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# Curriculum genres in early childhood education: a case study in writing development

## Volume 2

by

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# 6 Theme in the writing planning genre

## 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter we commence our examination of our chosen three instances of the writing planning genre by looking firstly at THEME, while in chapters 7 and 8 respectively we shall examine TRANSITIVITY and CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in the same three instances. We shall claim that all three analyses contribute to our overall appreciation of the operation of the writing planning genre, and that in developing the analyses as we do, this appreciation is built up in an expanding way. That is to say, we intend that the discussion be understood cumulatively, each chapter building upon the earlier ones, and hence creating a rich sense both of the organisation of the writing planning genre, and of the important research possibilities available to persons using the systemic functional grammar to examine such social processes.

As we argued when we examined it in the morning news genre in chapter 3, Theme is an important measure of the way in which any curriculum genre is put together. Examination of Theme patterns can reveal much both about how the schematic structure is constructed, and about the kinds of meanings built up within the genre in question. For example, a Theme analysis will both expose some of the important linguistic resources in which the two registers are constructed, and something of the manner in which these two registers operate to realise the various elements of schematic structure. In the example of the morning news genre examined in chapter 3, we argued firstly that the first order or pedagogical register operates in such a manner that it projects the second order or "content" register, and secondly that the two registers operate selectively (section 3.6), realising different elements of the schematic structure, but never converging in any one element. In

the case of the writing planning genre, we shall also argue that the two registers operate selectively, the one projecting the other. However, we shall argue in addition that while they also work to realise the elements of the schematic structure, they do so in such a manner that at certain points the two registers converge. The convergence, as we have already suggested in chapter 5 (section 5.1) is brought about by the fact that in the writing planning genre, unlike the pattern applying in the morning news genre, the teacher is teaching the children to write (the pedagogical field) about a "content" (the "content" field).

We have already noted in chapter 3 (section 3.5.12) that in all the texts examined in this study, teachers control most of the Themes, textual, interpersonal and experiential. Of the Themes which do form a part of the children's discourse, most are experiential, and a few are either interpersonal or textual. The children's Theme choices are in fact primarily to do with the "content" field, and they thus tend to feature with greatest frequency in the "body" of the Task Orientation element, where this field is most developed. Interpersonal Themes are a much more frequent feature of the teacher's talk than of the children's, though they are used selectively by her even then, for they normally have a function in the overall pattern of management and discipline of the children, and they tend to be invoked at points where the need for overt direction and/or discipline is felt. Textual Themes are a very frequent feature of the teacher's discourse, and they have a particular role in forwarding the directions taken in the talk and the kinds of reasoning encoded therein. Textual Themes have an important function in those aspects of the text where the pedagogical register is most directly involved, though they will also be involved in building the "content" register. They are thus found at the start of each element in particular, in the "body" of the Task Orientation, and in the "body" of the Task Specification as well. Since the Task element itself is very short there are few textual Themes there, though normally the

commencement of this element is signalled with a use of a textual Theme.

This pattern naturally varies somewhat both because some instances of the genre have more elements than others, and because teachers vary, especially in the degree to which they permit the active participation of their students. To take the former of these first, two of our chosen three instances of the writing planning genre possess more than the minimal three elements of the schematic structure discussed in chapter 5 (Task Orientation, Task Specification, Task). However, even where other elements are involved, such as a Task Reorientation, a Task Respecification, or a second Task Specification, the general picture prevails. The children use experiential Themes in the main, while the teachers use not only experiential Themes, but textual ones as well. Such textual Themes signal the start of an element, but they also occur to some extent in the "body" of the element, where connections need to be built for the purposes of establishing relatedness either in the pedagogical or the "content" field. Such interpersonal Themes as are used are much more frequently a feature of the teacher's discourse than they are of the children's discourse, and this reflects the teacher's role in directing the course activities take in the lesson.

Our analysis will seek to demonstrate that the elements of schematic structure function as earlier suggested in chapters 3 (section 3.3) and chapter 5 (section 5.3). Thus, the constituent or particulate elements function in a particular order, so that a Task Orientation always commences the structure, a Task Specification comes in the "middle" and a Task comes last. In addition, a Task Reorientation or a Task Respecification, where either occurs, always comes in a particular order too, the former following a Task Orientation, and the latter following a Task Specification: their patterning in other words may be understood to function in a "wave-length" manner. A Control

element, it will be shown, may occur anywhere in the structure, so that it functions prosodically.

To take the second cause of variation in the operation of the writing planning genre - namely differences in teaching behaviour - we shall argue that the teacher in the case of our third text, Mrs L, generates greater opportunity than the other teachers for the children to contribute to the construction of the discourse and to the negotiation of meaning. Thus, although the schematic structure in her particular instance of the writing planning genre is identifiably very similar to those of the other two texts, we shall aim to demonstrate that the children are nonetheless enabled to participate more fully than is the case in the other two texts. A Theme analysis, we shall suggest, helps us see how the relatively enhanced opportunity available to the children to talk is realised.

In exploring how the writing planning genre is built up, we will be interested in patterns of Theme distribution generally, and we will argue that the analysis tells us a great deal in particular of the consequences of the "language experience" approaches referred to in chapters 4 and 5. Ideally, as we have seen, the latter approaches seek to build educational opportunity for children to use language relevant to a field, through well controlled participation in suitable learning activity. However, in practice, as we have also suggested, such approaches, linked as they so often are to particular preoccupations with childhood, tend to underestimate the kinds of learning challenges with which young children can deal, and to perpetuate their relative ignorance and "helplessness". Rather than develop language experience activities which challenge because of the opportunity they offer for entry to new registers and hence new forms of "school knowledge", these approaches often involve children in dealing mainly with the familiar and the commonplace - the experiences of family and immediate peer group within the school classroom, in fact. Where, as we shall see in the third of our chosen

instances of the writing planning genre, the teacher does seek to engage the children in exploring new experience and hence in building a new register and a new knowledge, she fails to pursue what she does with the children to their real advantage. In fact, having gone part of the way into exploring a new scientific "content" field, employing some of the discourse patterns appropriate to that field in talk, the children are brought to an abrupt halt in such an exploration by a teacher direction which returns them, at the point of starting their writing, back towards some of the familiar and essentially childish "content" fields of imaginative tales. That the teacher causes such a thing to happen is to be explained, we shall argue, because of her own uncertainties both about what might be involved in constructing an appropriate written genre to do with the field, and about what constitutes appropriate learning experiences for young children. In that the teacher decides in the end to direct the children to write as she does, she opts to follow some familiar pedagogical practices dictated by the demands of an ideology of early childhood whose effect is to perpetuate the ignorance of childhood. A THEME analysis serves to demonstrate one of the linguistic systems through which this kind of pedagogical tendency is realised.

Despite such limitations in the curriculum texts we shall be examining, we shall argue that there is much to be learned from the patterns of talk the teachers generate concerning what might be desirable models of teacher/student talk. In the case of the first text, though the teacher does direct the children into making a number of observations about the "content" under discussion, we shall suggest that the children remain relatively disempowered, and on the whole not permitted by the terms of the talk to assist in any significant way in negotiation of meaning, or to rehearse possible generic models for writing. In a sense, then, the teacher provides a model of what not to do. In the case of the second text we shall examine, the teacher demonstrates in a Task Specification element how she helps the children builds connectedness in their construction of meaning

preparatory to writing, although in other ways we shall suggest there are some limitations in the patterns of talk she generates. The teacher in the third text shows skill in facilitating some useful talk about the "content" field, and there is much in her manner of generating talk to provide evidence of the kind of model of teacher/student talk one would hope to see in a genuinely negotiating classroom. The difficulties which do occur in this text are to do with the teacher's own uncertainties about the nature of the writing task to be undertaken.

Our manner of arranging the three instances of the writing planning genre is thus intended not only to allow a movement from the most minimal to more elaborated instances of the writing planning genre, but also to permit some movement through three different models of teacher generated talk. Such a movement should help to throw light upon the kinds of patterns of talk which need to apply if teacher and students are to enjoy a relationship in which some genuine negotiation of understanding is to occur. This chapter will begin to address such matters, though as we have already indicated, we shall be able to say considerably more about them when we undertake our analyses of TRANSITIVITY and CONVERSATION STRUCTURE.

Before we commence our detailed examination of our three instances of the writing planning genre, we will need to provide some general information about the contexts in which the three instances of the writing planning genre were generated. We shall also provide some general observations about the patterns of Theme distribution in the writing planning genre, subsequently looking at Theme in some detail in each of the three texts selected for close study. In all then, in the rest of this chapter we will do the following:

1) provide some general information about the curriculum themes around which the three texts examined were developed;

2) introduce an overall sense of the ways Theme choices are distributed in the writing planning genre, realising both the two registers and helping to define the presence of the elements of the schematic structure;

3) examine Themes in each of the chosen instances of the writing planning genre, tracing in detail how the two registers are realised, and how these in turn realise the genre;

4) argue, inter alia, the manner in which the analysis undertaken reveals the operation of an ideology of childhood which is insufficiently challenging to young learners.

## 6.2 Three instances of the writing planning genre: some preliminary observations

As we earlier noted in Chapter 4, the writing lessons in this study were always developed out of consideration of a particular curriculum

"theme", chosen both for its alleged relevance to early childhood, and for its value as an organising idea around which the curriculum could be integrated. The three elements of the curriculum most commonly integrated within the theme program were language arts, social science and science. Thus, there is one lesson taught in year 2, by Mrs. S, about "uniforms", undertaken as part of the unit of work on "Clothing", and relating most closely to the social studies program. Another lesson, this time about chickens, as one aspect of the theme on "Hatching out", was taught in year 1: the lesson in question, taught by Mrs. L, relates most closely to the science program. Another lesson about "my lunch", was taught in year 2, as part of the theme of that year on "Food", and it belonged most directly to the language arts program; it was taught by Mrs. P.

In developing the unit on "Hatching out", the teacher had introduced an incubator into the classroom, and she had acquired several fertilised eggs from a nearby hatchery, so that for about a week, the children could watch the eggs, and actually see the hatching of the chickens. Subsequently, the chicks stayed in the classroom for a few weeks before being given away to a child whose family was willing to take them. In the particular lesson to be discussed, the teacher introduced a very good children's reference book called Egg to Chick, by Millicent E. Selsam, and developed the discussion around that. Other lessons in the unit involved such things as reading the story of The Little Red Hen, or examining a children's book called The Chicken's Child, whose story is developed entirely through a series of pictures. Both of these were used as bases for writing stories. In other lessons, which the researcher did not actually observe, there was some discussion of the kinds of food chickens eat, and talk about the chickens as they grew and changed.

The lesson on lunches involved writing a story on the topic "What happened to my lunch?", and it was developed around a reading of a children's basal reading book from the series called Reading 360

Australia, whose title was My Lunch. The lesson as above noted, emerged in a unit of work on the theme of Food. Other activities undertaken in the theme included: learning about the five food groups currently identified by nutritionists, which were actually listed on the board, and the children were asked to write them down; a visit to a local butcher shop; reading the story called Stone Soup; cooking spaghetti in the classroom and eating it; reading a story called A Monster Sandwich, and making sandwiches; writing out the recipe for the spaghetti, as well as creating the shopping list for the ingredients. The latter activity we have considered briefly in chapter 5 (sections 5.3.1-5.3.4), and elsewhere in some detail (Christie, in press). The lesson in question, like most others undertaken in the curriculum theme, we shall argue, asked less of the children than it might and did not offer an appropriate model for learning a new genre for writing.

The lesson on uniforms emerged in the context of work on the curriculum theme of "Clothing", and to some extent, the researcher was responsible for the choice of field, though not for the choice of theme. Invited to sit in on one of the planning lessons, she had been somewhat puzzled about what the teachers proposed to deal with under this theme topic, apart from some talk about the items the children wore themselves. As we argued in chapter 4 (section 4.3) curriculum themes need to be chosen with care if some substantial learning experience is likely to emerge, and the notion of "clothing" invites comparison with that on "hats", proposed in the Traeger Park experience, and alluded to already in chapter 4 (section 4.3). Suggestions about the ways some items of clothing were made, or about the kinds of clothing worn in different parts of the world, were not well received. This led to a more general discussion about the kinds of uniforms worn in different occupational groups, and to a proposal, made by the researcher, that examination of the uniforms associated with such groups might most usefully be considered out of a thoughtful examination of the roles of different occupations. In

other words, the focus would not be primarily upon what persons wore as a measure of the office they fulfilled, but upon the office itself, where some consideration of this would open the reasons for the wearing of the uniform. Such an activity could lead to visits into the community to talk to people such as the police, traffic wardens, nursing staff, and so on, all of which seemed legitimate aspects of a good social studies program. While the idea of dealing with uniforms was taken up, the rest of the proposal was not really acted upon. It was of course the teachers' responsibility to determine what was done, but as sometimes happened on other occasions, the researcher sensed an anxiety about undertaking things "too hard" for such young children. The principal herself sometimes expressed such an anxiety as well as the teachers, though in the opinion of the researcher what often was done as a result severely underestimated the children's capacity and interest to learn new things.

In the particular lesson on uniforms we shall examine, the teacher displayed the uniforms of several occupational groups, most of them brought to school by the children, and generated some talk about the features of these, as a basis upon which the children then did their writing. As such, we shall argue, the activity did not introduce the children to a significant new "content" field, nor did it offer the prospect of identifying useful new genres for writing.

Before we commence our detailed exploration of Theme in the writing planning genre by examining Text A, the "uniform text", we shall now offer some general observations about the manner in which Theme choices are patterned in the genre. These observations having been established, they will guide our subsequent treatment of our selected three texts.

## 6.3 Theme patterns in the writing planning genre: some general trends

We earlier (chapter 3, section 3.5.2) noted Halliday's definition of Theme as "that with which the clause is concerned," and we also demonstrated the way in which textual, interpersonal and experiential Themes may be found in the clause, moving from the "outer" textual Theme, through to the interpersonal, and thence to the "innermost" Theme, the experiential. One of the more satisfying aspects of undertaking a Theme analysis, as was clear in chapter 3, is that it enables a simultaneous investigation of the organisation of a text in terms of the three metafunctions, experiential, interpersonal and textual. No other aspect of the grammar permits such a simultaneous examination in terms of the three metafunctions. Interesting work on Theme patterns has been undertaken in particular by Fries (N.D.; in press) as well as Eiler (1986). Fries especially has demonstrated the very varied range of items that may be used in experiential Theme position as well as the role of THEME in establishing what a text is about. Eiler, focussing on what she calls a "lecture-chapter" from a textbook on physics, has demonstrated how Theme choices are distributed, and in doing so, has argued that this uncovers some of the heuristic structures that define the genre involved. Like Fries, she has interests both in identifying the Theme choices used and in exploring the significance of the ways these are patterned throughout a text. We have similar interests in exploring Theme choices and their distribution.

The very variety the language permits in choices of items to occupy experiential Theme position is an interesting measure of the ways we can extend the possibilities available to us for "making meaning" in language. Items which occupy experiential Theme position in a conventional or unremarkable way we call "unmarked", while those which are unusual we call "marked." We did see some instances of marked experiential Theme choices in chapter 3, when we examined

our instances of morning news giving, though we shall look at the matter here a little more closely since this will be helpful for examining what happens at times in our instances of the writing planning genre.

Unmarked experiential Themes may be found for example in the following clauses taken from our texts:

> that's just like my uncle's
> she goes to school
> they make the bread
> my mum buys Home Pride

In each case the topical Theme choice is realised in a nominal group. Sometimes the nominal group may have more than one element as in the following made up examples:

> Aaron and Susy both told some news.
> Joel, the best student in the class,
> liked to tell morning news too.

In both cases, the topical Theme is an unmarked one. One of the commonest ways to create a marked topical Theme will be by placing a circumstance in Theme position as in:

> once upon a time, there were three bears.
> on the table she had placed her case.

In fact, as we shall see, circumstances quite often appear in marked topical Theme position in the writing planning genre. Another important way in which a marked topical Theme is created, as Fries has shown, is by placing a hypotactic or dependent clause in Theme position. In chapter 3, we saw both Aaron and Susy do this at what

were very important points in the creation of their anecdotes. Aaron began his anecdote thus:

> when Brian was getting the rubbish bins
> he found this box of old stuff,

while Susy started hers with circumstances of place and time:

> and at Tracey's house, not yesterday but the day before,
> I sleeped at her place....,

and she placed a dependent clause in marked topical Theme to herald the start of the Crisis element of her anedcote:

> and then when he jumped on us, we all got up.....

It is significant in fact that in both Aaron's and Susy's anecdotes, marked experiential Themes were used at points marking the start of a new element of the schematic structure. They actually helped provide the linguistic evidence for the presence of the new element. In the writing planning genre, as we shall see below, marked experiential Themes may appear at various points in the overall text. However, for the most part, they tend to occur at points marking the opening of an element of structure, and in that sense they are also element-defining. They appear in the teacher's talk, being rarely found in that of the children in the writing planning genre, and they will be realised in one of three ways:

1) in the use of a circumstance as in:

> well now today we're going to talk some more about....

2) in the use of a dependent clause as in:

well now these people are back, I want you to listen to this little tiny story....

3) in the use of a circumstance or a clause containing an embedded clause as in:

and for each of the uniforms [[we've looked at]] we've asked some questions

or,

all right now you've had time [[to look at all these uniforms]] we should ask Belinda .....

Marked experiential Themes which are realised in circumstances of time serve to focus the children's attention upon the time of doing a task, and they have a role in operationalising activity. The focus may be on "today" as in the example just cited above, but it may also be upon what was done earlier as a point of departure for the new work for the day, as in:

yesterday we looked at a book on animals, and today we are going to look at some pictures of animals...

Marked experiential Themes realised in dependent clauses, or alternatively in circumstances where an embedded clause is involved, tend to come either at the start of elements of the schematic structure or at least towards their beginning. Their role appears to be that of compressing and/or summarising aspects of activity as a basis for proceeding forward into the "body" of the element. Consider again the example cited immediately above, which occurs in the opening clause of a Task Specification:

all right now you've had time [to look at all these uniforms]
we should ask Belinda .....

Thus is a great deal compressed into the opening of the element. The marked experiential Theme here in fact establishes in a summary way everything that has just been accomplished in the previous element, the Task Orientation, and it thus has the effect of "clearing the way" as it were, to get on into the next element.

Whereas dependent clauses with or without embedded clauses or circumstances with or without embedded clauses will, as we have just noted, occur towards the start of elements of schematic structure, we find they occur less frequently in the "body" of an element. That seems to be because in the "body" of an element there is less of a need to summarise and/or compress information as we have just seen. Thus, especially in the Task Orientation, where the "content" is being established and the children are involved in talk about that "content", the experiential Theme choices are for the most part simple unmarked Themes. When, as in the Task Specification, something of the nature of the task is being established, marked experiential Themes will sometimes be used to identify aspects of the pedagogical field, once again appearing towards the start of the element, though on occasion they may occur in the "body" of the element as well.

Turning back for the moment to the simple unmarked experiential Theme choices, these also show patterned variation across the text. Class members tend to be thematised by the teacher at points where the pedagogical field is being foregrounded, as in the opening monologues of the various elements and in the "body" of the Task Specification. Sometimes the teacher chooses to thematise the children by using "we", serving to suggest the common commitment of all participants to the task(s) in hand as in:

we were looking at different people's uniforms...

Sometimes, when the teacher appears more concerned to advise the children of their obligations to do certain tasks, she uses "you" as in:

you can choose any one [[you like]] ....
well you can have a dog if you like....

In the "body" of the Task Orientation in particular, the "content" field will be foregrounded in experiential Theme position. In fact, this is one significant measure of the fact that the "body" of the element has been reached. Elsewhere, the "content" field finds some expression in the Task Specification - more indeed than one might expect, since the writing task is to be identified there, and such aspects of the pedagogical field as are thematised in the Task Specification are in fact reasonably few and general in character. In the Task element, where often only the pedagogical register is involved, the children again tend to be thematised, though sometimes, so much is the language here a part of action, the teacher employs an imperative, as in:

right, go back to your places.

It will be recalled that we have already argued in chapter 3 (section 3.5.2) that the imperative should be recognised as occupying an experiential Theme position, such is its frequency in teacher talk, and its importance in the overall character of curriculum genres generally.

The patterns of textual Themes are no less interesting than those of experiential Themes. Continuatives almost invariably start all elements of schematic structure, and they are produced by the teacher, as in:

all right now you've had time....
right who knows what they have to do?
well now these people are back..
OK, now what we're going to do is...

The continuatives always help realise the pedagogical register, and for that reason they are found very frequently in the teacher's talk, and only very occasionally in the children's. They occur mainly in the opening monologues with which the teacher heralds a new element of schematic structure, but they will also be found clustered quite frequently in the teacher's talk in a Task Specification or a Task Respecification, when the children are being encouraged to prepare for writing. The very consistent use of continuatives in the patterned ways in which they occur especially at the start of elements, is in fact another feature helping to define the presence of an element of schematic structure.

Among the many studies of classroom discourse undertaken this century, the very frequent use of continuatives in teacher talk must surely be one of the most commonly remarked features, though other researchers not using the systemic functional grammar do not of course use the term "continuative". Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 40) and again Sinclair and Brazil (1982, 27-29) in determining the "classes of acts" they identified in classroom talk, referred to a group they called "markers", and it is clear that the linguistic items they so named were in fact what we term continuatives. They said that such items served to alert the students that they must listen carefully to what was about to happen next.

Green and Weade (cited in Green and Kantor-Martin, 1988) identify a number of different functions for which the item "OK" is used in classrooms, some of which include: a "management function"; a function of "holding the speaker's place," in the sense of holding on for a moment before some new activity is commenced; signalling a

change of turns; or as a "backchannelling strategy" where "the listener inserts an OK into the stream of conversation in a voice that is quiet and encouraging but does not interrupt the speaker's turn." Not all these uses of "OK" constitute examples of continuatives, though we have referred to this research because of the general support it gives to the importance of linguistic items often operating in the role of continuatives in classroom talk.

In general continuatives have an important role in guiding the directions taken in the talk, and in this sense our findings are confirmed by the observations of other researchers with respect to the use of "markers" of various kinds. Our findings differ from those of the other researchers referred to in two senses. Firstly we are claiming the operation of two registers realising the elements of a curriculum genre; secondly, we are arguing the role of continuatives both in helping to realise the pedagogical register and, in turn, in helping to realise the elements of the schematic structure of the genre.

Other textual Themes found in the writing planning genre are structurals, realised through use of conjunctions, and conjunctive adjuncts of various kinds, as in the following passage, taken from one of the texts we shall examine below:

> well today we've got another simple little story
> [[which is called My Lunch]]
> and I want [[you to listen to it]]
> what happened to the little boy's lunch
> who came
> and took the lunch
> and what happened to it
> and then what happened to the little boy
> after he found
> he had no lunch

because when we finish reading this story
something's going to happen to your lunch

Teachers make most frequent use of structural Themes realised in additive conjunctions, for the purposes of building both the pedagogical field and the "content" field. However, some causal conjunctions ("because") are used, as well as temporal conjunctions ("when", "after"), contrastive conjunctions ("but") conjunctions of consequence ("so", "if") and conjunctions of alternation ("or"). Conjunctive adjuncts, especially those of time such as "then", are also reasonably frequently used. In the case of the pedagogical field, the frequent use of additive conjunctions has to do with building connections between steps to be taken in teaching/learning activity. In the case of the "content" field, the large number of additive conjunctions, and the relative sparsity of other conjunctions has to do with the building of simple connectedness between observations about the field. Reconstruction of familiar experience is often at issue here. Were there a more varied and frequent use of other conjunctions in textual Theme position, the kinds of reasoning patterns thus encoded in the discourse would necessarily be more varied, and the kinds of experiences constructed would thus involve rather more than the simple reconstruction of the familiar.

Of the interpersonal Themes, as we have already noted, most are produced by the teacher, though the children do produce them on occasion. The most common instances used include vocatives and finites as in:

ok Joel will you please shut the door?

Vocatives as we observed in chapter 3 (section 3.5.2) are used mainly to manage a child's behaviour in some way, and they sometimes are involved therefore in a Control element, when the teacher wishes to stop unacceptable behaviour. In our three instances of the writing

planning genre to be looked at below, we shall see that on several occasions the children also use vocatives in order to address the teacher. Finites are selected because of the choice of the interrogative mood, and since teachers ask many more questions than do children, they are a much more frequent feature of their talk than of the children's. The other interpersonal Theme choice found in the teacher's talk is the use of a modal adjunct, as we observed in chapter 3 (section 3.5.2). Like the uses of vocatives, modal adjuncts tend to be found in Control elements, since they involve the teacher in expressing attitude. While we did find a few selective uses of modal adjuncts in the children's talk in the morning news activity of Mrs L, as we noted there, they are not frequently found in the children's talk. Their relative frequency in teacher talk and their relative infrequency in the children's talk are measures of the nature of their relationship , and the comparative freedom the teacher enjoys in judging the nature of activities in the classroom, including the various actions of the children. As it happens, in the particular instances of the writing planning genre we shall examine, modal adjuncts do not feature with great frequency in the talk of the teachers.

WH interrogatives are also employed quite frequently in the writing planning genre. These, as we saw in chapter 3, (section 3.5.2) are regarded by Halliday as both interpersonal and experiential Themes. We choose to treat them as interpersonal Themes, as indicated in chapter 3, on the grounds that this is most illuminating of their function in classroom situations, and of the differential relationships of the participants. WH interrogatives are a frequent feature of teacher talk, and by contrast they appear much less frequently in the children's talk. In the tables set out in Appendices 2. A, 2.B and 2.C, where we identify all Theme choices in the three texts we are examining, instances of WH interrogatives will be listed as interpersonal Themes, but labelled in such a way that their joint

status as interpersonal and experiential Theme choices is acknowledged.

Looking to the overall distribution of interpersonal Themes in the various elements, we find that vocatives sometimes appear at the opening of an element, where a teacher directs a child to do something preparatory to getting on with the job in hand. Elsewhere, vocatives appear sometimes at the point of entry into dialogue after the opening teacher monologue in the Task Orientation of the Task Specification (or indeed in the Task Respecification), and where they do, this is part of signalling that a dialogue is to commence. Finites appear always in dialogue segments of the discourse, as do WH interrogatives: that is to say, in the "body" of the Task Orientation in particular, where the "content" field is established in greatest detail, and in the "body" of the Task Specification, where the pedagogical task is established in greatest detail. Interpersonal Themes do not normally feature extensively in the Task element, for interaction is not what is sought there. On the contrary, since this is where the pedagogical register dominates, the children are directed to action, and any talk from them, if it does occur, tends to be dealt with fairly summarily.

These then tend to be the patterns by which Themes are distributed across the text of the writing planning genre. We will now commence a detailed examination of the first of our chosen instances of the genre.

## 6.4 Theme in Text A, the "uniform text"

Text A is not strictly speaking a complete text, just as our instance of the morning news genre examined in chapter 3 was not a complete text. For convenience, and to distinguish it from the other instances of the writing planning genre to be examined, we shall call it Text A. In doing this, we should note the real advantages to educational

research of the notion of a genre. Any school day by its very nature generates very long texts, and from the point of view of the linguist, one wants a principled basis upon which to determine how to select from the text(s) those parts which it will be useful to examine in detail. Concentration upon selected instances of particular genres enables us to make principled decisions about those elements of the text(s) available to us that we will go on to study in detail.

Bearing in mind the outline of the schematic structure potential of the writing planning genre which we provided in Chapter 5, we will argue that Text A has the following schematic structure:

TO^ TS^ T.

A Task Orientation is followed by a Task Specification, and this in turn is followed by a Task.

This is the most minimal instance of the genre involved, since, as we argued in chapter 5, it is very common to find another element or elements in the "middle" of the schematic structure, and we may also find an optional C or Control element. We have in fact deliberately chosen to examine initially an instance of the genre of the most minimal kind, and in Texts B and C, we shall find instances of a more elaborated character. We will set out firstly the TO element of Text A, and we will then discuss the Theme pattern in this element, before going on similarly to treat both the TS and the T.

Since it is intended to treat each element in turn, thus presenting the text in a series of segments, each of which is examined before proceeding to the next one, it will be perhaps be useful firstly to give a quick synopsis of the whole text, so that the reader has some overall sense of what is involved. The text is in fact also presented in full in Appendix 2.A. Briefly, then, the teacher advises the children that they are to talk some more about uniforms, about which they

have already had earlier lessons (not witnessed by the researcher, by the way). She asks the children what questions have been raised to consider uniforms in the previous activities, and having been answered, she proceeds to display several uniforms, and to promote some discussion of these. Finally, the children are asked to select the uniform of their choice, and to write about it, using the same questions they have used hitherto to guide their writing.

### 6.4.1 THEME IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT A

We reproduce firstly the text of the Task Orientation.

The Task Orientation of Text A

T: (who has maintained her position on a chair in front of the children immediately after morning news, while they are grouped on the floor in front of her. Looking briefly around the group to achieve eye to eye contact she proceeds.) Well now today we're going to talk some more about the things we have been talking about for the last couple of days. We were looking at different people's uniforms weren't we? We looked at the crossing lady's uniform, and we talked to the lady about why she wears it. And for each of the uniforms we've looked at, we've asked some questions. What were the questions? (Christian raises a hand) Christian?

Christian: Who they were, what they wear, why they wear it. (He is actually reading this from the board)

T: Yes, why do people wear uniforms?

Danielle: Tells who they are.

T: Yes, it tells us what their job is. Now Mrs. P has lent us this uniform. Look at this peaked hat. (She holds it up)

Danielle: That's just like my uncle's.

Mirko: Is that Mrs. P's husband's?

T: Yes. See the peaked cap, the stiff piece here in the front. It's a dark colour isn't it? A dark blue, you'd call it. Now look at the jacket. (She displays it.)

Christian: He wears a white shirt

T: See the white stripes on the sleeves.

Christian: I know why he wears those things. (He means the stripes)
T: Yes, they show who he is don't they?
Mirko: Do they have a badge here? (He points to the patch where a badge has obviously been removed.)
T: Yes, Mr P. has taken it off.
Christian: And you sew them on.
T: What's this on the shoulder?
Gabriel: "Australia"
Aaron: "Australia".
T: And he has special buttons.
Aaron: Mrs. S. ... there's two sets of buttons, and two sets of button holes.
Christian: Mrs. S, how do you take the stripes off?
T: With a pair of scissors. This is a double breasted jacket. That's why there are all those buttons. See? (She holds it up.)
Cindy: There's buttons on the sleeve.
Diana: They look like silver coins -- the little ones.
T: Now let's look at the train driver's uniform. (She holds it up.)
Aaron: That's Jodie W.'s dad's.
T: Look, there's some badges here, some of them in the pocket.
Aaron: Mrs S, Jodie W.'s dad told Jodie not to lose them.
Carrie: Else we'll be in big strife. (said with a shudder)
T: Well, we'll pin them on here, on the jacket, then they can't get lost.
Christian: All of the badges are different.
Aaron: 'Cos they'd be for something different (He means each has a different purpose).
T: (Holds up the green jacket) See, this is a green jacket. I wonder if he'd wear a green shirt.
Christian: He would wear a blue shirt.
T: What else would he wear?
Diana: Slacks.
T: Yes, he would.
Stephen: Grey slacks.
T: Yes, I think they are grey. Well, so that's a train driver's uniform. Now let's look at this one. Who wears this kind of uniform? (She displays it)

Stephen: A nurse. Where do you find nurses? Who do they work for?
Stephen: A dentist.
Another child: A doctor.
T: Yes, that's right, and what does she do?
Diana: She's a helper.
Olivera: That's Jodie's mum's.
Cindy: She goes to school .....she's learning to be a nurse.
T: Yes, she's really a nurse's aide.
Stephen: An aide. What's that?
Christian: She's got to clean the people.
T: See what it says on the badge here. It's got R. N. A.
Aaron: That's "Real Nurse's Aide."
T: No. It's " Registered Nurse's Aide". She's a registered nurse's aide. It means she helps the nurses to look after the people in hospital. See, it's a blue uniform, and I think she wears white stockings, and a white cap.
Diana: Sometimes they have a cape. It's red.
T: Yes, good. I think she'd have a red cape too. No let's look at the two uniforms Belinda's brought in. They belong to Mr. and Mrs. S. They both work for the Home Pride Bakery. See their uniforms hanging up here.
(She points to the two uniforms, hanging from a light chord strung across part of the classroom for displaying things on it)
Tony: They make the bread.
Carrie: My mum buys Home Pride.
T: Look at Mr. S's shirt. It's brown.
Mirko: It's something like an army shirt.
T: See the writing. What does it say?
Aaron: "Home Pride ".
T: Why do they put it on the hats?
Christian: They can't put the writing up here (He gestures to his chest). They have to put it here (He points to his own head)
T: Why do they have to wear a hat in the bakery when they make the bread? Vanessa? (Vanessa does not reply)
Olivera: They might have to stop the sun. It might get in their eyes.
T: No, you wouldn't get sun in a bakery. Christian?

Christian: So they look nice.
T: No. Oh come on everyone. What's on your head?
Chorus: Hair.
T: And why do you need to cover that up if you're making bread in a bakery?
Aaron: To keep it tidy.
T: No, oh, can't anyone think better than that? What would happen if their hair fell out when they were making the bread?
Christian: It'ud get in the bread.
Stephen: There was paper in my bread once.
T: Yes, it'ud get in your bread, and that wouldn't be very nice, would it?
(Much animated talk here for a few seconds about eating bread with hair in it; too loud and too many speakers to catch it, but it dies very quickly because T ignores it).
T: See, Mrs S. wears a dress, and Mr S. has a shirt and trousers. And they're all the same colour, aren't they? It's a dark brown. They wear those to make the bread in the bakery.

Tables 2.A.1 and 2.A.2, in Appendix 2.A, set out respectively all the Theme choices in the teacher's discourse and the children's discourse in the TO. This discussion will draw upon these tables to illustrate the observations made about Theme distribution overall.

As an instance of the Task Orientation, this one compares closely with those we examined in an introductory way in chapter 5. The teacher signals the initiation of the pedagogical register when she commences the element of the genre in monologue and, having pointed a general direction for the lesson, she then seeks to involve the children by drawing them into dialogue with a question and a nomination of a child to answer the question. While both the pedagogical and the "content" registers are involved in this early monologue, it is clear both that the pedagogical register is primarily involved in the opening, and that from the point of entry into dialogue, the "content" register comes to the fore, remaining

predominant for the rest of the Task Orientation. Thus does the pedagogical register project the "content" register.

We shall choose to look closely at Theme in the opening, as a means of exemplifying what happens here: the pattern emerges quite constantly in our other instances of the genre. Hence, Table 6.1 sets out Theme in that part of the discourse which encompassess the opening monologue and the entry to dialogue. In Appendix 2.A, Tables 2.A.1 and 2.A.2 provide complete analyses of Theme choices in the Task Orientation here. Below we shall summarise all the Theme choices in the element. In treating all subsequent elements examined, we shall adopt the pattern of summarising Theme choices, providing detailed analyses of Theme choices in appendices at the end of the chapter.

Table 6.1 Theme in the opening of the Task Orientation of Text A

| THEME | | RHEME |
|---|---|---|
| Textual | Interpersonal | Experiential |
| well now | today | we're going to talk some more about the things [[we have been talking about for the last couple of days.]]" |
| *cont.* | *top.* | |
| | we | were looking at different people's uniforms |
| | *top* | |
| | we | looked at the crossing lady's uniform |
| | *top.* | |

| THEME | | | RHEME |
|---|---|---|---|
| Textual | Interpersonal | | Experiential |
| and | | we | talked to the lady about [[why she wears it]] |
| *struct.* | | *top.* | |
| and | | for each of the uniforms [[we've looked at ]] | we've asked some questions |
| *struct.* | | *top.* | |
| | what<br>*WH /top* | | were the questions |
| | **who**<br>***WH/top*** | | **they were** |
| | **what**<br>***WH/top*** | | **they wear** |
| | **why**<br>***WH/top.*** | | **they wear it** |
| yes<br>*cont.* | why<br>*WH /top* | | do people wear uniforms |
| | | | **tells** |
| | **who**<br>***WH/top.*** | | **they are** |
| yes<br>*cont.* | | it<br>*top.* | tells us |

| THEME | | RHEME |
|---|---|---|
| Textual | Interpersonal | Experiential |
| | what | their job is |
| | *WH top* | |

Note: the children's contributions to the talk are shown in bold typeface.

The teacher makes a very typical - one might even say an unmarked - Theme choice, to initiate both the pedagogical register and the first element of the schematic structure. That is to say, she selects as her opening textual Theme an instance of a continuative, or more correctly, she uses two continuatives to get going - "well now". Like all continuatives, they serve to indicate that a movement forward is being signalled, into a new learning activity. In the rest of the opening of the TO, while the teacher is still using monologue, she uses two other instances of textual Themes, both structurals, and both in fact examples of the conjunction "and", carrying an additive sense. They are:

> we looked at the crossing lady's uniform,
> and we talked to the lady about why she wears it.
> and for each of the uniforms we've looked at.....

The function of these two instances of structurals is to link clauses together and carry forward the learning activity at this stage.

The teacher's experiential Theme choices in the opening include two marked topical Themes which we have already examined above in section 6.3, when discussing the overall patterns of distribution of Theme choices in the writing planning genre. The first of them is a circumstance of time ("today"), in the first clause of the element, and the other is a circumstance of matter containing an embedded clause:

and for each of the uniforms [we've looked at]
we've asked some questions

The former, as we saw above, serves to focus the children's attention upon the activity for the present, while the latter has the sense of compressing earlier activity, alluded to in summary way as a basis for proceeding forward in this lesson.

Of the teacher's four other experiential Themes in the opening of the element, three identify the children as in:

we were looking at different people's uniforms.

Thus is some sense of a shared commitment to a common enterprise suggested by the teacher, in itself a strategy often employed in the opening of the element.

Signalling a movement into dialogue and a consequent engagement with the "content" field, the teacher selects a WH interrogative:

what were the questions,

and this invites a use of three WH interrogatives from a child, who reads from the board the questions examined in earlier lessons to do with uniforms:

who they were
what they wear
why they wear it

In time-honoured teacherly fashion, the teacher uses a continuative in response to the child ("yes"), asks why people wear uniforms, and a child replies using an additional WH interrogative:

tells <u>who</u> they are.

Another continuative greets this, and again in conventional teacherly talk, the child's answer is repeated:

<u>yes</u>. It tells us what their job is,

after which the teacher signals a new direction with her use of another continuative:

<u>now</u> Mrs P has lent us this uniform.

When in chapters 7 and 8 we examine TRANSITIVITY and CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in the text, it will be useful to match our observations here about the movement effected in the discourse through Theme choices with our observations concerning the movement effected both through choices in transitivity processes and in the exchange structure.

The movement is in fact a familiar one in much teacher education theory. Indeed, when the researcher was herself in training, it was sometimes referred to as "the movement from the known to the unknown", implying the step of establishing something already known or accomplished, as it were, as a basis for progressing to the yet-to-be-accomplished. This is a general principle still acknowledged in the preparation of teachers today, as the advice indicates to student teachers at teacher training institutions such as that at which the researcher works. In their lesson planning students are required to plan their lessons with a sense of the children's "entering behaviour", a term that actually refers to what it is the children are expected to know as a basis for proceeding to the new information the lesson is intended to open up. Ways of activating that "entering behaviour" will involve questioning and/or teacher

explanation or observation intended to remind the children of what they know.

Teachers familiarly start lessons by reminding the children of some prior learning activity or activities, and guiding them to a point of a departure into new activity. Such a process foregrounds the pedagogical register, since what is primarily at issue is operationalising activity, and our Theme analysis to this point has served to demonstrate just how heavily Theme choices are involved. From the point cited above at which the teacher says:

> now Mrs P has lent us this uniform,

the "body" of the Task Orientation has been reached, and the "content" field is foregrounded for the rest of the element. From here on, where the language has hitherto been language of action, it becomes much more language for the building of commentary upon the items displayed.

With the movement into the "body" of the element there is a shift in the experiential theme choices taken up by the teacher, while the children mark their entry into the element by making use mainly of experiential Themes. Thus, where there has been a tendency to thematise "we" as part of operationalising activity in the opening of the element, the experiential Theme in the "body" of the element identify aspects of the "content" field, as we shall see below.

In Table 6.2 we present summaries of the numbers and types of Theme choices taken up by the teacher and the children throughout the whole of the Task Orientation.

Table 6.2: Summary of Theme choices in the Task Orientation of Text A

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 22 | WH interrogatives | 15 | marked | 2 |
| conj. adjuncts | 0 | vocatives | 0 | | |
| | | finites | 1 | unmarked | 50 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 6 | | | | |
| temporal | 2 | | | | |
| consequential | 2 | | | | |
| conditional | 2 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| alternation | 0 | | | | |
| Total | 12 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 34 | | 16 | | 52 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 7 | marked | 0 |
| conj. adjuncts* | 1 | vocatives | 3 | | |
| | | finites | 2 | unmarked | 33 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| additive | 1 | | | | |
| temporal | 0 | | | | |
| consequential | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 0 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| alternation | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 4 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 5 | | 12 | | 33 |

* conj. adjuncts = conjunctive adjuncts

Looking to the choices of experiential Themes first, we have already examined above the two marked topical Themes used by the teacher, both realising the pedagogical register, and both in fact involved in the opening part of the Task Orientation. Apart from these all her other experiential Theme choices are simple unmarked ones, and as we have already noted above, the tendency to thematise the children, a feature of the opening of the element, disappears with the entry to the second order or "content" field, which is developed in dialogue in the "body" of the element. Some examples from the teacher's talk include:

> that's a train driver's uniform
> she's really a nurse's aide,

while two from the children's talk are:

> he wears a white shirt
> it's something like an army shirt.

The children's experiential Theme choices are wholly to do with the "content" field. They have no active role in the shaping of the pedagogical field.

Because of the field in question, and the tendency to build commentary upon the uniforms displayed, the teacher makes frequent use of imperatives, intended to guide attention towards aspects of the garments involved as in:

> look at the jacket
> see the white stripes on the sleeves.

Of the interpersonal Theme choices made, the teacher makes more frequent use of WH interrogatives than the children, part of the process in fact by which she encourages the children to make

observations relevant to the field. While the children produce seven instances of WH interrogatives, this is a misleadingly high figure, since the first three are actually read aloud from the teacher's discourse on the blackboard, and hence not genuinely created in any independent sense.

In the case of the teacher's uses of WH interrogatives, by the way, it is noteworthy that she engages the children for several minutes in talk relevant to the field in a manner which we would suggest is not really productive at all. We refer to those parts of the discourse where the teacher involves the children in talk about why bakers wear hats in the bakery, beginning with:

> why do they have to wear a hat in the bakery when they make the bread? Vanessa?

The children either do not answer this and other related questions, or alternatively they offer guesses. The teaching technique involved, which uses a series of questions intended to guide students into a new understanding of some kind, seeks to employ inductive questioning to engage the children in making connections between things not hitherto perceived as connected. In theory, students are supposed to be led inductively into reasoning their way through the factors responsible for some phenomenon. In practice, as Barnes (Barnes, Britton & Rosen,1971) pointed out some years ago, this kind of technique all too often invites the students to play a game of "guess what's in the teacher's head." While there are good reasons why teachers should ask questions of their students, a great deal of time is often wasted in classrooms where students do have to "guess what's in the teacher's head." Where students genuinely do not know an answer to some question, as Martin and Rothery (1988) have argued recently, it is very much better simply to tell them than involve them in what is often a frustrating exercise. When in chapter

8 we examine CONVERSATION . STRUCTURE in the writing planning genre, we shall return to these observations.

Turning to other interpersonal Themes, we should note that while the teacher produces no vocatives, the children produce three, all identifying the teacher herself as in:

> Mrs S there's two sets of buttons and two sets of button holes.

The number of vocatives produced by the children is in fact a little unusual, and while as we have earlier noted teachers do make relatively sparing use of them, it is also unusual that she uses none at all.

Both teacher and children make limited use of finites- once in the teacher's case:

> can't anyone think better than that,

and twice in the children's, as in

> is that Mrs P's husband's.

The relative infrequency of finites in the teacher's talk is to be set alongside her quite frequent use of WH interrogatives, serving a similar function in eliciting talk from the children. The children make relatively infrequent use of both finites and WH interrogatives, and that is because teachers typically ask questions, while children are expected to answer them.

Of the teacher's textual Themes 22 are continuatives, two of which as we saw above, are involved in helping to define the opening of the element - "well now", while others mark a movement forward in the talk like "now" also examined above. Others again are instances of

"yes" or "no", and involved in making responses to the children's answers to the teacher's questions, as in:

> yes I think she'd have a red cape too.

The children make no use of continuatives at all, and that is because in general it is not their role to determine the course taken in the discourse. True, they may engage with the "content" field - are indeed required to do so - and they do on occasion contribute to the development of the discourse about the field in ways which influence its focus and directions. However, the very absence of continuatives in their talk, understood alongside their relatively infrequent use of other textual Themes such as structurals, serves to demonstrate the reasonably minor role the children have in influencing the directions taken in their learning activities.

Structural Themes will always be of interest in any curriculum genre, since the types used as well as their frequency and distribution in the teacher's talk as compared with these in the children's talk, tell us a great deal of the kinds of meanings encoded in the discourse. In the table above we have indicated the types of conjunctions used as structurals. Of the 12 in the teacher's talk, six are instances of the conjunction "and", used in an additive sense, as in:

> see, it's a blue uniform, and I think she wears white stockings.....
> and why do you need to cover that up if you're making bread in a bakery?

There are two instances of the temporal conjunction "when", as in:

> why do they have to wear a hat when they make the bread?

The teacher also uses two conjunctions having a consequential sense:

well we'll pin them on here, then they can't get lost
well so that's a train driver's uniform,

and two instances of "if", used in a conditional sense, as in:

what would happen if their hair fell out?

The patterns of reasoning encoded through textual Theme choices in the teacher's talk, continuatives and structurals, are thus of a very simple kind. What is at issue primarily is simple linking of observations in an additive sense, with occasional building of connectedness through consequential and conditional conjunctions operating in textual Theme positions. This is the pattern in a great deal of early childhood education.

The children's textual Themes are much less frequent than the teacher's, and their role in the building of the element is less significant. There are four instances of structurals and one conjunctive adjunct. The first structural is realised in an additive conjunction:

and you sew them on,

the second in a conjunction of alternation:

else we'll be in big strife,

the third in a causal conjunction:

'cos they'd be for something different,

and the fourth in a consequential conjunction:

so they look nice.

The conjunctive adjunct occurs in:

> sometimes they have a cape.

Overall, within the Task Orientation the teacher initiaties activity in the opening phase where she uses monologue, and subsequently guides the children into dialogue about the "content" field in the "body" of the element. She guides the children in particular through: her uses of textual Themes to build connectedness; her uses of interpersonal Themes to elicit talk about the "content" field; and her uses of experiential Themes, which initially identify the children, and which remind them of what they have done together in earlier lessons, and which subsequently identify aspects of the "content" field.

The children are wholly engaged with the "content" field, though they do not initiate much of the discourse that relates to it, as their relatively small use of interpersonal Themes demonstrates, nor do they contribute much to the advance of the discourse into the various directions it takes, since they use very few textual Themes.

At the point of entry to the Task Specification, as we shall see, the teacher moves back to the monologic mode, in itself one important measure of the fact that a new element in the schematic structure is being initiated. Before we move to the Task Specification, it should be pointed out that the "content" as developed in the Task Orientation has been shown to be very "thin". No significant field of enquiry, we suggest, is really available in an examination of uniforms, and as we have seen, the teacher and children have been primarily involved in building commentary upon familiar experience of observing people wear uniforms.

## 6.4.2 THEME IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION OF TEXT A

As we did above, we will commence by setting out the TS, and then examine the Theme choices.

> Task Specification.
> T: All right, now you've had time to look at all these uniforms, we should ask Belinda to thank her mum and dad for letting us see their uniforms. Now remember what we said before when we looked at other uniforms and wrote reports about them. Well, we're going to write about these uniforms today. You can choose any one you like: the policeman's, the train driver's, the nurse's, or the one from the Home Pride Bakery. Now what do we have to remember to write about?
> Aaron: Who they are and what they wear.
> T: Yes.

This is in fact the most minimal example of the Task Specification in our three instances of the writing planning genre, even though that element is characteristically shorter than the Task Orientation. As we suggested in chapter 5 when we introduced the genre and the associated register variables, this element is shorter partly because the pedagogical field comes into play. In a mode sense the language is very much more that of action than of commentary upon action or experience. The latter, as we have seen, characterised the development of the "content" field above in the Task Orientation. As we also noted in chapter 5 (section 5.1), the pedagogical field is of significance in two related senses - firstly in the sense of the teacher's concern to direct activity and see that it proceeds in appropriate ways, and secondly in the sense of the teacher's concern to develop the ability to write. As we observed in introducing the matter in chapter 5, the Task Specification is often very short and its advice with respect to the task of writing is very general in character. The present instance bears out this observation.

Table 2.A.3, setting out the complete Theme choices in this element is to be found in Appendix 2.A. Table 6.3 provides a summary overview of the Theme choices of teacher and children.

Table 6. 3 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Specification of Text A,

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 5 | WH interrogatives | 2 | marked | 1 |
| | | finites | 0 | unmarked | 4 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| additive | 1 | | | | |
| temporal | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 2 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 7 | | 3 | | 5 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 2 | marked | 0 |
| | | finites | 0 | unmarked | 0 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| additive | 1 | | | | |
| temporal | 0 | | | | |
| Total | 1 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 1 | | 2 | | 0 |

It is in the Task Specification that the two fields should converge, as the teacher draws the children into some consideration of the activity of writing about the "content" field. In the convergence it is the pedagogical field which should find fairly detailed expression, especially with respect to talk of the nature of the writing task, and the kinds of linguistic choices to be made in writing a genre

appropriate for the purpose in hand. However, because teachers are themselves normally not skilled in dealing with the pedagogical field, particularly as this concerns the principles for creation of written genre generally, their treatment of it is normally scanty, and the directions to the children in their writing are quite rudimentary. This is an instance of the manner in which the principles for operating in language remain largely implicit, rather than explicated. As Bernstein would put it, an invisible pedagogy applies, and the children receive little advice to do with the nature of their writing task. Thus it is that though it is the pedagogical field that is made prominent, to the extent that it is foregrounded, it is in such a manner that the children are told to start work, rather than being guided into a consideration of the organisation of the text they must write.

Looking firstly to the opening Theme choices in the teacher's talk, it will be noted that in the manner already remarked as a feature characteristic of the beginning of an element, she selects both a continuative in textual Theme position and a marked experiential Theme to initiate the element:

> all right now you 've had time [[to look at all these uniforms]].
> we should ask Belinda to thank her mum and dad for letting us
> see their uniforms.

Of the other four experiential Themes chosen by the teacher, one is an instance of an imperative, selected to direct the children to activity:

> now remember what we said before...,

and the other three identify the children, either through a use of "we," as in:

well we're going to write about these uniforms,

or in a use of "you" as in:

you can choose any one [[you like]].

Four continuatives including the one already cited, together with two structurals realised through additive and temporal conjunctions, all have the effect of focussing upon the task of writing, as in:

now remember what we said before
when we looked at other uniforms
and wrote reports about them.

Two interpersonal Themes, realised through two uses of WH interrogatives, complete the range of Themes used by the teacher, as in:

now what do we have to remember to write about?

Two interpersonal Themes and one structural Theme are used by one child, constituting the only talk engaged in by the children with respect to the task:

who they are
and what they wear.

All in all, as this Theme analysis makes clear, it is the pedagogical field which is foregrounded in this element, though the talk about the actual writing is nonetheless of an unsatisfactory kind, not calculated to help the children learn much of the features of the written mode. It might be objected that since the teacher alludes to earlier writing activity, previous instruction of a helpful kind had been already given. Careful examination of what the children had

actually written earlier with respect to uniforms, as well as some conversation with the children and teacher did not indicate that this was the case. On the contrary, the questions had been placed on the board previously, but no talk concerning the linguistic choices to be made in writing had in fact taken place. As we shall argue when we return to this matter in chapter 9, the actual formulations of the questions were in fact somewhat unfortunate, disposing the children to make linguistic choices that were inappropriate for the written mode.

We would suggest that the "content" field was not of a kind likely to be associated with significant genres for writing, and for that reason it is difficult to see much effective learning about writing emerging from the activity. When in chapter 7 we examine TRANSITIVITY in our chosen instances of the writing planning genre, we shall have better evidence with which to consider this claim, for that will take us rather further into exploring field than our present Theme analysis permits. Suffice to note at this stage that in our view the "content" field as developed in the Task Orientation element appears to rely very heavily upon constructing commentary upon the uniforms drawn from familiar personal experience of witnessing people wear such uniforms. This is very much a case of manipulating local or "commonsense" knowledge, and while as we have earlier argued in chapter 4 (section 4.3), such knowledge is a legitimate, even an essential basis for proceeding to learn new knowledge, it should not in itself be seen as constituting a sufficient knowledge for the purposes of schooling.

## 6.4.3 THEME IN THE TASK OF TEXT A

The text of the Task element is set out immediately below.

> Task
> T: See. It's on the board there: "Who they are. What they wear. What it looks like. Why they wear it." ( The teacher stands up from her chair, and points to the board as she reads out these questions. Above them on the board is written the heading "Uniforms" though T. does not read this out.
> (The children stand up from their places on the floor in front of the teacher and return to their desks , where they open their books preparatory to writing. The teacher also begins to move about the room.)

As is normally the case, the T element of the schematic structure is very short indeed, and it is in teacher monologue. No children made any attempt to speak, and they would in fact normally be discouraged from doing so in this element of the schematic structure. It is in this element of structure that the pedagogical field is foregrounded, though the "content" field does find some expression as well: this is another element in fact in which some convergence of the two fields does often occur. The manner of foregrounding the pedagogical field is not of a kind that permits any further talk about the writing task. It is this field with respect to effecting action and movement which is of primary concern, and it is because the language is itself part of action that this element is so brief.

In fact the element marks the closure of activity in one sense, while at the same time heralding the start of another. It therefore normally involves some marked change in the physical disposition of the participants, the children in particular, though the teacher also normally changes her position as well. In this case, the teacher stood up from her chair and pointed to the board, while the children were so well trained in knowing what was expected of them, that they got

up from the floor and returned to their seats, without actually being told to do so, and prepared to write.

The element begins with a teacher selection of an imperative in experiential Theme position, serving to advise the children that their behaviour is being directed:

see .

There are four instances of WH interrogatives in the element which herald four questions actually relating to the second order or "content" field. There are two reasons why we can claim status for them as relating to the pedagogical field as well. Firstly, the ordered sequence of the four questions actually does provide some guidance to the children about the order in which they should produce their written texts: we shall consider their significance when we examine the writing done in chapter 9. Secondly, the four questions occur in a stretch of the discourse which is a teacher monologue, and in which the only other Theme choices used do relate to teacher direction of the children towards a task.

Overall then, Text A has been shown to constitute a minimal but complete realisation of the writing planning genre. No more than one "middle" element is involved, while there is no Control element. The two fields have been shown to operate across the three elements of structure identified, operating in selectively different ways to realise those elements. The pedagogical field does not offer much opportunity to extend literacy in any thoughtful way, with respect to the kinds of linguistic choices children need to make either for the control of the written mode or for the control of written genres. Equally, we have argued, the "content" field is not in itself a particularly happy one, involving the children in no more than the building of commentary upon familiar experience, and not offering the possibility of learning new fields of experience and enquiry. In

fact, Mrs S, the teacher involved, was probably the least confident of all the teachers observed in this study. In the opinion of the researcher, she was often keen to get the children away from their grouped discussions with her and back to their seats for writing, for this seemed to make her own participation in what went on a little less "public". She therefore tended to move the children as speedily as possible through the writing planning genre, often ignoring some expressions of inattention which were present, and which the other teachers would normally have taken steps to control.

We will proceed now to an examination of Text B, the "my lunch" text, taught by another teacher, called Mrs. P. We will argue that the patterns of Theme choices which we have uncovered in Text A find quite close parallels with those found in Text B, though the latter does have additional elements, and the "content" field is better developed.

### 6.5 Theme in Text B, the "my lunch text"

The teacher, Mrs P, had been working with the children in year 2 for several previous lessons exploring aspects of the curriculum theme on Food. In a lesson the day before, for example, she had read the children a story called A Monster Sandwich, and then they had made "monster sandwiches", and had eaten these for their lunch. The object of the lesson in Text B was to read a short story about a child who lost his lunch at school, and to use this as a basis upon which the children might write a story of their own about an imagined (or real) occasion on which they had lost their school lunches. As we earlier noted, the story book selected was called My Lunch, one of a series of beginning readers from the widely used basal reading series called Reading Australia 360. A recent study of the readers in the Reading Australia 360 (McGuigan, 1987), incidentally, has shown the overall poverty of the language used in these books.

The latter series, incidentally, originally produced in the U.S.A., was adapted for Australian use a few years ago, and, despite what the researcher would consider significant linguistic limitations, it is used widely in many parts of Australia, including the city in which this study was undertaken. In fact, the reading program at Normanbury, to the credit of the school principal, did not rely exclusively upon the use of any one reading series, and use of many other, and better books, taken from the school library, was actively encouraged in the total reading program. The story of My Lunch was actually designed for much younger readers than those in year 2, and it made extensive use of pictures, through which a great deal of the story unfolded. In fact, the children in the class in question could already read more advanced texts than this book offered. It seems the teacher, Mrs. P, chose the book because she liked the idea of a story about a child losing his lunch at school. Considerations of the "content" field, in other words, actually determined her choice, and while in principle it is clear the "content" does need to be considered, we would nonetheless suggest that hers was a pedagogically unwise decision, for two related reasons. Firstly, there is no virtue in selecting a reading book which offers little intellectual challenge to the young reader. Secondly, the actual linguistic model offered the children in the written language used, like that of many school basal readers, was an impoverished one, so little opportunity was afforded to examine some language patterns useful for writing.

Thus are the problems of many "language experience" approaches to teaching and learning made apparent. The teacher's reasons for selecting the reader in question related largely to the "content" field. Had she had a better developed sense of an appropriate pedagogical field, she would have selected a better and more demanding reading material as a source of stimulus for the lesson, and she would also have given more thought to the actual nature of the genre the children might write. As we shall see, the actual advice to the child to do with the linguistic choices they should make in writing was

very poor and underdeveloped. The complete text is set out in Appendix 2.B.

As we did in the case of Text A, we will begin our discussion of Text B by setting out its schematic structure thus:

C---------->
↘ ↘
TO^ TRO^ TS 1^ TS 2^ T

A Task Orientation is followed by a Task Reorientation, then there are two Task Specification elements, and a final Task. Control elements operate within the first and second Task Specifications.

## 6.5.1 THEME IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT B

The text of the Task Orientation is set out below.

Task Orientation

T: (sitting on a chair in front of the children who are grouped on the floor facing her) Well now these people are back ( a reference to Rebecca and Simon who have been sent to the school canteen with the class lunch orders during the Morning News session, and who have now returned), I want you to listen to this little tiny short story like the one we had yesterday. You know we had A Monster Sandwich, and then we made up our own monster sandwiches . Well today we've got another simple little story which is called My Lunch. And I want you to listen to it, what happened to the little boy's lunch. Who came and took the lunch, and what happened to it, and then what happened to the little boy after he found he had no lunch at all. Because when we finish reading this story, something's goingto happen to your lunch today, or we're going to pretend that it does. So listen what happened to this boy's lunch and we'll think of something that could happen to our lunches, our beautiful healthy sandwiches. (She then reads the story My Lunch, showing the pictures as she goes, as they constitute

significant elements of the book, substantially supplying additional information to that of the actual text)

"Where's my lunch? It's not here. Miss Gill, look! Here dog, here, come here. Oh no! Look! Stop dog, stop! We can catch him, said Miss Gill. Good dog, drop it. Oh no, you're a bad dog, go home! Go home dog, go home! Miss Gill, what can I eat? I will see, said Miss Gill, come with me. Oh, I like that, and that, and that, and that. And I like this, and this. Thank you." What sort of a lunch has he ended up eating?

Kelly: Spaghetti bolognaise.

T: He's chosen lots of things. He's got a plate of (indecipherable), and a plate of strawberries and an apple and spaghetti .

Child: Strawberries.

Child: Hot dogs.

Child: He's got some milk.

T: He went along into a take away food shop and he could choose what he might like.

Kelly: It looks like a canteen.

Jeffrey: That is a canteen, it is.

T: It's like a canteen. It says "Eat here or take away" and he can choose spaghetti or salad or olives or onion or.....

Frankie: He took a lot.

T: He's chosen lots of things -- had a special lunch. What was in his lunch that the dog ate?

Kelly: Healthy sandwiches.

A boy: Spaghetti.

T: It looked like he had spaghetti in his sandwich. (Several children laugh at this) There's the dog with his head in the bag and there's all the spaghetti falling down around his ears. Perhaps he had a spaghetti sandwich. (There are a number of comments from the children watching the book from the floor, not all of which are captured by the microphone)

Joseph: Gosh that looks like nice food.

Jodie: He's eating all different things.

Christopher: She's (the teacher) eating too.

The teacher commences the TO in monologue, so that the pedagogical register is to the fore as she starts to operationalise the learning activity. The monologue is sustained well into the TO, since the teacher proceeds to read the little volume to the children, and once she has finished, she draws the children into dialogue, signalling to the children that they are to engage in discussion. As was true in the case of Text A, the monologue involves both the pedagogical and the "content" register. Mention is made initially of the story to be read, the prior activities of making and eating sandwiches, and of the intention for this lesson that the children write a story. From the point of the teacher's commencing to read the story, the "content" field comes to the fore, and the subsequent entry into dialogue ensures the maintenance of the "content" field.

Tables 2.B.1 and 2.B.2, setting out the complete Theme choices of the teacher and of the children are provided in Appendix 2.B of this chapter. Table 6.4 provides a summary overview of the range and number of Theme choices in the teacher's talk and the children's talk in the Task Orientation.

Table 6.4 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Orientation of Text B

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 5 | WH interrogatives | 9 | marked | 3 |
| conj. adjuncts | 2 | vocatives | 4 | | |
| | | finites | 0 | unmarked | 39 |
| | | modal adjuncts | 1 | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 10 | | | | |
| temporal | 1 | | | | |
| consequential | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 0 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| alternation | 2 | | | | |
| projecting | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 16 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 23 | | 14 | | 42 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 0 | marked | 0 |
| conj. adjuncts | 0 | vocatives | 0 | | |
| | | finites | 0 | unmarked | 7 |
| | | modal adjuncts | 1 | | |
| structurals: | 0 | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | 1 | | 7 |

The teacher's Theme choices to initiate the element involve a continuative ("well") in textual Theme position and a marked experiential Theme, realised in a dependent clause:

well now these people are back, I want you to listen to this
little tiny story [[like the one we had yesterday]]

The experiential Theme choice, much as we have already argued this above, serves to summarise an activity completed and hence out of the way, so that the main activity of the lesson can proceed. The teacher makes use of two other marked experiential Themes, also featuring in the opening monologue, and each having a function in operationalising activity for the lesson. The first, heralded by another use of the continuative "well", is realised in a circumstance of time, serving to alert the children to focus on the task in hand for the day:

well today we've got another simple little story
[[which is called My Lunch]]

The other is realised in another dependent clause:

because when we finish reading this story, something's
going to happen to your lunch today

All other experiential Themes in the element, both the teacher's and the children's, are simple unmarked choices. Thus do the patterns suggested earlier appear to apply, by which marked experiential Themes are much more commonly a feature of the teacher's talk than of the children's, and they are normally found in the opening monologue in the element where the pedagogical field is foregrounded.

Apart from the teacher's experiential Theme choices in the opening monologue now noted, there are five instances early in the element which identify the children, once as "you":

you know we had A Monster Sandwich,

and the other occasions as "we" as in:

> we made up our own monster sandwiches.

Once the teacher proceeds into reading the story, the "content" field is foregrounded, and it remains so for the rest of the element.

Of the five instances of continuatives the teacher uses in textual Theme, the first two cited above (both instances of "well") are of course defining both of the operation of the pedagogical field and of the opening of the element. The other three instances found in the element are from the book, whose language is built entirely around reported speech, as in:

> oh no, look!

Of the structurals used by the teacher, 10 are realised in instances of the conjunction "and", and they are involved in building connectedness between steps to be taken in the lesson, and to a lesser extent in building links between events in the story. Most instances carry an additive sense, though two, used with the conjunctive adjunct "then" help to build temporal connection. Six instances of "and" occur in the opening, before the teacher starts to read the story as in:

> well today we've got another simple little story
> .....and I want you to listen to it

Such instances help to operationalise activities and point directions. Three instances of structural Themes realised in additive conjunctions occur after the reading of the story is completed, forming part of the teacher's reconstruction of the events just read, as in:

he went along into a take away food shop
and he could choose what he might like.

An example of the use of "and" in association with the conjunctive adjunct "then" is:

we had A Monster Sandwich and then we made up
our own monster sandwiches.

One other instance of "and" used in an additive sense in the teacher's talk occurs in the story:

and I like this and this.

There is in fact only one other structural Theme in the story, an instance of the conjunction of alternation "or", occurring in a sign in a shop displayed in one of the pictures:

it says eat here or take away.

The story, as we have already noted, is told partly through recorded talk and partly in the series of accompanying pictures. Given that the book was intended to be used as a model upon which the children might base their own writing activity, we would argue, as already indicated above, that the actual language offered the children was of a somewhat limited kind. It was not calculated to provide the children with examples of using language in demanding new ways, or of giving helpful advice about the schematic structure of the story they were actually to write. A text which made more demands upon the reader, and which offered the construction of more significant or challenging meanings would of course show several differences linguistically. It would for example, make better use of cohesive devices, building features of the written mode, and it would have a better established sense of schematic structure. Since textual Themes generally, and

structurals in particular have a cohesive role, both in forwarding discourse and in building connectedness of various kinds between clauses, their relative absence here is one factor responsible for the limited meanings being made in the story. Ironically, the teacher actually goes on to model a very much better linguistic pattern in the Task Specification 1, as we shall see below in section 6.5.3. There, especially through her use of a significant number of textual Themes, she helps the children to recreate aspects of their personal experience in a manner which builds connectedness in useful ways. In that the teacher shows real facility in this matter, it is a pity that her own somewhat poorly developed sense of what constitutes a "content" field of value does not on the evidence allow her to do rather more with the children. She clearly has strengths as a teacher.

Of the other structurals, one is realised in a temporal conjunction appearing as a structural Theme in:

> and then what happened to the little boy <u>after</u> he
> found he had no lunch at all,

and there is one instance of a causal conjunction in structural Theme position:

> <u>because</u> when we finish reading this story somethings's
> going to happen to your lunch...

Other instance of structurals in the teacher's talk include one realised in a consequential conjunction:

> <u>so</u> listen what happened to this boy's lunch,

one instance of a projecting conjunction in:

or we're going to pretend that it does,

and one other instance of a conjunction of alternation.

In general, the pattern of structurals in the teacher's talk tends to build simple addition of events engaged in - in this case, reading of a story about one child's loss of his school lunch, preparatory to considering the sets of circumstances in which the children in the class might imagine loss of their lunches. The occasional uses of structural Themes other than those building addition of events serve essentially to augment the general building of these events.

The children produce no structural Themes at all, and they thus have little influence over the course taken in the talk.

Of the interpersonal Themes used by the teacher, four belong to the discourse of the little story read, as in:

Miss Gill look!

There are also two instances of WH interrogatives within the story, as in:

where's my lunch?,

introducing questions asked as aspects of the unfolding of the story.

Apart from those interpersonal Themes constituting aspects of the story, there are in the teacher's discourse in the TO seven instances of WH interrogatives, and one modal adjunct. The latter is found in:

perhaps he had a spaghetti sandwich.

The relatively frequent use of WH interrogatives by teachers, and their relatively infrequent use in the children's talk, are features marking the nature of their relationship, and hence confirming the tenor values that apply, and as we discussed these in chapter 5. In terms of power, theirs is a hierarchic relationship. As the teacher uses WH interrogatives here, she employs four instances in the opening part of the Task Orientation, before she commences reading the story, and they form part of the manner in which she actually advises the children of the task they will be involved in after the story has been read, for they are to listen to the story and consider:

> what happened to the little boy's lunch
> who came and took the lunch
> what happened to it
> and then what happened to the little boy.....

The three instances of a WH interrogative used by the teacher after she has finished reading the story, like the four instances just cited, serve to direct the children's attention to the "content" field, as in:

> what sort of lunch has he ended up eating?

The pedagogical field, having been initially to the fore in the opening of the element, gives way to the "content" field as the element proceeds, just as we saw was true in the case of Text A. The pattern of the teacher's interpersonal Themes - more specifically the pattern of her WH interrogatives - serves to indicate one of the linguistic systems through which this tendency is realised.

Overall, the children's Themes and their distribution in the discourse of the Task Orientation are very different from those of the teacher, as the summary provided in Table 6.4 makes clear. We have already commented on the absence of textual Themes in the talk. There is in fact one interpersonal Theme, already noted, and the other

Themes - seven instances of experiential Theme choices - are all unmarked, realising aspects of the "content" field , as in:

> he's got some milk
> she's eating too.

Compared with the teacher's Theme choices, those the children produce are both fewer, and more limited in range. They all relate to the "content" field, and while that might be predictable in the TO element, it is fact establishes a pattern which prevails throughout the rest of the text as well, as our examination of the Task Reorientation element will begin to reveal. Children do not make anything more than a small contribution to the development of the pedagogical register at any stage in the writing planning genre, though Mrs L, the teacher in Text C, does involve the children rather more fully than the other two teachers.

## 6.5.2 THEME IN THE TASK REORIENTATION OF TEXT B

The text of the TRO is set out below.

> The Task Reorientation
> T:All right I'll read it through one more time. Now listen carefully to what happens. Who comes first? Where does the dog come and take the lunch?
> Joseph: The classroom.
> Two other children: The classroom.
> T: Well you listen.
> T: Where's my lunch?...Is he happy when he realises he hasn't any lunch?
> Chorus: No.
> T: He looks worried.
> Jeffrey: All the other people are happy.
> T: The other children look happy munching away at their lunch, or getting ready to have their lunch. But he doesn't look happy at all. He's probably worried, thinking, where did I put it? Why can't I find it? Look! Here dog, here, come here.

Oh he's come into the corridor, with his big nose into the school bag, finds a nice lunch for himself. Oh no, look! Stop dog, stop!
A girl: They're laughing ( a reference to the picture of the other children)
T: All the other children think it's a big joke -- 'cos it's not their lunch. If it was their lunch they wouldn't think it was so funny, would they?
Frankie: I'll bet he ate everyone's lunch.
T: We can catch him. Good dog, drop it. Do you think the dog 'ud feel like dropping it after he'd started eating a nice yummy lunch?
Chorus: No.
T: I don't think. 'Oh no! You're a bad dog. Go home. go home. Miss Gill what can I eat? I will see, said Miss Gill. Come with me. I like that, and that, and that, and that, and I like this and this and this .He's having an extra special lunch, he probably wishes the dog'ud take it every day.
(A muted laugh greets this remark) Thank you.

Table 6.5 sets out the summary of Theme choices in the TRO, while in Appendix 2.B, Tables 2.B.3 and 2.B.4 show the complete set of Theme choices in the teacher's and the children's talk.

Table 6.5 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Reorientation of Text B

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 6 | WH interrogatives | 5 | marked | 1 |
| | | vocatives | 3 | | |
| | | finites | 2 | unmarked | 30 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 2 | | | | |
| temporal | 2 | | | | |
| contrastive | 1 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| alternation | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 7 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 13 | | 10 | | 31 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 0 | marked | 0 |
| conj. adjuncts | 0 | vocatives | 0 | | |
| | | finites | 0 | unmarked | 4 |
| structurals: | 0 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | | 0 | | 4 |

It is unusual to find a Task Reorientation in the writing planning genre, while the Task Respecification on the other hand is a quite common element of the genre. It is possible that its unusual character accounts in part for the absence of a marked experiential Theme to get the element going. It is hard on the face of it to see the need for it, since there is no requirement at this point to allude in summary fashion either to the pedagogical task or to the "content"

to be written about. In other ways, however, the element does start in unmarked or typical fashion. Thus, the element begins in teacher monologue, and there are two choices of continuatives commencing the first two clauses of the element:

> all right I'll read it through one more time
> now listen carefully to [[what happens]]

A third continuative comes shortly after, when some children have answered two teacher questions concerning the "content" field:

> well you listen

Both the pedagogical and the "content" fields are in fact involved in the opening, for the teacher advises that she will read the story again, and that the children should listen carefully ( both aspects of the pedagogical field) and that they should consider certain questions about details of the story (the "content" field).

Of the 13 textual Themes in the teacher's discourse, the three continuatives just considered all fall in the opening part of the element, and three continuatives are drawn from the text of the story read. The remaining seven textual Themes the teacher uses- all of them structurals - are involved in building simple logical relationships of various kinds between clauses, thus encoding some of the reasoning in which the teacher seeks to engage the children. There are two instances of "and" used in an additive sense, one drawn from the book, and the other in:

> where does the dog come and take the lunch.

A conjunction of alternation is also used in:

> the other children look happy munching away at their lunch,
> or getting ready to have their lunch.

Two structural Themes are realised through temporal conjunctions as in:

> when he realises he hasn't any lunch,

and there is in addition one instance of a structural Theme realised through a contrastive conjunction, in:

> but he doesn't look happy at all,

and one use of a causal conjunction in:

> all the other children think it's a big joke 'cos it's
> not their lunch.

Turning to the interpersonal Themes that feature in the teacher's discourse in the TRO, we find 10 instances, three of which are vocatives from the written discourse of the story ("dog", "good dog" and "Miss Gill"), while two instances of WH interrogatives ("where" and "what") are also from the story. Of the other five, four are WH interrogatives, and one is a finite. Two of the WH interrogatives are involved in building questions to guide the children's concentration as they listen:

> who comes first?
> where does the dog come?,

while the finite is also intended to guide the children's thinking:

> is he happy?

The other two WH interrogatives are part of building questions attributed by the teacher to the boy in the story, as in:

> where did I put it?

The relatively high frequency of WH interrogatives or finites in the teacher's discourse is consistent with her role in guiding the children's working, and their frequency here compares quite closely with the pattern applying in the TO. In the latter case, it may be recalled, of the eight instances of interpersonal Themes outside those within the story, seven are in fact WH interrogatives.

Of the experiential Themes, the two involved in the opening of the TRO element identify the teacher and the children, and they relate to the pedagogical field, for they are part of operationalising behaviour:

> all right now I'll read it through one more time
> well you listen.

Subsequent experiential Themes relate to the "content" field and they mainly identify the boy in the story:

> he realises he hasn't any lunch,

or they are read directly from the story, identifying participants of various kinds, as in:

> we can catch him.

The pattern of children's Theme choices in the TRO is consistent with that found both in the TO and in the various elements of Text A, examined in section 6.4 above. The children talk less than the teacher, and they necessarily therefore produce significantly fewer Themes of any kind. There are in fact four experiential Themes in the children's talk, all of them simple unmarked Themes, as in:

all the other people are laughing.

### 6.5.3 THEME IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 1/CONTROL 1 OF TEXT B

It is in fact reasonably common to find both a Task Specification and a Task Respecification within an instance of the writing planning genre. However, in Text B, there are two Task Specification elements. There are two reasons why we argue that there are two Task Specification elements, rather than one such element or perhaps a Task Specification followed by a Task Respecification. They are:

> 1) there are two distinct elements of structure which we can identify, so that we are not dealing with one Task Specification;
>
> 2) though the two both deal with aspects of the task to be undertaken by the children, they do so in quite different ways. The TS1, we shall suggest, is primarily concerned with constructing possible events for writing about as a

feature of the "content" field. The TS2 involves both the pedagogical and "content" fields, and the children are much more overtly directed to their writing, though as we shall see, the nature of the writing task remains poorly articulated.

Our discussion will seek to demonstrate that both these observations are justified.

The text of the TS1 is set out first, and it will be noted that it incorporates the first Control element we have so far identified in the writing planning genre.

The Task Specification 1/Control 1

T: Now what I want you people to think about is something coming along and taking your lunch, or something happening to your lunch so that you couldn't eat it. Not a dog, that's in the story. Well, you can have a dog if you want, but it'ud be better if you think of something else.

Control

Frankie, put the comb away. The time to do your hair is at play time. (Frankie has been playing with a comb, and surreptiously doing his hair for a few seconds. He puts it in his pocket)

All right put your hand up if you've thought of something that could come and take your lunch, or something that could happen to your lunch. (no-one raises a hand) Have you ever had a day when you've had no lunch to eat? Jodie? (she nods) What happened
Jodie, when you had no lunch to eat?
Jodie: Mum didn't bring it up. She left it at home.

T: Left your lunch at home on the bench, and her mum didn't bring it to school, and she had no lunch. And what happened?
Jodie: Found no lunch.
T: And then what happened? Who had to ring up your mum and dad?
Jodie: Mr. H.
T: And then what happened?
Jodie: My mum brought my lunch.
T: And who else brought your lunch?
Jodie: Dad
T: She had no lunch to start with, because it was left at home, and she thought her mum was going to bring it at lunch time, and when her mum didn't bring it, Mrs S. rang her mum, and she wasn't at home, so her dad brought her lunch and then her mum remembered she hadn't brought her lunch, and she brought lunch too, so she ended up with two lunches. She ate the lot.
Joseph: What did she have?,
T: You had -- I can't remember---you had a sausage roll and donut.
Jodie: I had a very nice lunch. I had a sausage roll and a jam donut and a (indecipherable).
T: Mm, so that was an extra special thing. Who else has ever had no lunch, and then something's happened that they've had a different lunch? (no-one raises a hand) Emily? What happened yesterday?
Emily: My sister left hers on the dressing table.
T: And what happened when she found that she had no lunch?
Was she happy? What was happening to her?
Emily: She was crying.
T: She was crying and she came to me, and what did I say?
Emily: She could have one from the canteen.
T: What else happened to you?
Emily: The day I put the lunch in the school bag and brought the other school bag instead.
T: Mm and what happened that day? Emily had two school bags at home, and she put the lunch in one school bag, and took the other school bag to school. And when she looked in her bag, no lunch. And what happened that day?

Emily: I got a lunch from the canteen.
T: You had a special lunch order.

We will deal firstly with the Control element. An important message with respect to the appropriate rules for working is involved here: namely, one which says that those who play with combs and do their hair during a lesson are unlikely to be paying attention to what is going on, and they should therefore be made to desist. That the element is primarily concerned with control of behaviour is signalled in the first place through the choice of the vocative in the interpersonal Theme position, "Frankie", said with an increase in volume, serving to indicate teacher displeasure. We have earlier observed that teachers make very selective use of vocatives, and their appearance always indicates a reasonably forceful effort to command a child's attention. The other Theme of importance in the first clause is the topical one, involving the imperative "put," in:

put the comb away.

As for the second clause, the teacher's concern to foreground what she considers unacceptable behaviour is quite pronounced in her choice of a circumstance in marked topical Theme position, involving an embedded clause:

the time [[to do your hair]] is at play time.

The child knew he had been reproved, and wasted no time in putting the offending comb away.

Table 6.6 provides a summary of the Theme choices in the TS1, while Tables 2.B.5 and 2.B.6, setting out all the Theme choices in the teacher's discourse and that of the children are included in Appendix 2.B.

Table 6.6 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Specification 1 of Text B

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 3 | WH interrogatives | 14 | marked | 4 |
| conj. adjuncts | 4 | vocatives | 0 | | |
| | | finites | 2 | unmarked | 37 |
| | | modal adjuncts | | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 7 | | | | |
| temporal | 16 | | | | |
| consequential | 4 | | | | |
| contrastive | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 3 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| projecting | 2 | | | | |
| Total | 34 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 41 | | 16 | | 41 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 1 | marked | 1 |
| structurals | 0 | finites | 0 | unmarked | 9 |
| TOTAL | 0 | | 1 | | 10 |

The TS1 commences in teacher monologue, which as we have by now well established is a measure of the fact that a new element in the schematic structure has been initiated. Two other features mark the start of a new element - the use of a continuative and a marked experiential Theme:

now [[what I want you people to think about]] is something
[[coming along and taking your lunch]] or something
[[happening to you lunch]]

Another marked experiential Theme and another continuative appear shortly after:

not a dog, that's in the story
well you can have a dog

Clearly the pedagogical register is being foregrounded in the opening here, though the "content" register has some expression. The teacher soon guides the children wholly into talk of the "content" field, when she uses the third and last continuative in the element to signal the intention to move into dialogue:

all right put up your hand if you've thought of something
[[that could come and take your lunch]] or something
[[that could happen to your lunch]]

No child actually responds by raising a hand, and she goes on to use a finite to draw a child into talk about the "content":

have you ever had a day when you've had no lunch to eat?

While the direction to think in the opening embedded clause in experiential Theme position relates to the pedagogical register, both in terms of field and tenor, the matter about which the children are to think involves the "content" register, and in fact the TS1 deals essentially with the "content" field for writing. The two other marked experiential Themes found in the element both identify aspects of the "content" field:

and when her mum didn't bring it Mrs S rang her mum
and when she looked in her bag, no lunch

It is interesting to note the appearance of these two marked experiential Themes in the "body" of the element, since as we have suggested, such Themes occur more commonly in the opening of an element. Both the two used have the function of creating in summary way some aspect of a child's experience, which once established, becomes the basis for moving to another aspect of the experience. Once into the "body" of the element, all the experiential Themes identify matters to do with the "content" field, and most are unmarked Theme choices, as in:

she had no lunch
she ended up with two lunches.

The object of the engagement with the "content" field in the "body" of the element is to involve the children in reconstructing aspects of personal experience as sequences of events. One such sequence concerns a little girl ("Jodie") whose mother forgot her lunch, and whose parents both subsequently brought her one to school, while two others concern another girl ("Emily") firstly, whose sister had one day forgotten to bring her lunch to school, and secondly who had herself on another occasion also been without her lunch.

The pattern of building recreation of personal experience used by the teacher in fact provides a very much better model for the children to follow than does the story book from which she has read. Unlike the book, the teacher makes frequent use of textual Themes to build the events recreated, and to create connectedness between them in helpful ways. As the table above shows, there are 34 structural Themes, and most are instances of "and", though a number of others are used. Eight instances of the conjunction "and" are employed in an additive sense, and the other 12 carry a sense of temporal

connection, either explicitly expressed though association with the conjunctive adjunct "then", or implicitly involved. Implicit examples are indicated in the table by the use of a bracketed "then". Apart from these instances of structural Themes having a temporal sense, there are three instances of the conjunction "when", also of course carrying a temporal meaning. Four uses of consequential conjunctions in textual Theme position help to augment and develop the sense of the recreation of personal experience as in:

> and she wasn't at home so her dad brought her lunch
> and (then) she brought lunch too so she ended up with
> two lunches,

and so too do one instance of a causal conjunction:

> she had no lunch [[to start with]] because it was left at home,

and two instances of projecting conjunctions, as in:

> when she found that she had no lunch.

Other conjunctions in textual Theme position in the teacher's talk include one instance of a contrastive conjunctive ("but") and three instances of conditional conjunctions ("if"), each of them involved in building the conditions the teacher determines should apply for selecting an appropriate "content" for writing, and all therefore occurring early on in the element - in the teacher monologue in fact:

> well you can have a dog if you want but it'ud be better if you
> think of something else .....
> all right put up your hand if you've thought of something.....

The very high use of textual Themes of temporal connectedness, particularly in association with a high incidence of Themes of additive connection, is one important measure of the fact that the "content" field being examined is that of personal experience, and that it is being "narrated about" in a manner familiar in the oral mode of our culture. It will be recalled we noted in chapter 3 (section 3.3) that Halliday has argued young children learn to narrate about experience relatively late, and we suggested the morning news genre is one learning activity developed in the sub culture of schooling in which children can practise such a capacity. In this lesson Mrs P assists the children to learn about narrating by helping them to model the recreation of personal experience. In operating in this way, Mrs P actually "scaffolds" for the children some of the language relevant to narrating about personal experience, to use a term originally employed by Bruner, and taken over by others such as Gray (1987) (see chapter 4, section 4.3).

Such a pattern of scaffolding language appropriate for the reconstruction of personal experience is a feature of many "language experience" approaches, and in fact Mrs P demonstrates greater facility in this respect than some other teachers we have observed using "language experience" approaches. She is in many ways a good teacher. It is regrettable, therefore, that she does not work either with any sense of the differences between the spoken and written modes, or with a well developed sense of the nature of fields of enquiry worth exploring in schools.

To take the former of these first, we would suggest that if she did better understand the mode differences involved here, she would seek to model the features of the written mode, scaffolding features of a written story, and of course as we argued in section 6.5.1 above, selecting a better instance of a written story in the first place for discussion and examination. As we shall see in chapter 9 when we examine the writing produced by the children in some detail, the

written texts involved do suffer from an uncertainty on the part of the children about how to control the features of a written story. What the teacher does in her scaffolding here is less helpful than it might have been made to be, simply by incorporating more overt and direct talk about, and modelling of, the ways to construct a written story.

To take the second problem we suggest is a feature of the teacher's work here - namely, her lack of a sense of fields of enquiry worth exploring for schooling - the general view we would adopt here has been already discussed in chapter 4 (see sections 4.3 and 4.4 particularly). Contemporary teaching practices, sanctioned and indeed encouraged by much educational theory of the kind no doubt taught to our teacher Mrs P in her training, separates language and "content", and the very intimate relationship of the two is not recognised at all. Where this is the case, what constitutes a "content" field, and how that might be conceived as a means of dealing with experience, are not matters considered. The object in this particular lesson is to involve the children in recreating personal experience as a basis upon which they may go on either to write of that experience or to create some imagined personal experience. We suggest personal experience is a reasonable basis upon which to build learning activity, but it is not in itself sufficient as a primary objective of such an enterprise. The children are simply not extended enough by the kind of teaching/learning activity in Text B, and by its associated principles of reasoning, as these are realised in particular through the patterns of textual Theme choices. We shall return to these matters in chapter 7, when we examine transitivity choices, and hence go somewhat further into exploring the nature of the field in each of out three texts.

To turn to interpersonal Theme choices in the teacher's talk, there are 16 instances of these, and such a relatively large number serves to indicate the teacher's interest in eliciting talk from the children

focussing on the "content" field. Of the 16 interpersonal Themes, 14 are instances of WH interrogatives, such as:

> and (then) what happened?
> who had to ring up your mum and dad?
> what happened yesterday?,

while there are two instances of finites, also serving to elicit information on the content field:

> have you ever had a day when you've had no lunch to eat?
> was she happy?

As we earlier noted, it is a particular characteristic of teacher discourse that it will be marked by a relatively high use of WH interrogatives and finites in interpersonal Theme position, while by contrast the children make very little use of them.

Of the Themes produced by the children, all but one are experiential, the exception being one of the relatively infrequent instances of a WH interrogative, produced by a child asking a question about the experiences of the little girl who was without her lunch:

> what did she have?

There is, again unusually, one instance of a marked topical Theme in the talk of one child in the class, though this is actually produced in response to a teacher question:

> what else happened to you?,

and the clause complex of which it is a part actually remains elliptical:

the day [[I put the lunch in the school bag and brought
the other school bag instead ]] (was what happened to me).

Overall, as has proved to be the case elsewhere, the children's choices of Themes indicate an engagement wholly with the "content field", though because the children talk much less than the teacher, such an engagement does not equal the frequency with which the teacher engages with it through experiential Theme choices.

## 6.5.4 THEME IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 2/CONTROL 2 OF TEXT B

The Task Specification involves another Control element. The complete text showing both Task Specification and the Control is as set out below.

The Task Specification 2/Control 2

T:All right, hands down.Thinking caps on. Get these brains working. They're nearly Grade 3 brains. I don't have to tell them everything to think. You have to get them working, you have to be responsible for what you're thinking. Now what you're going to do -- you're --- it can be something that really happened to you.

Control

Joseph, you're spoiling the grade. (Addressed because he is not paying attention, but instead gazing out of the window. He is sitting to the back of the group, and somewhat apart from the other children. He does as he is told, and moves in to sit rather closer to the others) Now wriggle up please and start listening. You'll getback to your place and you won't know what to do.

What I want you to think about is something that -- it might be something that really happened to you, one day you found you didn't have any lunch, or it might be something like this little boy in the story, a dog came into the school and took your lunch out of the school bag, so he ended up with a wonderful lunch that the teacher had to buy him, or it might be something different altogether. You might have a monster coming in and taking it. ( A murmur of laughter from several children) You might have someone with the same bag eating your lunch, and then you didn't like the lunch that they had in their bag, so you had to get something special. You might have --- perhaps put your lunch down outside to play a game, and some animal, a cat or a dog or some person steps over it, and squashes it or -----

Simon: A bird?

T: Or a bird. Yes, you could have a bird take your lunch. Or somebody might throw your lunch away by mistake.

Tables 2.B.7 and 2.B.8 in Appendix 2.B show the complete breakdown of Theme choices in the teacher's talk and that of the children in the Task Specification 2. Table 6.7 provides a summary overview.

Table 6.7 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Specification 2 /Control 2 of Text B

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACH ER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 4 | WH interrogatives | 1 | marked | 3 |
| conj. adjuncts | 1 | vocatives | 1 | unmarked | 26 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 2 | | | | |
| temporal | 4 | | | | |
| consequential | 2 | | | | |
| alternation | 4 | | | | |
| Total | 12 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 17 | | 2 | | 29 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES. | | | | | |
| textual | 0 | interpersonal | 0 | experiential | 0 |
| TOTAL | 0 | | 0 | | 0 |

We will, as before deal with the C element first, and it is apparent that it compares with the C1 element considered above. Thus, the teacher signals its start with a use of a vocative, foregrounding the name of the child whose inattention at this point displeases her - "Joseph," and she follows this with a use of a second person pronoun in experiential Theme position:

> Joseph you're spoiling the grade.

The next clause complex involves two textual Themes, a continuative and subsequently a structural, each introducing a clause which uses an imperative in topical Theme position - thus is Joseph ordered to change his behaviour:

> now wriggle up please and start listening.

The final clause complex in the element involves additional uses of the second person pronoun in topical Theme position, and the two clauses involved are linked with an additive conjunction in textual Theme position:

> you'll get back to your place and you won't know what to do.

Overall, as in the earlier C element, the child involved is left in no doubt that his behaviour is unacceptable, and the effect of the teacher's somewhat peremptory manner is to direct him back to being attentive once more.

Turning now to the TS2, the teacher signals the start of a new element both by moving into monologue, and by choosing a continuative:

> all right, hands down.

Once again the pedagogical register is very much to the fore, as the opening sequence of experiential Themes makes very clear. Firstly, the children are directed to action through a use of an imperative:

> get these brains working,

and then a choice of a third person pronoun identifies the children's brains:

> they're nearly grade three brains.

After that the teacher thematises herself:

> I don't have to tell them everything,

and then she thematises the children:

> you have to get them working
> you have to be responsible for [[what you're thinking]].

There are three marked experiential Themes in the teacher's talk in the Task Specification 2, and they all have significance in helping to define the task to be done by the children. All three occur fairly in the element. It is interesting to note that the first two, both involving embedded clauses, actually start what become incomplete clause complexes. The third marked Theme, realised in a circumstance of time ("one day") occurs immediately after the use of the second embedded clause in marked experiential Theme position. The two embedded clauses are experientially very similar, as are the clauses the teacher goes on to create after both. Their very incomplete status serves to signal if anything the more forcefully the teacher's desire to direct the children here:

now [[what you're going to do today]].....
it can be something [[that really happened to you]]
[[what I want you to think about]] is something that...
it might be something [[that really happened to you]]
one day you found you didn't have any lunch.

The pedagogical and "content" fields converge as the element proceeds, and this we might expect, since the object is to define a task which involves writing on the one hand (the pedagogical field) about a topic on the other hand (the "content" field). Hence from the point at which the teacher uses her third marked experiential Theme cited above ("one day"), she moves into a pattern of experiential Theme choices by which aspects of both fields tend to alternate. There are in fact 13 experiential Themes in the teacher talk after her use of "one day", all of them simple unmarked Themes, and seven of these identify the children referred to as "you", as in:

you might have a monster [[coming in and taking it]],

while the other six identify aspects of the "content" field, as in:

it might be something like this little boy in the story

or

a dog came into the school.

The pattern by which experiential Themes in the teacher talk alternate, identifying the children as "you" on the one hand and aspects of the "content" on the other, is one of the points of difference with the TS1. In the case of the TS1, class members were also identified, as well as their family members, but they were referred to in the third person as "she" (used extensively), as well as "her mum" or "Emily." Third person choices to identify class

members and their family were relevant to the building of the "content"- namely what happened to some of the class when they lost their lunch. But second person choices, occurring either at the start of elements or as in the "body" of the TS2, serve to realise aspects of the pedagogical field, and the direction of the children's behaviour.

Despite the fact that both the pedagogical and "content" fields are thus operationalised in the experiential Theme choices, it will be observed that no such Theme choice relates directly to the nature of the writing task. One can imagine that if the experiential Themes did more directly identify the pedagogical field in this sense, say with respect to the manner of structuring the opening of the story, then the field might be realised for example in the following made up instances:

> when writing a story, we need to plan the beginning....

or

> let's plan some possible ways to start the story....

Subsequent questions might then be framed to guide the children into plotting a possible schematic structure for writing. The teacher was of course quite capable of asking such questions, and of involving the children in sustained usefully connected discourse. The evidence of her behaviour as revealed through her Theme choices in the TS1 has demonstrated this. That she did not so involve the children in talk of the task in the TS2 is evidence of her own inabliity to articulate features of the language relevant either to consideration of the written mode or to considerations of the organisatioin of genres. Such an inability relates to the problems of the language education theories discussed in some detail in chapter 4.

Another significant point of difference between the TS2 and the TS1 is the absence of opportunity for the children to talk. The teacher plainly discourages talk from the children here as her interpersonal Theme choices indicate. In fact, she uses only two interpersonal Themes, both of them features of the Control element, and not part of the TS2 at all. Their function as we looked at them above is to control the behaviour of an inattentive child, not to promote talk from the children. In the TS1, on the other hand, as we saw above, the teacher employs a number of WH interrogatives, and she actively seeks to draw the children into some dialogue calculated to have the children talk about aspects of the "content" field. In the TS2, the children are not encouraged to talk, though one child does venture a remark - an unsolicited suggestion to do with a possible animal that might take one's lunch ("a bird?"). This the teacher does accept with her use of the continuative "yes", going on to endorse the suggestion a little more fully, though she does not encourage the child to say any more.

The teacher does employ several structural Themes, though it will be apparent that she employs nothing like the variety used in the TS1, even allowing for the fact that the TS2 is considerably shorter. In the TS1, as we saw above, the teacher employs instances of additive, temporal, consequential, alternating, projecting and contrasting conjunctions, the most numerous being the first three of these. In the TS2, by contrast, as Table 6.7 shows, the range of types of conjunctions employed by the teacher in structural Theme position is reduced. She employs instances of temporal, consequential and alternating conjunctions only. Of these, the most numerous are the temporal, as in the following where the conjunction "and" is used in association with the conjunctive adjunct "then":

> and then you didn't like the lunch [[that they had in their bag]].

The alternating and the consequential conjunctions in textual Theme positions, it will be observed, are significant in building relationships between possible events in the stories to be written, and the meanings they help create relate rather more to the "content" than to the pedagogical field:

> or it might be something like this little boy in the story

and

> so you had to get something special.

There are in fact 12 structural Themes, and of those four are temporal and four are realised in conjunctions of alternation ("or"). The relative frequency of these, along with the two uses of consequential conjunctions, indicates that the teacher is concerned to build possible alternative sets of events worth writing about in the story.

It is in this sense again that the TS2 differs from the TS1. In the latter, the teacher is concerned to create some sense of possible events to be written about, employing temporal, additive and consequential conjunctions in particular to help build the linguistic pattern in which these are realised. In the TS2, on the other hand, while having some continuing interest to build temporal connectedness between possible events, and some sense of their cause/effect relationships as well, she seems more concerned to suggest possible alternative options in events for the children to select for writing. The concern to this extent is still with the "content" field, though on a somewhat reduced scale. That is because the pedagogical field is of considerably more significance here, realised as we have seen above both in the experiential Theme choices and in the absence of interpersonal Theme choices.

The participation of the children in the TS2 is largely a silent one. One boy, as we noted above, does offer an unsolicited contribution which is accepted, though the child is not invited to expand on what he has said. In offering such a contribution, by the way, the boy took something of a risk, for teachers not uncommonly resist the offering of unsolicited observations, on the grounds that the children should either wait to be invited to speak, or at least put up a hand to signal an interest in saying something. As is the case elsewhere in the data when this occurs, it suggests the teacher finds the unsolicited observation sufficiently relevant to her ongoing purposes that she chooses to acknowledge it, not offering the reproof often given for "calling out".

Overall, while in the TS1 the "content" register finds primary expression, in the TS2, both the pedagogical register and the "content" register find expression. It is in the latter element in fact that the two registers do converge more fully than has been the case in earlier elements. However, even though this is the case, the actual task for writing remains poorly developed. To the extent that the pedagogical register is involved, it is in terms of directing children to a job, but the nature of that job remains unexplicated in any way that reveals or rehearses the kinds of linguistic choices the children need to make in order to write their stories. This is another instance of the working of an "invisible pedagogy" in the classroom.

### 6.5.5 THEME IN THE TASK OF TEXT B

The text of the Task element is set out below, and Tables 2.B.8 and 2.B.9, showing the complete overview of Theme choices are provided in Appendix 2.B. This is in fact a rather longer T element than is generally the case in our data.

The Task

T: Right, who's got something in their head that they're going to write about? Oh I can see some eyes popping, looks like they've got beautiful stories in there, ready to be written down. Well you can do it straight in your blue books. Now if you need some help with the spelling, or any help with what you're going to write, have your jotter beside you, or your spelling books, so that if you've got words in there that you've already asked how to spell, you can look them up.
Susy: What about if they're in your folder?
T: You can have your other spelling sheets besides you and your folder. All right, let me see who's going to be first.
(The children get up, move to their lockers, collect writing books, and make their way to their seats.)
T: (Moving to the board) Now here's your heading "What Happened to My Lunch?"

Table 6.8 Summary of Theme choices in the Task element of Text B

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACH ER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 5 | WH interrogatives | 2 | marked | 3 |
| | | | | unmarked | 6 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| consequential | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 1 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 6 | | 2 | | 9 |
| CHILDREN's CHOICES | | | | | |
| | | WH interrogatives | 1 | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | | 1 | | 0 |

In view of the significance we have argued for the use of continuatives, partly in marking the start of a new element, and partly in serving to move activities forward, operationalising the learning of the children, it is of interest to note that the greatest number of textual Themes here in this element are continuatives. There are in fact seven textual Themes, six of which are continuatives:

> right who's got something in their head...
> oh, I can see some eyes popping....
> well, you can do it straight in your blue books
> now if you need some help with the spelling....

all right let me see who's going to be first
now here's your heading....

while only one is a structural:

so that if you've got words in there...

As this analysis of textual Theme choices confirms, this element is concerned primarily with operationalising the task: the pedagogical register is very much to the fore. It is notable that both the teacher and the children move their positions quite decisively towards the end of this element. We have much earlier noted the manner in which changes in the physical disposition of participants, especially at the start and the end of a curriculum genre, serve to reinforce and match the patterns of linguistic behaviour. In this case, a schematic structure has ended, and another one, involving the starting of writing, actually is about to commence.

There are two instances of interpersonal Themes, both examples of WH interrogatives, used here as part of a pattern of stimulating the children's participation, but clearly not intended to provoke any verbal response from the children. The former:

right who's got something in their head...?

is plainly part of a rhetorical question, for the teacher did not actually look or wait for any child to raise a hand, but instead immediately proceeded on. The second instance of a WH interrogative is intended to invite a change of action and of physical disposition, not an answer at all:

all right let me see who's going to be first.

In general, as we have suggested above, the use of interpersonal Themes, especially WH interrogatives, marks efforts by the teacher to engage the children with the content field. The relatively limited use of WH interrogatives here is itself significant, and in any case, as we have seen, those instances used relate to the pedagogical field.

There are nine instances of experiential Themes, three of which are marked. Of the three concerned, it is of interest to note that two are examples of dependent clauses, both in turn having an embedded clause:

> if you need some help with the spelling or any help with [[what you're going to write]] have your jotter beside you.....
> if you've got words in there [[that you've already asked how to spell]] you can look them up

In both cases, as has been true in the earlier instances of dependent clauses in experiential Theme positions examined above, the function is to foreground some important information for the children, with which once it is established, the children may proceed. In both cases, the information foregrounded relates to the pedagogical field, not to the "content" field, confirming our sense that the meanings being built up in this element relate primarily to the pedagogical register.

The third marked experiential Theme foregrounds a circumstance which again relates very much to the pedagogical field:

> now here 's your heading [[What Happened to My Lunch?]].

Of the other six other experiential Themes, an early one identifies the teacher herself, signalling to the children her concern in

directing what is going on:

> oh, I can see some eyes popping.....

and towards the end of the element she again signals her concern for the direction of activities by using the imperative:

> all right let me see who's going to be first.

Apart from these instances, all other experiential Themes identify either some part of the children (their eyes) or the children themselves ("you"):

> they 've got beautiful stories in there ready [to be written down]
> you can have your other spelling sheets beside you and your folder.

The children's role in this element of the genre is once again very minimal. One child asks a question involving a WH interrogative, intended in fact to facilitate an aspect of the pedagogical field:

> what about if they're in your folder?

Now that our Theme examination of Text B is finished, we can see that it compares in a number of ways with Text A, though there are also some significant points of difference. The principal area of difference lies in the fact that Text B has a more elaborate schematic structure than Text A, which as we saw, had the most minimal structure such a genre appears to need, in order to be classified as a complete instance of the writing planning genre. Where Text A had a Task Orientation, a Task Specification and a Task, Text B has a Task Reorientation and two Task Specification elements as well as two Control elements. The two texts compare, we suggest, in that the "content" fields which they seek to develop offer too little to the children as opportunities for significant learning. However, the

teacher in Text B, as we have sought to demonstrate, does make use of some useful strategies in her language in order to guide the children into building connectedness between events.

We will now turn to Text C, the "chicken text". We shall argue that our third text has a number of characteristics generally confirming the pattern we have built up in examining Texts A and B. An important point of difference, however, is that in Text C some development does occur of a significant "content" field, which with better teacher direction, might have been turned to advantage in the children's learning to write

## 6.6 Theme in Text C, the "chicken text"

This lesson occurred when the children were in Year 1, in fact about a year before the teaching of the two lessons involved in Texts A and B. It is of some significance to note this, since we shall argue that the learning activity offered in Text C is rather more demanding than those in Texts A and B, at least with respect to the "content" field selected for treatment. From the point of view of the pedagogical field, however, we shall argue that the writing activity is unfocussed in ways that invite comparison with those in Texts A and B. In fact, as we shall see in chapter 9, where we make some examination of the written texts produced, it is difficult to see much evidence of growth in the intervening year in the children's writing. Early childhood education too often keeps children "marking time" rather than extending the learning possibilities available to them.

As we earlier noted, the lesson in Text C involved learning about the manner in which a chicken develops in a fertilised egg. A number of chicks which had recently hatched in a classroom incubator were in the back of the room, when the teacher gathered the children around her on the floor, and directed their attention to a book called Egg to Chick. After some guided talk about the development of

chickens, generated around the display of the book with its particularly good illustrations, and by some selective reading by the teacher from the book's text, the children were given a series of pictures showing chickens in varying stages of development, and told to write "a story" about how a chicken grows.

The fact that the teacher told the children to write a "story" was in itself an important indication of the confusion she felt about the kinds of genres and registers, and hence the forms of knowledge, she was actually engaged in introducing to the children. The language of the textbook was plainly scientific, and as we shall see, at least part of the language generated by the teacher with the children in talk about the book and the information it provided through its illustrations was also scientific. The children did engage in construction of a scientific register. Yet the very benefits, in terms of a developed new "uncommonsense" knowledge and capacity in the children to use such knowledge, were simply lost subsequently by the direction to the children to write a story. As we shall see, the discussion the teacher actually generated about the writing of the "story" and about how the chicken must "feel" inside the egg immediately before hatching, pointed the children back to the world of fantasies and stories in which animals are imagined to have feelings which compare with those of human beings. Anthropomorphising animals is a very familiar feature of early childhood literature, and the teacher was of course aware of this. As we shall show in chapter 9 when we look at a sample of the written texts produced, these showed all the difficulties and conflicts the children experienced in trying to accommodate the demands of two distinct registers - the one scientific, the other that of fantasy and imagination.

We must explain the teacher's actions in directing the children as she does, in terms of two different though related problems of a kind earlier alluded to in chapter 4 in particular, where we examined

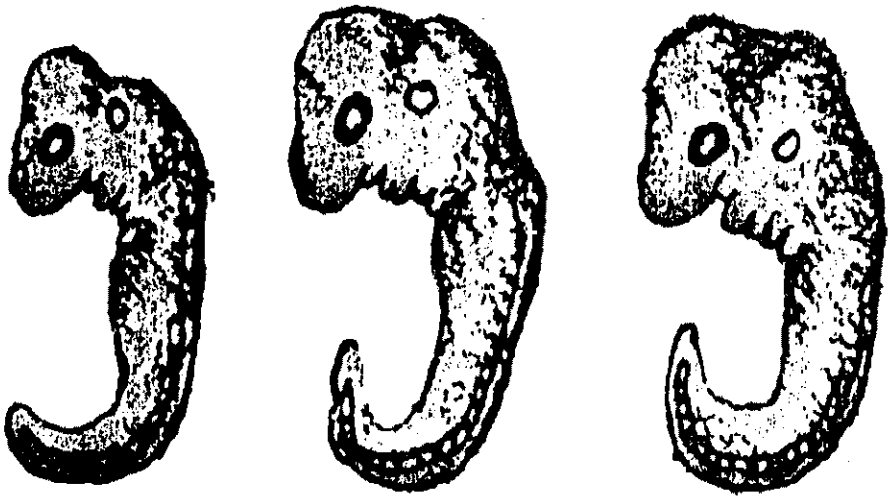
many contemporary ideologies of early childhood language education. Firstly, like most teachers of her generation, Mrs L is committed to an ideology of early childhood which proposes that children should deal mainly with genres and registers of imaginative or make believe experience, and so she deems the writing of a "story" about emerging from an egg an appropriate activity for young children. This is in fact not to do the children the justice of recognising that they are capable and indeed eager to handle more demanding and varied learning experiences. Secondly, since Mrs L is, again like most teachers of her generation, insensitive to the intimate relationship of language and "content" or experience, she does not appreciate that the very meanings she actually engages the children in constructing through the use of the textbook are indeed scientific. A specialist register is in fact involved, which the children plainly are capable of understanding and using, given the support the teacher is certainly able to provide them.

Apart from the anthropomorphic talk about how chickens "feel" inside eggs, there is one other point in the spoken discourse at which the children are engaged in a make believe or play activity. It is a point at which the children are invited by the teacher to "make little chicken noises." This is a step she actually takes because one child has produced a chicken noise sotto voce, and having asked the child to quieten, she does a little later suggest that several people have a go at making such noises. The researcher did not ask her why she took such a step, though we are sure she would have justified it in terms of the same principle of "variation in learning activity" which we earlier noted causes teachers to involve children in moving about or singing songs: it is an oblique acknowledgement that the effort of sitting still, being attentive, and talking only when invited to do so by the teacher, is considerable, so that some variation provides a degree of relief.

Look at an embryo fish

and an embryo chick

and an embryo man.



fish chick man

A page from Egg to Chick



Do you see something strange?

The embryos look alike.

When the animals are bigger,

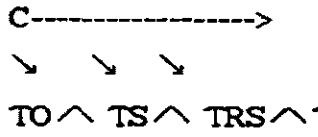
they will look very different.

But in the beginning,

the embryos look the same.

The complete text of the lesson, showing the various elements of schematic structure is in Appendix 6.C

We will argue that Text C has four elements of structure, which may be set out thus:




where C is Control,
TO is Task Orientation,
TS is Task Specification,
TRS is Task Respecifiation,
and T is Task.

We will proceed as before by considering each element in turn.

## 6.6.1 THEME IN THE TASK ORIENTATION AND CONTROLS 1 AND 2 OF TEXT C

The text of the Task Orientation is set out below.

Task Orientation / Control 1/Control 2

(The teacher and children have just finished singing three little songs, introduced for variation of activity and to settle the children, who have just re-entered school after morning play. The teacher looks around the group on the floor in front of her, and having achieved eye contact, so that she is sure they are all looking at her, she starts by displaying a book.
(She opens the front pages and holds the book for all to see.)
T: We're going to start off with a little story this morning. Firstly, I want to show you some of the pictures in this little book called Egg to Chick. And we're just going to find out what you people know about this little book. I won't read it all

to you. I'll show you some of the pictures and we'll have a little chat about them. Lesley, what sort of creature is this little creature here? Deborah?
Deborah: A hen
T: It's a hen, and what do you think this is here?
Deborah and several other children: Egg.

Control 1

T: Don't call out. (This is addressed to the children other than Deborah who have answered with her)

(T. turns several pages in the book, not intending to look at all the pages, or to read all the written text)
Oh, I wonder if someone can tell me what's happening in this picture?
Child: It's a special place.
T: Yes and what's happening in this special place? Joseph?
Joseph: It's on a farm.
T: Have you ever seen great big long silver sheds----
Several children: Yes (overlaps)
T: where chickens are kept or hens are kept for laying eggs?
They're called batteries or battery chickens or battery hens
Olivera: Battery cage.
T: And when they lay their eggs, the eggs fall down into this little shute.
Anthony: Mrs L, I know where they are. I know where they are.
T: Where are they?
Anthony: They're where you buy the chickens.
T: That's right. And are these litttle eggs going to turn into chickens?
Chorus: No.
T: How do we know they're not going to? Diana?
Diana: 'Cos the mother's not in a warm spot, and they're not keeping warm.
T: That's right. She can't sit on them.
Diana: 'Cos the steel is cold.
T: That's right. Jeffrey?
Jeffrey: They're falling down.

T: Yes, they're falling down into this little shute, and they're taken away.
Child (indecipherable)
T: They're taken away to be eggs on your table. Here's another little egg. Now something's interesting about this one over here. Can you see a little spot of blood?
Several: Yes.
T: Well sometimes you'll get an egg that's got a little spot of blood on it. It doesn't mean that the egg is going to grow into a chicken. It's just something that sometimes happens to the egg. Which part of the egg does the little chicken start to grow? Jodie, which part of the eggs does the little chick start to grow?
Jodie: (A long pause) The middle?
T: Mm What's the middle part of the egg called?
Several children: The yolk.
T: This is the inside of the egg and this little white spot here is where the little chicken will start to grow. That's the yolk that it will feed on. It's got that little tube to his tummy.
Anthony: A chord.
T: Yes, a little chord. And that's, he feeds on all of that yolk. As he grows he feeds on that yolk and the yolk shrinks. It gets smaller and smaller.
Anthony: Well, when I et my egg at home, I seen a yolk in it.
T: Mm. And that white part, you know when he comes out and he's all wet?
Several children: Yes.
T: That's the white part.
A boy: That's the white and he's all wet.
T: And the yolk is his food and the white part keeps him nice and warm.
Anthony: He gets yellow feathers.
T: Do you think that's why he turns yellow? His feathers are yellow because he's eaten yolk? (said with a smile, as this is a joke)
Anthony: Yeah.
T: And there's a broody hen. She's sitting on her nest, and she's broody because she's going to hatch out little chickens
Jeffrey: Mrs. L. I've got a question.
T: Yes, Jeff?
Jeffrey: Does she have a bath?

T: Pardon?
Jeffrey: Does it have a bath?
T: What do you mean? Do you know how long a hen has to sit on the eggs until they're born? Do you know how long?
How many days?
A child: One week.
Another : One day?
(Olivera raises a hand)
T: Yes, Olivera?
Olivera: One week.
T: No. Wendy? (Wendy has raised a hand)
Wendy: Three weeks?
T: Three weeks, Wendy's correct. Twenty-one days or three weeks. That's how long the mother hen has got to keep sitting on the eggs. She'll get up occasionally to go and get some feed but---
Child : It has to be hot.
T: she has to keep those eggs warm (overlaps)
Another child: And they have to be hot. It has to be a hot day.
T: Very warm. It says here this is a picture of the incubator in Mrs. B.'s room and it says that sometimes if the hen won't keep on the eggs, or if they want to have eggs to hatch when they haven't got a mother hen, well then you get the special fertilised eggs, and you put them in the incubator, and the electricity keeps them warm (several children call "warm") because it warms up.
Jeffrey: And the light
T: Yes, the light's um fed by electricity and the light keeps shining to keep the inside warm ( a reference to a box at the back of the classroom with a light on protecting some young chicks). It's like our little brooder.
Anthony: You turn that little black, um knob.
T: Yes, that's right. That was to increase or lower the temperature. And here, this little picture shows what's inside the eggs after three days. Three days, and you can see already a tiny little creature. It looks a bit like a little bird.
Anthony: A crocodile.
T: You can notice that they've got red lines on the, the yolk.
Child: Yolk (overlaps).

T: Now, those red lines are actually blood vessels and they carry blood to the little chicken as it's growing .
Jeffrey: Yuk, yuk, blood vessels ( he points to the blood vessels in his own wrist)
T: And these are some pictures of what a baby fish looks like when it's just starting to grow, what a baby chicken looks like when it's just starting to grow, and what a human being looks like when it's just starting to grow. So they all look a bit the same, don't they? There's a close up of what's happening after three days. You can just make out the eye and the head and the heart and things.
A child: What are those little red lines?
T: Those little red lines are the blood vessels. Right? here's after five days, and you can just see the beginning of the wing. Right, there's after one week or seven days, and you can even see the start of his feet.
A child: It looks like a snail.
T: You'll notice that the yolk inside is starting to change. It's turning into more of an oval shape, Mirko. (Addressed by name because he is inattentive) It's starting to lose that nice round shape.
Anthony: Mrs L.
T: Yes Anthony
Anthony: You can see its feet.
T: Yes and you start to see its little claws too.
A girl: And its little beak.
Jeffrey: And his eyes.
T: Two weeks or thirteen days.
Several children: Oh.
T: Two weeks or thirteen days - nearly two weeks. And you can start to see again he's really starting to get like a real chicken.
A boy: And he's sleepy too.
Another child: He's turning yellow.
T: Yes he's turning yellow because he's got feathers.
Sixteen days.
Olivera: There's not too much of the yolk left.
T: No there's not too much of the yolk left. It's getting pushed right away, and there's even less now.
Olivera: Nineteen days.

T: Nineteen days, and there he's starting to look like he looked when he first hatched out. You've got the air space there, you've got his claws and the leathery part of his foot, very little of the egg sac left, of the yolk left, his beak, and his head tucked up under his wing.
Olivera: He's squashing.
T: He's squashing. He's filling up nearly the whole of that shell. Yes, Susy? (Susy has raised a hand)
Susy: Well when I went to the Melbourne market we were walking and I saw this lady and she had this part of her head black and the rest all red like uh, like uh a cock.
T: Like the top of the comb of a hen or rooster.
Susy: Yeah it looked funny.
T: Hens and roosters have got a comb at the top, right? And then they've got -
Susy: It was all red.
T: It looked a bit like that, did it? (pointing to a picture in the book)
Susy: Yeah.
Jeffrey: A cone.
T: No, comb, not a cone. A cone is what you eat an ice cream in, but a comb is that. Right, twenty-one days, or three weeks, and there you see the egg starting to hatch out. The little hole and then it starts to peck a little line around, It says "the twenty-one days inside the egg are over. The chick pecks at the shell. It pecks thousands of times. At last the shell cracks". It's a very very very hard job for that little chick to get out.
Mirko: It would take a long long time.
(The teacher has a brief conversation with another teacher who enters the room on another matter)
T: I heard the little chicks particularly when I had them home there, pecking and pecking and pecking. It's a very very hard job to get out. There you are, look, he's pecked nearly all the way around.
Olivera: How much days?
T.: It says it takes many hours to split the shell all around.
The chick is almost out. Slowly the chicken comes out of the shell. "The chick is still very weak. His legs are wobbly and his feathers are wet", and he's out. And that's just like he looked, isn't it? Our chick's out.

Several children: Yes, the same.
T.: And look after a while. You can still see the little blood lines inside "In a few hours the feathers dry out. Now the chick is soft and fluffy."
Anthony: Mrs. L, that's what Belinda's chicken looked like.
T: Yes. "The next day the chick walks and runs about. It picks up its food. Most chicks are fed mashed seeds," and that's what ours are being fed.
(There are a few noises as of crowing made by the children)
T: Wait a minute. We'll listen to some chicken noises in a minute. And- quiet please- this is how the chicken will grow. It starts off here, and it will gradually grow after a few weeks to this size, and then its feathers start to change and it loses those yellow baby feathers. Think about a hen that you've seen. Have you ever seen a yellow hen?
A child: Yes.
Chorus: No.
T: What coloured hens have you seen? Joseph?
Joseph: Brown and white ones I saw.
T: Yes.
(Jeffrey raises a hand)
Jeffrey: Black and white.
(Wendy raises a hand)
T: Yes. Wendy?
Wendy: Purple
T: No, I've seen grey ones.
Anthony: Yes.
(Elvira raises a hand)
T: Elvira?
Elvira: I've seen grey and white.
T: Yes, white ones too. The yellow coloured feathers will change.
A girl: You can have a purple one. (The teacher ignores this)
T: And the hens of course lay eggs again. (said as she returns to the pages of the book) Well usually they drop the feathers and they grow and they change as they grow older. Right, let's see if we can get one or two people, seeing that people think they can make good chicken noises and be good chickens, we're going to have a little go and see who can be the best chicken in the grade for a couple of

minutes. All right, Jeff, you can come over here and show us you being a chicken.

Control 2

The rest of you must be quiet, or that's when we'll stop.
(Jeffrey comes out and produces a chicken noise.)

T: Very good Jeffrey, you can sit down. Who else would like to show me their chicken impersonation? (Diana raises a hand) Right, Diana.
(Diana comes to the front and makes chicken noises.)
T: That's good Diana. All right Joel. (Joel has put up his hand)
(Joel comes to the front and makes chicken noises.)
T: Well don't be silly, don't be silly.
Joel: He's excited.
T: He's a very excited chicken, yes, I can tell. Um all right Jodie.
(Jodie has raised her hand)
(Jodie comes to the front and makes a chicken noise.)
T: All right you can sit down. Last one. Veronica. (She has also raised her hand, and comes to the front and makes chicken noises)
T: Oh that's a lovely one. A very baby chicken.

A summary of the Theme choices of the teacher and of the children is provided in Table 6.9, while complete analyses of Theme are provided in Tables 2.C.1 and 2.C.2 in Appendix 2C.

Table 6. 9 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Orientation/Controls 1and 2 of Text C

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 21 | WH interrogatives | 16 | marked | 14 |
| conj. adjuncts | 8 | vocatives | 3 | unmarked | 157 |
| | | finites | 8 | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 37 | | | | |
| temporal | 15 | | | | |
| consequential | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 2 | | | | |
| causal | 4 | | | | |
| alternation | 1 | | | | |
| contrastive | 2 | | | | |
| projecting | 5 | | | | |
| manner | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 68 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 97 | | 27 | | 171 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 4 | WH interrogatives | 3 | marked | 2 |
| conj. adjuncts | 0 | vocatives | 3 | unmarked | 37 |
| | | finites | 2 | | |

| Textual | | Interpersonal | Experiential |
|---|---|---|---|
| structurals: | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | |
| additive | 4 | | |
| causal | 2 | | |
| Total | 6 | | |
| TOTAL | 10 | 8 | 39 |

Despite the fact that Mrs L, unlike the teachers in both Text A and Text B, does not start the TO with a continuative, there are other ways in which her opening compares closely with those of Mrs S and Mrs P. In the first place, the element begins in teacher monologue, and the opening experiential Theme choices identify class participants ("we") and the teacher herself ("I"), helping to indicate that directions are being pointed for the joint behaviour of teacher and children:

> we're going to start off with a little story this morning
> I want to show you some of the pictures in this little book
> [[called Egg to Chick]]

The pattern of textual Themes serves also to help point directions for behaviour:

> firstly I want to show you.....
> and we're just going to find out..
> and we'll have a little chat about them
> and what do you think this is.....

Both pedagogical and "content" registers are involved in the opening, though it is the pedagogical register which is foregrounded. Entry to dialogue and engagement of the children with the "content" field is signalled with a use of a vocative and a WH interrogative:

> Lesley what sort of creature is this little creature here?

The "content" field is in fact foregrounded for the rest of the element, though there are two points at which a Control element is invoked by the teacher to correct unacceptable behaviour. She employs an imperative to address a child:

> don't call out.

Elsewhere, towards the end of the element she thematises the children in experiential Theme position and employs one structural Theme to create a clause in which the children are advised of what constitutes acceptable behaviour, and what will happen if such behaviour is not displayed:

> the rest of you must be quiet
> or that's when we'll stop.

The teacher here employs a modal operator ("must"), incidentally, the better to reinforce her sense of controlling what is potentially unacceptable behaviour.

It will have been observed that in the teacher's opening clause she refers to the book she displays as a "story", and as we have noted above, this is an early indication of the teacher's own incertainties with respect both to questions of genre and register here. This is the more unfortunate because the book is in fact a very good one, and Mrs L is in many ways a good teacher. As the lesson proceeds, as we shall see, she actually points the children in two directions. On the

one hand, having opened by referring to a "story", she ultimately invites the children to write "stories". However, on the other hand, especially in the "body" of the Task Orientation, she engages them with some success in development of a scientific register. Had she a better grasp of the relationship of language and "content" and a clearer sense of the organisation of the various genres children need to create in writing, she could the more effectively have directed the lesson.

We have already examined in detail aspects of Mrs L's work in chapter 3, when we looked at the morning news genre. We have argued that she was unusual among the teachers in this study in that she allowed the children scope and opportunity to operate with some independence in the role of Morning News Giver. In this particular instance of the writing planning genre, as we shall see, the children have the opportunity to talk rather more often and more freely than they do in Texts A and B, considered above. Moreover, in this lesson, unlike what is the case in both Texts A and B, there is a significant "content" field involved, and some opportunity for the children to engage in processes of turning their "commonsense" or familiar knowledge about chicken development into new or "uncommonsense" knowledge. That they do not go further, capitalising on their developing new knowledge in order to write some sort of scientific exposition about chickens, reflects the limitations in the teacher's own knowledge. The theories that lie behind Mrs L's teaching practices with respect to early childhood education and to language education generally are of course to blame.

While our discussion here will illuminate these matters to some extent, we will be able to say considerably more about them both in chapters 7 and 8. In the former, our examination of TRANSITIVITY will take us rather more fully into consideration of field and its construction in the text, and we will be able to compare the manner of creating field in the talk and in the textbook used. We will argue

that the limitations that emerge in the "content" field as that is constructed in talk are born of the ideology of early childhood that applies. In the latter chapter, where we examine CONVERSATION STRUCTURE, we will be able to see how it is that the children often do have a greater and more effective share in the creation of the conversation than they do either in Texts A or B, and we will be able to see in particular how the teacher makes their participation possible. We will argue that the teacher actually demonstrates and develops with the children some of the features of classroom talk in which the children are involved in genuine negotiation of new meaning with their teacher. It is thus all the more regrettable that the teacher, excellent though she is in many ways, does not take the few additional but crucially important steps she might take in fostering the children's learning of writing, were she better aware of the relationship between language and "content".

We shall take up these matters in part below, especially when we consider the interpersonal Theme choices of the teacher in the Task Orientation. We have already considered the opening of this element, observing that it functions much like the TO in Texts A and B, though there is no continuative to signal its beginning. Once into the "body" of the element, where the "content" field is foregrounded, the teacher does make use of continuatives. In fact, she uses 21 in all, seven of which are instances of "yes", used in answering the children as in :

> yes he's turning yellow,

while the remaining 14 have the usual function of forwarding the discourse as in:

> well sometimes you'll get an egg....
> now something's interesting about this one over here.

Of the other textual Themes, there are 68 structural Themes in the teacher's talk, and eight conjunctive adjuncts. Of the structural Themes, the largest single number (37 in all) are additive conjunctions, while temporal conjunctions are 15 in number, and there are four examples of causal conjunctions, as well as five projecting conjunctions, two conditional conjunctions, two contrastive, and one each of conjunctions of alternation, of consequence, and of manner. The large number of additive conjunctions in textual Theme position reflects the nature of the "content" field here, being built up very considerably around the illustrations and parts of the written text of the book. The teacher is primarily intent upon building a sense of the steps by which the chicken develops in an egg and eventually hatches, as in such clauses as:

> and are these little eggs going to turn into chickens?
> and this little white spot here is where the little
> chick will start to grow
> and she's broody.

Temporal Themes, while relatively important here, do not feature as largely as they do in Texts A and B, where the "content" field is different, and where the object is much more to recreate personal or at least familiar experience, real or imagined, either about the use of uniforms or about the loss of one's lunch. The temporal Themes here are sometimes created through the use of temporal conjunctions such as "until" or "when", though a number are created through the use of the conjunction "and", either explicitly linked to the conjunctive adjunct "then", or carrying an implicit sense of temporal connection. Some examples include:

> do you know how long a hen has to sit on the eggs
> until they're born?
> and he's starting to look like he looked

when he first hatched out
and there you see the egg starting to hatch out
and then it starts to peck a little around.

Together with the additive conjunctions, these temporal Themes develop the sense of the steps by which chickens develop, though they do not involve building meanings which explain why the development occurs as it does. As the discussion in chapter 7 will bring out more forcibly, the discussion of the "content" field in the TO is not well motivated in this sense, compared with the manner in which it is motivated in the textbook used. There are in fact two senses in which the textbook deals with aspects of chicken development very much better than it is dealt with in the teacher's talk. The first sense is that the need for a union of egg and sperm is established as something that must take place in order to produce a fertilised egg from which a chicken will grow. The second sense is that chickens are explained in terms of their relationship to other egg-producing creatures: that is to say, their place in the scientific scheme of things is established, in the manner in which scientists build taxonomies of living things. The latter is important as an aspect of the "uncommonsense" knowledge about chickens worth knowing. Chickens are defined by scientists in terms of their relationship to other living things.

The linguistic resources in which such meanings are built up will be found particularly in transitivity choices, and we shall take up these matters again in chapter 7, where Transitivity is of direct concern. As already indicated, we shall explain the absence in the teacher's talk of meanings about chickens with respect both to their sexual reproduction and to their place in a scientific view of living things, in terms of the ideology of early childhood education with which the teacher operates. Though it is true that the scientific meanings in question are built up especially in Transitivity choices, it may well also be the case that had the teacher sought to make such meanings

available to the children, she would have made more use of structural Themes realised in conjunctions other than additive or temporal.

As it is, such causal conjunctions as are used by the teacher do contribute in useful ways to the building of the "content" field, as in:

> she's broody <u>because</u> she's going to hatch out little chickens
> and the electricity keeps them warm <u>because</u> it warms up.

The only instance of a consequential conjunction in structural Theme position in the teacher's talk also has a useful role in building an aspect of the "content" field:

> these are some pictures of what a baby fish looks like.....
> what a baby chicken looks like....what a human being looks
> like....<u>so</u> they all look a little bit the same don't they?

With only small but significant shifts in the teacher's talk, however, she might well have developed the meanings being built here more fully, opening out, as the textbook does very well, the manner in which embryonic creatures of many kinds bear a remarkable resemblance to each other. Of the linguistic resources the teacher used if she were to open out these matters, they might well have included among other things, other instances of causal and consequential conjunctions in textual Theme position.

Overall, while the causal and consequential conjunctions in structural Theme positions do make their contribution to the building of the "content" field, their relatively small contribution compared with that of the additive and temporal ones, serves to indicate that the primary purpose of the teacher is to build a sense of a simple sequence of events in which chickens grow, but speculation about or explanation of, the reasons for the processes of growth do not feature strongly.

Projecting conjunctions are used by the teacher in advising the children of select aspects of the "content field", normally as made apparent in the illustrations of the book, as when she identifies a spot of blood on the egg and says of it:

> it doesn't mean that the egg is going to grow into a chicken. It's just something that sometimes happens to the egg.

Incidentally, we might want to argue that the teacher could have made clearer why the apparently fertilised egg did not grow into a chicken. However, noting this, it is nonetheless interesting to compare the teacher's behaviour here with that of Mrs S in Text B, with the series of questions she generated not very effectively about why bakers wear hats in bakeries (section 6.4.1). The children, as we noted, had insufficient information to answer such questions, and were forced to guess. The teacher in Text C might have pursued a similar course of action with respect to the spot of blood on the egg, probably with similar results, since it is unlikely the children would know the significance of the blood. In that she simply advises the children as she does, she does not involve them in unsatisfactory guessing about an aspect of the "content" field. For this, she is to be applauded.

Other conjunctions in textual Theme position include contrastive conjunctions which occur twice, as in:

> she'll get up occasionally to go and get some feed <u>but</u> she has to keep those eggs warm.

The two instances of a conditional conjunction in structural Theme position used by the teacher relate to the direction of the children's behaviour and are of the pedagogical field, rather than the "content" field, as in:

oh I wonder if someone can tell me what's happening in this picture.

Experiential Theme choices relate mainly to the "content" field, though a number identify either the teacher ("I") or the children ("you") as the TO proceeds. There are 14 marked experiential Theme choices used by the teacher, six of which make exophoric reference to an illustration in the book as in:

here's another little egg.

There are three instances of dependent clauses in marked Theme position, all realising aspects of the "content" field, as in:

when they lay their eggs they fall down into this little shute,

and other marked experiential Theme choices used by the teacher include one circumstance of manner and two of time, again realising aspects of the "content" field, as in:

slowly the chicken comes out of the shell
in a few hours the feathers dry out.

Unmarked experiential Theme choices with respect to the "content" field include such examples as :

she's going to hatch out little chickens
it looks a bit like a bird,

while the teacher frequently directs the children's attention to noticing aspects of the "content" field in the pictures as in:

you can see already a tiny little creature.

Towards the end of the element, where the teacher invites the children to "make little chicken noises", she both thematises the children:

> you can sit down

and herself:

> I can tell.

Turning to the interpersonal Themes in the teacher's discourse, there are in fact 27 instances, of which 16 are WH interrogatives, eight are finites and three are vocatives. Both the WH interrogatives and the finites are used in interesting ways, as we shall see shortly. In general, we should note that the WH interrogatives belong to the "content" field, and are involved in promoting dialogue, and in eliciting from the children observations about the "content" of concern as in:

> where are they?
> which part of the egg does the little chicken start to grow?

Finites have a similar function in either eliciting talk from the children, or in directing them to examine something relevant to the "content" field as displayed in the book, as in:

> do you know how long?
> can you see a little spot of blood?

The relatively limited use of vocatives, as we have noted earlier, seems to be a feature of such a curriculum genre. Teachers use vocatives only selectively, and very often as part of controlling and disciplining children. We have already examined the first instance above ("Lesley") as an aspect of the opening of the element.

To take up more directly the significance of the teacher's uses of interpersonal Themes, it is notable that of the 16 WH interrogatives and eight finites she employs, most occur in the earlier part of the element, and while the teacher is involving the children in reconstructing aspects of the "content" field familiar to them as matters drawn from earlier experience. Thus 12 WH interrogatives and in fact all the finites occur from the teacher's first question:

> we're just going to find out <u>what</u> you people know
> about this little book,

to her final question with respect to the length of time a hen sits on an egg before the chickens hatch:

> <u>do</u> you know how long?

Teacher questioning is a legitimate activity, while it is used to elicit what is known as a basis for proceeding forward, and what is interesting is that from the asking of the last question, to which Wendy offers the right answer ("three weeks"), the pattern of discourse changes. The children are not asked questions about aspects of the "content" field with which it would be unreasonable to expect them to be familiar. Henceforth, and with the exception of a much later question designed to elicit the kinds of chickens the children have seen:

> have you ever seen a yellow hen?,

the pattern is one in which teacher and children contribute experiential and textual Themes, as they jointly construct the new meanings emerging from examination of the pictures in the book about chicken development. At the end of the element, where the teacher involves the children in "making little chicken noises", she again makes use of two WH interrogatives, as in:

who can be the best chicken in the grade?

At this point, however, the engagement with the "content" field is strictly over, and as we have already suggested the activity of "making chicken noises" is intended as a variation in learning activity.

Analysis of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in chapter 7 will further enhance our sense that the children are able to participate in the building of meaning about the "content" in terms if not of equality with the teacher, at least of some independence.

Thus, the Theme choices for the children are fewer and less varied than those for the teacher, though compared with either Text A or Text B, the children's contributions to the construction are both more numerous and more varied. It is clear that the teacher is in control, but the children are enabled to contribute to the text in a number of ways. Unusually, compared with the other texts examined earlier, there are 10 instances of textual Themes in the children's discourse, four of which are continuatives, and of those, two are responses to teacher questions:

yeah it looked funny
no I've seen grey ones.

The former is interesting because it introduces an instance of a child expressing attitude. Mrs L is in fact more prone to allow attitudinal expression in the children she teaches than the other teachers in Texts A and B.

The other two instances of continuatives in the children's talk are both uses of "well":

well, when I et my egg, I seen a yolk in it
well, when I went to the Melbourne market, we were walking....

The children in Texts A and B did not produce continuatives at all. Capacity to produce them, like capacity to produce attitudinal expression, we must conclude, is one measure of a degree of independence enjoyed by the children in contributing to the construction of the text in a curriculum genre. In that teachers control a large number of continuatives, as we have already observed, they do control a great deal of the directions taken in the classroom discourse. However, where, as in Mrs L's classroom, the children are enabled to produce some continuatives, it is clear that they too can control at least some of the directions in which the talk goes. Capacity so to produce continuatives is a small but important aspect of a classroom discourse in which some negotiation of understandings is taking place.

The other instances of textual Themes used by the children are all realised in conjunctions in structural Theme position. Two are causal:

'cos the mother's not in a warm spot
'cos the steel is cold.

Four are instances of the additive conjunction, in:

and they're not keeping warm
and he's sleepy too
and I saw this lady
and she had this part of her head black and the rest all red like uh, like uh a cock.

There are three instances of vocatives in the children's discourse, all addressed to the teacher, as in:

Mrs. L, I know where they are,

two instances of WH interrogatives, as in:

> what are those little red lines?,

and one instance of a finite is in fact repeated:

> does she have a bath?

Of the children's 39 experiential Themes, the majority relate to the content field, though on several occasions, children refer to themselves as "I", when offering a comment, as in:

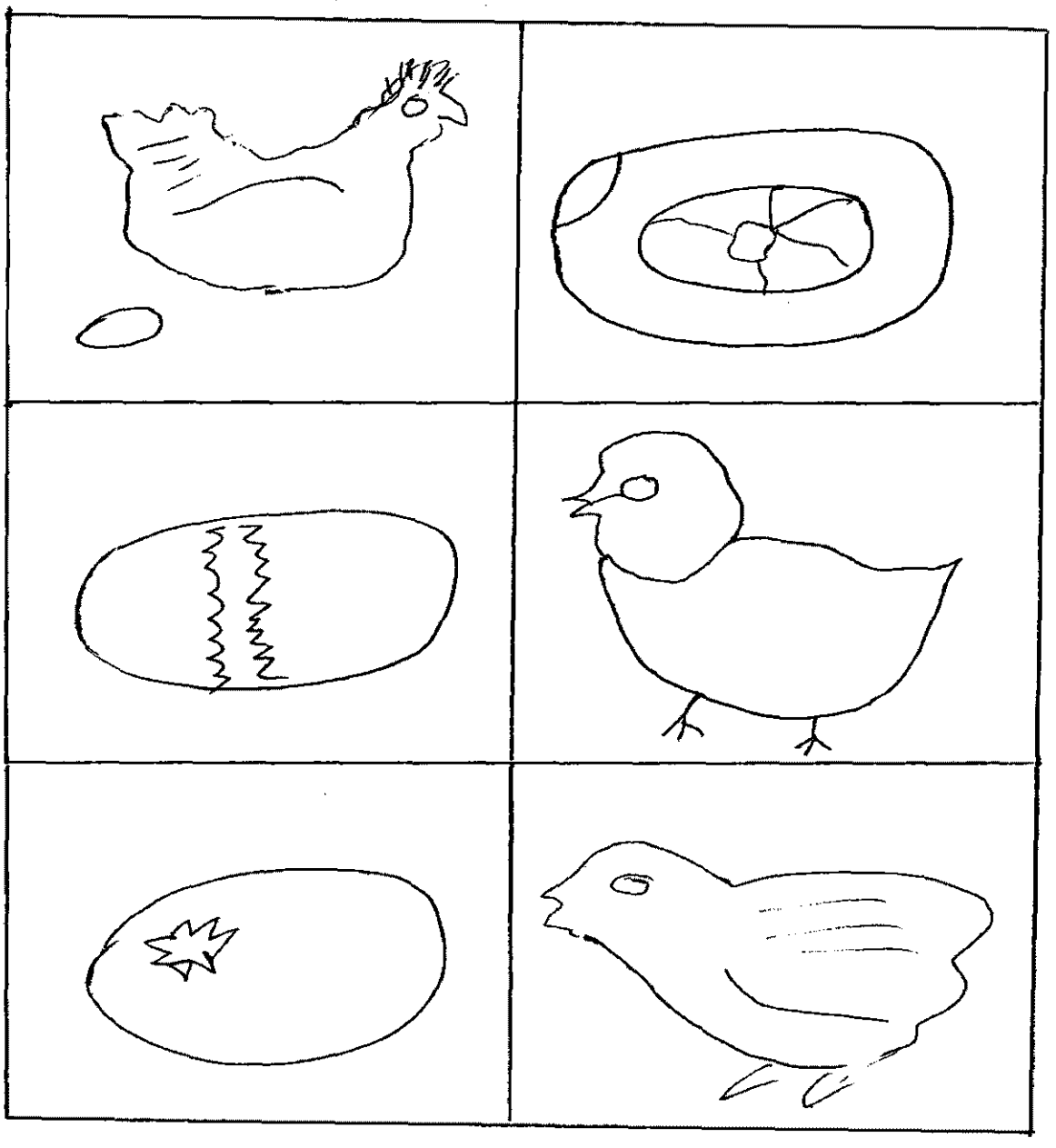
> I've got a question
> I saw this lady.

Interestingly, there are two instances of a dependent clause placed in marked topical Theme position in:

> well when I et my egg at home I seen a yolk in it
> well, when I went to the Melbourne market, we were
> walking and I saw this lady...,

The presence of the latter two, we would suggest, is further evidence that in Mrs. L's class, the children actually did have genuine "space to move", as it were, and hence more opportunity to create sustained text, than was true in the other teachers' classrooms.

Overall, the children show through all their uses of textual, interpersonal and experiential Theme choices that they do contribute rather more to the discourse than do the children in either Text A or Text B. Their contributions all relate to the "content" field, it will be observed, not to the pedagogical field. Examination of the manner in which the children are enabled to operate in Mrs L's classroom, we shall argue later on, offers us some



How a Chicken Grows.

Fig 6.3

sense of the kind of patterns of talk that should ideally apply where the children are allowed to contribute to the construction of meanings in a classroom situation.

## 6.6.2 THEME IN TASK SPECIFICATION AND CONTROL 3 OF TEXT C

The text of the Task Specification/Control 3 is as follows.

The Task Specification/Control 3

T: All right before we start some work today, I like Jeffrey's chook impersonation, and I liked Veronica's chicken one too. So I think those two deserve a clap. (They clap briefly) Well done. (There is a slight disturbance because some children from another class enter and briefly look at the chickens in the incubator at the back of the room. Some of the class, including Olivera, turn to look at the other children)

Control

Right everyone sitting down. All right I'm waiting for you please Olivera, to show me a few manners, and not be so rude. Thanks girls, turn around. (Gabriel starts to make a chicken noise) Gabriel, stand up. Be quiet and sit down. That's finished with now. Don't you know when to stop?

What I have here is a little sheet I'd like you to take back with you to your seat. (She holds it up. See Figure 6.2 for a copy) On this little sheet, when you look very very closely, you may not be ableto see it from the front. When you look closely, you'll find there are pictures, Belinda, of all the stages that a little chick goes through before it is born.
Stephen: Can you put second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth?
T: (Ignoring Stephen) Now, what you have to do is this. First thing,you've got to sort out which order the pictures go in.
Joel: I reckon the mother hen would go first.

T: Then I'll want you to paste them into your scrapbook in the correct order, and then I want you to write a little story about this little chick, how it grew and how it hatched into a chicken (children here chorus "chicken" along with the teacher). Well let's see if someone can tell me which picture would be the first picture in this little story. Jeffrey, which one do you think?
Jeffrey: The hen on the egg.
T: Yes the hen that lays the egg, that's the first one. That tells you something. This just shows that she's already laid her first egg, and her legs are tucked in under her body. All right, I'll let you think about the second one.
A child: I know where the second one is.
T: Who can tell me the very last picture in this little story? The very last one Mandy? Can you point to the last one? Why not this one?
A boy: Because that one's the best.
T: No. Is this when the chicken's just hatched out of the egg and it's all wet?
Chorus: Yes.
T: Right, I see because its feathers are all slicked down. This is your last picture here, with the little chick standing up and fluffy. Now, if we -- wait a minute, no I'll explain first. First of all Jeff, I want you to cut it out and paste it in the correct order. You can leave your colouring till the Clag is dry and till you've written your little story. Now how are you going to go about making up a story for these pictures? Right, that's your problem. How are you going to go about making up a story for these pictures? Deborah?
Deborah: Um, I'm going to look at the pictures and write about how the chicken hatched.
T: You've got to think about too, first of all, this little story is different to our eggs in the incubator because it, the egg here is hatched by the mother hen. Right? Because she's the lady, she's the one who starts it all off. She's hatching her little chick. I don't know, maybe if you wanted to write in your story that the egg was then taken and put in an incubator, you could. That's up to you. But you've got to tell us about how the little chick grows inside the egg. Again, how must that little chick feel inside the egg, Joseph? Particularly when he's starting to get all squashed up towards the end. How must he feel inside that egg? Come on, where's Mirko, the person who wanted to have a go at being inside an egg. How must that

little chicken feel, Mirko? By the time he's to this stage? How must he feel? What's he want to do when he's to this stage,when he's pecking a hole, Diana?
Diana: Get out. I thought if, I thought if they're all squashed up, they'd just push out.
T: They've got to break the shell first haven't they? This one shows you how they break it. They peck a little line around. Yes, Jodie?
Jodie: If I was in the shell I would feel sad.
T.: You'd feel sad do you think?
Jodie: Yes, and scared.
T: You bet, I'd feel scared. Yes, I think it'd be very scarey though once you got out, because from suddently being protected in that nice little dark room, all of a sudden you're out in the light and there's children and there's noise, and there's other chicks around pecking at you, and there's light and there's food and there's water.
Anthony: And he might die.
T: Did anyone bring along anything for our little new chicks to eat? Any worms or caterpillars? Can you remember for tomorrow?
Several children: I'll bring some.
I'll bring some grain.
Child: What's that?
T: It just says at the bottom "How a chicken grows" (This is written on the bottom of the paper being distributed to the children).

Table 6.10 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Specification/ Control 3 of Text C

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 14 | WH interrogatives | 16 | marked | 11 |
| conj. adjuncts | 2 | vocatives | 3 | unmarked | 61 |
| | | finites | 5 | | |
| | | modal adjuncts | 2 | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 10 | | | | |
| temporal | 7 | | | | |
| consequential | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 2 | | | | |
| causal | 4 | | | | |
| contrastive | 1 | | | | |
| projecting | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 26 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 42 | | 26 | | 72 |
| CHILDREN's CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 2 | marked | 2 |
| conj. adjuncts | 0 | vocatives | 0 | unmarked | 11 |
| | | finites | 1 | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 2 | | | | |
| causal | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 3 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 3 | | 3 | | 13 |

We will deal with the Control element here first. It is signalled by the teacher with uses of two continuatives, and the teacher goes on to thematise herself, in addressing one of the offending children:

> right everyone sitting down
> all right I'm waiting for you please Olivera....

She goes on to use four imperatives in quick sucession, as well as a vocative, building a strong sense of ordering the children to behave as she requires:

> turn around
> Gabriel, stand up
> be quiet and sit down

Having advised Gabriel that the activity of making chicken noises is finished, she uses a finite to address a question to him to which it is not intended that he reply:

> don't you know when to stop?

Turning back to consideration of the manner in which the TS element is initiated, we can see that as has been true in earlier examples, the new element is signalled though several characteristic sets of linguistic choices. In the first place the teacher selects a monologue, signalling the start of the new element with a use of a continuative, and she uses a dependent clause in marked experiential Theme position. Where the continuative serves to indicate a new movement forward, the dependent clause serves to establish something in summary fashion which it is important to identify early in pointing directions for the children. Whereas in other instances at the start of an element such a dependent clause often refers to something finished and summarised as a basis for proceeding

forward, the dependent clause here establishes something yet to be done.

> all right before we start some work today, I like Jeffrey's chook impersonation....

The pedagogical register is very much to the fore in the teacher monologue, and the first Control element, which we have just considered above, serves to reinforce the foregrounding of the pedagogical register. Once the latter element is completed, the teacher proceeds to get on to defining the task for the children more fully, and to do so she chooses another marked experiential Theme, this time realised in an embedded clause:

> [[what I have here]] is a little sheet [[I'd like you to take back with you to your seat]]..

Such is her concern to thematise the nature of the task here that the teacher goes on to use two more marked experiential Themes, this time realised in dependent clauses:

> when you look very very closely you may not be able to see it from the front
> when you look closely you'll find.....

Shortly afterwards, yet another marked experiential Theme, realised in an embedded clause, serves still further to foreground the pedagogical field:

> now [[what you have to do]] is this....

There are in fact 11 instances of marked experiential Themes in the teacher's talk, and apart from those just examined, another three relate to thematising aspects of the pedagogical field. They include

one which is produced in response to a child's answer to a teacher question. Holding up the series of pictures intended to be used for guiding writing, the teacher has asked:

> which picture would be the first picture in this little story?,

and a child having replied, she goes on:

> yes the hen [[that lays the egg]] that's the one.

The teacher goes on a little later, pointing to the series of pictures:

> first of all, this little story is different to our eggs in the incubator.

A little later, while suggesting possibilities for writing about, she says, using a modal adjunct in interpersonal Theme firstly, helping to signal the possibility of choices for the children:

> maybe [[if you wanted to write in your story that the egg was then taken from the incubator]] you could.

We will have a little more to say with respect to the remaining experiential Theme choices below. Firstly, we need to make some observations both about the unmarked Theme choices and about the operation of the other Theme choices in the teacher's talk in the element.

Unmarked Theme choices include 11 instances where the teacher identifies herself as in:

> I'll explain first

while in three cases the children are thematised, as part of the process of directing them:

> you can leave your colouring....

Once an aspect of the task is thematised:

> that's your problem.

The remaining unmarked Theme choices identify aspects of the chicken's development, as that is portrayed in the sheet:

> he's starting to get all squashed up

Textual Theme choices serve to augment the building of matters with respect to the pedagogical field and the task of writing. There are in fact 14 instances of continuatives, a number of which have already been considered above. Four instances are instances of "yes" or "no" used in response to the children, as in:

> yes [[the hen that lays the egg]] that's the one.

Such instances are important in the total construction of the talk, but they do not define directions in quite the way of other instances of continuatives. It is interesting to note that after the four instances of continuatives used in the opening monologue, and considered earlier, there are in fact five additional instances of direction-pointing continuatives in the "body" of the element. Such a number involves a more frequent use of these continuatives in the "body" of the element than was true in the "body" of the Task Orientation. In the latter, where the object was to explore a "content" field they were used to some extent, but their greater frequency in the TS is one measure of the fact that the nature of the activity has changed. The language is not so much that of reflection upon a "content", but rather that of

operationalising activity. The continuatives tend to foster the forwarding of this activity. Instances include:

> well let's see if someone can tell me which picture would be....
> all right I'll let you think about the second one
> now how are you going to go about making up a story for these pictures..
> right that's your problem.

Of the 26 structural Themes the teacher uses, the largest single number are realised in 10 additive conjunctions, one of which is involved in the Control element:

> be quiet and sit down,

while three are used in building information about the task to be done with the series of pictures the children are to use:

> this just shows that she's already laid her first egg and her
> legs are tucked under her body.

The remaining six additive conjunctions have a somewhat different role towards the end of the element, and we shall return to their significance below. Other conjunctions realising structural Themes include seven temporals (one accompanying a conjunctive adjunct of time), which are involved in building aspects of the children's task as in:

> and then I want you to write a little story...
> you can leave your picture till the Clag is dry..

There are four instances of causal conjunctions, also involved in building with the children aspects of the task, as in the following, when a child has just identified which of the six pictures comes in a particular order:

right I see, because its feathers are all slicked down.

Two conditional conjunctions in structrual Theme position help realise aspects of the directing of the children to work, as in:

well let's see if someone can tell me....

There are in addition one instance of a contrastive conjunction, and one of a projecting conjunction, both helping to build aspects of the operationalising of the task:

but you got to tell us about [[how the little chick grows inside the egg]]
this just shows that she's already laid her egg.

Interpersonal Theme choices show that Mrs L has drawn the children into talk about the writing task, considerably more than Mrs S, the teacher in Text A, and rather more than Mrs P, the teacher in Text B. Sixteen instances of WH interrogatives and three of the five instances of finites used draw the children into talk about the pictures and the writing, as in:

who can tell me the very last picture in this little story?
can you point to the last one?

Enough has been said of the overall distribution of Theme choices in the teacher's talk in the Task Specification and associated Control element, to show that the pedagogical register is foregrounded, and that an effort is made to draw the children into guided talk about the task of writing. Despite the strengths the teacher displays, however, it should be noted that the talk is still very general, with respect both to matters to do with the written mode and to do with the appropriate genre for writing. On six occasions the teacher refers to the writing of a "story" or a "little story", and while no advice is given to do with the organisation of a story or narrative genre, it is clear

that no advice is given either with respect to other factual genres, of the kind which we suggest is really required here. The series of pictures distributed - in itself a useful aid to give the children - is modelled (perhaps unconsciously) on the manner of providing illustrations in the textbook used. Illustrations are in fact part of the written mode of the sciences generally, and of the biological sciences in particular. Much of the teacher-directed talk actually tends to invite the creation of scientific meanings, and that is why the teacher's sudden switch, towards the end of the element, to the building of fantasy about how chickens "feel" inside the egg, seems in particular misplaced. The remaining two marked experiential Theme choices which we did not consider above, are involved here:

> how must that little chicken feel, Mirko, by the time he's to this stage?
> because from suddenly being protected in that nice little dark room, all
> of a sudden you're out in the light....

A subsequent series of six additive conjunctions realising structural Theme positions, go on to help build the sense of how the chickens "feel":

> and there's children
> and there's noise
> and there's other chicks around [[pecking at you]]
> and there's light
> and there's food
> and there's water.

We will return to these particular issues in chapter 7, as already suggested, where the transitivity analysis will permit further examination of the field. Suffice to note here that given that it is in the TS that the task for writing is to be defined, the teacher is able at best to guide the children into useful but in themselves insufficient talk of the significance of the sequence of pictures she has given

them around which to develop their writing. She seems unable to focus the talk any more directly upon the decisions to be made in selecting language appropriate for writing. This is regrettable, given her qualities as a teacher. She might for example have returned to the model of the textbook and generated discussion about how its language patterns were put together, perhaps drawing the children into talk about why such writing is not "story"-like at all, but factual. She might have also involved them in some negotiation of jointly constructed models on the blackboard.

Turning to the children's Theme choices in the TS, we find that these are less frequent and varied than in the TO, and this is to be explained by the fact that in this element the teacher is intent upon getting the task established, so that she talks rather more, though as we noted above, she does draw the children into more talk with respect to the task than do many teachers. As Table 6.10 shows, the children produce 13 experienial Themes, two of which are marked, and both of which relate to the "content" field:

> if they're all squashed up, they'd just push out
> if I was in the shell I would feel sad.

Of the other eleven experiential Themes, seven identify class members as in:

> I'm going to look at the pictures,

while the other two identify aspects of the sheet being distributed for writing:

> the mother hen would go first
> that one's the best.

There are three textual Themes produced by the children, realised in one case in a causal conjunction, and in two instances of an additive conjunction. The causal conjunction and the first additive conjunction relate to building meanings to do with the task of writing:

> because that one's the best
> and write about [[how the chicken hatched]].

The other additive conjunction is involved in helping to build speculation about what might happen to the chicken when it enters the world:

> and he might die.

There are three interpersonal Themes used by the children, the first of which is a finite, and part of an question, which the teacher ignores, as teachers frequently tend to do, on the grounds that children should speak only when invited to do so:

> can you put second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth,

and the other two of which are WH interrogatives:

> I know where the second one is
> what's that.

In the former of these, the speaker has again offered what is an unsolicited remark, and is ignored. In fact, the teacher pointedly goes on to ask a question addressed to the class in general, though immediately followed by one addressed to a nominated child - one other than the one who has made the unsolicited remark:

who can tell me the very last picture in this little story?
The very last one, Mandy?

A child has been implicitly rebuked for "calling out", rather than formally signalling intention to ask a question, by raising a hand. This is the more interesting because the third WH interrogative used in interpersonal Theme position cited above ("what's that?") is accepted by the teacher, who does answer. While the general rule applies that children must not call out unsolicited questions or observations, this teacher, like all others, is capable of waiving that rule, sometimes because she is ready to act upon what she sees as the relevance of the child's contribution, and sometimes (though this is harder to prove), because she views the child who asks or calls out more favourably than some others who may do so. In this particular element of this lesson, the child Stephen, who asked the question, "can you put second, third, fourth, fitfh and sixth," was quite regularly ignored by the teacher when he called out, because, in the opinion of the researcher, she liked him less than some of the other children. He was in fact less biddable than they were, and inclined to be boisterous.

As for the second instance of an interpersonal Theme ("what's that"), we would suggest that the teacher accepts that because it serves her purpose for the moment. In fact the question involved serves to direct attention to the task, for it focuses on the writing on the bottom of the page being distributed, reading "How a chicken grows". It is the teacher who has been responsible for allowing the discourse to drift away from the task, and back to considerations of the chicken in the egg, so that the child's question helps bring everyone back on target, and it causes her to move immediately into the new element, the Task Respecification.

When in chapter 8 we examine CONVERSATION STRUCTURE, we will investigate some of the latter matters more fully. As we have already argued in chapter 6, when we examined the register variables that operate, the teacher enjoys considerable power in the relationship that applies. This has consequences for the manner in which she asks questions and for the manner in which she recognises or responds to any questions the children may ask.

We will now examine the TRS element, which is significantly shorter than the TS.

### 6.6.3 THEME IN THE TASK RESPECIFICATION AND CONTROL 4 OF TEXT C

The text of this element is as follows.

Task Respecification/Contol 4

T: Right, who can tell me again what I want you to do this morning? Who's got a really good memory?
Olivera: I've got a bad memory.
T: Right, Jodie's got a good memory. Yes, Jodie, what have you got to do?
Jodie: You have to (pauses)
T: Come on listen 'cause Jodie's going to tell us all about what you're going to do with this. What are you going to do first of all? (No answer)
Jeffrey: I know.
T: Jeff?
Jeffrey: Cut it out.
T: Cut it out. Then what? Jodie?
Jodie: Paste it.
T: Paste it. Paste them in the correct order. Don't just stick them on the same way as here because it may not be the correct order. You can number each little picture if you like.
A Child: The two top ones are. (He means in the right order)

T: Ah, all right good.
A child: And colour it.
T: No listen, then, the colouring. I'd like you then when you've pasted it on, to write your story. After you've done your story, when it's dried out, you can then colour in your picture. If you colour it in first, some of you will spend the whole hour colouring it in, and we still won't have a story from you. You can stick and while it's drying you can write your story.

Control

Can I have the car please? (Addressed to Stephen, who is handling and admiring a toy car of Gabriels's. Stephen hands it over) Thank you. Whose car is it? (no answer) Whose care is it? (Gabriel looks sheepish, though neither he nor Stephen says anything) Gabriel? (he nods his head) Friday, you can collect that.

Table 6.11 Summary of Theme choices in the Task Specification and Control 4 of Text C

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 4 | WH interrogatives | 7 | marked | 4 |
| | | vocatives | 1 | unmarked | 14 |
| | | finites | 1 | | |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 2 | | | | |
| temporal | 1 | | | | |
| conditional | 1 | | | | |
| causal | 2 | | | | |
| Total | 6 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 10 | | 9 | | 18 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 0 | WH interrogatives | 0 | marked | 0 |
| | | vocatives | 0 | unmarked | 4 |
| structurals: | | | | | |
| conjunctions: | | | | | |
| additive | 1 | | | | |
| Total | 1 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 1 | | 0 | | 4 |

There are several marked differences between the TRS and the TS, for as the time approaches for the children to commence writing, the language becomes increasingly involved in operationalising activity. Not only is this element shorter than the TS, which is in turn shorter than the TO, but the children are involved significantly

less in contributing to the construction of the discourse. While both registers find some expression in this element, it is the pedagogical register which predominates. The opportunity for reflection upon the "content" field is definitely over.

While the teacher initiates the element, using a continuative to signal her entry to the element, she does not, as is so often the case, take up monologue, but instead starts a question:

> right who can tell me again what I want....?

Two more continuatives follow quickly:

> right Jodie's got a good memory
> yes Jodie what have you got to do?

Apart from the four continuatives used, the teacher employs six structural Themes realised in conjunctions (two of them additive, two causal, and one each of temporal and conditional conjunctions), all of them helping to build meanings to do with the task, such as:

> don't just stick them on the same way as here because it may
> not be the correct order
> you can number each little picture if you like and while it's drying,
> you can write your story.

Of the 18 experiential Theme choices, those in the early part of the element in the teacher's talk are simple unmarked choices, and in the latter part of the element, three marked experiential Themes are used, while a fourth marked Theme is involved in the Control element. The unmarked ones identify class members on seven occasions, as in:

Jodie's got a good memory
you can number each little picture,

while there are four instances of imperatives, involved in alerting the children that they have a job to do, as in:

come on
listen.

The three marked experiential Themes are to do with the task of writing, and they serve to foreground in summary fashion either aspects of the behaviour in which the children are to engage, or (in the third case) an aspect of activity to be going on while the children write:

after you've done your story, when it's dried out, you can then
colour in your picture
if you colour it in first, some of you will spend the whole hour
[[colouring it in]]
while it's drying you can write your story.

Plainly, it is the pedagogical field which is of prime occasion in all experiential Theme choices used by the teacher.

The final marked experiential Theme choice she uses identifies a circumstance of time, part of punishing Gabriel whose car is to be kept for a few days:

Friday you can collect that.

Interpersonal Themes are fewer than hitherto in Mrs L's lesson, for while she takes some steps to draw the children into rehearsing the task quickly for her, the object is not to open out the discussion in any way which will invite frequent or lengthy contributions from the

children. The teacher uses four WH interrogatives to stimulate talk about the task as in:

> what are you going to do first of all?

The other three interpersonal Themes she uses are one finite and two WH interrogatives, none of them calculated to stimulate much talk, but rather to obtain the car being played with, and to identify its owner:

> can I have the car please?
> whose car is it?
> whose car is it?

The children use five Themes only, one of them a structural Theme realised in an additive conjunction, and the other four all unmarked experiential Themes. Three of the experiential Theme identify members, thematised as part of the process of determining what they are to do as in:

> I've got a bad memory.

One experiential Theme relates directly to the task for writing, and it identifies two of the pictures in the sheet distributed:

> the two top ones are,

while the structural Theme involves building links between clauses realising what it is the children are to do:

> cut it out
> paste it
> and colour it.

This is the simplest and most minimal set of Theme choices in the children's discourse in any element of Text C, though the pattern is to be expected, on the evidence of our earlier examinations of Texts A and B. From our overall examination of Texts A, B and C, it seems that the contribution made by the children to the construction of the discourse actually wanes as the genre proceeds, and as the closing element(s) are reached.

### 6.6.4 THEME IN THE TASK OF TEXT C

Finally, to turn to the T element, which is the most minimal element in the text, consisting of only one clause produced by the teacher.

Task

T: Right now will you hop back to your seats please.
(The children get up from the floor, collecting a sheet of paper with the series of pictures on it, and also picking up the "scrapbooks" earlier referred to by the teacher, and taking these both to their places, where they commence cutting out the pictures as the first step towards completion of their task. The teacher also stands up, and moves about the room, ready to supervise the children's behaviour.)

Table 6.11 summarises the Theme choices here.

Table 6.11 Summary of Theme choices in the Task element of Text C

| Textual | | Interpersonal | | Experiential | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER CHOICES | | | | | |
| continuatives | 2 | finites | 1 | unmarked | 1 |
| TOTAL | 2 | | 1 | | 1 |
| CHILDREN'S CHOICES | | | | | |
| | 0 | | 0 | | 0 |

At this point in the genre, the time for action has been reached and such language as is used is intended to facilitate the action. Thus, in familiar teacherly fashion, the teacher signals the start of the element with a use of two continuatives ("right now"), and she employs one finite, intended not to invite a linguistic response, but to invite action:

> will you hop back to your seats please?

The children comply, knowing that no further talk from them is really required.

Such a Task element compares closely with those of Texts A and B.

In all then, Text C both compares with Texts A and B, in that all three are identifiably instances of the same types of genre, and at the same time it shows points of difference. With respect to schematic structure, for example, it has one element - the Task Respecification

- which the other two texts do not have. With respect to the "content" field, so we have suggested, Text C makes a more wholehearted attempt than the other two to engage the children in coming to grips with a new "content". The children are enabled, especially in the TO and the TS, to produce a more varied range of Themes, textual, interpersonal and experiential Themes, than they are in Texts A and B, and they thus make a great contribution to the negotiation of meanings. Such limitations as the text reveals are born of the teacher's uncertainties with respect both to an appropriate genre for writing, and to the nature of the "content" field involved. Hence it is that the children are only partially involved in learning a new register, and what they do learn is not exploited as well as it could have been.

This is the more unfortunate, we have suggested, because of the facility the teacher undoubtedly shows in promoting talk from the children, and in encouraging them to operate with the comparative independence they do enjoy in contributing to the discourse.

Below, in section 6.7, we shall seek to summarise what we have demonstrated both about the schematic structure of the writing planning genre and about the operation of the two registers in the genre in our three chosen instances, in so far as they are realised in Theme choices.

## 6.7 Summary

In drawing this chapter to a close, we shall now summarise the principal matters we have sought to argue about the writing planning genre, as that has been shown to be represented in each of Texts A, B and C. We should note in starting this summary that we had argued the operation of two registers in the writing planning genre - a pedagogical register, to do with operationalising and directing both the children's general behaviour and their specific behaviour with

respect to learning to write - and a "content" register, to do with the "content" about which the children are to write. We had also suggested that any instance of the writing planning genre would involve minimally three elements - the TO, the TS and the T, and that the two registers operated in selectively different ways to realise the elements of the genre. In addition we argued that an instance of the writing planning genre might involve optional elements, including a TRO, a TRS or a second TS, and a C element or elements. Where the elements TO, TRO, TS, TRS and T might all be regarded as particulate or constituent elements of structure, the C element, we had suggested, functions prosodically. Finally, we had argued that the particular manner of movement through these various elements of structure might be understood to be "wave-like." This chapter has sought to throw some light upon these arguments, and to provide evidence in support of them, is so far as a Theme analysis will permit that.

Our analysis of Theme in Texts A, B and C has led us to argue the following:

> 1) An element of structure in the writing planning genre normally starts in teacher monologue, realising the pedagogical register. Entry to a new element is normally signalled with a use or uses of continuatives, though this is not normally the case in a C element, whose opening is more commonly signalled with a vocative or an imperative.

2) Experiential Theme choices towards the start of an element tend to identify either the teacher or class members or both, as a way of alerting the children that their behaviour is being directed. Marked experiential Theme choices often signal the start of an element as well, serving to foreground in summary way some information and/or activity completed and worth noting before proceeding forward. Interpersonal Themes apart from vocatives do not appear at the start of an element: where they do occur, they frequently signal the start of a Control element, as noted in (1).

3) Since the TO is the element in which the "content" field is developed most fully, it is foregrounded in the "body" of that element. Entry to an engagement with the "content" is signalled by uses of interpersonal Themes, notably uses of WH interrogatives, and the start of dialogue about the field.

4) Experiential Theme choices occurring within the "body" as the "content" is developed tend to be unmarked, both in the teacher's talk and the children's, though there are some exceptions. In general, the children produce mainly unmarked experiential Themes, creating few interpersonal Themes, and even fewer textual Themes. Their principal contributions to the discourse in fact occur in the TO. The teacher's uses of structural Themes, realised in conjunctions, serve to build connectedness of various kinds in the development of the "content" field. The pattern varies somewhat in the case of Text B, where a TRO is introduced, though its general features with respect to Theme choices compare with those in the TO.

5) A TS is normally shorter than a TO, and since a TS is intended to define the task for writing for the children, it will tend to see a convergence of both the pedagogical and "content" registers. It will quite

commonly use a marked experiential Theme to start as noted in (2) above, foregrounding something done, to be born in mind for moving forward, or something yet to be done with respect to the task. The aim is to define the writing task with respect to a given "content". This pattern has been found to vary somewhat in the case of Text B, where a first TS actually develops a "content" field for writing, while the second TS sees the convergence of the two registers. Where the two do converge, there tends to be a pattern of experiential Theme choices in the teacher's talk, such that both "content" field and pedagogical field are identified in interweaving fashion.

(6) Marked experiential Theme choices will be used to foreground features of the task. Interpersonal Themes are normally fewer in a TS than in a TO, though in the case of Texts B (in the TS1) and Text C, the teachers make quite frequent use of WH interrogatives to

promote talk. Textual Themes, as realised in structurals, do occur in the teacher's talk in the TS, but they tend to be less frequent than in the TO. That is because in the latter the "content" field is developed, while in the TS the pedagogical field is developed. Again this pattern varies in the case of Text B, where the first TS makes considerable use of structurals in the teacher's talk in the first TS, and rather less use in the second TS.

7) Continuatives tend to be used by the teacher in the "body" of the TS, where the object is to operationalise activity.

8) The T is the shortest element in the schematic structure, and that is because behaviour is being operationalised. This element always accompanies a marked change in the physical disposition of the participants. The pedagogical field is foregrounded here. Teacher's experiential Theme choices tend to identify the children as part of directing them to action.

Textual Themes in her talk are normally few, and those that occur tend to be continuatives, serving to forward activity. She uses few if any interpersonal Themes, tending to discourage talk at this stage in the genre. The children frequently produce no discourse in this element, though when they do, such Theme choices as they use tend to be WH interrogatives, used to elicit clarifying information from the teacher with respect to the task to be done.

9) While the pattern with respect to
the order of the particulate elements of schematic structure does not vary, the C element may occur anywhere, since its expression is prosodic. Where a C element does occur, it tends to be signalled with a use of a vocative, said by the teacher with an increase in volume. An associated experiential Theme will sometimes be realised in an imperative, as noted in (1) though it may be realised in a

choice of a second person pronoun, identifying the child(ren) in question.

The above represent a series of observations our THEME analysis has enabled us to make about the writing planning genre as that is realised in Texts A, B and C. Three other general observations need to be mentioned, emerging from our discussion in this chapter, and to be borne in mind in our subsequent discussions in chapters 7 and 8. The first concerns the relative contributions of the teacher and children in each of the three instances of the writing planning genre. In general, the children make the least contribution in Text A, which is in any case the shortest text. They are enabled to participate a little more fully in Text B, where the teacher shows some facility especially in the TS 1, in scaffolding for selected children the kinds of language they can use to build observations about their personal experience in losing school lunches. While we shall argue that even then the "content" field she is handling is an insufficient one for the purposes of school learning, she does model some desirable features of building understanding with the children in language. In text C, the children participate most fully, using a greater range of textual, interpersonal and experiential Themes than they do in Texts A and B.

The second observation concerns the nature of the writing activity to be taught in each of the three texts. In no case is there a particularly well directed discussion of the kind of writing to be done, so that the pedagogical field in each text remains underdeveloped, and the children are left to deduce a great deal both of the features of the written mode they must learn and of the nature of the written genre they should write.

The third general observation concerns the nature of the "content" fields apparently selected as appropriate for early childhood learning. With the exception of that involved in the third text, we suggest that

those selected are not calculated to open up new opportunities for learning of the kind schooling is supposed to offer.

Any limitations with respect either to the advice for writing or to the selected "content" fields, we suggest, are to be understood as problems created by the particular ideologies of early childhood education commonly in operation in our schools.

# 7 Transitivity in the writing planning genre

## 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter we aim to examine TRANSITIVITY in the writing planning genre. The notion of the TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM has been already introduced in chapter 1 (section 1.3) and in chapter 3 (sections 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.5.5, 3.5.8 and 3.5.12). The earlier discussions, especially in chapter 3, have already served to demonstrate the important ways in which a TRANSITIVITY analysis can illuminate the kinds of meanings created in a curriculum genre. In this chapter our purposes in examining TRANSITIVITY are fourfold. Firstly, we shall argue that such an analysis complements what we have already been able to demonstrate in our THEME analysis in chapter 6, providing confirmatory evidence for the presence of the schematic structure of the writing planning genre as we have already described that. Secondly, we shall argue that such an analysis illuminates still further the operation of the pedagogical and "content" registers in our three instances of the writing planning genre. That is to say, the two registers operate in systematic ways such that the pedagogical register projects the "content" register and the two together realise the elements of structure; one of the linguistic systems through which the two registers do these things is TRANSITIVITY. Thirdly, we shall argue that in so examining the operation of the two registers we are enabled to see rather more fully the strengths and limitations of both the pedagogical and "content" fields as these are developed in each of our three instances of the writing planning genre. That is because a TRANSITIVITY analysis in particular enables us to penetrate the nature of "what's going on" in a text, to hark back to Halliday's own definition of TRANSITIVITY, already quoted in chapter 3 (section 3.5.3). Finally, we shall suggest that the discussion overall throws more light upon the significance of the ideologies of early childhood education generally and of language

education in particular, as these are found to be present in the writing planning genre.

In chapter 6, where we concentrated upon THEME only, we have already managed to argue a number of matters concerning our three instances of the writing planning genre. Since we shall claim that all our observations with respect to the three texts can be both enriched and enhanced by what we can demonstrate of the operation of TRANSITIVITY, it is intended immediately below in section 7.2 to summarise the most important of these observations, hence sharpening the reader's expectations of what we hope to accomplish in this chapter.

Once that is done, we intend to discuss in more detail certain features of TRANSITIVITY. We shall outline in particular the manner in which we deal with relational and behavioural processes, though we shall say a little about mental and verbal processes as well. We have already introduced the major types of relational processes in chapter 3 (section 3.5.3), and for the purposes of what was argued in that chapter, what was said at that point was sufficient. However, in this chapter, because we need to be able to argue rather more fully the ways in which relational processes are involved in building the technical language of various "content" fields, we shall need to introduce a greater degree of delicacy into our description of such processes. In the case of the mental and verbal processes, we did explain in chapter 3 (section 3.5.3) that we handle these a little differently from Halliday (1985a). We shall have a little more to say about these processes, and we shall argue that mental processes in particular have a role in realising aspects of the pedagogical field. We also indicated in chapter 3 (again in section 3.5.3) that our manner of treating behavioural processes differed from Halliday's, though we did not at that point explain how this was so. It will be necessary to do so for the purposes of our discussion in this chapter, since behavioural processes are quite significant in the operation of the

writing planning genre, also having an important role in realising aspects of the pedagogical field.

In general, we shall argue that when the pedagogical field is foregrounded, it is realised primarily in patterned uses of behavioural, mental and material processes. These processes are employed as aspects of directing the children's behaviour, and they tend to occur at the start of an element of schematic structure, though they will occur elsewhere, whenever behaviour is being operationalised. The principal participants in these processes - the behaver, the senser and the actor - tend to be class members, because it is their behaviour that is being operationalised by the teacher. Sometimes the teacher chooses to identify herself with the class members by using "we," as we have already noticed when we looked at experiential Theme choices in chapter 6. Other participants in the pedagogical field - such as a range, a phenomenon or a goal - tend to identify aspects of the "content" field, though features of the latter field are often realised in a circumstance as well. To the extent that the pedagogical field addresses questions to do with the actual task of writing, those aspects of that task which are handled tend also to find expression in participants such as ranges, phenomena or goals, or in circumstances. An example may be provided from the opening clause of the teacher in Text A:

| | |
|---|---|
| now we 're going to talk | some more about the things [[we have been talking about for the last couple of days]] |
| *Beh. Pro: beh.* | *Circ: extent Circ: matter* |

Where the "content" field is being foregrounded, as in the "body" of the Task Orientation especially, then it is realised through processes, participants and circumstances. The nature of the processes selected does depend of course upon the kind of field involved. In fact, the "content" fields in Texts A, B and C all make use of the full range of transitivity processes, though there are differences in the

relative distributions of these in each text. For example, Text A, the "uniform text" builds meanings about the uniforms and those who wear them; it uses relational processes to build aspects of the uniforms, their appearance, and the persons who wear them, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| it | 's | a dark colour isn't it? |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

while it employs material processes to build aspects of what those persons do, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| who | wears | this kind of uniform? |
| *Actor* | *Pro: material* | *Goal.* |

Text B, the "my lunch text" builds meanings about lost school lunches; it makes use of relational processes to make observations about how people feel about lost lunches, as in:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| but | he | doesn't look | happy | at all |
| | *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute,* | |

and material processes to build reconstruction of activities to do with losing lunches, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| left | your lunch | at home | on the bench |
| *Pro: material* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place* | *Circ: loc: place.* |

Text C, the "chicken text" is concerned with the development of chickens; it uses relational processes to build observations about the various stages of development of a chick and what it looks like, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| it | 's turning into | more of an oval shape |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

as well as material processes to build actions in which chickens and hens engage, as in :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| he | 's pecked | nearly all the way around |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: extent.* |

We have already suggested that the "content" field in each of the three texts is rather limited, though we do suggest that that in Text C is potentially a good one, and that aspects of it are in fact well developed. We shall argue that appropriate development of a "content" field at least of the kind involved in Texts A and C, will involve development of a technical language, and that the relative absence of such a language, is one important measure of the fact that no significant "content" is involved in either. In the case of Text C, we shall suggest that we are able to demonstrate both in what ways a technical language and its associated understandings are established, and in what ways the field might have been developed further, say in the manner of the textbook displayed by the teacher, though she read only very selectively from it. Development of a significant "content" field, we shall suggest is what is involved in building "uncommonsense" knowledge with the students concerned. With respect to Text B, where the object is to involve the children in some imaginative activity preparatory to writing, the "content" field is by its nature different from those of the other two texts. Nonetheless, we shall argue that simple reconstruction of personal experience, which actually constitutes most of what goes on in the lesson, is not a sufficient "content" for school learning

We shall seek to establish all these matters in detailed examinations in turn, of Texts A, B and C. We shall argue that the results of our analyses, when combined with those already established for THEME, do potentially make an important contribution to the development of an educational linguistics. Such a linguistics, we suggest, is one which provides teachers not only with an enhanced sense of how

curriculum activities of the kind involved in the writing planning genre are constructed, but also with a sense of the possibilities for intervention and change in such activities.

Overall then, we aim to do the following in this chapter:

1) to provide an introductory summary of matters already argued with respect to each of Texts A, B and C, to be borne in mind in our developing discussion of TRANSITIVITY in the same three texts;

2) to outline features of the TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM, examining in particular our methods of treating mental, verbal, behavioural and relational processes;

3) to outline the manner in which mental, behavioural and material processes operate to help realise the pedagogical field in particular, and through it, to help realise also the elements of schematic structure of the writing planning genre;

4) to suggest that relational processes have an important role in building the technical language of a "content" field;

4) to outline the manner in which transitivity processes operate to help build the "content" field in those parts of the elements of structure where the "content" field is foregrounded. We shall suggest that the particular combinations of processes which realise the "content" vary, depending upon the nature of the field involved;

5) to argue that where the two fields converge, the pedagogical field tends to be realised in processes, while the "content" field tends to be realised in associated participants and/or circumstances;

6) to examine Texts A, B, and C in turn, demonstrating the general substance of the above claims with respect both to the operation of the two registers and to that of the schematic structure;

7) to argue, inter alia, the general value of the analyses undertaken in the development of an educational linguistics, providing as it does the possibility of recognising ways of

intervening in educational
practices, with a view to
changing them.

## 7.2 Texts A, B and C: the principal arguments

It will be recalled that we introduced our three instances of the writing planning genre in a particular order, and that the order had little to do with the chronological order in which the teaching episodes occurred. In fact, Texts A and B were taught in the third year of the study when the children were in year 2, while Text C was taught in the second year, when the children were in year 1. We examined the texts in their chosen order for at least three related reasons. The first concerns their status as instances of the writing planning genre, the second concerns the operation of the two registers in each instance of the genre, and the third concerns the nature of the contributions made by the teacher and the children to the construction of the discourse in each case. We shall comment a little more fully on each of these.

To take the first of the reasons, concerning the status of the texts as instances of the writing planning genre, we argued that Text A had the three basic elements of schematic structure found in the writing planning genre: the Task Orientation, the Task Specification and the Task. Text B, we suggested, had a Task Reorientation as well as a Task Orientation, two Task Specification elements rather than one, and a Task Respecification and two Control elements as well as a Task. Text C, we argued, had a Task Orientation, a Task Specification, a Task Respecification, three Control elements and a Task. The texts thus offered opportunity to move from an instance of the most minimal realisation of the schematic structure to two other instances which provided identifiably similar realisations, while incorporating several optional elements of structure as well.

To turn to the second of our reasons for the order of studying our three texts, concerning the significance of the two registers, it was seen that the three texts provided three different opportunities to examine the operation of the pedagogical and "content" registers. In Text A, with respect to the "content" register, it was suggested the object was that the teacher and children work with a "content" field selected partly for its relationship to an overall curriculum theme on "Clothing", and partly for the manner in which it drew upon the children's familiar personal experience of several occupational groups and the uniforms they wore. The interest in uniforms was seen to make a contribution to the overall curriculum theme as an aspect of the social science program. Such a "content" field, it was argued, was insufficient as a "content" for school learning, providing little of substance as a form of knowledge about which children might write. The children were not enabled to turn their "commonsense" knowledge of aspects of wider community life to do with uniforms into "uncommonsense" knowledge, of a kind which might cause them to deal with experience in new ways. With respect to the pedagogical field, it was suggested that while the teacher certainly worked with some degree of effectiveness in directing the children's behaviour towards considering the uniforms displayed, little advice was given concerning the nature of the writing task they were to undertake.

In the case of Text B, the object with respect to the "content" register was that the teacher read the children a story about a boy whose school lunch was stolen by a dog, and subsequently that she and they talk about incidents in which class members and/or their family members lost school lunches. Such a "content" was chosen as an aspect of an overall curriculum theme on "Food", and this particular lesson was seen as a part of the language arts program. As an example of a suitable "content", it was suggested, the notion of a story about a lost lunch was again an insufficient one, providing little in the way of opportunity to learn new knowledge. Moreover, with respect to the pedagogical field, the actual story book read offered a

rather poor model of the written language upon which the children might have drawn to undertake their own writing. In this regard the teacher herself did help the children to model appropriate patterns of language, because in drawing out from some of the children the incidents in which they or family members had lost school lunches, she did quite effectively "scaffold" at least some of the features of a text in which personal experience might be reconstructed as for a "story-like" genre. The teacher here thus offered a somewhat better instance of how to work with children by "scaffolding" language for them, than did the teacher in Text A. She did not, however, directly address questions to do with the nature of the written genres she wanted the children to produce. To this extent, as in Text A, the pedagogical field remained very underdeveloped in Text B.

Text C was notable, we suggested, because in this the teacher and children were involved in exploring a "content" field of some substance, in that it did offer the children opportunity to work with their established "commonsense" knowledge about chickens, building from this to develop new "uncommonsense" knowledge about chickens and their development. The lesson was undertaken as part of an overall curriculum theme on "Chickens", and it was seen to make a contribution to that theme in terms of the science program. In the initial part of the Task Orientation, and drawing upon an excellent book about chicken development, the teacher successfully elicited from the children much of the familiar and "commonsense" knowledge they had about chickens. In the same element she subsequently moved towards involving the children in negotiation of new understandings about chickens, and towards allowing the children to contribute to the development of such knowledge. The text here thus provided an interesting contrast with Texts A and B, it was suggested, both in that a "content" of some significance was involved, and in that the children were enabled to participate rather more fully in its articulation. However, it was nonetheless argued

there were difficulties both with respect to the "content" field and the pedagogical field.

In the case of the former, it was suggested that there were two important senses in which aspects of the "content" were not fully developed: firstly in the sense that chickens develop from the union of an egg and sperm; secondly, in the sense that chickens are understood, scientifically at least, in terms of their relationship to other living creatures. Both these matters, we noted, were actually dealt with clearly in the textbook, though we did not quote from the textbook to prove the point. We shall do so, incidentally, in this chapter.

In the case of the difficulties to do with the pedagogical field in Text C, we argued that despite the success achieved in involving the children in talk of the "content" field, the teaching/learning activity was somewhat compromised. This was because of the teacher's advice to the children to write a "story" about chickens, though they were issued with a series of pictures as a stimulus to writing more reminiscent of scientific than of "story-like" genres. While the term "story" is itself a very general one, its thrust, as we argued, is to point children towards the writing of narratives, often drawing upon imagined or "make believe" experience. In short, we suggested that the teacher unwittingly pointed the children into two conflicting directions, so that on the one hand they explored a scientific register in talk, but on the other hand they were directed to the writing of a text of an imaginative kind. Furthermore, we suggested, the actual advice to the children with respect to their writing task was of a general kind, not really calculated to open up understandings of the written mode or of the features of written genres, even "story-like" ones.

Overall, Text C thus provided an interesting contrast with Texts A and B in that unlike what was the case in the latter two, an opportunity was provided for examination of a useful "content" field, and in that the children were enabled to participate with their teacher in jointly building understandings about that field. However, Text C compared with Texts A and B in that it offered insufficient assistance to the children in terms of mastering an appropriate genre for writing.

The general problems with respect both to poorly motivated "content" fields and poorly motivated pedagogical fields we attributed to the operation of the ideologies both of early childhood education and of "language experience" as a basis for learning. These ideologies have at least two unfortunate consequences. Their effect we suggested firstly, is to ask too little of young children in coming to terms with new knowledge, delaying needlessly their engagement with significant fields of enquiry. Secondly, their effect is that very little explicit information concerning writing is given the children: the very linguistic tools they must select in order to write remain hidden, functioning at some implicit level only. In Bernstein's terms then, as earlier indicated (chapter 1, section 1.2), an "invisible pedagogy" applies in the writing planning genre.

The third of our reasons for examining the three instances of the writing planning genre in the selected order concerned the nature of the talk in each and in particular the nature of the contributions of teacher and students. The three texts in fact gave opportunity to examine three different manifestations of the teacher/student relationship in the writing planning genre. Thus, the teacher in Text A generated the least talk from the children, the teacher in Text B generated rather more, and the teacher in Text C generated the most talk. There were, we argued, interesting differences in the kinds of linguistic resources the children were enabled to deploy in each of the three texts. Because the children were encouraged to

talk rather more often in Text C, they were necessarily enabled to draw upon a much more varied range of Theme choices than in the other two texts. They thus enjoyed a degree of independence in contributing to the construction of the text, especially in the Task Orientation, of a kind not enjoyed in Texts A and B. We suggested that Text C in particular provided evidence of the kinds of linguistic models that would need to apply in a classroom text in which the children were enabled to participate with their teacher in negotiation of understandings both with respect to the pedagogical tasks of writing and with respect to the "contents" about which to write.

These three sets of arguments, concerning the schematic structure of the writing planning genre, the operation of the two registers (their fields in particular), and the nature of the talk of teacher and children - all raise issues of critical importance in the development of an educational linguistics, and through that, in the development of improved educational practices. It is important, firstly, that we develop for teachers an improved sense of the operation of their lessons, encouraging them to understand the nature of the schematic structure of the curriculum genre they generate. If teachers are aware of the manner in which such a patterned goal-directed activity occurs, they are the better equipped to review it, determining in what ways they might amend and alter it.

As one aspect of understanding the manner in which the schematic structure of the genre works, it is important, secondly, that teachers have a sense of the operation of the two registers, for it will be in coming to terms with these that teachers will ultimately come to teach the more effectively. They will have a better developed sense of the nature of a "content" field than is true in Texts A, B or even in C, and in particular of the manner in which that field is realised in language. They will, for example, certainly seek to work with children's "commonsense" experience of the world, much as the

teachers in Texts A, B and C all do. But they will consciously seek in addition to engage the children in building new and "uncommonsense" knowledge, and hence in learning to handle the technical registers in which such knowledge is realised. In addition, because teachers will have an enhanced appreciation of the manner in which the various "content" fields are constructed in the schematic structures of different types of genres, they will seek the more consciously to teach their students to recognise and to use such genres, especially the various written ones of general concern to this study.

Finally, where teachers have an improved sense of what it is to guide their students' talk in ways such that they both "scaffold" appropriate language for their students and engage them in negotiation and construction of new knowledge in language, then they will adopt very much improved patterns of teacher guided talk about the "content" for writing, and about the nature of the writing activity.

All these matters it is hoped will be considerably developed through our analysis of TRANSITIVITY, though the third matter, concerning the respective contributions of the teacher and children in jointly working out some important understandings will be in particular enhanced in addition in our discussion of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in chapter 8.

## 7.3 Transitivity in the two registers in the writing planning genre

As we saw in chapter 6, elements of structure always begin by foregrounding the pedagogical register. The opening of elements such as the Task Orientation or the Task Specification for example, is signalled by a teacher use of monologue, in which the teacher's object is to point directions for the children as they enter the element. Behaviour tends to be operationalised partly through the use of such

textual Themes as continuatives and through the use of experiential Theme choices which identify class members. Interpersonal Themes are few, and their eventual appearance tends to signal the entry to dialogue and to engagement with the "content" field in the "body" of the element.

Processes used by the teacher in the opening of the element tend to be behavioural, mental or material, employed as part of operationalising activity. We have already cited above in section 7.1 an instance of an opening clause from the teacher in Text A, in which a behavioural process is employed to operationalise activity. Since as we have already indicated, we choose to treat behavioural processes rather differently from Halliday (1985a) it will be appropriate now to explain the differences. In fact, our manner of treating behavioural processes is taken from Painter and Martin (N.D.) in their Functional Grammar Workbook.

Halliday treats behavioural processes as being grammatically "intermediate between material and mental processes." (1985a, 128), while Painter and Martin argue that behavioural processes are "the action versions of mental and verbal processes". According to Painter and Martin, behavioural processes are most like mental processes of perception, but they differ from the latter in two important ways. In the first place, unlike mental processes, they take present in present tense as their unmarked form for referring to an action occurring at the moment of speaking. In the second place, they cannot report, so they never involve hypotactic projection. In the latter respect, by the way, behavioural processes differ from verbal processes, which do project. One important characteristic that behavioural processes share with mental processes is that their principal participant, the behaver, must always be a conscious being, unlike what is the case by contrast, in material processes. Compare the following made up examples:

| | |
|---|---|
| behavioural | he's listening to the radio |
| perception | he hears the music |
| | |
| behavioural | she's talking about the concert |
| verbal | she says she is sick. |

As we have already suggested, behavioural processes tend to occur in teacher talk at those points at the start of elements where the pedagogical register is most prominent. The teacher's task at this point in an element is to direct and guide the children's behaviour. We find Martin's system of classifying behavioural processes helpful to use, for it provides in our view a more comprehensive method of dealing with these processes than does Halliday's discussion (1985a, 128-9).

Behaviour may be operationalised in teacher choices of processes other than behavioural, including mental processes. The teacher in Text B, for example, starts her Task Orientation thus:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| now these people are back | | |
| I | want | you to listen to this little tiny story [[like the one we had yesterday]] |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog* | *Phenomenon* |
| *α* | | *β* |
| | | |
| you | know | we had "A Monster Sandwich" |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* |
| *α* | | *β* |

In the opening of the Task Orientation of Text C, the teacher says in part:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| we | 're just going to find out what you people know about this little book | | |
| *Senser* | *Process: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | |
| *α* | | *β* | |

In both instances it is clear that the teacher is operationalising activity.

It will be observed that as we earlier explained in chapter 3 (section 3.5.3), wherever a hypotactic projected clause is used we have chosen to regard the latter clause as either a phenomenon or a verbiage. As we indicated in chapter 3, our intention in so labelling the clause in question is to bring out the nature of the relationship of the clause to either a phenomenon or a verbiage. It should be noted, incidentally, that to label a projected clause in this manner is really to argue that hypotactically projected clauses are, from the point of view of experiential meanings, actually embedded. However, we shall not in fact take the step of implying that such clauses need to be regarded as embedded.

The third of the types of processes in which the pedagogical register is sometimes operationalised and the start of an element of schematic structure also built up, is the material process, as we have already noted above. Where material processes are used in the opening of an element, they are normally employed as part of constructing some activity in which the children have hitherto engaged, to be borne in mind for the new lesson, or they may be part of building activity to be embarked upon in the lesson in question. In the opening of the TO of Text B, for example, the teacher reminds

the children of what has gone on before:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| you know | we | had | "A Monster Sandwich" |
| | *Actor* | *Pro: material* | *Goal* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| then | we | made up | our own monster sandwiches. |
| | *Actor* | *Pro: material* | *Goal* |

Turning to a consideration of the types of processes found realising aspects of the "content" field, it will be clear that the nature of the processes used will differ depending upon the field in question. A "content" field seeking to develop understandings of how chickens grow will necessarily be realised in somewhat different sets of transitivity processes from fields which build information about uniforms or about how people feel when they lose their lunches. It is possible, however, to make some general observations concerning the nature of a "content" field, and how that will be built up in terms of a technical language which in turn characterises some form of "uncommonsense" knowledge.

We have already argued at several points in earlier chapters, following Bernstein (see section 1.2, chapter 1), that a function of schooling will be that children are inducted into some developing appreciation of the manner in which knowledge that is commonplace, local or familiar can be transformed in the processes of building new and unfamiliar ways of dealing with experience. The various school subjects or "disciplines", some sense of which of course lies behind the curriculum themes which gave rise to our three selected writing lessons, actually represent aspects of the "uncommonsense" ways we have learned to deal with experience and ideas in our culture. Eggins, Martin and Wignell (1987), Martin and Rothery (1988), Martin (1989; in press), White and Welford (1987) Cope and Kalantzis (1987; in press), Gilbert (in press), (Lemke, 1988), Christie and Rothery (1989) (McNamara, 1989) have all in interesting ways

sought to explore the manner in which "bodies of knowledge" or fields of enquiry are constructed in language. A detailed examination of the various arguments of these writers is beyond the scope of this discussion. However, all would argue that capacity to understand and work in some tradition or field of enquiry will involve learning to operate with certain patterns of using language, and that it is in these that various methods of enquiry are encoded. Among the important linguistic resources individuals will draw upon to build the technical language of various subjects will be the TRANSITIVITY system, and as Martin has shown (1989; in press), certain types of relational processes are in particular involved.

The various sciences build their technical language through extensive use of relational processes. At the simplest level, we may employ an attributive process to build basic description of a commonsense kind, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| that cat | is | black |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute.* |

The building of simple description is no doubt a fundamental feature of much of our everyday uses of language, as well as our uses of language in schools, and in any scientific contexts. Note that the Attribute here is realised in the use of an adjective "black". An Attribute can also be realised in a noun, though it will be one of a general kind, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| that cat | 's | a black one |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute.* |

Such processes may be probed by asking the question, "how or what ... like?" Answer "it's black", or "it's a black one".

While processes that describe build simple but essential observations of a commonsense kind, other attributive processes may also be used to classify. Processes that classify take phenomena and group them. In such processes, the Attribute tends to be realised in a noun only, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the cat | *is* | a mammal |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

though a rather general adjective may be used as well as the noun, taking the role of a Classifier (Halliday, 1985a, 164) as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the cat | *is* | a small mammal |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute.* |

The probe used in classifying processes is "what kind of .. is that?" Answer: "a small mammal". In that processes that classify take phenomena and group them in various ways, they ultimately help build the various taxonomies in which scientific enquiry abounds, and in which technical items such as "mammal" are used.

While attributive processes are involved in describing and classifying, as Martin has shown (1987) , identifying processes are involved in exemplifying and "exhausting". The following is an instance of an exemplifying process:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a cat | *is* | an example of a mammal |
| *Token* | *Pro: intensive* | *Value* |

A characteristic of such a process, marking it as exemplifying, is that its deixis is indefinite, while by contrast deixis in the case of what

Martin calls an "exhausting" process is definite, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the cat | is | the mammal |
| *Token* | *Pro: intensive* | *Value* |

Martin calls such a processes "exhausting" because they have a "completing" function: in other words they create a definitive statement. They may be probed by asking the question "who, which, what?"

Principles of describing, classifying, exemplifying and exhausting, Martin has suggested, are what are actually involved in the manner in which identifying and attributive processes are used to build meanings within a field. They may be thought of as arranged along a cline, each representing ways by which the familiar phenomena of "commonsense" experience are eventually translated into the new types of phenomena of "uncommonsense" experience. Figure 7.1 sets out the four types of processes.

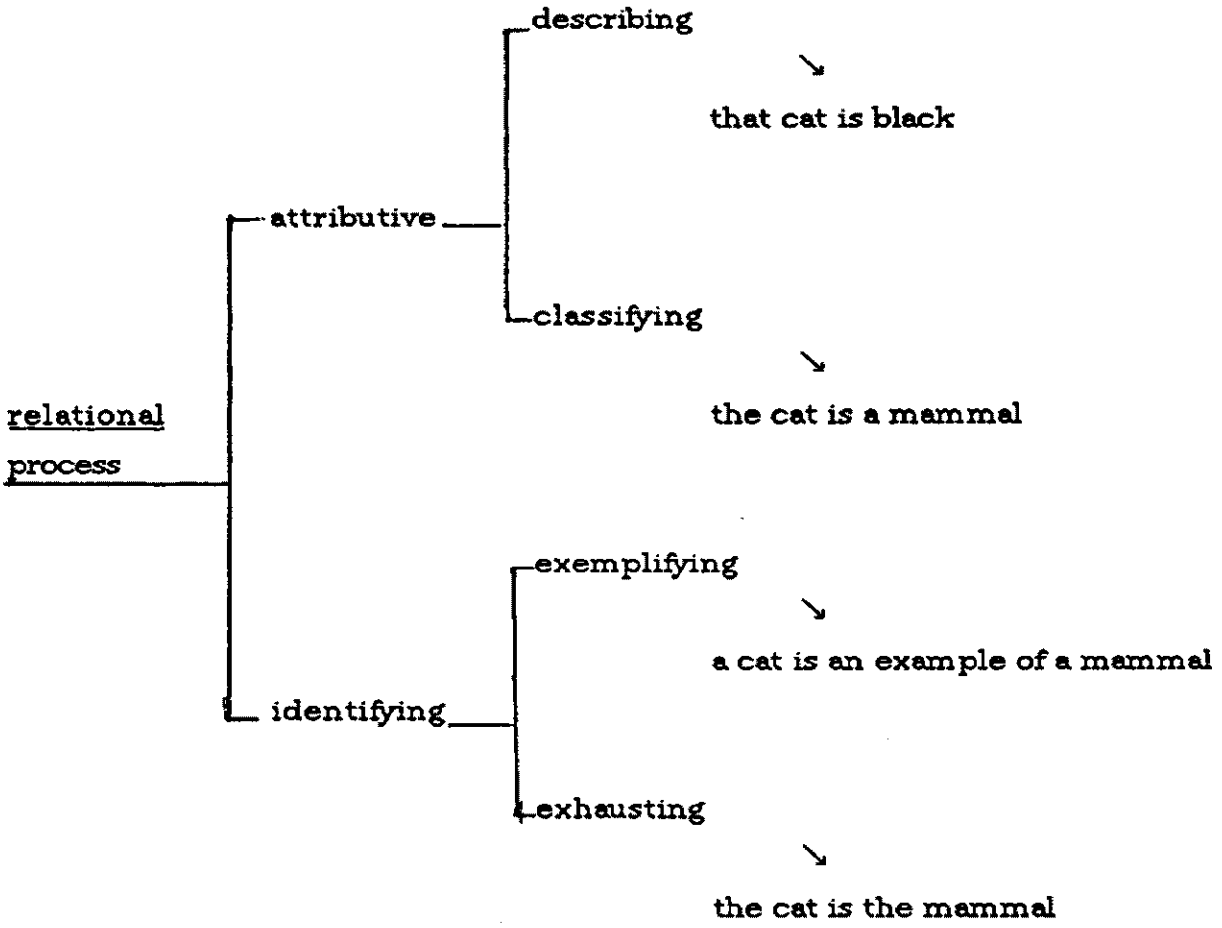



Figure 7.1: Ordering experience through relational processes.

Relational processes have an essential role in building the technical language especially of the many areas of scientific enquiry, and as Martin has observed such technical language "enables scientists to reclassify the world". (1989,40) Consider for example the following:

> an animal which gives birth to its young alive is called a mammal
> the biosphere is made up of many ecosystems

The process of building technical language involves grammatical metaphor and among other things, the creation of nominalisations (Halliday, 1985b, 93-94). Very commonly a transitivity process will

be turned into a nominalisation. Note for example the way in which the material process "precipitate" is nominalised in the following instance, cited by Martin (1989, 40):

> precipitation refers to all forms of water which fall from the sky.

Thus are the resources of the language used to build and expand our collective potential to mean. Martin suggests that the sciences make rather more use of technical language than do studies like English and history, though the latter two certainly make considerable use of abstraction (Martin, 1989,41-2).

The relevance to our examination of the three writing planning genres of these observations regarding relational processes and nominalisations in the building of fields, lies in the fact, as we shall see, that so little language is in fact used in ways which might build the "uncommonsense" knowledge of school learning, especially in the cases of Texts A and C. It is true that Text B, the "my lunch" text makes no claim to build a scientific "content" field, since its object is to have the children construct either real or imagined experiences in losing their school lunches. However, we would argue that such an object is in itself insufficient, precisely because it fails to challenge the children to explore experience in new ways, involving them in dealing with no more than the very commonplace. As for Texts A and C, both do seek to build a scientific "content" field, in the former of a social scientific character, and in the latter of a natural scientific character. As our analyses below will seek to demonstrate, the relatively limited use of transitivity processes in ways calculated to build more than simple description in all three of our instances of the writing planning genre serves to demonstrate that in each case not enough is done under the teacher's guidance to involve the children in learning how to construct new and potentially "uncommonsense" knowledge of a kind characteristic of a useful "content" field.

Our general observations with respect to the transitivity processes and their role in building the pedagogical and "content" fields having now been established, we shall turn to an examination of TRANSITIVITY in Text A. Before we do so, however, we should make one observation regarding the manner in which field is to be examined through TRANSITIVITY. We would wish to avoid giving the impression that our analysis will exhaust all possibilities for examining field. In fact, were we to explore field more fully in this study, we would need to examine its manner of realisation in other linguistic systems, including most notably its lexis. A study of lexical cohesion in both the pedagogical and the "content" fields would in fact add valuable dimensions to the study. However, in a study of this kind, whose focus is primarily upon genre, it is not possible to do justice to a detailed examination of field. This qualification having been noted, we can proceed.

## 7.4 Transitivity in Text A, the "uniform text"

As we did in the chapter on Theme, we will consider TRANSITIVITY in each element of each text in turn. At this point, we should note that in Appendices 3.A, 3.B and 3.C at the end of this chapter the reader will find the complete tables setting out transitivity processes in Texts A, B and C.

### 7.4.1 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT A

Table 7.1 sets out the transitivity choices of the teacher and the children in the TO of Text A: it should be noted that transitivity processes in embedded clauses have not been included in these calculations.

Table 7.1: Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Orientation of Text A

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 30 | 16 |
| Mental: | perception | 6 | 0 |
| | cognition | 5 | 2 |
| Behavioural | | 12 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) attributive | 11 | 9 |
| | (ii) identifying | 7 | 3 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 1 | 3 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 2 | 4 |
| Verbal | | 4 | 2 |
| Existential | | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | | 79 | 41 |

The opening teacher monologue, in which the pedagogical register is foregrounded and the commencement of the element of structure is also signalled, makes use of five behavioural processes: almost half in fact of the behavioural processes that the teacher uses in this element thus come in the opening clause complexes, where direction of behaviour is of such importance. These processes help

to establish what is to be done, as well as what has been done hitherto, for as we earlier noted in chapter 6 (section 6.4.1), part of the teacher's intention here is to clarify what has been already known and/or done before, as a basis for a movement forward into the new:

now we re going to talk some more about the things [we have been talking about for the last couple of days]
*Beh. Pro: beh. Circ: extent Circumstance: matter*

we were looking at different people's uniforms
*Behaver Pro: behavioural Range*

we looked at the crossing lady's uniform
*Behaver Pro: behavioural Range*

we talked to the lady about [why she wears it]
*Behaver Pro: behavioural Addressee Circumstance: matter*

and for each of the uniforms [we 've looked at ] we 've asked some questions
*Circumstance: matter Beh. Pro: beh. Range*

The pedagogical field is foregrounded in the choice of the behavioural process in each case and hence, too, in the choice of the principal participant - the behaver, identifying the class members "we". The "content" field on the other hand is identified either in another participant choice, such as a range as in:

different people's uniforms

or

some questions,

or in a circumstance as in:

about the things [[we have been talking about for the last couple of days]].

Aa noted above in section 7.3, wherever the two fields converge in fact this tends to be the case: the pedagogical field is realised in processes and their principal participants, while the "content" field is realised in other participants or in a circumstance. This is very interesting evidence of the manner in which linguistic resources are deployed to create the pedagogical register, which thus operates to "project" the "content" register. From the point of entry to the "content" register as we shall see, the linguistic resources are deployed in such a way that the "content" is realised in processes, participants and circumstances. Bernstein's general observations (already alluded to in chapter 1, section 1.2, chapter 3, section 3.4, and chapter 5, section 5.4 ) would appear to be confirmed with respect to the operation of a recontextualising principle, such that the "contents" of fields of enquiry and/or activity "outside the school" are relocated for the purposes of teaching and learning. TRANSITIVITY represents one of the significant linguistic systems through which the one field "projects" the other.

The move from the foregrounding of the pedagogical field to the eventual foregrounding of the "content"field, as we have already observed in chapter 6 (section 6.4.1) is signalled by a shift in MOOD choice. In addition, as we can now observe, it is also signalled by the use of a relational process - more specifically an identifying process- serving to cause the children to identify some questions relevant to the "content" field both used hitherto, and pertinent to this lesson:

| what | were | the questions |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process: intensive* | *Value.* |

A child responds to the teacher's question, actually reading from the board, as we have already noted in chapter 6:

| who | they | were |
|---|---|---|
| *Value* | *Token* | *Process: intensive* |

| what | they | wear |
|---|---|---|
| *Goal* | *Actor* | *Process: material* |

| why | they | wear | it |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Circumstance: cause* | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |

The sequence of transitivity choices here, like the choice of the interrogative mood in each case, is quite significant. To take the latter matter first, teachers sometimes list a series of points on the board, which are essentially moodless, since they are normally realised through nominal groups such as "uniforms" or "people's uniforms." In that Mrs S has chosen here to select the interrogative mood and thereby to create three questions, she has signalled that the issues involved are in some sense "problematic", and hence constituting a "content" to be investigated and learned about. In itself, such a strategy is a very frequent feature of teachers' talk, and part of operationalising thinking about a "content". In addition, however, the selection of transitivity choices and their sequence is also important, for they build the order in which a "content" about each of a number of uniforms is to be constructed. Thus, as we have seen, the first process is another identifying one- "who they were," aimed at directing the children to identifying a group of persons who wear uniforms. The subsequent two are both instances of the same material process, linked in one case to a goal and in the other to a circumstance both serving to direct attention towards the items worn by the group in question - "what they wear" and "why they wear it."

In fact, though the questions are in themselves reasonable guides for directing talk, they are not helpful in guiding the development of the written mode, as we shall see in chapter 9 when we review some of the writing done by the children in the lesson. The questions are of course essentially of the spoken rather than the written mode, but since the teacher is insensitive to the differences between the two modes, she is in no position to appreciate the point. Teacher education is very much at fault here, because for many years it has failed usefully to direct teachers' attention to the important differences between the two modes. On the contrary, teacher education has frequently denied the differences. Instead, "language experience " approaches and/or "whole language" approaches of the kind we discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.3) have frequently argued that it is sufficient that children "be encouraged to use language" in some diffuse and undirected way, in the belief that by a process rather like osmosis they will eventually "pick up" such differences as do exist between the two modes. Patently, many students do not ever adequately "pick up" the differences, as the continuing difficulties with writing of many students well into the secondary school all too painfully indicate. While we did allude to these matters in passing in chapter 6 (section 6.4.2), we shall return to them in chapter 9.

With the child's reading out of the three questions the transition to the engagement with the "content" field is almost but not completely effected. By way of offering reinforcement and emphasis, the teacher takes up what she would identify as the question of central significance in the exploration of the "content" field, in which, it should be noted, the choice of process - a material one - itself builds an aspect of that field:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| why | | do | people | wear | uniforms |
| *Circumstamce:* | *cause* | *Pro-* | *Actor* | *-cess: material* | *Goal,* |

and she receives an answer, constructed through a choice of a verbal process which builds some reflection upon the "content" field:

| tells | who | they | are | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Value* | *Token* | *Process:* | *intensive* |
| *Process: verbal* | *Verbiage* | | | |
| *α* | *β* | | | |

Again for reinforcement the teacher repeats the answer:

| it | tells | us | what | their job | is |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Value* | *Token* | *Process: intensive* |
| *Sayer* | *Process: verbal* | *Receiver* | *Verbiage* | | |
| *α* | | | *β* | | |

The period of establishing directions having been established, a material process is used as the teacher displays an object of concern for the lesson:

| Mrs. P. | has lent | us | this uniform |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Recipient* | *Goal,* |

and the children's behaviour is once more directed by the teacher with another choice of a behavioural process:

| look at | this peaked hat |
|---|---|
| *Process: behavioural* | *Range* |

Six behavioural processes and six processes of perception are subsequently employed by the teacher in the "body" of the element to guide the children's attention and general behaviour throughout the rest of the element. Their relatively frequent use, in association with the use of the imperative mood, is caused by the fact that she is concerned to have the children look at and note aspects of the

uniforms as she displays them: they are an aspect of the mode of the lesson in fact. It will be noted that the children employ neither behavioural processes nor processes of perception. That is because their role in the element is not to direct talk but on the whole to engage in reflective talk on the "content" field.

The behavioural and perception processes used by the teacher do not in themselves of course realise any aspects of the "content" field, for as we have noted, they serve to direct the children's attention towards these things, which in turn are realised either in a range in the case of a behavioural process, or in a phenomenon in the case of a mental process of perception, such as:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *see* | the peaked cap, the stiff piece | here in the front | |
| *Process: perception* | *Phenomenon* | *Circumstance: location: place* | |

Several uses of questions:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| what | 's | this | on the shoulder? |
| *Value* | *Process: intensive* | *Token* | *Circumstance: location: place* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| what | does | it | say? |
| *Verbiage* | *Pro-* | *Sayer* | *-cess: verbal* |

or less commonly, a use of a mental process of cognition:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I wonder | | if | he | 'd wear | a green shirt |
| | | | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |
| *Senser* | *Process: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | | |
| *α* | | *β,* | | | |

mark other strategies employed by the teacher to provoke some talk or thought about the "content" field in the children.

Turning to the manner in which the "content" field is developed and built up in the talk, and to the character of that "content", it becomes apparent that this is constructed mainly through a pattern in which material processes and relational processes have a role. Looking to the teacher's talk, she employs 30 material processes. Apart from the one cited already, in which a teacher colleague's action in making available the first uniform for study has been identified, two others are used to construct actions taken in the classroom by the teacher in response to some concern expressed over the risk of losing some badges displayed:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| well | we | 'll pin | them | on here, on the jacket |
| | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* | *Circumstance: location: place* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| then | they | can't get lost |
| | *Goal* | *Process: material* |

Otherwise, the material processes build features of the activities engaged in by the persons who work in the uniforms examined. Of these, five are instances in which the activity of "wearing" a uniform is involved. Examples are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| what else | would | he | wear? |
| *Goal* | *Pro-* | *Actor* | *-cess: material* |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| they | wear | those | to make | bread | in the bakery |
| *Actor* | *Pro: material* | *Goal* | *Pro: mat.* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place* |

With one exception, the remaining material processes construct aspects of what the people "do" who "work" in the uniforms examined, including four instances of "make" or "making" as in:

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | why | do you need to cover | | | that | up |
| | *Circ: cause: reason* | *Pro-* | *Actor* | *-cess: mat-* | *Goal* | *-erial* |

| if | you | 're making | bread | in a bakery? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* | *Circumstance: loc: place* |

One other clause complex involving two material processes will serve to illustrate their general role in the teacher's talk in building the activities in which persons engage in their work:

| It | means | she | helps | the nurses [to look after the people in hospital] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Actor* | *Pro: mat.* | *Client* |
| *Sayer* | *Pro: verb* | *Verbiage* | | |
| *α* | | *β* | | |

Of the processes the children produce, 16 are material, and like those produced by the teacher, they are generally involved in building some aspects of the activities in which the persons who wear the uniforms engage, as in:

| he | would wear | a blue shirt |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |

| she | 's got to clean | the people |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |

It is of course to be expected that a fairly large number of material processes would be involved in such a "content" field, since some talk of what the people "do" who wear the uniforms is no doubt essential. However, it is when we turn to a consideration of the role of the relational processes - especially the intensive identifying and attributive ones - that we can begin to gauge some sense of the nature of the "content" field, and of its limitations. Bearing in mind our observations of above in section 7.3, drawn from Martin's research, we have chosen in Table 7.2 to group all the identifying and attributive processes used by the teacher in the Task Orientation.

Table 7.2: Identifying and attributive p rocesses in the teacher's talk in the Task Orientation of Text A

Identifying processes

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| what | were | the questions* | | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | | Exhausting |
| it tells us | what | their job | is | |
| | *Value* | *Token* | *Process* | Exhausting |
| a dark blue | you | 'd call | it | |
| *Token* | *Assigner* | *Process* | *Value* | Exemplifying |
| they show | who | he | is | |
| | *Value* | *Token* | *Process* | Exemplifying |
| what | 's | this | on the shoulder | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | *Circ: loc.* | Exemplifying |
| that | 's | [[why there are all those buttons]] | | |
| *Token* | *Pro.* | *Value* | | Exhausting |
| so that | 's | a train driver's uniform | | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | | Exemplifying |

Attributive processes

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| this | is | a double breasted suit | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |
| this | is | a green jacket | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| it | 's | a dark colour isn't it | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I think they | are | grey | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| yes that | 's | right* | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| she | 's really | a nurse's aide | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| she | 's | a registered nurse aide | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| it | 's | brown | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| that | wouldn't be | very nice, would it* | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| they're | all the same colour | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| it | 's | a dark brown | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

* Note the three instances marked with an asterisk will not be considered in any detail here, since they have no great significance in the building of the "content" field.

Overlooking three such processes on the grounds that they do not contribute directly to the "content" field, we can see that the teacher employs six identifying processes and nine attributive processes.

Taking the latter first, seven are involved in describing features of the uniforms examined, as in:

they're all the same colour,

while two have a classifying role, as in:

she's a registered nurse aide.

Simple description is thus in particular a strong feature of the teacher's talk, and in fact the building of description is actually strengthened by her uses of one circumstantial attributive process:

| what | 's | on your head |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute: circumstance* |

and two possessive attributive processes:

| he | has | special buttons |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: possession* | *Attribute: possessed* |

| it | 's got | RNA |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier: possessor* | *Process: possession* | *Attribute: possessed* |

Of the identifying processes two are "exhausting", as in:

it tells us what their job is,

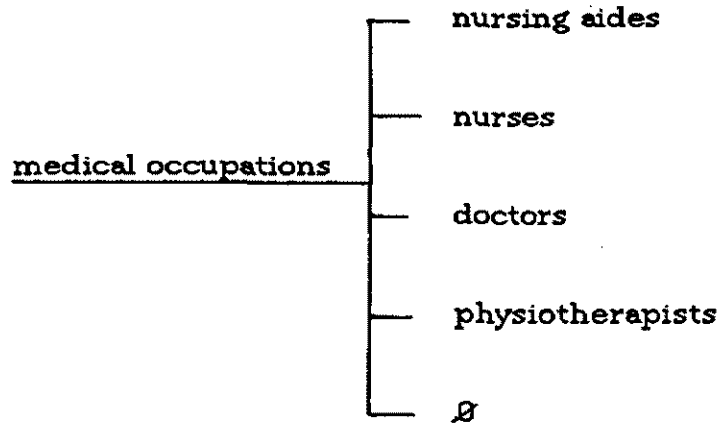
while the other four are exemplifying, as in:

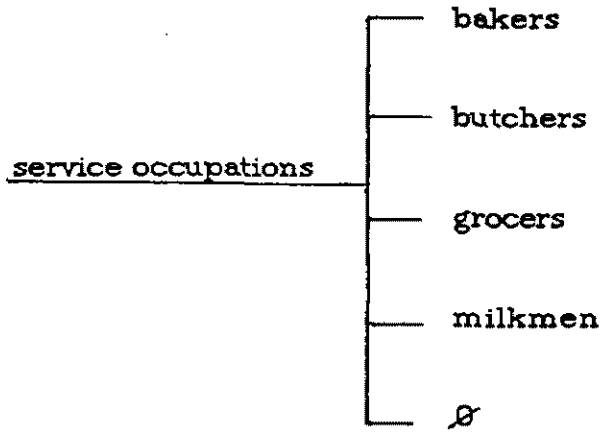
a dark blue you'd call it.

Teachers tend to use a lot of attributive processes, and their presence seems to be a necessay part of building attention to the characteristic features of the phenomena associated with a field. As we shall go on to argue through our examination of TRANSITIVITY in our other two texts as well, however, while the building of description is no doubt an essential first step in establishing the commonsense knowledge of a field, such knowledge does itself need to be subsequently used to build new forms of knowdege or new ways of dealing with experience, as part of the process of transforming and enriching children's understanding. Processes of classifying, exemplifying and exhausting are among the very important resources in which such new forms of knowledge are built - especially, one would point out, in a text whose curriculum focus is intended to develop literacy through a social scientific enquiry. That this TO uses more processes of description than of any other is itself significant as a measure of the relatively "low level" knowledge being handled.

It is difficult to see, in fact, how the teacher could have done much more than this with what is a very unpromising "content" field. As we earlier noted when we introduced the text in our chapter 6 (section 6.2), an attempt made by the researcher to shift the field from uniforms to a consideration of various occupational groups whose members happened to wear certain uniforms, was not well received by the teacher and her colleagues, on the grounds that this would be "too difficult". Such are the problems created by a commitment in part to the ideology of early childhood we discussed earlier, and in part to the notions of "language experience" adopted here: commitments which as we have begun to demonstrate involve children in identifying what is already familiar and commonplace to them, without taking them many steps further towards ways of turning the familiar into new experience or knowledge.

Supposing for example, that the researcher's suggestions had been accepted, and a decision made to focus on the occupational responsibilities of police, train drivers, nursing aids and bakers. There are a number of possible ways such fields might have been developed. Each occupational group might well be assembled with other related occupational groups and sets of simple taxonomies developed:

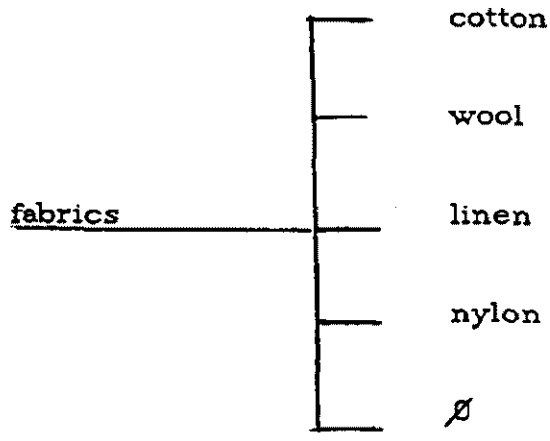



The responsibilities of each group might have been explored, and their relationships to and differences from each other might have been stated. Such an enquiry is genuinely social scientific in character, permitting the development of new and "uncommonsense"

understandings about significant social groups in the children's culture.

Alternatively, supposing the decision had been asked to focus on the production of clothing. Here the teacher and children might have focussed on types of fabrics:




Subsequent learning might have involved finding out about where such fabrics are made and how. Such matters are not in themselves "too hard" for young children. On the contrary, visits to sheep farms, cotton and woollen mills and/or reading about them are both possible and desirable bases upon which to engage children in learning quite systematically about aspects of the ways in which their clothing is made and why such clothing is important to their health and well being.

The endeavour to explore these matters or those associated with the occupational groups mentioned immediately above would necessarily involve among other things a more varied range of relational processes, especially those which exemplify and exhaust, as well as more systematic use of a technical language for categorising phenomena of various kinds.

It will be useful to consider the patterns of relational processes used by the children, and to compare the kinds of meanings they make in these with those made by the teacher. Table 7.3 sets out the identifying and attributive processes used by the children in the TO.

Table 7.3: Identifying and attributive processes in the children's talk in the Task Orientation of Text A

Identifying

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| tells us | who | they | are | |
| | *Value* | *Token* | *Process* | Exhausting |
| what | 's | that? | | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | | Exemplifying |
| that | 's | "Real Nurse's Aide" | | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | | Exhausting |

Attributive

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| that | 's | just like my uncle's | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |
| they | look like | silver coins, the little ones | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |
| else we | 'll be | in big strife* | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute: circumstance* | | Describing |
| all the badges | are | different | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| she | 's | a helper | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| she's learning | to be | a nurse | |
| | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| it | 's | red | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| it | 's | something like an army shirt | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| to keep | it | tidy | |
| *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute* | Describing |

* Note that we will ignore this process in our discussion on the grounds that it does not contribute to the development of the "content" field.

Nine of the children's processes are attributive and six of those are involved in describing aspects of the "content" field, as in:

> all the badges are different,

while two classify, as in:

> she's a helper.

Two of the three identifying processes have an exhausting role as in:

> tells us who they are,

while one exemplifies:

> what's that?

The children are involved primarily in building simple description of a series of uniforms drawn from familiar occupational groups, and actually belonging to the families of class members. In so far as the terms of the lesson permit, the children show facility in identifying aspects of the uniforms, augmenting what is said with three circumstantial attributive processes, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 'cos | they | 'd be | for something different |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Circ: attribute,* |

and four possessive attributive processes as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| is | that | Mrs P's husband's? |
| *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute: possession.* |

Of the remaining transitivity processes in the TO, we should note that the teacher uses four verbal processes as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| it | means | she helps the nurses |
| *Sayer* | *Pro: verbal* | *Verbiage* |
| α | ß, | |

while the children uses two as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| tells who | they are | |
| *Process:* | *verbal* | *Verbiage* |
| α | ß | |

In addition the teacher uses one existential process:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| there's | some badges | here | some of them in the pocket |
| *Pro: exist.* | *Existentent* | *Circ: loc: place* | *Circ: loc: place,* |

and the children use two, as in:

| there | was | paper | in my bread | once |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Pro: exist.* | *Existent* | *Circ: loc: place* | *Circ: loc: time.* |

As our analysis has sought to show, then, the "content" examined in the TO has been of a rather limited kind, primarily involving the building of simple description of the phenomena under review - namely the uniforms. This analysis accords with the general findings also established in our examination of Theme (chapter 6, section 6.4.1). Given that this examination of uniforms was conceived as part of the social science program, we can see how much the "language experience" model adopted here has constrained the kinds of choices in meaning made available to the children and/ or modelled on their behalf by the teacher. Exploration of the familiar is plainly considered by the teacher to be a sufficient goal in itself, and in adopting such a view she operates in a manner consistent with a great deal of contemporary advice to teachers as we have already suggested in chapter 4 (sections 4.3 and 4.4)

### 7.4.2 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION OF TEXT A

Table 7.4 sets out an overview of transitivity choices in the Task Specification of Text A. It makes clear immediately just how different experientially is the activity in this element of the lesson.

Table 7.4 Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Specification of Text A

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 0 | 1 |
| Mental: | cognition | 2 | 0 |
| | affect | 1 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 4 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | identifying | 0 | 1 |
| Verbal | | 3 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 10 | 2 |

The teacher's transitivity choices in this element indicate that she has returned to an engagement with the pedagogical field. The transitivity processes she selects are mental, behavioural and verbal only, and they all in various ways identify aspects of the children's behaviour which concern her or which she wishes to direct. Furthermore, to the extent that the "content" field finds any expression here it is either in one of the secondary participant positions - as a range, or a phenomenon - or in a circumstance.

The opening of the teacher monologue involves a possessive process though which the teacher advises the children that their

responsibilities are once again being foregrounded:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| now | you | 've had | time [[to look at all these uniforms]] |
| | *Carr: poss.* | *Pro: poss* | *Attribute: possessed* |

Two verbal processes are subsequently involved in identifying acceptable behaviour for the children:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| we | should ask | Belinda | to thank | her mum and dad [[for letting us see their uniforms]] | |
| *Say.* | *Pro: verb* | *Receiver* | *Pro: verb* | *Receiver ,* | |

and in the "body" of the element, two behavioural processes identify the task, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| we | 're going to write | about these uniforms | today |
| *Behaver* | *Pro: beh.* | *Circ: matter* | *Circ: loc: time* |

Two processes of cognition are used by the teacher in directing the children's attention to their writing as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| now | remember | what we said before..... |
| | *Process: cognition* | *Phenomenon* |
| | α | ß |

Material and relational processes, both so crucially involved in the building of the Task Orientation, as we saw above in section 7.4.1, have no role in this element at all.

The children's two processes, one an intensive process, the other a

material process, help identify the "content" for writing:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| who | they | are | |
| *Value* | *Token* | *Process: intensive* | |
| and | what | they | wear |
| | *Goal* | *Actor* | *Process: material* |

The task of writing, as we have already observed in chapter 6 receives little overt treatment, for the pedagogy has become "invisible" at this point in the lesson. To some extent of course this is a response to mode: language for reflection upon experience, of which the talk about the "content" throughout most of the TO is an example, is relatively detailed and explicit, but the language of action - in this case of writing - remains largely implicit. It is unfortunate, however, that the nature of the writing task and the linguistic choices to be made by the children are not better understood by the teacher, so that she might more usefully intervene to direct the children's attention to these matters.

## 7.4.3 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK OF TEXT A

Table 7.4 provides a summary of transitivity choices in the Task element of Text A.

Table 7.4 Summary of transitivity choices in the Task of Text A

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 2 | 0 |
| Mental: | perception | 1 | |
| Behavioural | | 0 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) identifying | 1 | 0 |
| | (ii) attributive | 1 | 0 |
| | circumstantial attributive | 1 | 0 |
| Verbal | | 0 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 6 | 0 |

The Task element is entirely in teacher monologue. The general intention to direct the children is signalled with a choice of the imperative mood and a process of perception:

*see*
Process: perception

A subsequent circumstantial process helps identify the sequence of questions to be borne in mind when writing:

| it | 's | on the board there |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute: circumstance,* |

and the remaining processes identify those questions:

| who | they | are |
|---|---|---|
| *Value* | *Token* | *Process: intensive* |

| what | they | wear |
|---|---|---|
| *Goal* | *Actor* | *Process: material* |

| why | they | wear | it |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Circ: cause: reason* | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |

Our analysis of TRANSITIVITY in Text A now being completed, we shall turn to a consideration of Text B.

## 7.5 Transitivity in Text B, the "my lunch text"

We shall proceed immediately to an examination of TRANSITIVITY in the Task Orientation of Text B.

## 7.5.1 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT B

Table 7.5: Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Orientation of Text B

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 24 | 3 |
| Mental: | perception | 2 | 0 |
| | cognition | 5 | 0 |
| | affect | 7 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 5 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) attributive | 6 | 1 |
| | (ii) identifying | 0 | 1 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 3 | 1 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 4 | 1 |
| Verbal | | 2 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 58 | 7 |

Marking the entry to this TO as a little different from that of Text A, the teacher initiates it with an attributive process, establishing something completed and worthy of note as a basis for proceeding forward:

| now | these people | are | back..... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute* |

The rest of the opening teacher monologue (up to the point at which she commences to read from the book) makes use of five cognition processes and four behavioural processes and one process of perception as means for operationalising activity: it is in these that the pedagogical register is being foregrounded. (A second process of perception found in the dialogue of the story does not of course contribute to the pedagogical field at all.) Examples include:

| I want | you | to listen to | this little tiny story [[like the one we had yesterday]] |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Beh.* | *Pro: beh.* | *Range* |
| *Sens Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | |
| *α* | *β* | | |

| when | we | finish reading | this story..... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Behaver* | *Pro: beh.* | *Range* |

| so | listen | [[what happened to this boy's lunch]] |
|---|---|---|
| | *Pro: perception* | *Phenomenon* |

Still in the opening monologue the teacher uses 10 material processes, one involved initially in constructing activities undertaken hitherto and being recalled as a basis for proceeding forward as in:

| we | made up | our monster sandwiches |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal.* |

Subsequently, she employs four material processes with a shift from the declarative to the interrogative mood and poses four questions. These it is clear, are not to be answered immediately and the even pattern of the monologue is not disturbed by posing them. Their

presence is significant, however, comparing with the questions posed in the TO of Text A and alluded to above in section 7.4.1. As we noted then, teachers typically ask questions as a means of drawing attention to the "problematic" - the things to be learned as a focal concern for a lesson. Here the uses of material processes serve to signal to the children something of the "content" to be gleaned from the story, as a potential basis for writing: it is activity and event that are of primary concern. This is a language arts lesson: the object is to develop imaginative writing of "stories" of a kind in which action and event will play a major part. The questions are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| who came | | | |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | | |
| and | took | the lunch | |
| | *Process: material* | *Goal,* | |
| what | happened to | it | |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* | |
| then | what | happened to | the little boy..... |
| | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal.* |

Material processes are also involved in constructing possible events that might occur to the children's lunches:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| something | 's going to happen to | your lunch |
| Actor | Process: material | Goal. |

The reading of the book constitutes the introduction to the "content" for the lesson, and it makes use of 10 material processes to construct

the events involved, as in:

| stop | dog |
|---|---|
| *Pro: material,* | |

while there are also three behavioural processes and two verbal processes, also involved in constructing aspects of the events, as in:

| I | will see | said | Miss Gill |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Behaver* | *Process: beh.* | *Pro: verbal* | *Sayer.* |
| *"1* | | *2* | |

There are in addition two circumstantial attributive processes, as in:

| it | 's not | here |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute: circumstance,* |

as well as one attributive process:

| you | 're | a bad dog |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute.* |

Two processes of affect realise the feelings of the boy in the story about the food he eventually buys as in:

| I | like | this and this |
|---|---|---|
| *Senser* | *Pro: perception* | *Phenomenon* |

The text is a rudimentary one, a matter we have already remarked in chapter 6, in introducing it. As our transitivity analysis shows, it deals in the building of a simple sequence of events.

The children's participation in the TO involves making observations upon features of the story as these are realised in the pictures in the book. Such processes are really brought from the children under the teacher's direction. Thus the teacher provokes talk with a question involving a material process:

| what sort of lunch | has | he | ended up eating? |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Goal* | *Pro-* | *Actor* | *-cess: material,* |

and of the seven processes produced by the children for the remainder of the element, they employ three material processes as in:

| he | took | a lot |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal,* |

as well as four other processes - an attributive, an identifying, a circumstantial attributive and a possessive attributive - all involved in building some reflection upon the story, as in:

| he | 's got | some milk |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: poss.* |

Overall, then, the TO uses material processes, processes of perception and behavioural processes to operationalise behaviour, and material processes in particular to construct the events of the story constituting the basis of the "content" of the lesson, as well as some relational processes of various kinds, building reflections upon the details of the story, as these are displayed in the pictures in the book. The very much greater proportion of material processes in the TO here than was true in the case of Text A is in itself a significant measure of the "content" field difference: Text B deals with activity in particular.

## 7.5.2 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK REORIENTATION OF TEXT B

Table 7.6 sets out transitivity choices in the Task Reorientation.

Table 7. 6 Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Reorientation of Text B

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 18 | 1 |
| Mental: | perception | 1 | 0 |
| | cognition | 6 | 1 |
| | affect | 4 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 5 | 1 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) identifying | 0 | 0 |
| | (ii) attributive | 9 | 1 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 1 | 0 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 1 | 0 |
| Verbal | | 1 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 45 | 3 |

The element 's opening highlights the pedagogical field, and subsequently the "body" of the element focuses on the "content" field. Thus, behavioural and material processes signal the opening of the element, while material, relational and mental processes build the "body" of the element. In the case of the latter field the material processes, many of them drawn from the book read, serve to build the events of the story, while the mental and relational processes build the meanings of reflection upon those events: meanings to do with how the boy looks and how he feels.

Three behavioural processes, involved in directing behaviour, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| now | listen | carefully to | what happens, |
| | Pro: beh. | Circ: manner: quality | Range, |

interwoven with three material processes identifying the questions to be borne in mind when listening to the story, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| where | does | the dog | come? |
| | Pro- | Actor | -cess: material, |

serve to mark the opening of the element. The behavioural processes in particular relate to the pedagogical field, while the material ones here focus attention upon those aspects of the "content" field that interest the teacher.

Once launched into the "body" of the element, the "content" field comes to the fore. Within the "body" the teacher uses two behavioural processes read from the story as in:

look!
Process: behavioural,

but none are to do with directing behaviour. Instead, she uses 13 material processes drawn from the story to reconstruct the events already read, as well as creating some additional material processes of her own, as in:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| he | 's come | into the corridor | with his big nose | in the school bag |
| *Actor* | *Pro: mat.* | *Circ: loc: place* | *Circ: manner: means* | *Circ: loc: place* |

In addition, she uses nine attributive processes - three more than in the Task Orientation - to build description of the characters in the story as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| he | doesn't look | happy | at all. |
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute.* | |

She also employs six processes of cognition, intended to realise aspects of the thought processes of the boy or the other characters in the story as in:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| all the other children think | it | 's | | a big joke |
| | *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | | *Attribute* |
| *Senser* *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | | |
| *α* | *β* | | | |

The children's contributions to the discourse in this element are not considerable. As Table 7.7 indicates, they produce four processes , all of which realise reflections upon the activities in the story as depicted in the pictures. The first one so employed is an attributive process:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| all the other people | are | happy |
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

a second realises a behaviour of the people in the story:

| | |
|---|---|
| they | 're laughing |
| *Behaver* | *Process: behavioural,* |

and the remaining two are a cognition and a material process:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | 'll bet | he | ate | everyone's lunch |
| | | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |
| *Senser* | *Process: cognition* | *Phenomenon* | | |
| *α* | | *β* | | |

Overall, as this analysis reveals, the "body" of the element is entirely involved in reconstructing aspects of the "content" field as that is contained in the book selected for reading, and in building some reflection upon that field. This general finding accords with our observations made in our Theme analysis in chapter 6. As we shall see, the entry to the TS1 element does involve some shift in the meanings under construction, and a greater involvement of the children.

## 7.5.3 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 1/CONTROL 1 OF TEXT B

Table 7.7 sets out transitivity choices in the Task Specification 1/ Control 1.

Table 7.7 Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Specification 1/ Control 1 of Text B

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 33 | 10 |
| Mental: | perception | 1 | 0 |
| | cognition | 4 | 0 |
| | affect | 1 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 3 | 1 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) identifying | 2 | 0 |
| | (ii) attributive | 3 | 0 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 2 | 0 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 9 | 0 |
| Verbal | | 1 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 59 | 11 |

The Control element will be dealt with immediately. It involves firstly a material process and secondly an identifying process, whose functions are to cause the offending child to desist from his unacceptable behaviour, and to understand when such behaviour is the more acceptable:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frankie | put | the comb | away |
| | *Process: material* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the time [[to do your hair]] | is | play time |
| *Value* | *Process: intensive* | *Token* |

Turning to the TS1 element itself, we find that the pedagogical field is foregrounded in the opening through a combination of material, mental and behavioural processes. Then, once the movement into the "body" of the element is effected, the majority of processes used by both teacher and students are material ones, involved in the simple reconstruction of personal experiences.

As we earlier noted in this chapter, processes within embedded clauses are not included in our calculations of processes set out in the various tables. However, it is interesting to note that in the opening of this element in which the teacher employs two embedded clauses to compress a great deal of information (the significance of which at the start of an element we have already referred to in chapter 6, section 6.3), both a process of cognition and a behavioural process are employed as part of operationalising activity:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| [[what | I | want | you people | to think about]] | is | [[something coming and taking your lunch or something happening to your lunch so that you couldn't eat it]] |
| *Phen.* | *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Behaver* | *Pro: cog.* | | |
| | *Value* | | | | *Pro: int.* | *Token* |

The pattern of using behavioural processes and/or mental processes of either cognition or perception to direct behaviour, especially at the start of elements is thus preserved, though on this occasion embedded within a clause which uses an identifying process. Another mental process - this time one of affect - is employed a little later in a clause complex in which another behavioural process is employed as well, and they both have significance in directing the children's behaviour:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| well you can have a dog | | |
| if you | want | |
| *Senser* | *Process: affect* | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| but it'ud be better | | |
| if you | think of | something else |
| *Behaver* | *Process: beh.* | *Phenomenon.* |

Immediately after this clause complex, through a material process and another process of cognition, the children are further directed:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| all right put | | your hand | up |
| | *Process: material* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| if you | 've thought of | something [[that could come ..... |
| *Senser* | *Process: cog.* | *Phenomenon* |

Note here as we observed earlier (section 7.1) in discussing the manner of realisation of the two fields at the points at which the two converge, that the tendency is for mental or behavioural processes to realise aspects of desired behaviour, while the phenomenon or range realises aspects of the "content" field, such as:

> [[something coming and taking your lunch or something happening to your lunch so that you couldn't eat it]],

or

> something else.

Once the opening steps of the element have been effected, possessive attributive process serves to effect a new step towards directing the children's behaviour, marked with a mood change:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| have you ever | had | a day [[when you've had no lunch to eat? ]] |
| *Pro- Carr: Poss.* | *-cess: poss* | *Attribute: possessed* |

There follow 32 material processes in the teacher's talk, all of them involved in either eliciting from the children reconstruction of personal events in which they lost lunches, or in assisting in reconstructing these events by "scaffolding" for the children what had happened. Examples of the former include:

| | |
|---|---|
| what happened Jodie? | |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| and then | what | happened? |
| | *Actor* | *Process: material,* |

and of the latter include:

she had no lunch [[to start with]]
because it was left at home
*Goal* *Process: material* *Circ: loc: place*

and she thought her mum was going to bring it at lunch time
*Actor* *Process: material* *Goal* *Circ: loc: time*

and when her mum didn't bring it
*Actor* *Process: material* *Goal*

Mrs. S rang her mum
*Actor* *Process: material* *Goal.*

As we suggested in chapter 6 (section 6.5.3), this teacher is at her strongest when "scaffolding" language for the children in this way, and in fact the effect of the pattern of language she builds up in her efforts to reconstruct events is that she provides a better potential model of language for the children than does the reading book selected for use. This important matter notwithstanding, we would still express two concerns about what we would see as some problems in what the teacher does, and which we have already expressed in chapter 6.

Firstly, we would argue that the very activity involved, requiring simple reconstruction of personal experience, seems to us an insufficient activity for the development of a knowledge for writing. This is even more the case, we would suggest, in that the morning news activity, discussed in some detail in chapter 3, provides an appropriate opportunity for children to construct recounts or anecdotes of personal experience of the kind involved here. As it is in this lesson no opportunity appears to be afforded for the building of significant new knowledge. Secondly, though the teacher does

demonstrate strength in modelling language for the reconstruction of personal experience, such a strength is not matched by a capacity to involve the children in talk of the written genre she wants them to write. The language modelled is in fact very much that of the spoken mode, not that of the written mode, while the distinctive features of the schematic structure of the text the children are to write do not receive any discussion either in the TS1 or in the TS2.

In fact, we would argue that such a situation, in which the "content" field is of a rather general and undemanding kind, would be capable of being redeemed to some extent, had there been some more overt commitment to developing a discussion of the nature of the writing task as one important aspect of the pedagogical field.

The teacher's failure to take up either a more demanding "content" for writing or a more thorough examination of the nature of the written mode and genre we suggest comes not from any incompetence in her, but rather from a lack of information. On the evidence, as we have seen, Mrs P has real capacities as a teacher: it is the very traditions in which she has been trained and works which are responsible for the problems here.

To return to the transitivity processes used, none of the other types apart from those discussed is very numerous in the teacher's talk in the element, though she does use nine possessive processes, the relatively large number of which is to be explained by their role in helping to build the children's personal experiences as a feature of eliciting the reconstruction of these:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| she | had | no lunch |
| *Carrier: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: possessed* |

or

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| who else | has ever had | no lunch |
| *Carrier: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: possessed.* |

Of the 11 processes produced by the children in this element, all but one are material. The children's role as we have seen is to engage with the "content" field by reconstructing aspects of their personal experience:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| mum | didn't bring | it | up |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place.* |

Overall then, the TS1 involves substantial engagement with the "content" field, though as we have seen both fields do converge at the opening of the element. In our earlier discussion of the TS2 in chapter 6 (section 6.5.4) we argued that the meanings made here are different from those in the TS1. We will now see the ways in which a transitivity analysis appears to support this claim.

## 7.5.4 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 2/CONTROL 2 OF TEXT B

Table 7.8 sets out transitivity choices in the Task Specification 2/ Control 2 of Text B.

Table 7.8 Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Specification 2/ Control 2 of Text B

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 14 | 0 |
| Mental: | cognition | 2 | 0 |
| | affect | 1 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 4 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | (i) identifying | 1 | 0 |
| | (ii) attributive | 6 | 0 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 0 | 0 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 3 | 0 |
| Verbal | | 1 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 32 | 0 |

One important measure of the fact that it is the pedagogical field which is more consistently to the fore in this element lies in the fact that while the children have a quite important role in the construction of the discourse in the TS1, they have none in the TS2. In general, in all the instances of the writing planning genre we are examining, the children's responsibility is to engage primarily with the "content" field, while the pedagogical field is realised primarily in the teacher's discourse. The element opens by foregrounding the pedagogical field, and while the "content" field does find expression in the "body" of the element, it is constructed in terms of building alternative "contents" for writing. As we observed in chapter 6 (section 6.5.4), the children are not intended to take a role in the construction of such "contents" now, though they were actively encouraged to do so in the TS1.

The opening of the element and the pedagogical field are both realised in two behavioural processes, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| get these brains working | | |
| *Pro-* | *Behaver* | *-cess: behavioural,* |

two attributive processes as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| they | 're nearly | Grade 3 brains |
| *Carrier* | *Process: attributive* | *Attribute,* |

and one verbal process:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | don't have to tell | them | everything [[to think]] |
| *Sayer* | *Process: verbal* | *Receiver* | *Verbiage,* |

all of which signal the concern to get the children working.

This opening is followed by the Control 2 element which is realised in four material processes, one behavioural process and one process of cognition, all of which are directly involved in the teacher's effort to control and redirect his behaviour. The child, Joseph, who is addressed, is told:

| you | 're spoiling | the grade |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal,* |

and he is told he must:

start listening
*Process: behavioural,*

otherwise:

| you | won't know | what | to do |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Goal* | *Process: material* |
| *Senser* | *Process: cog* | *Phenomenon* | |
| *α* | | *β* | |

The teacher signals a move away from the Control element back to the Task Specification 2, and to do it she selects an unfinished clause whose embedded clause contains two processes of cognition (again not included in our calculations in Table 7.9):

| [[what | I | want | you to think about]] | is something that.... |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Phen* | *Senser* | *Pro: cog* | *Sens. Pro: cog.* | |

The teacher is now into the "body" of the element where the "content" field is again of significance. In fact she selects 10 material processes to realise aspects of the possible "contents" about which the children might write as in:

| a dog | came | into the school |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: loc: place* |

| and | took | your lunch | out of the school bag |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Process: mat* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place,* |

and the other processes used in the "body" are all variously involved in building aspects of possible "content" fields for writing. These include two attributive processes, as in:

| it | might be | something like this little boy in the story |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: attributive* | *Attribute,* |

and three possessive attributive processes as in:

| you | might have | [[a monster coming in and taking it]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: poss.,* |

and a process of affect:

| you | didn't like | the lunch [[that they had in their bag]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Senser* | *Pro: affect* | *Phenomenon.* |

The TS2 thus largely deals with the "content" field, though in ways that are different from in those in the TS1. With the movement to the Task, as we shall now see the pedagogical field is once again foregrounded.

| well | you | can do | it | straight in your blue books |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Actor* | *pro: material* | *Goal* | *Circ: loc: place ,* |

partly through four possessive attributive processes as in:

| if | you | need | some help with the spelling..... |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Carrier: poss.* | *Pro: poss* | *Attribute: poss.,* |

partly through two perception processes as in:

| all right let | me | see | who's going to be first |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Pro-* | *Senser-cess: perception* | *Phenomenon* |
| | *α* | | *ß,* |

and one behavioural process:

| you | can look | them | up |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Behaver* | *Pro-* | *Range* | *-cess: beh.* |

A child makes one contribution in this element of schematic structure, when, the teacher having advised the children to use their book of spelling words for help, she asks, concerning the words:

| what about if they | 're | in your folder |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute: circ.* |

Now that we have completed our analysis of TRANSITIVITY in Text B, it is clear that the analysis appears to confirm and extend our sense of how it is constructed as that was initially explained in chapter 6. In addition, as we indicated above in sections 7.1 and 7.3 we sought to show in what ways a TRANSITIVITY analysis might illuminate in particular the nature of the "content" field. This is a language arts lesson, and the nature of the "content" is intended to be different from that developed in Text A, whose focus was drawn from

the social science program. Where in the case of Text A, some attempt was made to conduct an enquiry into the nature of the uniforms worn by persons in four different occupational, in Text B, as we have seen, an attempt was made to construct experiences to do with the losing of school lunches for the purposes of writing about them, where these were initially created in the story book read from by the teacher, and latterly reconstructed from the children's personal activities. Where the "content" field in the case of Text A made use of relational processes among others, to build description of the persons and their uniforms, the "content' field in Text B made use in particular of material processes to build events. The "content" field in Text A was limited, we argued, in that it did not permit the possibility of building "uncommonsense" knowledge, as that would be realised, among other things in relational processes having classifying, exemplifying and exhausting roles. The "content" field in Text B, we would argue, is also limited, in that as our TRANSITIVITY analysis has shown, it involves the children primarily in simple construction of events, be they of their own experiences of losing lunches, or imagined experiences. Such a learning activity suffers, we suggest, in that it does not permit exploration of new kinds of knowledge of a kind that schooling is ideally intended to permit. As we have already suggested more than once in this study, the limitations of the teaching/learning activity are to be explained in terms of certain pedagogical traditions in early childhood education which we have already discussed in chapter 4, and which we would argue are well in need of a change.

We shall now turn to Text C whose "content" field we have already suggested is in many ways potentially much stronger than that in either Texts A and B, though we shall argue that the teaching/learning activity is nonetheless compromised because of difficulties arising from the pedagogical traditions we have reviewed at length in chapter 4.

## 7.6 Transitivity in Text C, the "chicken text"

In examining TRANSITIVITY in Text C, we shall argue just as has been true in the cases of Texts A and B, that such an analysis can allow us to illuminate not only the working of its schematic structure, but also the working of the two registers through which that schematic structure is realised. It will be recalled that in chapter 6 (section 6.6.1) and briefly above in section 7.2, we have suggested that Mrs L, the teacher in this lesson, has selected a "content" field which is potentially a very good one, permitting interesting possibilities for the children to move from their commonsense experience and knowledge of chickens to a grasp of some important "uncommonsense" knowledge on the subject. We suggested further that the teacher showed facility at times in developing some useful talk with the children about chickens. However, we argued that the "content" developed was nonetheless less significant than it might have been, and we suggested that such an argument might best be established partly by undertaking some examination of the manner in which a sense of the "content" field is built up, and partly by comparing the sense of the field thus established with that provided in the textbook Egg to Chick, which the teacher used. We also suggested, with respect to the pedagogical field, that while the teacher showed skill in directing the children in some ways, her manner of directing and developing the actual task for writing was unfortunate, and compromised by her uncertainties about what it was appropriate to ask young children to write. We have already in chapter 6 drawn attention to the inaccurate manner in which Mrs L referred to the textbook as a "story", and to difficulties created by her asking the children to write "stories", when a scientific "content" field was what was actually involved. Finally, these problems we suggested, were borne of the difficulties created by the traditions of early childhood literacy education in which Mrs L had been trained, and which still apply in many schools.

These matters we shall now try to take up. We will begin, as before, by focussing on the Task Orientation and its two associated Control elements.

## 7.6.1 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK ORIENTATION AND CONTROLS 1 AND 2 OF TEXT C

In examining the choices of transitivity processes in the TO, we shall argue, firstly, that the teacher initiates the element in a manner very like that already established to be true in Texts A and B: that is to say, in the opening teacher monologue the pedagogical field is foregrounded in choices of processes which operationalise activity, while the "content" field is realised in secondary participants and circumstances. Further, we shall suggest that with the entry to dialogue and to an engagement with the "content" field, the "content" field is foregrounded in processes as well as in secondary participants and circumstances. The only exceptions to this latter general principle occur firstly in the cases of the two Control elements, where processes identify behaviours to be avoided and which the teacher wishes to control, and secondly at those points in the "body" of the element at which the teacher selects processes to direct the children's attention towards aspects of the "content" field as they are depicted in the book used. Finally, in examining the manner in which the "content" field is realised in the "body" of the element, we shall argue that while the field is developed in such a way that some new understandings are established with the children, especially through uses of attributive and identifying processes, there are significant limitations in the "content" established, when compared with that provided in the book.

The complete summary of transitivity choices in the TO and the two associated C elements is set out in Table 7.10. As before, processes within embedded clauses have not been included in the calculations.

Table 7.10: Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Orientation / Controls 1 & 2 of Text C

| Process type | | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | | 65 | 8 |
| Mental: | perception | | 17 | 5 |
| | cognition | | 11 | 2 |
| | affect | | 1 | 1 |
| Behavioural | | | 8 | 0 |
| Relational: | | intensive: | | |
| | | (i) attributive | 35 | 10 |
| | | (ii) identifying | 11 | 3 |
| | | circumstantial: | | |
| | | attributive | 12 | 6 |
| | | possessive: | | |
| | | attributive | 8 | 3 |
| Verbal | | | 5 | 0 |
| Existential | | | 2 | 1 |
| TOTAL | | | 175 | 39 |

As the table makes clear immediately, the children actually participate more fully in this TO than they do in Texts A and B - they thus necessarily have opportunity to produce a greater range and number of transitivity processes.

In the manner familiar because by now well established in the examples of Texts A and B, the teacher's opening monologue foregrounds the pedagogical field in her choices of transitivity processes, while the "content" field finds expression in the secondary participants in each case - a goal or a range - as well as in the circumstances. Thus, the opening clause complexes, all in the declarative mood, use three material processes, as in the following:

| we | 're going to start off | with a little story | this morning |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: manner: Means* | *Circ: loc: time,* |

two cognition processes as in:

| and we | 're just going to find out | what you people know | about this little book |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Senser Pro: cog.* | *Circ: matter* |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | |
| *α* | | *β,* | |

and two behavioural processes, as in:

| I | won't read | it all | to you |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Behaver* | *Pro: beh.* | *Range* | *Receiver,* |

all of which serve to operationalise activity.

The move on into the "body" of the element is achieved, as we noted in chapter 6 (section 6.6.1), through a change to the interrogative mood, and the asking of a question intended both to draw the children into dialogue, and into an engagement with the "content" field. The process selected in the question is identifying, and its

function is that of classifying, as we explained this in section 7.3 above:

| Lesley | what sort of creature | is | this little creature | here? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Attribute* | *Pro: int.* | *Carrier* | *Circ: loc: place.* |

The activity having been operationalised, and attention focussed by the teacher's question just cited, the discussion henceforth proceeds, built largely around the book Egg to Chick. In fact, such a discussion as does develop would be quite impossible without the aid of the book and its excellent pictures, or at least some comparable set of illustrations or charts. This points to an important truth about the register involved: illustration is itself quite fundamentally a part of the scientific mode, as even the most cursory perusal of scientific textboks will testify (Christie, 1986).

Seventeen processes of perception used by the teacher serve to direct the children's attention to features of the chicken's development as displayed in the book, and they are to that extent features of the mode here. As such their use compares with the manner in which the teacher used such processes to direct attention in the TO of Text A, examined above in section 7.4.1 where the children were examining uniforms:

| can | you | see | a little spot of blood? |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Pro-* | *Senser* | *-cess: perception* | *Phenomenon* |

Five verbal processes employed by the teacher perform a similar function to that of the processes of perception, in that they do not directly build the "content" field: instead their function is to realise ways of directing the children's attention to that field. For example,

holding up the book, the teacher says at one point:

| it | says | the twenty-one days inside the egg | are | over |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Sayer* | *Pro: verb.* | *Carrier* | *Circ: loc: place* *Pro: int.* | *Attribute* |
| *1* | | *"2* | | |

Of the 12 circumstantial processes of attribution Mrs L uses, most are employed to direct attention to the "content" field, where the circumstance actually realises an exophoric reference to an illustration in the book as in:

| and | there | 's | a broody hen |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Attribute: circ.* | *Process: intensive* | *Carrier.* |

Use of such processes in this manner is another response to mode, and to the demands of developing the children's understanding of the "content" field by reference to the book.

Turning more directly to the processes in which the "content" field is realised, it is apparent that this is primarily constructed in choices of material processes (all but five of the 65 used by the teacher and all but two of the 10 used by the children and identified in Table 7.11) which create aspects of what chickens and hens do, as in:

| she | can't sit | on them |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: loc: place,* |

and in choices of 66 relational processes used by Mrs L - 35 attributive ones in particular - as well as the 21 relational processes produced by the children. These work to build description of chickens and hens, as in:

| it | 's | a hen |
|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute.* |

In the interest of taking a first step towards clarifying the ways in which attributive and identifying processes are used in the Task Orientation for describing, classifying, exemplifying and exhausting, we have set out all such processes used in the element in Table 7.11

Table 7.11: Attributive and identifying processes in the Task Orientation of Text C

Attributive

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lesley, what sort of creature is | | | this little creature | here? | |
| | *Attribute* | *Pro.* | *Carrier* | *Circ.* | Classifying |
| it | 's | a hen | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | Classifying |
| **it** | **'s** | **a special place** | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | **Describing +** |
| that | 's | right* | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | Describing |
| and | are | these litttle eggs | going to turn into | chickens? | |
| | Pro- | *Carrier* | *-cess* | *Attribute* | Classifying |
| how do we know | | they 're not going to (turn into chickens) | | | |
| | | *Carrier* | *Process* | | Classifying |
| **and they** | **'re not keeping** | | **warm** | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | | *Attribute* | | **Describing** |
| that | 's | right * | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | Describing |

'cos the steel is cold
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* **Describing**

now something 's interesting about this one over here
*Carrier* *Proc.* *Attrib.* *Circ.* *Circ.* Describing

the egg is going to grow into a chicken
*Carrier* *Process* *Attrib.* Classifying

it 's just something [[that sometimes happens to the egg]]
*Carr.* *Pro.* *Attribute* Describing

it gets smaller and smaller
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

and he 's all wet
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

**and he 's all wet**
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* **Describing**

and the white part keeps him nice and warm
*Attributor* *Pro.* *Carr.* *Attribute* Describing

he gets yellow feathers
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

and she 's broody
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

three weeks, Wendy 's correct
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| but | she | has to keep | those eggs warm | | |
| | *Attributor* | *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute* | Describing |
| it | **has to be** | **hot** | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | **Describing** |
| **and** | **they** | **have to be** | **hot** | | |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |
| it | **has to be** | **a hot day** | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | **Describing** |
| this | is | a picture of the incubator in Mrs B's room | | | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | | Classifying |
| and | the electricity | keeps | them | warm | |
| | *Attributor* | *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute* | Describing |
| because | it | warms up | | | |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | | | Describing |
| to keep | the inside | warm | | | |
| *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute* | | | Describing |
| these | are | some pictures of | what a baby fish looks like<br>what a baby chicken looks like<br>what a human being looks like<br>when it's just starting to grow | | |
| *Carrier* | *Pro* | *Attribute* | | | Classifying |
| yes, | that | 's | right* | | |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |

it looks a bit like a little bird
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

so they all look a bit the same, don't they?
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it 's turning into more of an oval shape, Mirko
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

**and he 's sleepy too**
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* **Describing**

**he 's turning yellow**
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* **Describing**

yes he 's turning yellow
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

**yeah it looked funny***
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it **was all red***
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it looked a bit like that, did it?
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it 's a very very very hard job [[ for the little chick to get out]]
*Carr.* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it 's a very very hard job [[to get out ]]
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

it takes many hours [[to split the shell all around]]
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

the chick is still very weak
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

his legs are wobbly
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

and his feathers are wet
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

now the chick is soft and fluffy
*Carrier* *Process* *Attribute* Describing

Identifying

what 's the middle part of the egg called
*Token* *Pro_* *Value* *-cess* Exhausting

they 're called batteries or battery chickens or battery hens
*Token* *Process* *Value* Exhausting

this is the inside of the egg
*Token* *Process* *Value* Exhausting

this little white spot here is [[where the little chicken chicken will start to grow.]]
*Token* *Circ. Pro* *Value* Exhausting

that 's the yolk [[that it will feed on]]
*Token* *Process* *Value* Exhausting

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| that | 's | the white part | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **that** | **'s** | **the white** | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | **Exhausting** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | the yolk | is | his food | |
| | *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| that | was | [[to increase or lower the temperature]] | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| do you think that | | 's | [[ why he turns yellow]] | |
| | *Tok.* | *Pro* | *Value* | Exhausting |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **what** | **are** | **those little red lines?** | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | **Exhausting** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| those little red lines | are | the blood vessels | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| but | a comb | is | that | |
| | *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | Exemplifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| that | 's just | [[like he looked]] | |
| Token | Process | Value | Exhausting |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **that** | **'s** | **[[what** | **Belinda's chicken looked like]]** | |
| *Tok.* | *Process* | *Value* | | **Exhausting** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| this | is | [[ how the chicken will grow ]] | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

+ Children's contributions to the discourse are shown in bold typeface.

* These processes are not in themselves involved in creation of the "content" field, and they will not be considered in the discussion.

When we earlier introduced the four types of processes - describing, classifying, exemplifying and exhausting (section 7.3) - we noted, following Martin, that these may be thought of as representing a cline, such that each has a different role in building meanings about phenomena of many kinds. There is a movement, in fact, from the activity of providing basic description about phenomena, though processes which by classifying, exemplifying and exhausting, all offer different ways of ordering the phenomena and hence constructing experience in new ways. Where processes that describe build basic information about characteristics of phenomena, those which classify group the phenomena. Processes which exemplify provide instances of a phenomenon, and the ultimately help build a technical language. Finally, processes having an "exhausting" role build definitive or "completing" observations about phenomena.

As Table 7.11 indicates, of the 45 attributive processes employed in the element, seven have a classifying role, while the other 38 have a describing function. Useful though all the processes used can be shown to be, we shall argue firstly that it is description that is mainly at issue here, and that it is "commonsense" knowledge which is thus primarily being developed, and secondly, that a wider and more varied use of processes having functions in classifying, exemplifying and exhausting, would have helped build a richer sense of the "content" field, and a greater amount of the "uncommonsense" ways in which scientists in fact deal with the phenomena of chickens and hens.

It is clear that describing processes do have an important role in building meanings about hens and chickens, as for example in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| he | 's | all wet |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| she | 's | broody |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| it | 's | a very very very hard job [[to get out]] |
| *Carrier* | *Process:* | *Attribute* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the chick | is | still very weak |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute.* |

Equally, the meanings created in classifying processes are valuable, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| what sort of creature | is | this little creature | here |
| *Attribute* | *Process* | *Carrier* | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| it | 's | a hen |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute.* |

Engagement with these meanings is no doubt an essential aspect of building the "content" field here, and for children of six years of age, the meanings built in the describing processes in particular are significant. To that extent, the teacher is to be defended in her development of these meanings. In what sense then, might we term them "commonsense," and more particularly , why would we suggest that their construction is an essential but insufficient treatment of the "content" field?

The most appropriate way to answer that question is to consider the kinds of knowledge that might be made available, by contrast, if the scientific field which is actually involved were pursued more fully. As we have argued elsewhere (Christie, 1986), one way to demonstrate this is by recourse to the world of biological textbooks in which the meanings of chicken reproduction are created. An examination of a representative range of university textbooks on the subject shows that the little textbook in use in this lesson Egg to Chick, in fact offers a very good introduction to the field involved. It happens that the teacher makes very selective use of the actual written text, sometimes skipping whole pages and sections, and elsewhere paraphrasing the written text on the pages used, on the grounds, presumably, that those left out are too hard. A review of the book leads us to argue that unless the meanings established about chickens - their characteristics and their reproductive cycle - are built in a way that these are understood in relation to the wider world of other animals, then what is constructed is at best both partial and incomplete, and certainly not comprehensively scientific.

With a view to demonstrating this argument, we will shortly examine the characteristics of the scientfic language used in the textbook. Before we do so, however, we will make one further comment about the classifying processes, examine the exemplifying and "exhausting" processes used in the construction of the "content" field in the element, and, finally, we shall comment on the role of the possessive processes in the construction of the "content" field.

Of the seven classifying processes, two (which we have cited above) have the function of identifying a "little creature" as a hen. Three others serve to classify eggs as things from which chickens come, as in:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| are | these little eggs | going to turn into | chickens |
| *Pro-* | *Carrier* | *-cess* | *Attribute.* |

One other process classifies a series of pictures:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| these | are | some pictures of | what a baby fish looks like |
| | | | what a baby chicken looks like |
| | | | what a human being looks like |
| | | | when it's just starting to grow |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | |

While the latter classifying process has the effect of drawing the children's attention to the fact that the illustrations show the similarities of a number of young things - in itself a piece of "uncommonsense" knowledge of some significance - the classifying processes collectively thus have a fairly limited role, since they primarily deal with chickens as things coming from eggs. There are not, for example, any processes which classify chickens as birds, to be understood in relation to other birds, or alternatively, as egg-laying creatures like other such creatures, or alternatively again, as creatures having male and female parents, like other creatures. Chickens are not in fact classified at all, in terms of their relationship to other living things.

When we turn to the set of exemplifying and "exhausting" processes, we find that there is in fact one exemplifying process used, and it is employed by the teacher in identifying an aspect of a hen's appearance, to which she points in a picture:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a comb | is | that |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token.* |

The latter process, produced by the teacher in response to a confusion in a child's mind about the difference between a "cone" and a "comb", is useful, in that it clears up the child's uncertainty. However, it is clear that exemplifying as such has no role in the Task

Orientation at all. Chickens could have been discussed, as instances of birds:

| a chicken | is | an example of a bird |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value,* |

or alternatively, as instances of egg-laying creatures:

| a chicken | is | a type of egg-laying creature. |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value,* |

where the force of the processes involved would have been to build a sense of chickens and hens in terms of their relationship to other such creatures, as these are to be understood in the taxonomic terms used by scientists - a point to which we shall return below.

The 15 "exhausting" processes all have a useful role, for they are involved in building some of the technical language which constitutes a part of the "content" field. One is involved in identifying types of chickens:

| they | 're called | batteries or battery chickens or battery hens |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value,* |

while nine identify parts of the egg, as in:

| that | 's | the yolk [[that it will feed on]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* |

or

| that | 's | the white part |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value,* |

and three have a role in building reflection on how the chicken grows or "looks" when it grow as in:

| and | that | 's just | [[like he looked]] |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Token* | *Process* | *Value* |

or

| this | is | [[how the chicken will grow]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value.* |

The remaining two "exhausting" processes involve one to do with talk of contol of the temperature of an incubator:

| that | was | [[to increase or lower the temperature]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value,* |

and one, forming part of a joke the teacher makes about why chickens turn yellow:

| do you think | that | 's | [[why he turns yellow]] |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Token* | *Process* | *Value.* |

Overall, the "exhausting" processes in particular build much that is valuable as aspects of the "content" field.

Such a sense of the "content" field is developed further through uses of possessive processes. Most of the eight instances of possessive processes employed by the teacher have a function in building more information about the characteristics of chickens, as in the following:

| sometimes you | 'll get | an egg [[that's got a little spot of blood on it]] |
|---|---|---|
| *Carr: poss* | *Process* | *Attribute: possessed,* |

though the three possessive processes produced by the children are less directly involved in the construction of the "content" field, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I | 've got | a question |
| *Carr: poss* | *Process* | *Attribute: possessed.* |

Overall, as this discussion has shown, the discourse in the TO, in so far as it realises aspects of the "content" field, is strongest in terms of describing chickens and hens and in terms of building exhausting observations about chickens, in which a degree of useful language relevant to the field is established. The discourse is less strong in terms of classifying and very weak in terms of exemplifying: the majority of those processes that are used for classifying tend to focus on classifying eggs as things from which chickens come forth, while exemplifying has no significant role in the discourse.

Some indication of a more comprehensive way to treat the "content" field is provided in the book in use, Egg to Chick, about which we shall now say a little more. We have earlier noted that a perusal of several biology textbooks for use in universities shows that this particular children's textbook offers an excellent introduction to the field. Elsewhere (Christie, 1986) we have examined in some detail the scientific field in question. The most important general point one would wish to make about scientific enquiry is that it is taxonomic: that is to say, living things are understood in terms of how they relate to other living things in a hierarchically ordered manner. Table 7.12 sets out one possible taxonomic statement about domestic hens, though other such statements might also be proposed.

Table 7.12 Classification of chickens according to the iinternational code of nomenclature of taxonomy

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Sub Phylum: Vertebrata
Class: Aves
Order: Galliformes (Game Birds)
Family: Phasianidae

Interest in the reproduction of domestic hens is one of a number of possible sub-fields within biology: in fact it is an aspect of vertebrate embryology. To the biologist, chicken reproduction is of interest as one manifestation of bird reproduction, but that in turn is of interest as one instance of vertebrate reproduction; and indeed, of course, the latter is of interest in turn as one manifestation of animal reproduction. Bearing these general considerations in mind, it is of interest to examine how the textbook Egg to Chick approaches the study of chicken reproduction. A copy of two pages from the book is reproduced here to give some sense of the manner in which the book deals with its subject. We have already noted the significance of the illustrations as an aspect of the scientific mode. The general role of the illustrations needs to be borne in mind in the rest of this discussion.

As we shall see, the most important differences between the way the "content" field is constructed in the classroom discourse and in the textbook lie in the facts that the textbook makes much greater use of classifying processes, considerably less use of describing processes, more use of exemplifying processes and rather less use of exhausting processes. The overall effect, as we shall see, is that a greater degree of "uncommonsense" knowledge is built up, in that chickens are understood not only as creatures that come from eggs, but in that they share this characteristic with a number of other animals, and

like the latter, they have a female and male parent, each having an essential role in the creation of the young creature.

Table 7. 13 sets out all the attributive and identifying processes used in the book.

Table 7.13 Attributive and identifying processes in the book Egg to Chick

Attributive

| how | does an egg like this grow into a chicken | | | like this | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Circ.* | *Pro- Carrier* | *-cess* | *Attribute* | *Circ.* | Classifying |

| these eggs | can become | frogs | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| these eggs | can become | turtles | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| these eggs | can become | dogs | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| these eggs | can become | chickens | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| what | makes | an egg | grow into | an animal | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Attributor* | *Process* | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| an egg | cannot grow into | an animal | all by itself | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | *Circ.* | Classifying |

| it | will start growing into | a new animal | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| blood spots do not mean the egg | | is growing into a chicken | | |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| this white spot | will grow into | a chick | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| the eggs | begin to change into | chicks | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| they | are | little tubes [[called blood vessels]] | |
| *Carrier* | *process* | *Attribute* | Classifying |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| at last | they | become | hens and cocks | like these | |
| *Circ.* | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | *Circ.* | Classifying |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| they | are | yellow | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| she | keeps | them | warm | |
| *Attributor* | *Process* | *Carrier* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| the embryos | look | alike | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| when | the animals | are | bigger | |
| | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| they | will look | very different | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| the embryos | look | the same | |
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| its eyes and its head | are | very big | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| see how much longer | the feathers | are | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Attribute* | *Carrier* | *Process* | Describing |

| the feet | are | much bigger | too | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | | Describing |

| the chick | is | almost ready [[to come out]] | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| the 21 days inside the egg | are | over | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| it | is not | easy [[for the chick to get out]] | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| the chick | is | almost out | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| the chick | is | still very weak | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| its legs | are | wobbly | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| its feathers | are | very wet | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

| the chick | is | soft and fluffy | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* | Describing |

Identifying

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| they | are | little tubes [called blood vessels] | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exemplifying |
| it | is called | an incubator | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | Exemplifying |
| it | is called | an embryo | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | Exemplifying |
| all animals | are called | embryos when they first begin to grow | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | Exemplifying |
| it | is called | the egg tooth | |
| *Value* | *Process* | *Token* | Exemplifying |
| that | is | [[why chickens & frogs & dogs & people all have both a mother and father]] | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |
| the hen | is | the chick's mother | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |
| the cock | is | its father | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |
| this | is | the white of the egg | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |
| this | is | the yolk | |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value* | Exhausting |

while four subsequent classifying processes establish some possible types of animals:

| these eggs | can become | frogs |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process:* | *Attribute* |

| these eggs | can become | turtles |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* |

| these eggs | can become | dogs |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute* |

| these eggs | can become | chickens |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute.* |

Another material process establishes a general statement about people:

| people | grow | from eggs | too |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: mann: means* | |

Having then used another classifying process as part of posing a further question:

| what | makes | an egg | grow into | an animal? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Attributor* | *Process* | *Carrier* | *Process* | *Attribute,* |

the book goes on to weave a pattern in which one material, two attributive processes having a classifying role, and two circumstantial processes are employed to build the meanings of sexual reproduction:

| an egg | cannot grow into | an animal | all by itself |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Pro: intensive* | *Attribute* | *Circ: mann: means* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| first | it | must be joined | by a sperm |
| | *Goal* | *Process: material* | *Actor* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| then | it | will start growing into | a new animal |
| | *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the sperm | comes from | the father |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: circumstantial* | *Attribute* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the egg | comes from | the mother |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: circumstantial* | *Attribute* |

The process of building the facts and significance of vertebrate reproduction is then further developed by a clause employing an "exhausting" process which makes a definitive statement:

| | |
|---|---|
| that | is [[why chickens and frogs and dogs and people all have both a mother and a father]] |
| *Token* | *Pro: Value* |

Two more "exhausting" processes immediately follow, also having the function of building definition:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the hen | is | the chick's mother |
| *Token* | *Process:* | *Value* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the cock | is | its father |
| *Token* | *Process* | *Value.* |

Overall, this opening series of clauses has served both to establish the basic principles of vertebrate reproduction to the young reader, and to demonstrate to the linguist interested in the issue some linguistic resources in which such a thing is achieved. The material processes realise the activities associated with such reproduction (the egg "is

joined by the sperm") while classifying processes establish the classes of beings ("an animal" or "a new animal"), created as a result of these activities. Finally, exhausting processes define ("the hen" is "the chick's mother"), and some fundamental biological principles have thus been enunciated. None of these matters, it will be noted, is realised in the text generated by the teacher in the Task Orientation, as we have been examining it.

Since the discourse in the TO makes virtually no use of exemplifying processes, the five used in the textbook by contrast are worthy of some note. Looking at the five as they are listed in Table 7.14, it will be clear that they are involved in building a deal of the technical language relevant to the field here, and their manner of doing so is of interest:

it ( i.e. a "box heated by electricity") is called an incubator
Value Token

they (i.e. "the red lines") are little tubes [[called blood vessels]]
Value Token

it (i.e." the tiny chick") is called an embryo
Value Token

all animals are called embryos [[when they first begin to grow]]
Value Token

it (i.e.the hard point on the tip of the beak) is called the egg tooth
Value Token

All five processes provide evidence of the manner in which a technical language associated with a scientific register is built up, just as Eggins, Martin and Wignell (1987, 42-43) have demonstrated. In discussing identifying processes, Halliday (1985a, 114-118), defines

the Token as the grammaical element which realises a "sign, name, form, holder, occupant", while the Value realises the "meaning, referent, function, status, role". Thus, in each of the five identifying processes provided here, technical terms are built up through the Token and some of the "uncommonsense" knowledge of the field is constructed as well.

Turning to the describing processes used in the book, it will be noted that these include a number that the teacher has actually used herself. Indeed, she makes more use of those clauses building description than she does of any others in the book overall. We must conclude that she does this because she believes descriptive activity is the most appropriate one for the children she is teaching.

In general then, now that we have completed our examination of the development of the "content" field in the textbook and compared with that of the field developed in the classroom talk, we can see that the field in the class discourse is strongest in terms of description. Such description as is built up under the teacher's guidance as we have already suggested is useful, but it nonetheless provides insufficient information about the characteristics of hens and chickens, when compared with that provided in the language of the textbook, which is written for young learners of the age of those in the class. It is insufficient because such information is not developed in the context of an examination of a "content" field which should also examine hens either as a class or as an example of an animal which engages in sexual reproduction: such propositions could be built in classifying and exemplifying processes as we have seen. Furthermore, the development of the field allows no establishment of the general principle that all vertebrate animals reproduce through sexual union - a proposition of the kind which would be realised in an exemplifying process. Finally, because of these characteristics of the discourse in the TO, very little technical language particular to the "content" field concerned is introduced.

The lesson was intended to be a science lesson, and science by definition seeks to take the propositions of the "commonsense" and familiar world, and to develop our understandings of these in a number of ways. The describing processes used in the TO do establish "commonsense" meanings - meanings that is, that are either awakened from familiar experience, or at least built from the immediately recognisable features of the phenomena displayed in the illustrations in the textbook: to that extent they are used well, and there is every reason to believe that the children enjoy much of the talk. However, the understandings thus established are at best only partial, and they remain not illuminated by a further exploration of the manner in which the "content" field is actually developed further by genuine scientific enquiry, of the kind which the textbook demonstrates admirably can in fact be made available to quite young children.

In bringing this discussion of the TO of Text C to a close, we should note that in the activity at the end of the element, where the teacher invites the children to "be good chickens" as a variation in learning, the processes are partly behavioural:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| they | can make | good chicken noises |
| *Behaver* | *Process: behavioural* | *Range,* |

sometimes attributive, as when achieving some control over the children:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| the rest of you | must be | quiet |
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

and sometimes material:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| very good Jeffrey, | you | can sit down |
| | *Actor* | *Process: material.* |

It is direction of the children's behaviour which is primarily at issue here.

Our general analysis supports the picture built up in the initial analysis of Theme in chapter 6 (section 6.6.1), such that there is a movement from the opening teacher monologue in which both the pedagogical and the "content" fields find expression, into the "body" of the element in which the "content" field is prominent. Towards the end of the element the pedagogical field is once again foregrounded, as the teacher overtly directs the children's behaviour.

We should note that notwithstanding the reservations we have expressed about the teacher's manner of going about constructing the "content" field in this element, the fact is that she has done considerably more towards developing an engagement with a significant field than have either of the teachers in Texts A and B. As we noted in the case of the former, a social science lesson about uniforms, it is difficult to see what the teacher could have done in developing the activity since no significant "content" field actually applies. In the case of the latter, the basal reading book used about a boy's lost lunch provided little as an imaginative field for enquiry. Given that Mrs L, the teacher in Text C is in many ways a gifted teacher, such limitations as are apparent in the TO of her lesson reflect problems to do with the general traditions within which she is working.

## 7.6.2 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION AND CONTROL 3 OF TEXT C

Table 7.15 sets out a summary of all the transitivity processes used in the TS and C4 of Text C.

Table 7.15: Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Specification / Control 13 of Text C

| Process type | | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | | 31 | 5 |
| Mental: | perception | | 1 | 0 |
| | cognition | | 12 | 3 |
| | affect | | 6 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | | 10 | 3 |
| Relational: | | intensive: | | |
| | | (i) attributive | 9 | 3 |
| | | (ii) identifying | 6 | 1 |
| | | circumstantial: | | |
| | | attributive | 7 | 2 |
| | | possessive: | | |
| | | attributive | 1 | 0 |
| Verbal | | | 6 | 0 |
| Existential | | | 6 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | | 95 | 17 |

Direction and control of the children's behaviour is primarily at issue in this element. Material, behavioural and some mental processes are all involved in giving general direction to what is going on. In the opening clause in the teacher monologue the teacher makes uses of a material process, and both process and goal realise aspects of the pedagogical field:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| all right before | we | start | some work | today |
| | Actor | Pro: mat. | Goal | Circ: loc: time. |

The teacher goes on to pass judgment upon the children's just completed efforts at "being good chickens". As we noted in Chapter 3 (sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.8) on the morning news genre, responsibility for evaluating the significance or the worth of any activity is normally the teacher's: it is an important measure of the relationships that apply:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I | liked | Jeffrey's chook impersonation |
| *Senser* | *Process: affect* | *Phenomenon: thing* |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and | I | liked | Veronica's chicken one | too |
| | *Senser* | *Process: affect* | *Phenomenon: thing* | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| so | I | think | those two | deserve | a clap |
| | | | *Carr: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: poss.* |
| | *Senser* | *Pro: cog* | *Phenomenon* | | |
| *α* | | | *ß* | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| well | done |
| *Circumstance: mann: comparison* | *Process: material* |

There then follows a Control element, in which the teacher takes steps to control what she considers unacceptable behaviour. This is realised partly in material processes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Gabriel, | stand up |
| | *Process : material,* |

and partly in attributive processes:

| | |
|---|---|
| be | quiet |
| *Process: intensive* | *Attribute,* |

and partly in mental processes:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| don't | you | know | when | to stop? |
| | | | *Circ: loc: time* | *Pro: material* |
| *Pro-* | *Senser* | *-cess: cognition* | *Phenomenon* | |
| *α* | | | *ß* | |

Having re-established what she considers acceptable order, the teacher proceeds to initiate the TS proper, and as we saw in our chapter (section 6. 6.2) this is signalled by her use of an embedded clause in a marked topical Theme position. In fact, in a clause complex making use of an identifying process, she manages to pack a great deal of information in by using embedded clauses in both the Token and Value positions:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| [[what I have here]] | is | a little sheet [[ I'd like you to take back with your to your seat]] | |
| *Value* | *Pro.* | *Token* | |

Plainly, the pedagogical field is now in operation, and the following clause complexes, using both behavioural and mental processes of perception, identify the behaviours in which the children are to

engage, while one existential process, involving use of embedded clauses, establishes the "content" field:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| on this little sheet, when | you | look | very very closely | |
| *Circ: loc: place* | *Behaver* | *Pro: beh.* | *Circ: mann: quality* | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| you | may not be able to see | it | from the front |
| *Senser* | *Pro: perception* | *Phenomenon: Thing* | *Circ: loc: place* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| when | you | look | closely |
| | *Behaver* | *Pro: beh.* | *Circ: mann: quality* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| you | 'll find | there are pictures Belinda, of all the stages [[that a little chick goes through before it is born ]] | |
| | | *Pro: ex. Existent* | |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | |
| *α* | *β* | | |

One measure of the fact that it is the pedagogical field which is much more of concern here than the "content" field is the somewhat reduced participation of the children in this element, compared with the amount of their involvement in the TO. As the talk proceeds there is an interweaving pattern such that mental processes, material and behavioural processes begin to build what it is the children are to do:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| you 've got to sort out which order | | the pictures | go | in |
| | *Circ-* | *Actor* | *Pro: mat* | *-stance: mann: quality* |
| *Sen. Process: Cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | | |
| *α* | *β* | | | |

and a little later:

| | |
|---|---|
| I want | [ you to write a little story about this little chick<br>how it grew<br>and how it hatched into a chicken] |
| *Senser Pro: affect* | *Phenomenon* |

The children's behaviour continues to be operationalised, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| you | can leave | your colouring |
| *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Goal* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| till | the Clag | is | dry |
| | *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| and till | you | 've written | your little story |
| | *Behaver* | *Process::behavioural* | *Range* |

Interestingly, because it is so rare to find a teacher do so in this study, the teacher turns to considering the issue of how a "story" might be made, and she actually asks a question about it, provoking a response from one child:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| um, | I | 'm going to look at | the pictures |
| | *Behaver* | *Process : behavioural* | *Range* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| and | write | about [ how the chicken hatched] |
| | *Process: beh.* | *Circumstance: matter.* |

We have already alluded (chapter 6, section 6.6.6; chapter 7, section 7.2) to the confusions unwittingly created by Mrs L in suggesting that the children write a "story." The teacher's confusions are unfortunate in two senses, though ultimately the two are related. In the first place, she appears so unaware of the actual demands of the "content"

field with which she has been dealing that she seems not to appreciate that such a field actually demands some kind of factual writing, not "story" writing at all; this is the more remarkable, we might add, because of the general significance of the series of pictures she has taken the trouble to prepare and distribute to the children as a basis for writing. Secondly, conscientiously though she seeks to give advice and generate talk about the writing task, she actually confines what is said to considerations of the "content" for writing, not to the generic structure of what it is that is to be written. Like the other teachers in the study, then she actually does not teach the children <u>how to write</u> at all. Indeed, the teacher makes clear that the choice of how to write is to be made by the children - in itself a hard thing to expect, especially of such young writers:

| maybe | if you wanted | to write | in your story that | the egg | was then taken |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | *Goal* | *Pro: material* |
| | *Sens. Pro: cog* | *Pro: verbal* | | *Verbiage* | |
| | *α* | | *β* | | |

| you | could |
|---|---|
| *Sayer* | *Pro: verbal* |

| that | 's | up to you |
|---|---|---|
| *Carrier* | *Process: intensive* | *Attribute: circ.* |

The attempt to involve the children in some anthropomorphising about animals, already referred to in chapter 6 (section 6.6 and 6.6.2) leads to some teacher uses of circumstantial attributive processes about how chickens feel:

| how | must | that little chick | feel | inside the egg |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Attrib: cir.* | *Pro-* | *Carrier* | *-cess: int.* | *Circ: loc: place.* |

Questioning about this matter persists for a few minutes, and in fact at the time of the teaching episode the researcher noted in her field notes that some of the children appeared somewhat nonplussed by the question, for it did sit somewhat uneasily in a discussion whose general character had been factual, not imaginative. The teacher repeats her question a couple of times, saying to one boy ("Mirko"):

| how | must | that little chicken feel, | Mirko, by the time [[ he's to this stage?]] |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Attrib: circ* | *Pro-* | *Sens.* | *-cess: int.* *Circ:loc: time'* |

No-one replies, Mirko in particular looking somewhat blank, so the teacher shifts the focus of the question:

| what | 's | he | want | to do |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Phenomenon: thing* | *Pro-* | *Senser* | *-cess : affect* | *Pro: mat.* |

| when | he | 's | to this stage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Carrier* | *Pro: int.* | *Attrib: circ.* |

| when | he | 's pecking | a hole, | Diana? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Actor* | *Pro: mat.* | *Goal* | |

Diana responds:

| get out | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Process :* | *material* | | | | |
| I | thought | if | they | 're all squashed up | |
| | | | *Goal* | *Process: material* | |
| | | | they | 'd just push | out |
| | | | *Actor* | *Process: material* | *Circ: loc: place* |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | | |
| *α* | | *β* | | | |

This response, now more factual than imaginative, appears to take the talk away from imaginative exploration. A little later, another child - a girl called Jodie - appears to return to the general intent of the earlier questions with regard to the chicken's "feelings." It is probably to be expected, by the way, that a girl rather than a boy takes up this theme, since the researcher's general observation is that girls rather than boys respond to matters fantastic and imaginative: this we believe is a condition of gender. Imaginative experience, like the anthropomorphising of animals, would appear to be valued in our culture as appropriate to childhood, and little girls in particular seem to be expected to participate in creating fantsay and "make believe". Jodie says:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| if | I | was | in the shell |
| | *Carrier* | *Pro: int.* | *Attribute: circ.* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I | would feel | sad |
| *Carrier* | *Process: Iintensive* | *Attribute.* |

The teacher responds with a smile, and develops the point for the moment:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| you | 'd feel | sad | do | you | think |
| *Carrier* | *Pro: int.* | *Attribute* | *Pro-* | *Senser* | *-cess: cog.* |
| *'1* | | | *2* | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| you | bet | I | 'd feel | scared |
| | | *Carrier* | *Pro: int.* | *Attribute* |
| *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | |
| *ɗ* | | *ß* | | |

| yes, | I | think | it | 'ud be | very scarey |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Carrier* | *Pro: int.* | *Attribute* |
| | *Senser* | *Pro: cog.* | *Phenomenon* | | |
| | *α* | *β,* | | | |

and from there she goes on to talk of the sensations of the chicken once it enters the world outside the shell. The conversation is adrift, and has been for several minutes, for the participants have shifted well away from any talk of the pedagogical task, and in fact, they have moved back to certain aspects of the "content" field.

After some talk of the need to bring in food for the chicken, it is a child who actually directs the talk back to the task in hand. Pointing to the piece of paper showing the series of pictures being distributed to the children, the child says:

| what | 's | that? |
|---|---|---|
| *Value* | *Pro: int.* | *Token,* |

to which the teacher replies:

| it | just | says | at the bottom | "How | a chicken | grows" |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | *Circ: mann: means* | *Actor* | *Pro: mat.* |
| *Sayer* | *Pro: verb.* | *Circ: loc: place* | | | | |
| *1* | | | | *"2* | | |

Overall, having started by foregrounding the pedagogical field, the teacher has allowed the discourse to return to the "content" field in the "body" of the element. To the extent that the pedagogical task has been examined, the talk has been directed to considerations of the "order" of the pictures, and to the need to plan a "story" about "how the little chick grows inside the egg." While the teacher has made some effort to generate some talk about the task, it is clear that such discussion as does emerge is both confused and very general. As

advice for writing, hers compares with that given by the teachers in both Texts A and B.

## 7. 6.3 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK RESPECIFICATION AND CONTROL 4 OF TEXT C

Table 7.15 sets out the summary of transitivity processes in the Task Respecification and Control 4 of the text.

Table 7.15: Summary of transitivity choices in the Task Respecification / Control 4 of Text C

| Process type | | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|---|
| Material | | 16 | 3 |
| Mental: | cognition | 0 | 1 |
| | affect | 1 | 0 |
| Behavioural | | 4 | 0 |
| Relational: | intensive: | | |
| | identifying | 1 | 0 |
| | circumstantial: | | |
| | attributive | 1 | 1 |
| | possessive: | | |
| | attributive | 5 | 1 |
| Verbal | | 2 | 0 |
| Existential | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 30 | 6 |

As we argued in chapter 6 (section 6.6.3), the TRS does concentrate rather more fully upon the pedagogical field than the "content" field. What is accomplished largely represents a summary of the general directions to work offered in the TS: it is not the case that the pedagogical task is developed any more fully, and the "content" field receives rather less realisation than was true in the TS. Most processes - 19 in fact - are material and to do with constructing what is to be done as in:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| yes Jodie what | have | | you | got to do? |
| | *Goal* | *Pro-* | *Actor* | *-cess: material* |

There are four behavioural processes (all produced by the teacher) as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| you | can write | your story |
| *Behaver* | *Process: beh.* | *Range,* |

and five possessive processes, three of which reflect upon desirable characteristics for the children to have as they start writing, as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| who | 's got | a good memory? |
| *Carrier: poss.* | *Process: poss.* | *Attribute: poss.,* |

and two of which are involved in the Control element as in:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| whose car | is | it |
| *Attribute: poss* | *Pro: int.* | *Carrier.* |

The remaining processes - two verbal, one circumstantial and one identifying process - all in varying ways contribute to the building of the pedagogical field.

### 7.6.4 TRANSITIVITY IN THE TASK OF TEXT C

As earlier noted, the Task element is realised in a single clause, constructing the action to be undertaken by the children preparatory to starting their writing and involving a material process:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| right now | hop | back to your seats please |
| | *Process: mat.* | *Circ: loc: place.* |

This T element thus marks some variation upon the comparable element in Texts A and B. In the former, the task was actually constructed linguistically, in a series of questions read out by the teacher from the board. In the latter, a "heading" for writing was realised in the teacher's talk, and also written on the board. While the teacher in Text A made no reference to the action to be taken by the children in moving back to their seats, the teacher in Text B made a somewhat oblique reference to it. Here in Text C, it is the action alone which finds linguistic realisation, and it is as we also earlier noted (chapter 6 section 6.6.4), accompanied by a marked change in the physical disposition of all the participants.

## 7.7 Summary

The analysis of TRANSITIVITY in our three instances of the writing planning genre being now completed, we may summarise the major elements of our arguments thus:

> 1) The opening teacher monologue in the TO foregrounds the pedagogical register, realised either in behavioural, material or mental processes of perception or of cognition. The "content" field finds realisation at this point in secondary participants and/or circumstances. Examples include:

We were looking at different people's uniforms;

I want you to listen to this little tiny story [like the on we had yesterday] ;

We're going to start off with a little story this morning.

2) Once into the "body" of the TO, the "content" field is foregrounded in processes, participants and circumstances, as in:

Mr P has taken it off;

He went along into a take away food place;

This is the inside of the egg.

The only exceptions to this general principle in the manner in which a "content" field is realised, occur where the teacher uses a behavioural process or a process of perception or cognition to direct the children's attention to aspects of the field as in:

Look at this peaked hat. See what it says on the badge here.

3) A TS or a TRS starts by foregrounding the pedagogical field again in one of the processes mentioned in (1), and since the object here is to define a task for writing, the "content" field finds less expression in the "body" of the element.The one exception to this is in the

case of Text B, where a TS1 does deal with the "content" field in some detail, and the TS2 deals with it rather less, dealing with the writing task rather more fully.

4) In that the TS and the TRS deal with the pedagogical field, this field mainly realises aspects of teacher direction of the children's behaviour, as in:

You can do it straight in your books,

and it realises aspects of the actual task for writing in very general ways, as in:

How are you going to go about making up a story for these pictures? Right that's your problem.

5) A T element, the most minimal element in the schematic structure, is realised in several possible types of processes, depending on whether the teacher chooses to identify actions to be taken, or the task for writing:

Right now will you hop back to your seats please;

All right, let me see who's going to be first.
Here's your heading: "What happened to my lunch?"

6) The C element, since it involves control of unacceptable behaviour, tends to be realised in material processes, though sometimes a relational process may be used identifying some matter, as in:

Frankie put the comb away. The time to do your hair is play time.

7) Since as a general principle, the children participate most in the TO of each of Texts A, B and C, it is there that they produce most transitivity processes. The one exception to this is Text B, where the children talk rather more fully in the TS1 than in either the TO or the TRO of structure. In general, their contributions mainly realise aspects of the "content" field. In Text C, where as we noted in chapter 6, the children talk most, they produce a more varied range of transitivity processes than they do in Texts A and B.

8) A "content" field, in that it is intended to offer access to some of the "uncommonsense" knowledge of school learning, will be constructed in part in sets of attributive processes which have the functions of describing phenomena:

It's a dark colour,

and classifying phenomena:

The egg is going to grow into a chicken,

and in part in identifying processes which have the functions of exemplifying phenomena as in:

A comb is that,

and "exhausting" phenomena:

Those litte red lines are the blood vessels.

Exemplifing processes in particular help build the technical language associated with a "content" field:

All animals are called embryos when they first begin to grow,

though classifying processes will also make use of technical language, as in:

At last they become hens and cocks like these.

9) Using these general principles as explained in (8), we can argue that Text A (drawn from the social science program) and Text C (drawn from the natural science program) each build a "content" which is less successful than it might have been, where the teachers had a better informed grasp of the relationship of "content" and language. Text A makes most use of describing processes, very limited use of classifying processes, and also limited use of exemplifying and "exhausting" processes. By its nature, its "content" field is not likely to offer much opportunity for learning how to handle phenomena in new ways. Text C, which has a potentially very good "content" field, makes less significant use of classifying and exemplifying processes in particular than it might have done, and its

"content" is built primarily in description. While describing the phenomena of chicken development is desirable, and in fact handled well by the teacher, such an activity provides an insufficient access to the "uncommonsense" knowledge of chicken development which science affords This it was possible to establish by comparing the manner of realising the field in the TO with the manner of its realisation in the discourse of the textbook displayed, Egg to Chick, which is carefully written to realise important scientific understandings.

10) In the case of Text B, where the school program drawn on is language arts, the nature of the "content" field involved is different from that in Texts A and C. Even then, however, it has been argued that the field is an insufficient one for school learning. That is because the field primarily involves the children in building events either as constructed in a reading book whose language is very limited, or in reconstructing aspects of personal experiences. Such problems with the "content" field might have been alleviated, had the activity addressed more fully the nature of the writing task as an aspect of the pedagogical field. However, as was true of Texts A and C, the writing task was treated only very generally.

Overall, our observations with respect to TRANSITIVITY actually support and enrich the analysis of the three texts in terms of THEME already offered in chapter 6. An examination of TRANSITIVITY allows us to trace both the manner in which the two registers are realised, the one "projecting" the other, and to demonstrate how the operation of the two works to build the various elements of schematic structure we have claimed may be found in the three examples of the writing planning genre identified. In addition, since we had argued the particular strength of a TRANSITIVITY analysis in penetrating the nature of a field, we have in particular been able to show rather more about the nature of both the pedagogical and "content" fields than was true in chapter 6. Such an analysis has served to support the general arguments (i) that the pedagogical field in each of the three instances of the writing planning genre is strongest in terms of teacher guidance of the children's general behaviour, and weakest in terms of teacher advice to the children on the actual tasks of writing; and (ii) that the "content" field in each case provides less of an opportunity for engagement with learning a new "uncommonsense" knowledge than might have been the case if the teachers had had a clearer sense of what constituted a significant "content" for examining with young learners.

We would stress that the limitations we believe have been demonstrated in the operation of the pedagogical and "content" fields are not to be explained in terms of any alleged incompetence in the teachers. Rather, we have sought to argue with some care that the difficulties in the operation of the two fields spring from a general ideology of early childhood education which underestimates what young children are capable of learning, and whose effect is to perpetuate their lack of knowledge rather than to remedy it. Each of the teachers we suggest shows facility in some ways in working with the children, though we believe that those in Texts B and C do rather better at involving the children in learning than the teacher in Text A.

In turning to chapter 8, we intend to explore the latter matters rather more fully, for we shall seek to demonstrate in what ways an analysis of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE will illuminate the nature of the contributions of the teacher and the children to the construction of the discourse. In particular, it should help us to see the facility with which the teacher in Text B usefully "scaffolds" appropriate language for the children, while the teacher in Text C involves the children in genuine negotiation of jointly constructed information.

# 8 Conversation Structure in the writing planning genre

## 8.1 Introduction

In this chapter we take up the issue of how the discourse in the writing planning genre is structured as conversation. Our previous two chapters have examined aspects of the grammar of our selected instances of the genre. While the analyses undertaken have served to demonstrate a great deal both of the meanings built up in the texts, and of the manner in which these are built, we have not to this point considered how it is that the discourse is actually organised as conversation. Our objects in this chapter broadly will be two. On the one hand we will seek to consider in what ways the conversation of the writing planning genre is structured. On the other hand, we will seek to demonstrate how such an examination throws more light upon the nature of the genre in question, illuminating in complementary ways the general observations we have already made about it, and about the ideologies of early childhood language education at work there.

In Section 8.2 we will offer a brief discussion of some research into classroom discourse. Here we will refer to work undertaken by a variety of educationists exploring patterns of classroom discourse, as well as various research activities of a loosely "sociolinguistic" type. Researchers in the former category, we shall suggest, have often made very useful contributions to an understanding of classroom practices, though since their methodologies have been of a more informal kind than that which is attempted here, we shall not draw directly upon these. Researchers in the "sociolinguistic" tradition, we shall suggest, have taken up concerns with classroom studies closer to those taken up here, and we shall suggest that there are in fact useful points of similarity between them and this study. We shall in addition consider in particular the work of Sinclair and Coulthard

(1975), who undertook an important study of classroom discourse - probably the first of its kind done by linguists. We shall seek to explain the research methodology they developed, drawing attention to the ways in which we wish to develop our research methodology somewhat differently, especially with respect to our notion of the CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in the classroom.

In Section 8.3 we shall go on to examine aspects of the earlier research into EXCHANGE STRUCTURES, drawing upon the work of Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c), Martin (1986) and Ventola (1984, 1987,1988). In seeking to explain how a conversational exchange is generated we shall, following Ventola, propose that in the creation of an exchange we may find operating either a MOVE or a MOVE COMPLEX. We shall suggest that the notion of the move complex in particular enables us to build an appropriate sense of the dynamic free-flowing character of conversation.

In section 8.4 we shall take the principles of conversation structure analysis we have thus proposed and outline the ways in which conversation structure helps to realise the two registers of the writing planning genre. We shall argue that our analysis generally supports and extends the accounts we have already given of the three instances of the genre, especially with respect to the various elements of schematic structure we have identified in each.

In sections 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 we shall consider conversation structure in some detail in each of the three instances of the writing planning genre we have been examining. We shall argue that the analysis enables us to see rather more clearly than we have been able to do so till this point some of the characteristics of classroom talk which would need to apply where teachers genuinely negotiate understandings with their students, or where they scaffold appropriate language for their students. We shall suggest that Mrs S, the teacher in Text A, permits least opportunity for negotiation, and

that she does not on the whole scaffold appropriate language either. In Text B Mrs P does quite skilfully demonstrate at one point some effective scaffolding of language, though as we have already suggested, the "content" about which she scaffolds seems to us needlessly limited in character. We shall suggest that Mrs L, the teacher in Text C, despite some of the problems in her text to which we have alluded in earlier chapters, does provide interesting evidence of the character of a text in which some genuine negotiation of learning takes place with the students.

In a final section of the chapter we will seek to bring together in summary ways the principal insights of our analyses in chapters 6, 7 and 8. We shall argue that the three principal analyses adopted allow complementary interpretations both of the manner in which the writing planning genre is constructed, and of the kinds of meanings built up in the genre.

In summary, then our objects in this chapter overall will be:

1) to review briefly background trends and themes in classroom discourse analysis of the last few years, distinguishing at least three types of work: that done by educationists, that done by people in a "sociolinguistic" tradition, and that undertaken by linguists;

2) to consider in some detail the study of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), suggesting points of similarity and difference between their study

and our own. We shall suggest that the differences arise from the particular model we adopt of language, register and genre;

3) to consider in some detail research into CONVERSATION STRUCTURE of Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c), Martin (1985a, 1986) and Ventola (1984, 1987, 1988). We shall outline the EXCHANGE SYSTEM NETWORK and adopt Ventola's notions of the move and the move complex, as features of the conversation exchange;

4) to give an overview of the ways different types of conversational exchanges help to realise the pedagogical and "content" registers and the elements of schematic structure of the writing planning genre;

5) to examine conversation structure in each of our instances of the writing planning genre, drawing attention to the types of moves most commonly taken up by the teacher and the children;

> 6) to bring together the fruits of the overall analysis, comparing our general findings with those already outlined in earlier chapters for THEME and TRANSITIVITY. We shall argue that all three analyses confirm each other, and help us to demonstrate both the types of meanings constructed in the writing planning genre, and something of the ideologies of childhood, knowledge and of learning which apply in the genre.

## 8.2 Some background trends in the study of classroom discourse

The study of classroom discourse in itself has a fairly old history, though not all researchers interested in the subject have been linguists. Bellack (Bellack et al, 1966), Flanders (1970), Dunkin and Biddle (1974) and Barnes (Barnes, Britton & Rosen, 1969, (Rev. Ed.)1971, Barnes, Britton & Torbe, (3rd Ed.)1986; 1977; Barnes & Todd, 1977) have all been essentially educationists of various kinds, interested to find out more about the manner in which teachers and students worked together, with a view to changing the quality of what was done in schools. Others, to whom reference has already been made in chapter 5 (section 5.3) have worked in what was referred to loosely as a "sociolinguistic" tradition, following Cazden's categorisation. These researchers have included for example, Cicourel et al (1974), Mehan (1979), Heath, (1983), Lemke (1983, 1985), and Green and Kantor-Smith (1988). Collectively, this group have drawn upon ethnomethodology in the case of Cicourel, and in

the case of the others, upon ethnographic traditions of the kind to which we made reference when discussing the work and influence of Hymes and others in chapter 1 (section 1.2). Other researchers - primarily linguists in fact - have also made studies of classroom discourse since the 1970's, including most notably Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Sinclair and Brazil (1982) as well as Stubbs (Stubbs and Delamont,1976; Stubbs,1983, 1986; Stubbs and Hillier, (eds.) 1983). Where Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) undertook their study of classroom discourse primarily as a matter of linguistic research, Stubbs and his colleagues have sought to bring together the perspectives of linguistics and ethnography and to offer observations of a kind which might improve school practice.

Of the early researchers into classroom discourse, certainly the most influential in Australia were Bellack et al (1966), Flanders (1970) and Dunkin and Biddle (1974). The work of Flanders was becoming established in the 1970's when the researcher was herself launching her own career in teacher education, and his principles of classroom analysis were widely used and influential. A major problem with Flanders' system, however, was that it was difficult to see how a number of the categories of analysis he used were motivated: from the point of view of the linguist, his study was just too informal. In fact, as Cazden (1986, 433) points out in her discussion, in models of classroom interaction of the kind which Flanders and Dunkin and Biddle in particular developed, researchers coded classroom talk "on the spot into pre-established categories." For that reason, she notes, the manuals and/or reports which issued from their work made little use of actual instances of classroom talk. Such studies Cazden terms "process-product" in character (as distinct from the "sociolinguistic" tradition to which reference has been made above). Here, Cazden draws upon a characterisation provided originally by Dunkin and Biddle (1974), and taken up by Koehler (1978, cited in Cazden, 1986, 432) in her capacity of Director of the Division of Teaching and Learning of the National Institute of Learning. A process-product

approach, Koehler had noted, attempted to "determine which teaching processes are effective in relation to desired outcomes."

The work of Flanders, Dunkin and Biddle was related to other research initiatives of the late 1960's and 1970's of a "process-product" kind which became influential in Australia, including work on "micro skills" in teaching (Allen and Ryan 1969; Turney et al, 1973, 1975). Such work sought to break down teaching behaviour in particular into component parts or "skills" which might be studied in isolation, rehearsed and reinforced by trainee teachers under the guidance of a teacher educator. Skills included, for example, questioning, reinforcement, "basic questioning" and "advanced questioning." Check lists of appropriate behaviours were developed, and these were used in studying behaviour in classrooms and/or in analysing activities captured on video. Such approaches, which are still used in some teaching training institutions to-day, are behaviourist in character. Given the general theoretical orientations of this study, these approaches make a number of unacceptable assumptions about one's capacity to dissociate "behavioural skills" from the totality of the social processes in which people engage in given contexts of situation. For that reason, we shall not have any more to say about these research studies into "micro skills," other than to observe, even if one accepted the theoretical orientations involved, that these studies have never made much direct use of classroom language, developing rather general descriptions of the kind referred to by Cazden.

We should note that a recent review of research into classroom interaction (Hansford, 1988, 77-111) suggests that approaches to classroom interaction research in terms of general descriptions of behaviour are still advocated by many. The issue of whether one is attracted to using such approaches does depend in the end upon one's purposes in undertaking a piece of research. Where, as is the case in this study, the concern is to develop a fine linguistic

description of what goes on in classrooms, the more general approaches to which we have made reference are simply inappropriate.

Of the other early researchers, Bellack et al (1966) did considerably better than Flanders or Dunkin and Biddle, in that the descriptive system they developed for dealing with classroom discourse was more consistently motivated and explained. Bellack and his colleagues proposed that we think of the organisation of lessons in hierarchical terms, so that they broke up the structure of a lesson into "game", "sub-game", "cycle" and "move". Their ideas were to prove of interest to Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) when they undertook their study of classroom language. However, Bellack was not a linguist, and from the point of view of both Sinclair and Coulthard and of this study at least, the categories of talk that he generated were just too general.

To return to the other researchers mentioned above, Barnes was and remains primarily interested in language and cognition: how it is that students are encouraged to think in the classroom, or alternatively, how it is that much classroom practice seriously constrains their opportunities to learn to think in independent ways. To that end, he has freely sampled portions of classroom texts (e.g. Barnes, Britton and Rosen,1969; 1971), exploring how the talk works, what the teacher's role appears to be, and how the students seem to operate in response to what the teacher does. He has also, in collaboration with Todd (1977) studied what happens when arrangements are instituted other than those conventionally applying in the classroom, such as using small group talk, with a view to demonstrating how cognition and general independence of learning activity are developed. Unlike researchers like Flanders, Dunkin and Biddle, or indeed Allen and Ryan or Turney et al, Barnes has always rejected "checklist" approaches to the categorising of aspects of classroom language, just as he would completely reject any behaviourist position.

He thus does make much more frequent and direct use of extracts from classroom talk than do the latter group of people in order to illustrate the general arguments he wants to make. However, interesting though many of his observations have been, his work too has been very informal in character, offering relatively little to a study of this kind. Furthermore, since he has never sought to examine the overall organisation of a teaching episode or event, he has not developed any descriptions of classroom discourse which even compare with the notion of the curriculum genre being offered here.

In fact, as we have already observed in chapter 5 (section 5.3), the researchers whose work has been most closely related to the type of study undertaken here are those in Cazden's "sociolinguistic" tradition, such as Cazden herself, Heath, Mehan and Lemke. All of these people have been fundamentally interested in the nature of the teaching episode as a comunicative event: as an occasion on which persons engage in socially significant activities with a view to some joint negotiation of shared understandings. As we noted in our discussion in chapter 5, however, unlike the group of ethnographic researchers referred to, we use the systemic functional grammar to undertake our analysis, with the associated model of genre and register as outlined in chapter 1 (section 1.4). Like the ethnographers of the classroom, we are interested to uncover the kinds of linguistic structures in which classroom behaviour is realised, though we do not approach this issue in terms of establishing rules, as say, Mehan (1979) and Cazden (1988) do, nor in terms of the "activity sequence" and "thematic system" which we have earlier noted ( chapter 3, section 3.4, and chapter 5, section 5.3) Lemke (1983, 1985) uses. We would argue that the model of genre and register analysis as interpreted and explained by using the systemic functional grammar, allows a greater delicacy of analysis than these other methodologies permit. We would argue, firstly, that the grammar allows a teasing out of the manner in which experience is actually structured in the patterns of classroom talk, building

various ideologies to do with knowledge, the nature of teaching and learning, and the nature of childhood. Secondly, as we earlier suggested (chapter 5, section 5.3) we believe our analysis in terms of the operation of our two registers allows us both to explain how the schematic structure of a curriculum genre is built up, and how the various elements of structure operate in particulate, prosodic and "wave-length" senses.

Researchers into classroom talk frequently invoke the operation of a basic three part structure in the talk, giving it the distinctive character of teacher/pupil interaction. The structure is referred to by Cazden (1988, 29) and Perrott (1988, 16) as the IRE structure. Teacher initiates, child responds, teacher evaluates. Such a structure, with some variations, is recognised by Mehan (1979), Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Sinclair and Brazil (1983). Thus, as Sinclair and Coulthard proposed this pattern, they referred to a sequence of initiation, response and feedback (1975, 21), while Sinclair and Brazil use Initiation, Response and Follow-up (1982, 49). As we develop our account of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in the classroom below, we shall see that one of the EXCHANGE SYSTEMS we shall identify accords very closely with this IRE sequence, though we shall also identify other such EXCHANGE SYSTEMS. Unlike researchers such as Cazden, Mehan, Sinclair and Coulthard, we shall be interested, not in uncovering the sociolinguistic "rules" that appear to apply in the classroom, but in uncovering the operation of the exchange systems, and we shall seek to demonstrate that ours is a finer analysis of what happens in the construction of classroom conversation than are the analyses of these other researchers. Before taking up these matters, however, we need to say rather more about the work of Sinclair and Coulthard in particular, and about the emergence of an interest in the study of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE since their original study was published.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) were probably the first linguists to attempt a study of classroom discourse, and since theirs remains an important early study, this discussion will be informed partly by reference to their work. However, in our next section, we will also draw upon the more recent work of Berry (1981a, 1981b, 1981c), Ventola (1984, 1987,1988) and of Martin (1985a,1986), all of whom have sought, as systemicists, to develop principles for investigating CONVERSATION STRUCTURE. It will be to their work that we will look most closely for models of use here.

Like Bellack and his colleagues (1966), Sinclair and Coulthard sought to build a view of the teaching/learning episode which acknowledged various levels of structure. As noted above, Bellack had proposed that a lesson had four structures, arranged hierarchically: the "game," which in turn had "sub-games", and these in turn consisted of "cycles", while the latter consisted of "moves". While the former two, Sinclair and Coulthard noted, were understood in pedagogical terms, the latter were understood in terms of discourse. The "move", the lowest unit of structure, was itself divided into four types. The notion of the "move" was in fact to be taken over and incorporated into Sinclair and Coulthard's work as constituting one rank on their discourse scale, and they finally recognised one lower rank, the "act".

In fact, for the purposes of their study, Sinclair and Coulthard proposed five ranks on their discourse scale, and they then proposed that what they called the "level" of discourse should be understood "as lying between the level of grammar and non-linguistic organisation," in the manner indicated in Figure 8.1.

| Non-linguistic Organisation | DISCOURSE | Grammar |
|---|---|---|
| course | | |
| period | LESSON | |
| topic | TRANSACTION | |
| | EXCHANGE | |
| | MOVE | sentence |
| | ACT | clause |
| | | group |
| | | word |
| | | morpheme |

Figure 8. 1 Levels and Ranks in Sinclair and Coulthard's System of Classroom Discourse Analysis (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, 24)

In what follows in our discussion of this model as proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard, we shall seek to bring out the ways in which the model we shall be developing differs. To begin with, it will be recalled that we have already proposed a model of language, register and genre, following Martin, which identifies these as occupying three different communication "planes." (chapter 1, section 1.4) This model, already introduced in our discussion in chapter 1, we will again represent below in Figure 8.3. As we shall see shortly, the adoption of this particular model means that we approach the study of discourse structure somewhat differently from the manner suggested by Sinclair and Coulthard's three "levels".

According to Sinclair and Coulthard, the level of non-linguistic organisation in their model referred to pedagogically significant units of organisation found in schools, such as a year's course of work in a given subject. These were not in themselves, they said, capable of description in terms of linguistic organisation. In naming the top rank in the level of discourse, Sinclair and Coulthard chose the term

"lesson" because it was a word "specific to the particular language situation". They believed that the four lower ranks would be present in other discourse. They noted that the fifth rank - the "lesson", or some variant of it- might also be present in other discourses, and they suggested that once comparative data had been studied, a more general label would be subsequently adopted (1975, 24).

The latter point is of some interest here, since it will be clear by now that in this study the term we are proposing for our most general unit of structure is the genre, which in our view relates most closely to Sinclair and Coulthard's fourth rank - namely, the transaction. Central to this study in fact, as we saw in our earlier discussion in chapter 1 (section 1.4), is the view that participation in one's context of culture involves capacity to recognise and to use the many, many genres characteristic of the various contexts of situation in which persons may operate. By this standard, then, a lesson is a type of genre, and since we need to select a label with which to distinguish it from other types of genres, we have chosen to term it a "curriculum genre", recognising in addition that there are many types of such genres, and that this study is concerned with only two instances - the morning news and the writing planning genre.

Both in the volume written by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 9-10) and in a subsequent study of discourse analysis by Coulthard (1977), some reference was made to the work of Mitchell (1957/1975) in his examination of "Buying and selling in Cyrenaica," though Sinclair and Coulthard were critical of Mitchell's study. This is in fact significant for the purposes of this study, since it points to some differences of opinion in methodology. In chapter 1 (section 1.4) reference has already been made to the work of Mitchell, which was influential in the development of the early work on register and genre of both Hasan (1978) and Martin (e.g.1985a). In fact, in what became an important pioneering work in the systemic linguistic tradition, Mitchell sought to define what we would today term the schematic

structure potential of certain trading encounters in Cyrenaica (or in Hasan's terms the "generic structure potential" of these encounters). He had recognised three types of buying and selling transactions, and five stages within each. These Coulthard cited, arguing that Mitchell provided a "semantically motivated analysis" only, and he wrote that while Mitchell's analysis captured "some of the structure of the transaction, it is arguable that it is not a linguistic analysis at all." Coulthard went on to say that:

> the stages are defined and recognised by the activity that occurs within them rather than by characteristic linguistic features..(Coulthard, 1977, 4- 5).

Sinclair and Coulthard, it is clear, make a distinction between "linguistics" and "semantics" which we do not accept. As we explained at some length in chapter 1 (section 1.2 ) those approaches which dissociate grammar or language on the one hand, and semantics or meaning on the other, are in the logico-grammatical tradition referred to by Firth, and they involve a tendency to create dualisms or dichotomies which Firth, Halliday and others in their tradition do not accept. On the contrary, a semantically driven grammar of the kind Halliday has proposed and which we are using in this study, sees the object of linguistic enquiry as being to demonstrate the manner in which the grammar operates to realise meanings. Hence, for us, in identifying "stages" in buying and selling encounters, Mitchell was indeed defining these "in terms of the activity that occurred within them": that is what is involved in recognising any text as an instance of a given genre, and he certainly was undertaking linguistic analysis. It is true that much of the finer analysis in terms of the grammar, examples of which we have already attempted to demonstrate in our discussions in chapters 3, 6 and 7, is not a feature of Mitchell's discussion. He wrote at a time when functional grammars of the kind we are using had not been developed. But that does not mean Mitchell was not undertaking

linguistic analysis. It means rather, that the tools available to him to complete his study were not of a very delicate kind.

One other point is worth making here, for what this discussion suggests of the kind of analysis our model of genre, register and the grammar disposes us to undertake. In fact, it seems to us that in doing our kind of analysis, one does, like Mitchell, work initially from one's intuitive sense of the manner in which a genre works - a sense acquired from participation in the context of culture - and that one does move from that through one's sense of the operation of register as that applies in any given context of situation, moving ever closer to the finer analyses the functional grammar permits. Martin's model of genre, register and language as lying on three communication planes is intended to capture something of this. However, and this is important to note in addition, one moves or "shunts" back and forth across the analyses of the grammar and the descriptions and discussions of register and genre. In other words, one constantly checks one's judgments in terms of the three communication planes, never losing sight of the basic points firstly, that one's object at any time is indeed to "define and recognise the activity" that is going on, to use Coulthard's words, and secondly, that the effort to do this sucessfully will involve interpretation and analysis on all three planes.

Hence, to return to the five ranks of discourse proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard, having determined that we recognise a curriculum genre - more specifically for the purpose of this discussion, a writing planning genre - we would note, as already indicated above, that the genre roughly relates to the fourth rank they propose - the transaction.

Turning to the third of Sinclair and Coulthard's ranks of discourse, the exchange, we will propose here that the unit of investigation we will adopt is also that of the CONVERSATION EXCHANGE. Before proceeding in our next section to begin a detailed explanation of the

notion of conversational structure as it is understood here, we need to say a little more of the nature of the model of language we are using here, because this is relevant to establishing more fully in what ways the approach being adopted differs from that of Sinclair and Coulthard.

First of all, we should recall the tri-stratal model of language adopted for the purposes of this study, as we introduced this in chapter 1 (section 1.4). This we reproduce here in Figure 8.2.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CONVERSATION STRUCTURE | TRANSITIVITY | TONALITY |
| CONJUNCTION | THEME | TONICITY |
| REFERENCE | MOOD | TONE |
| LEXICAL COHESION | group LEXIS | foot & syllable prosodies |
| | & word systems | phoneme systems |
| *discourse* | *lexicogrammar* | *phonology* |

Figure 8.2 Outline of a tri-stratal systemic functional grammar with central systems on each stratum noted (Martin, 1985a, 249)

In this model language is understood as a semiotic system having three strata, and as we have already argued in chapter 1, the basic units on each of the strata of language are the phoneme, the clause and the text, respectively. The particular model of the lexicogrammar adopted for the purposes of the "middle" stratum, where the basic unit is the clause, is a functionally oriented one, as we have now arged at some length in several places in this study, whose elements have a very rich explanatory power for dealing with the manner in which meanings are realised. It is a model we would argue, already richer than the model of grammar implied in the third of the three "levels of discourse" proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard. Our earlier chapters on THEME and TRANSITIVITY, we suggest,

have already demonstrated this. In addition, it will be noted that CONVERSATION STRUCTURE finds its place in a stratum along with several other features of language through which relations between clauses are realised. In this model, then, CONVERSATION STRUCTURE has a place in a cluster of features of language which build cohesion.

But what is more important for the present discussion, the notion of the text which is the basic unit assumed for the purposes of the third stratum is itself conceived in social terms, where, in a general sense, that implies a very intimate relationship of text to context. In a more specific sense, however, the notions of text and context are understood in terms of a commitment to the two other semiotic systems, register and genre, and the relationship of these both to each other, and to language itself. As this is proposed by Martin, we have set it out in Figure 8.3.

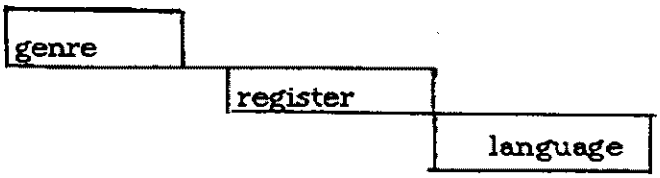



Figure 8.3. Language in relation to its connotative semiotics: register and genre (Martin, 1985a, 250)

As we recalled above, genre, register and language are each said to occupy a different communication plane. The plane on which social interactions of various kinds are actually organised and classed into recognisable groups is that of genre. Where Sinclair and Coulthard propose to call their highest rank on their discourse level the "lesson", we speak of a curriculum genre. In taking that step, we already conceive the genre in rather different terms from the manner in which Sinclair and Coulthard conceive their notion of a lesson. For us, the genre is a socially valued means of getting things done: it is one of the many activity types which are created in the

culture. In our view, therefore, the various aspects of school organisation generally referred to by Sinclair and Coulthard as part of their fifth level, and which they argue has "non-linguistic organisation" would certainly be capable of being investigated in terms of the schematic structure potential of various types of genres: the many genres, in fact, in which the total pattern of school organisation is negotiated and maintained.

Overall, the commitment to the notion of genre implies a commitment to a social theory of a kind different from any proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard. In addition, as we shall see in our next section, the systemic functional grammar involved offers a research tool of particular value in investigating aspects of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE.

## 8. 3 Conversation Structure explained

Our notion of what constitutes a conversation structure will draw upon the work of Martin (1985a,1986) and that of Ventola (1984, 1987,1988) in particular, though as we have already noted, both draw upon Berry, who in turn acknowledges a considerable debt to Sinclair and Coulthard. It will be necessary to explain the general approach before we proceed in subsequent sections to apply it. "An exchange", notes Ventola (1988, 51) "is one of the fundamental units which realise social interaction". The issue is how to offer a principled explanation of how it is persons interact to effect the various types of exchanges in which they engage.

Figure 8.4 sets out the EXCHANGE SYSTEM NETWORK proposed by Ventola, and itself elaborated from the network earlier proposed by Berry (1981a;1981b;1981c).

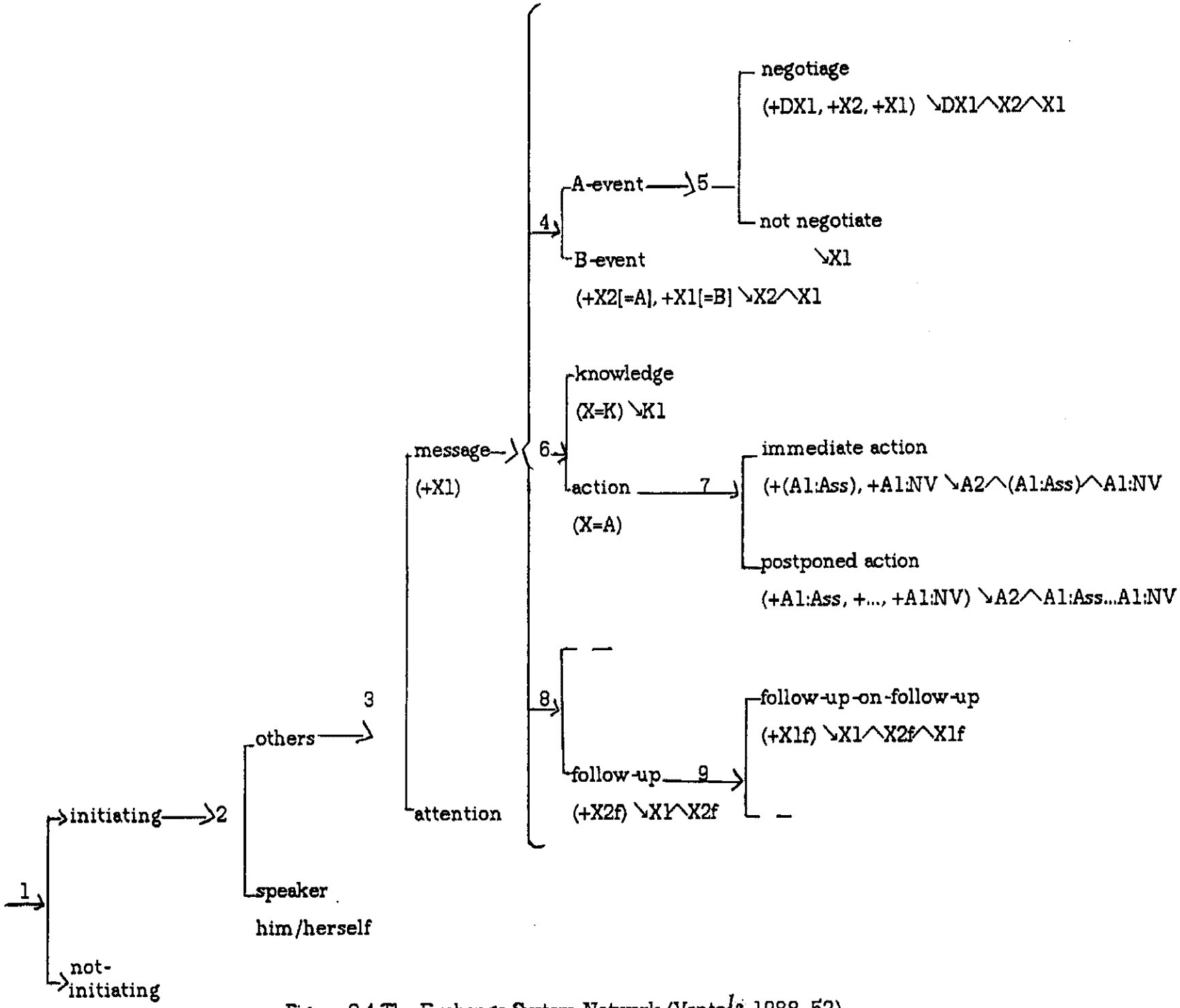



Figure 8.4 The Exchange System Network (Ventola 1988, 52)

System 1 draws attention to a fundamental distinction between initiating and not-initiating exchanges, while System 2 distinguishes exchanges addressed to oneself from those addressed to others. A [not-initiating] situation would apply where there was silence. An [initiating] exchange of the kind typically found in a school situation, where the teacher addresses the children would be:

T: Now Mrs. P has lent us this uniform

System 3 differentiates exchanges which are used to transmit information from those used to attract attention. Where exchanges transmit a message there will always be at least one structural slot, and it is the one filled by the Primary Interactant's move, X1. The example just cited from our classroom data is an example of an X1 slot.

System 4 distinguishes choices that may be made between an A-event or a B-event - a distinction originally made by Labov (1970,1972; Labov and Fanshel, 1977). In an A-event, Speaker A is the one who knows the event, and hence the Primary Interactant. In a B-event, Speaker B is the Primary Interactant, possessed of the knowledge of the event, and Speaker A is not so possessed. In explaining the principles involved here, Labov wrote:

> Given two parties in a conversation, A and B,we can distinguish as 'A-events' the things that A knows about but B does not; as 'B-events' the things which B knows but A does not; and as 'AB-events' knowledge which is shared equally by A and B. (Labov, 1970, reproduced in Paolo Giglioli (ed.) (1972, 301)

Some examples from our data will illustrate.

| A-event | B-event |
|---|---|
| Speaker A: He wears a white shirt. | Speaker A: Do they have a badge here? |
| (X1) | Speaker B: Yes. |
| | (X2^X1) |

In system 5, A may choose to negotiate or not to negotiate the transmission of the message involved. Where negotiation is chosen, A knows the event, but wants to find out in a delayed or DX-1 slot whether B knows as well. Teachers very typically use DX-1 slots, and they also frequently follow up in a manner indicating whether the event established by the Secondary Interactant ( the child questioned) is correct as in:

T: Why do people wear uniforms?
C: Tells who they are.
T: Yes.
(DX1^X2^X1)

This particular sequence is the one which matches very closely the IRE sequence referred to above in section 8.2, and identified by Coulthard and Sinclair, Mehan, Cazden and Perrott, among others.

System 6 acknowledges that exchanges may be knowledge or action oriented. Where the exchange involves transmission of knowledge, X may be represented as Knowledge (K), and where it involves action, X may be represented as Action (A). Thus, since the above exchange involves transmission of knowledge, it is represented as we have seen:

(DK1^K2^K1).

System 7 recognises that where actions are involved, some will be effected immediately, while others will be effected later: in both cases the action is carried out non-verbally, though verbal assent will often be given, especially where the action is postponed. Consider the following example, where the teacher displays a garment and the children do as they are bidden and look at it, so that their assent is immediate and non verbal:

T: See the peaked cap, the stiff piece here in the front.
(A2 ^ A1: NV).

Ventola suggests (1988, 55) that where an action is postponed "there must at least be a verbal assent (A1: Ass) to carry out the action later". We do not find that is so in the case of classroom discourse. Commonly, a teacher will, for example, direct the children that they are to take later actions, such as moving back to their seats and writing a "story", and though the children will subsequently undertake such steps, thus providing verbal assent to the directions, they will not typically provide verbal assent at the time the direction is made. Indeed, it seems that silence on such occasions is the appropriate response from children, indicating that they are listening and hence attentive to what is required of them. In our view, an (A1: Ass) move at the time an action is directed by an A2 and then postponed, is optional only, not essential.

Returning to the system network in Figure 8.4, system 8 shows that the Secondary Interactant may or may not choose to offer a follow-up: K2f or A2f. In the classroom situation, where the K2 position is normally occupied by a child, the follow-up is an option sometimes taken up, but probably much less commonly than is true in other types of conversation. This is a measure of the tenor values that apply, and the relative powerlessness of the children. Consider the following:

C: Mrs. S, how do you take the stripes off?
T: With a pair of scissors.
(K2 ^ K1).

Since the teacher is rarely in the position of K2, because she occupies the K1 position more often than not, the follow-up is also an option she does not always use. The following is a characteristic pattern:

C: Do they have a badge here?

T: Yes.

(K2^ K1)

The various realisation rules in Figure 8.4 actually generate nine different types of exchange structures. These are represented in Figure 8.5, taken from Ventola (1988, 56), so that the nine exchanges are set out showing how the structural slots are sequenced, and the lines linking them in each case create the exchange concerned.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DX1 | Dx1 | Dx1 | | | | | | |
| X2 | X2 | X2 | X2 | X2 | X2 | | | |
| X1 | X1 | X1 | X1 | X1 | X1 | X1 | X1 | -X1 |
| X2f | X2f | | X2f | X2f | | X2 | X2f | |
| X1f | | | X1f | | | X1f | | |

Figure 8.5 Possible sequencing moves in exchange structures generated by the EXCHANGE system network (Ventola, 1988, 56)

An issue of considerable theoretical significance concerns how to determine the nature of the unit which actually fills the structural slots in exchange structures, and here we shall adopt the principles developed by Ventola, as she has built these from the earlier work of both Berry and Martin. Firstly, it will be recognised that any slot in an exchange structure is filled by a move, a term itself taken from Sinclair and Coulthard, who as we saw earlier in turn took it from Bellack. Ventola's particular contribution is to distinguish two types of moves- either simply the move itself, or the move complex. These will require some explanation.

Let us take a piece of discourse already cited above:

T: Why do people wear uniforms?
C: Tells who they are.
T: Yes.
(DK1^K2^K1)

As the structural description indicates, each of the three moves here is seen as occupying a separate slot in the conversation structure. The exchange is of course one of the most minimal kind, found quite frequently in classrooms, but also found in radio quizes of the sort Berry analysed in some detail. In practice, however, exchanges often involve much more than is given here. Ventola (1988, 57-8) quotes the following exchange from Berry:

| | |
|---|---|
| Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire? | DK1 |
| Contestant: Salisbury. | K2 |
| Quizmaster: Yes. | K1 |

What happens, Ventola asks, if the quizmaster says a little more than his opening question, as in:

Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire? Again, which English cathedral has the tallest spire?

Do both clauses fill a separate DK1 slot? Indeed, what fills a slot - a clause, or some other unit? The question is an important one for this study, because of the nature of classroom discourse.

Martin's proposal for dealing with this problem (1986) has been to suggest that a message is the basic unit filling a slot, and that a messages is realised lexicogrammatically by a unit which selects independently for MOOD. Thus, in this definition, where two clauses

have a hypotactic relationship (or relationship of dependency) (Halliday, 1985a) they are said to constitute one message, since clauses so related always select the same mood. But where clauses have a paratactic relationship ( a relationship of equality), they are said to constitute two messages. Martin provides the following example:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| B: Have you heard of Baron Munchhausen? | K2 | |
| A: No, I've never heard of them. | K1 | Ex1 |
| A: It's the first time I've heard of them. | K1 | Ex2 |

In A's turn, there are two units which are held to select independently for mood, and in Martin's terms, there are actually two exchanges here, such that the division between the two exchanges comes in the middle of interactant A's speak-turn. Yet as Ventola suggests the second K1 move appears to transmit the same information as the first, in a manner indeed in which speakers often do restate things, so that it would seem more appropriate to see the second K1 move as constituting part of the reply to K2. Ventola concludes:

> Speaker-turns frequently consist of more than one clause and to consider a clause choosing independently for mood as the unit filling the slots leads to a fragmentary picture of the social interaction achieved by an exchange. (Ventola, 1988,59)

Ventola's manner of dealing with the difficulty created here, as we have already indicated, is to recognise both the unit move and the move complex, and in explaining these to invoke Halliday's notions of the differing logical relations between clauses. The move and the move complex Ventola explains thus:

> The unit move is realised on the lexicogrammatical stratum by a clause selecting independently for MOOD (consequently clauses in a hypotactic clause complex, that is, the clauses which are related by a dependency relation are not considered as independent moves). Here then the move corresponds to Martin's unit

> message. A move complex, on the other hand, is realised by a paratactic clause complex on the lexicogrammatical stratum. .....move complexing and clause complexing are not the same phenomenon: the former is a discourse phenomenon and the latter a lexicogrammatical phenomenon, although the same logical principles underlie move complexing and clause complexing. (Ventola, 1988, 60)

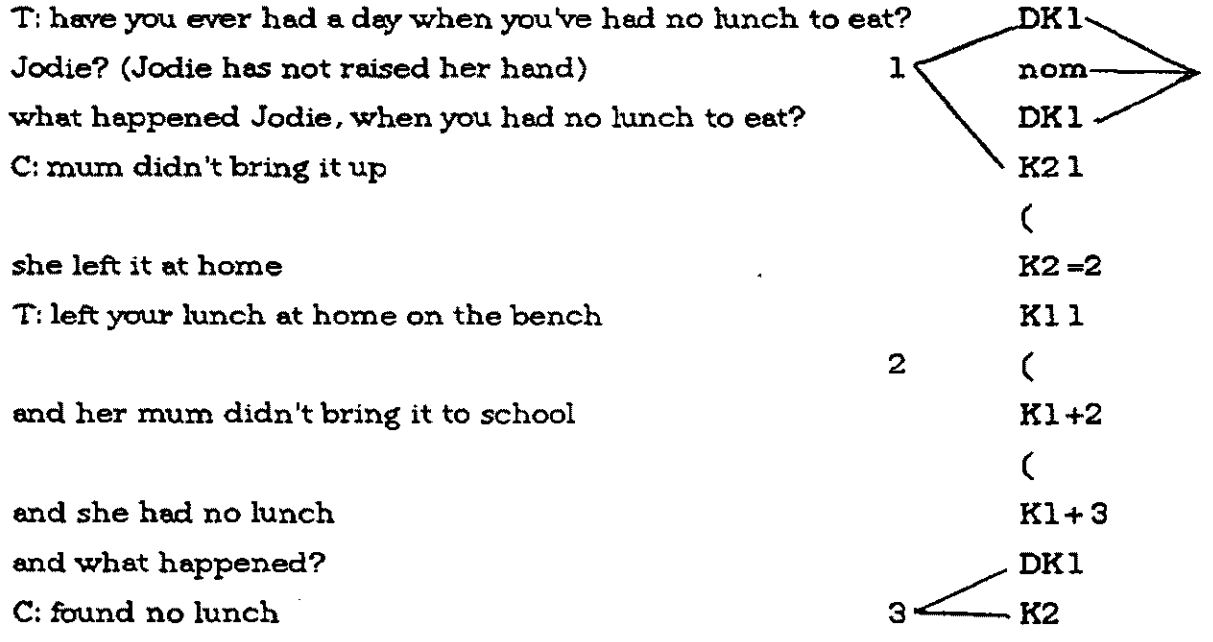
Some further explanation of the logical principles to which Ventola alludes will be necessary. We have already briefly alluded to the manner in which Halliday (1985a, 192-251) recognises two major types of logical relations- expansion and projection. (chapter 3, section 3.4) There are three types of expansion, and two types of projection. Table 8.1 sets out some examples of each from the data being used in this study.

Table 8. 1 Exemplifications of the logical relationships between paratactic clauses, after Halliday, 1985a, 192-251

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| EXPANSION | elaboration | mum didn't bring it up<br>= she left it at home |
| | extension | Mrs S wears a dress<br>+ and Mr S has a shirt and trousers |
| | enhancement | these are some pictures of (what various animals) look like when (they are) starting to grow<br>x so they all look a bit the same, don't they? |
| PROJECTION | locution | it says<br>" it takes many hours to split the shell all around |
| | idea | I thought, I thought,<br>' if they're all squashed up, they'd just push out |

In elaboration (signified by =), a clause elaborates upon the meaning of the other clause, by specifying or describing it in some further way. In the case of extension (signified by +) a clause extends upon the meaning of another by adding something to it. In the case of enhancement ( signified by x) a clause enhances the meaning of another clause, by reference to condition, place, cause, time or manner. Projection occurs when one clause is projected through another, in such a way that either a locution or a wording is produced (signified by "), or alternatively an idea is produced (signified by ').

We will illustrate the manner in which Ventola's principles work for recognising move complexes in CONVERSATION STRUCTURE, by reference again to some of the data in this study. The following is an extract from Text B:




There are three exchanges here. In the first, the teacher operates in what at first sight might appear to be a K1 position, but in fact as the course of events demonstrates, she does in fact know of what has happened to the child she nominates to speak, Jodie. (The use of "nom" signifies "nomination", by the way, and we shall have more to

say about this below, and about Sinclair and Coulthard's use of the term, from which we are borrowing.) Having nominated the child, the teacher elaborates upon the question she has asked, and the child Jodie steps into the K2 position. The exchange is thus realised in two DK1 moves taken up by the teacher and two K2 moves taken up by the child Jodie. The use of the arched line -( -signals that moves are linked, forming a move complex. It should be noted, particularly in the case of the teacher's two DK1 moves here, that a rather liberal interpretation of Halliday's notion of elaboration is in fact being adopted for the purposes of this study. To recognise the two moves in question as separate exchanges would in our view be to return to the somewhat fragmentary views of conversational exchange which we have already noted Ventola has sought to abandon. The relationship of elaboration claimed between the two moves of the child in the first exchange is in fact much more consistent with Halliday's principles of elaboration as explained in the grammar (1985a, 196-7). As a general principle, as we shall see, the notion of elaboration is treated somewhat liberally throughout this discussion. We shall, incidentally, argue that a tag question normally marks the closure of an exchange, but even then exceptions can be found as in the following, where we would argue a relationship of elaboration exists:

| | |
|---|---|
| it's a dark colour isn't it? | K11 |
| | ( |
| a dark colour you'd call it | K1=2 |

In general, our treatment of extension, which is a feature of the second exchange cited above, will accord rather more closely with Halliday's notions than will our treatment of elaboration. In the instance given, each of the two moves said to be linked by extension begins with a use of the conjunction "and", and a clear relationship of extension is in fact constructed. In the third exchange, the teacher takes up a DK1 move, and the child a K2 move.

We find this pattern for distinguishing move complexes is very helpful, for it allows us to see the manner in which moves take up varying slots in the structure of each exchange, and it also permits us to see the kinds of relationships between moves within any one slot. The overall effect, as Ventola has suggested, is that one's sense of the operation of exchanges is less fragmentary than Berry's earlier descriptions(1981a, 1981b,1981c), or those of Martin (1986). There are, however, some problems remaining to be resolved in handling exchange structure as Ventola has proposed it, to which we shall allude below. Before we do so, however, we should note that in her account of the manner in which she labels her move complexes, Ventola uses the two symbols for projection which we have included in Table 8.1 above. We shall choose not to employ these in our own analysis, because we shall take the view that wherever a projected clause or clauses do occur, they clearly remain part of the actual exchange in which the projecting clause appears. It seems unnecessary, therefore, to label them. In practice, the force of Ventola's proposals for improving our grasp of the exchange structure is particularly strong in drawing attention to the relations of elaboration, extension and enhancement, and to the manner in which we can draw upon these in constructing the move complex.

There are at least two problems which occur to us in using the description of exchange structure as we have outlined it thus far. In the first place, a conflict sometimes develops depending upon how one identifies paratactic relations between clauses. To illustrate the point we shall consider an aspect of the element of text we have just examined. Having elicited some reconstruction of personal

experience from the child, the teacher says, paraphrasing the child in part:

| | |
|---|---|
| left your lunch at home on the bench | K11 |
| | ( |
| and her mum didn't bring it to school | K1+2 |
| | ( |
| and she had no lunch | K1+3 |
| and what happened? | DK1 |

We have labelled the moves here as we believe they should be labelled, seeing the last move as initiating a new exchange, to which the child addressed replies:

| | |
|---|---|
| found no lunch | K2 |

Our reason for drawing attention to this passage from the text is that the clause in the DK1 move is paratactically linked to the previous clause through the use of the conjunction "and", even though the two clauses select differently for mood. In quite another context, by the way, Halliday (1985b, 20-21) has discussed two clauses linked paratactically by the use of "and", when in other circumstances they would more normally be linked hypotactically. The two clauses here would not normally be linked hypotactically. In fact, they would normally be two separate clauses. In that the teacher has chosen to link the two clauses, it might be argued, adopting Ventola's general principles for identifying a move complex, that the final clause of the teacher's is part of the earlier move complex. In fact, since the clause in question does mark a change in mood, creating a DK1 move, which in turn elicits a K2 move from the child, this seems not an appropriate argument to sustain. While Ventola (1988) does say that a move is realised by a clause (or hypotactic clause complex) selecting independently for MOOD, she does not address the issue of MOOD in the case of the move complex as she has discussed it. We

shall continue to deal with instances of the kind we have identified as we have demonstrated, simply noting that some potential conflict can arise in our manner of handling aspects of the exchange structure by means of the move complex as Ventola has written of this.

There is one other problem of quite another sort to which we wish to draw attention in handling aspects of exchange structure, and as we have encountered it in undertaking this study. It concerns our inability to recognise a K move and an A move as constituting aspects of the same exchange. The notions of the Knower and the Actor derive, ultimately, from the English MOOD SYSTEM, as Martin (1986) has shown. Drawing upon the MOOD SYSTEM Halliday (1985a, 69-100) identifies four primary speech functions: OFFER, COMMAND, STATEMENT and QUESTION. These are matched by a corresponding set of desired responses: accepting an offer, carrying out a command, acknowledging a statement and answering a question. Table 8.2 gives an overview of the speech functions and responses.

Table 8.2 Speech functions and responses (from Halliday, 1985a, 69)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| give | goods & services | offer | acceptance | rejection |
| demand | " " | command | undertaking | refusal |
| give | information | statement | acknowledgement | contradiction |
| demand | " | question | answer | disclaimer |

When language is used for the exchange of information, the clause created is a PROPOSITION - something we can, for example, verify or falsify, argue about, accept or qualify. When language is used for the exchange of goods and services, we may be said to create a PROPOSAL. Knowers relate to proposition-oriented exchanges, while Actors relate to action or proposal-oriented exchanges. Martin

(1986) offers examples of both. Instances of proposition-oriented exchanges include:

| | |
|---|---|
| Timbuctoo is in Canada | K1 |

or

| | |
|---|---|
| Where's Timbuctoo? | K1 |
| In Canada. | K2 |

An example of an action-oriented exchange is:

| | |
|---|---|
| Wrap it for me | A2 |
| Okay | A1 |

Examples of these sorts are found in our data. However, there are at times instances in the discourse where a K move and an A move seem very closely related, and it would be useful to be able to acknowledge something of the relationship. In "real life", one feels, proposition-oriented and proposal-oriented moves do not function in such complete independence of each other as Martin's two examples seem to imply. Consider for example, Text A, where the teacher and children are talking about various uniforms. Some badges have been found in the pocket of a jacket, and a child has pointed out that these must not be lost. The teacher's response needs to be represented as two different exchanges, thus:

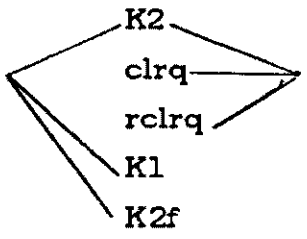
| | |
|---|---|
| T: well we'll pin them on the jacket | A1[NV] |
| then they can't get lost | K1 |

These two exchanges are in fact very closely related. Studies of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in the future will need to look more closely at proposition-oriented and proposal-oriented moves, with a

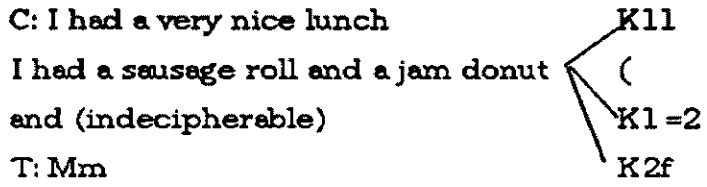
view to finding ways to represent at least something of this kind of relationship.

Before concluding this section, we need to clarify a distinction we have yet to make between dynamic and synoptic moves in the generation of conversation. Martin (1985a) and Ventola (1984,1987, 1988) have both drawn attention to the need to understand the construction of conversation in terms of the operation of both synoptic and dynamic systems. As an exchange unfolds, the participants take up certain moves and a text is generated. We may represent the potential range of the various exchanges and the moves that make them up in synoptic terms. In fact, we have already represented the exchange system networks being used in this study in synoptic terms in Figure 8.4, and our discussion in much of this section has sought to explain aspects of these system networks. But in addition, when a text is actually in generation, various others moves, not actually part of the exchange system networks, will often be employed. These are the moves that operate dynamically, functioning in various ways to further the progress of the synoptic moves, and to achieve satisfactory completion of the exchange systems being created. Ventola suggests (1988) that such dynamic moves may come into operation when some problem as to "how to proceed" appears to occur. Such an example she herself cites (1988, 66-7), where speaker B has not fully understood the K2 move of speaker A:

A: where do you come from
B: you mean where I was before
A: yes
B: history
A: mm

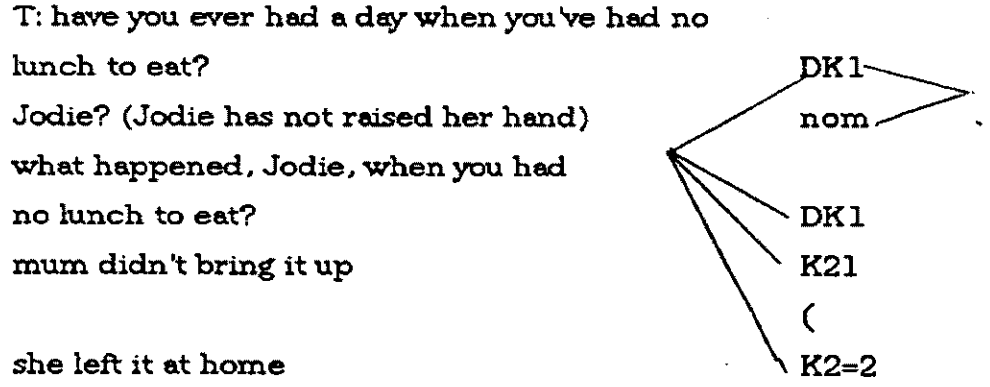


One exchange is involved here, realised synoptically through a K2 move, a K1 move and a K2f. However two other dynamic moves are necessary to assist the appropriate completion of the exchange. They are the clq - a "clarification request" - and the rclq - "response to clarification request". Dynamic moves are not involved only in handling difficulties. Sometimes, their function is to express reception of a message as in the following instance from our data:




Ventola notes that once the function of a dynamic move "is completed the generation of the exchange is assumed according to the sequencing defined by the choices from the network." (1988, 67) Following Ventola's general principles, we will always indicate a dynamic move thus —>— showing this to the right of the exchange, while any lines to the left of the exchange show the realisation of the synoptic moves.

Above, we have already noted in the discourse an instance at which we have identified one dynamic move, though we did not at that point discuss it. We refer to the instance at which a child was nominated by the teacher to speak:



It will be necessary to explain our reasons for identifying a "nomination" move as dynamic. The term was used by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 42), and it is to be compared with their other term of "bid" (ibid, 41). The function of a nomination, as Sinclair and Coulthard noted it, was "to call on or give permission to a pupil to contribute to the discourse". It was realised by:

> a closed class consisting of the names of all the pupils 'you' with contrastive stress, 'anybody', 'yes', and one or two idiosyncratic items such as 'who hasn't said anything yet'. (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, 42)

A bid on the other hand, had as its function "to signal a desire to contribute to the discourse." (ibid, 41) It was realised by:

> a closed class of verbal and non-verbal items - 'Sir', 'Miss', teacher's name, raised hand, heavy breathing, finger clicking. (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, 41)

We shall use the terms "nomination" and "bid", recognising them both as dynamic moves rather than synoptic ones, though we shall not interpret the realisations of these in terms as general as the definitions of Sinclair and Coulthard suggest. A nomination will occur where a teacher specifically nominates a child to answer a question, as is true in the case of Jodie cited above. A bid will be recognised only where a child raises a hand signalling intention to respond to a DK1 move from the teacher, after which the teacher will often employ another nomination move as well. Theoretically at least children are supposed always to signal willingness to respond to a DK1 move by raising a hand, though as this study reveals, quite often

the practice is waived. An example from our data is as follows:

T: what were the questions? DK1
C: (raises hand) bid [NV]
T: Christian? nom
C: who they were what they wear why they wear it K2

There are other ways in which the children enter the conversation, as we shall see below in sections 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7. There are in addition, other types of dynamic moves, to which reference will be made in our discussion below. At this stage we have said sufficient to indicate the ways in which both nominations and bids may be said to operate as dynamic moves in an exchange structure.

Now that we have established the general principles to be adopted here for investigating CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in classroom discourse, we will proceed to Section 8.4, where we will begin to apply what has been established in a more systematic way to our three instances of the writing planning genre.

## Section 8.4 Conversation Structure in the writing planning genre: general trends in the operation of the two registers

In our earlier chapters we have already argued the operation of a schematic structure in each of our three instances of the writing planning genre, and we have also argued the presence of two registers - a first order or pedagogical register and a second order or "content" register. As we have seen, there is a pattern that applies such that within the Task Orientation the teacher initiates the teaching/learning activity in an opening monologue in which both the pedagogical and "content" fields find expression, though initially it is the former that is foregrounded. The entry to dialogue both marks the commencement of the children's involvement in the

construction of the discourse and it marks the movement into the "body" of the element: at this point the "content" register comes to the fore. In subsequent elements of the schematic structure a pattern applies such that the pedagogical register and the "content" register tend to converge at the start of each element, so that it is the former which is foregrounded. With the entry to the "body" of each element the "content" register again tends to be foregrounded. The one element in which this general pattern does not seem to apply is the final Task element, where the teacher is particularly concerned to operationalise activity, and the pedagogical register predominates.

Several general observations may be made initially about the manner in which the conversation structure operates as an aspect of realising both the two registers and the elements of schematic structure. In the first place, as we might well have predicted, the teacher operates in the K1 position much more frequently than do the children. Similarly, in so far as actions are involved in the lesson, she operates normally in the A2 position, directing the children to action, rather than being directed by them, so that is they who operate in the A1 position. The teacher's most frequent positions, in fact, are the K1, the DK1 and the A2. Teachers typically do use a lot of DK1 moves, since that is part of the way in which they involve the children in exploring aspects of the "content" field, eliciting from them children whatever they can that is relevant to the field. Conversely, the children most frequently occupy the K2 position, though that of A1 is also reasonably frequent. The children do, however, take up the K1 position, especially in the "body" of an element. Rarely does a child take up the DK1 position. The DK1 moves used by the teacher may occur in any element, but they are most frequent in the opening element or the "middle" element(s), where the "content" is explored. As the lesson proceeds, and the children are moved ever closer to commencment of their writing task, the teacher's DK1 moves become much less frequent, normally diappearing altogether in the

Task element, but also sometimes not appearing in the Task Specification element either.

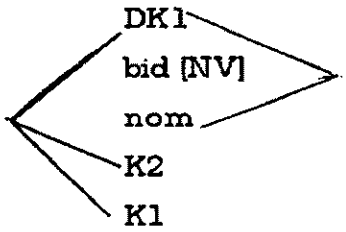
At the start of an element of schematic structure, the teacher normally takes up a series of K1 moves, part of the process of pointing directions in her opening monologue, and she signals the entry of the children to an engagement with the "content" by a DK1 move, as in the following, part of which we have already cited above in section 8.3:

| | |
|---|---|
| well now today we're going to talk | |
| some more about the things we have | |
| been talking about for the last couple | |
| of days | K11 |
| we were looking at different people's | |
| uniforms weren't we? | K1=2 |
| we looked at the crossing lady's | |
| uniform | K11 |
| and we talked to the lady about why | |
| she wears it | K1+2 |
| and for each of the uniforms we've | |
| looked at, we've asked some questions | K1+3 |
| what were the questions? | DK1 |
| C: (raises a hand) | bid [NV] |
| T: Christian | nom |
| C: who they were what they wear why they | |
| wear it | K2 |

We have noted that the opening of an element is normally constructed through a series of K1 moves on the part of the teacher. However, she may initiate the element by means of a series of A1

moves as in Text C:

| | |
|---|---|
| we're going to start off with a little | |
| story this morning (displays book) | A1[NV] |
| firstly I want to show you some of the | ( |
| pictures in this little book called "Egg to | ( |
| Chick" | A1=2 |
| and we're just going to find out what you | ( |
| people know about this little book | A1+3 |
| I won't read it all to you | A1 1 |
| | ( |
| I'll show you some of the pictures | A1=2 |
| | ( |
| and we'll have a little chat about them | A1+3 |
| Lesley what sort of creature is this | |
| little creature here? (no answer) | DK1 |
| C: (raises a hand) | bid [NV] |
| T: Deborah? | nom |
| C: a hen | K2 |
| T: it's a hen | K1 |

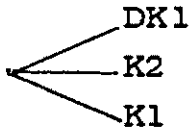


Once into the "body" of an element, the teacher continues to make use of K1 moves, but she also continues to make use of DK1 moves, and the children correspondingly offer K2 moves. This is in fact one measure of the differences between conversation at the start of an element and conversation in the "body" of the element. It is in the "body" of the element, where the "content" field tends to find clearest expression that the children take up their K1 moves, though they generally take up rather fewer than does the teacher.

In section 8.2 above, we have already noted the IRE pattern identified in the studies of Coulthard and Sinclair (1975), Mehan (1979), Perrott (1988) and Cazden (1988) among others, and we have observed that the manner in which this pattern is said to be

realised in terms of our analysis is in a DK1^ K2 ^ K1 pattern, as in:

T: oh I wonder if someone can tell me
what's happening in this picture?
C: it's a special place
T: yes




The most common way that children actually get an opportunity to participate in the construction of the conversation is through taking up the K2 move in response to a DK1 move of the teacher, as we have already noted. In fact, while the teacher enjoys considerable scope in taking up K1, DK1 and A2 positions, the children are genuinely constrained in their capacity to take up either the DK1 or the A2 options at least. While they may take up the K1 option, this tends to be so only at those points in the discourse where some discussion of the "content" field is in progress - normally, in fact in the "body" of an element. As we shall see, the children are sometimes in real difficulties when they wish to initiate a new exchange. The choices open to them in which to do this are not considerable, and when they attempt to use them, they are not always successful.

Bearing these general observations in mind, we shall now turn to each of our instances of the writing planning genre for some more detailed consideration of the CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in each case. As before, we shall commence with Text A.

## 8.5 Conversation structure in Text A

We shall proceed by working through each of the elements of Text A. At this stage we should note that the complete analysis of conversational structure in Text A is set out in Appendix 4. A in volume 2 of this thesis. We shall draw selectively upon the analysis to illustrate this discussion. In terms of its schematic structure, it will

be recalled that we have already argued this text has the three most minimal elements necessary in order to recognise an instance of the writing planning genre:

T^ TS^ T.

## 8.5.1 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT A

Table 8.3 provides an overview of the various moves taken up by the teacher and the children in the Task Orientation of Text A.

Table 8.3 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Orientation of Text A

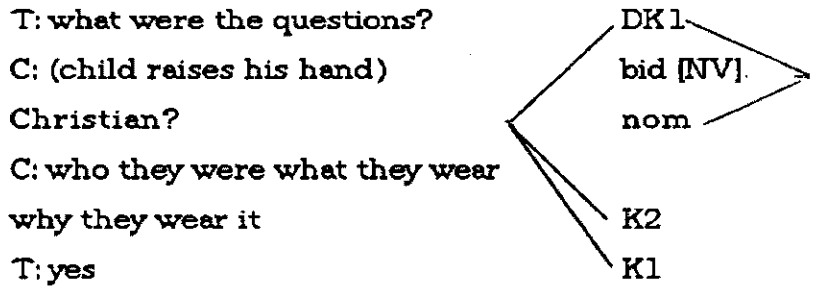
| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 14 | 1 |
| K1 | 45 | 22 |
| K2 | 1 | 26 |
| K2f | 1 | 0 |
| A2 | 16 | 0 |
| A1 | 1 | 16 |
| | | |
| others: | | |
| nom | 2 | 0 |
| bid | 0 | 1 |
| cf | 0 | 1 |
| ch | 3 | 0 |
| | | |
| TOTAL | 83 | 67 |

Of the 45 K1 moves of the teacher, five of these cluster in the opening monologue, in which the pedagogical field is being

foregrounded, as we noted when we cited this above in section 8.4:

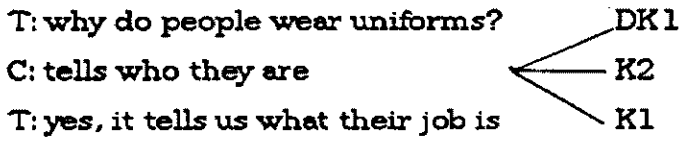
| | |
|---|---|
| well now today we're going to talk | |
| some more about the things we have | |
| been talking about for the last | |
| couple of days | K1 1 |
| we were looking at different people's | ( |
| uniforms weren't we? | K1= 2 |
| we looked at the crossing lady's | |
| uniform | K11 |
| and we talked to the lady about why | ( |
| she wears it | K1+2 |
| and for each of the uniforms we've | ( |
| looked, we've asked some questions | K1+3 |

Two exchanges are involved in this opening monologue of the teacher, both of which are built through move complexes. Of these, the first uses elaboration, and the second uses extension. The mood shift on the part of the teacher marks the entry to a new exchange, one in which her authority is clear in that she takes up a DK1 position:




The teacher proceeds immediately to another DK1-initiated exchange. As we have already argued in chapters 6 and 7 (sectons 6.4.1 &7.4.1), at the point at which this exchange is completed, what we termed a "transition" is over. The transition involved is that from the opening monologue in which the pedagogical field has been

foregrounded and the "content" field has found minimal expression, to the dialogue of the "body" of the element in which the "content" field is to be foregrounded.




In the opening, to the extent that the "content" field has been treated, this has involved reference to activities previously done in treating this field. Now the teacher effects a move into dealing with the new "content", and to do so, she takes up a K1 position:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: now Mrs. P has lent us this uniform | K1 |

The teacher now takes up an A2 move to direct the children's attention, and the children are launched into the "body" of the element:

| | |
|---|---|
| look at this peaked hat | A2 |
| | [A1: NV]. |

Two children are immediately moved to contribute, the first by offering a K1 move, the latter by offering a K2 move:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: that's just like my uncle's | K1 |
| C: is that Mrs. P's husband's? | K2 |

Since the former is not immediately relevant to the teacher's purposes, she ignores it. It seems that it is the teacher's right to ignore any K1 move on the part of the children, if she chooses to do so, though the children do not enjoy a similar right. The teacher does, however, respond to the second K2 move with a K1 move,

presumably because it suits her, bearing in mind the general course she wishes to pursue:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: yes | K1 |

Now the teacher directs the children's behaviour once more:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: see the peaked cap, the stiff piece | |
| here in the front | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| it's a dark colour isn't it? | K1 1 |
| | ( |
| a dark blue you'd call it | K1 =2 |

The teacher in fact employs 16 A2 moves throughout the element, as part of directing the children's attention towards the garments under discussion. The children on the other hand make no A2 moves, though they make a corresponding set of 16 [A1: NV] moves to the teacher's A2 moves.

Once into the "body" of the element, the children make 26 K2 moves and 22 K1 moves. In general, any child's use of a K1 move represents an attempt to initiate an exchange, and as we have just noted, such moves are sometimes accepted by the teacher, but in other cases ignored. In fact, the offering of these moves is a risky business, since strictly speaking they constitute instances of "calling out", which we have already discussed in earlier chapters (chapter 3, sections 3.5.1 & 3.5.6; chapter 5, section 5.2 ). Teachers actively discourage children from offering unsolicited observations, and they frequently chastise children who produce them. In practice, unless the children become very boisterous, the teacher frequently does not chastise the children involved, but the other strategy she pursues is probably more effective in denying the children opportunity to talk: she simply ignores what is said. Furthermore, as we have seen, such

is the nature of her authority, she can choose to make use of some of the K1 moves from the children, or to ignore them, depending upon her overall concerns in the lesson. It is these considerations which together explain why it is that though the children do produce a number of K1 moves, they are not nearly as numerous as the teacher's K1 moves, nor do they for the most part lead to exchanges involving a subsequent K2 ^ K1 sequence.

Of the 22 occasions on which children use K1 moves, most as we have seen involve responses to the teacher's DK1 moves. However, three of the children's K2 slots represent attempts to seek information, and since they are not in themselves frequent features of the discourse, they are worthy of comment. One we have already examined above, when we saw that a child asked the question "is that Mrs P's husband's?". A second instance occurs when a child talks of the stripes on the sleeve of a jacket:

C: Mrs S how do you take the stripes off? — K2
T: with a pair of scissors — K1

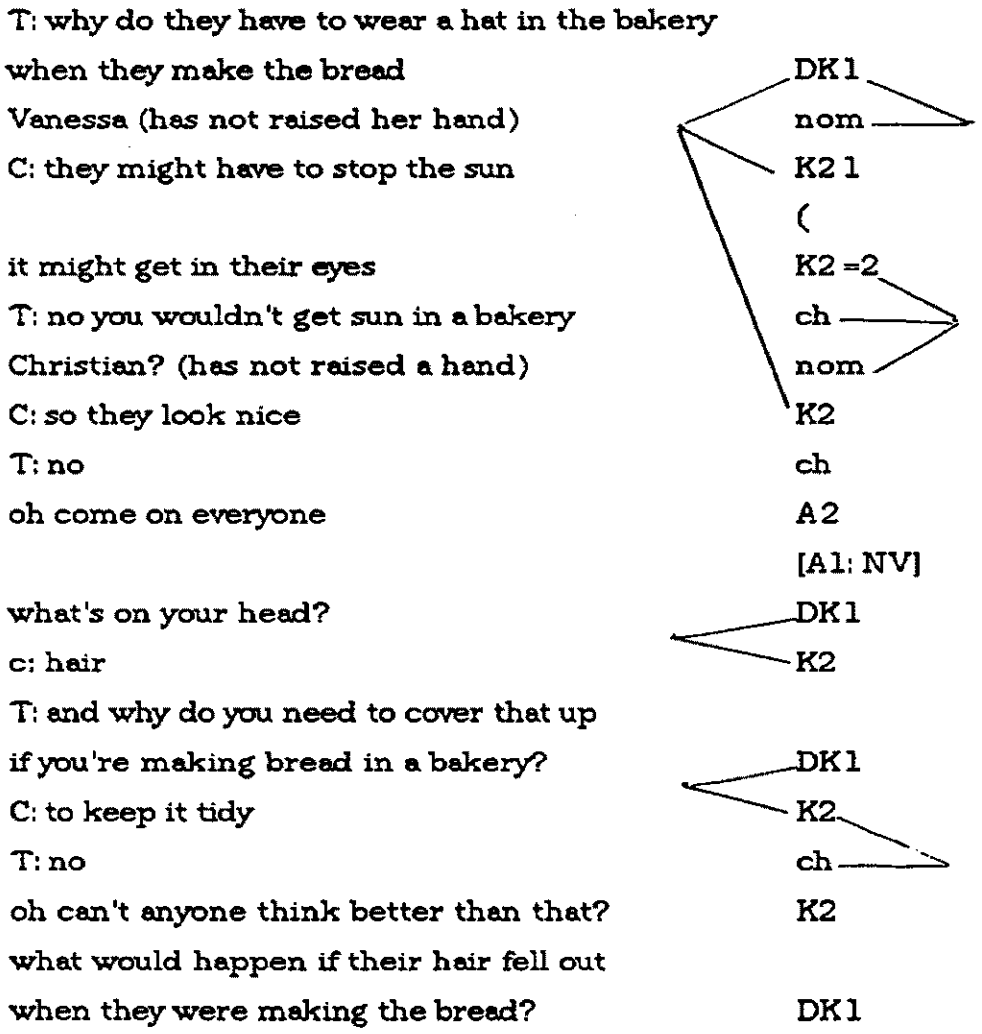
A third occurs when a person has been identified as a nurse aide, and a child seeks explanation, using a cf or "confirm" move operating dynamically, in order to establish this:

C: an aide — cf
what's that? — K2
she's got to clean the people — K1.

The children do not in fact enjoy much opportunity to elicit new information.

Before we leave our examination of the conversation structure in Text A, we should comment upon that portion of the discourse in which the teacher involves the children in talking about why bakers wear a

hat in a bakery. As we have seen earlier in chapter 6 ( section 6.4.1) the children have absolutely no knowledge of the explanation of this and in such a situation we would suggest that the teacher would do the children most justice if she simply told them the reason. Instead, however, she chooses to involve them in a not very productive series of exchanges, leading to the kind of activity which, as we earlier noted in chapter 6, Barnes (1972) castigated some years ago as "playing the game of guessing what's in the teacher's mind". Such an activity does nothing for the cause of learning, though it does serve to bolster the power base of the teacher. Setting out the text here in a manner which reveals the exchange sequences shows how unhelpful the activity is:



| | |
|---|---|
| C: it 'ud get in the bread | K2 |
| C: there was paper in my bread once | K1 |
| T: yes it 'ud get in your bread | K1 1 |
| | ( |
| and that wouldn't be very nice would it? | K1+2 |

One of the ironies about this little series of exchanges is that each wrong contribution made by a child actually draws from personal experience. Language experience approaches of the kind that the teacher here would subscribe to actually favour drawing upon children's personal experience as a necessary point of departure for learning. For all that, she summarily dismisses the contributions the children make, in a manner hardly suggesting a great deal of respect for what they have to say. We would make two observations here. Firstly, each of the children's contributions has the merit that it is quite sensible, though the teacher does not concede this. Secondly, since none of the answers given in any way accords with the answer the teacher actually has in mind, one would question the wisdom of persisting in drawing upon personal experience.

As a general principle we would argue that children's personal experience obviously is a useful basis upon which to teach new information. However, it will never be a sufficient basis upon which to proceed to new learning, and where the knowledge the children possess patently does not relate to what concerns the teacher in terms of the "content" involved, there is absolutely no merit in persisting in drawing personally based observations from the children.

It will now be appropriate to draw to a close this discussion of the conversational structure in the Task Orientation of Text A. As we have already noted in chapters 6 and 7, in our chosen instances of the writing planning genre the TO tends to be the longest element. It is the element in which the "content" field is explored most fully,

and it tends to be the element in which the children participate most. These observations we found to be particularly true of the TO in Text A. Now that we have examined the conversational structure, it will be clear that K1 moves in the teacher talk initiate the element in which the pedagogical field is foregrounded, while the "content" field finds some expression there as well. Next, we have observed that two subsequent DK1 moves serve to draw the children into talk, and that it is the "content" field which is foregrounded from here on in the element. The teacher uses a series of A2 moves to direct the children's attention to aspects of the garments displayed. In addition, she makes frequent use of DK1 and K1 moves. Where she employs a DK1 move, it is frequently but not invariably in the unmarked sequence found in most other conversation: K1^ K2 ^ K1. However, she does not always employ the K1 move, and that, we conclude, is one measure of her authority: she does not always feel obliged to give verbal response to a child's K2 move, though she will of course always do so where the child's K2 response is not what she wanted.

As for the children, they employ a large number of K2 moves in response to the teacher's DK1 moves. What is of interest to note in their share of the discourse, however, is they do produce a number of K1 moves, most of which are not acknowledged either by the teacher or by other children: this must surely be in notable contrast to the pattern which applies in conversations other than those in a classroom. Since children are considerably constrained by the tenor values that apply in the classroom (see chapter 5, section 5.4), they will experience difficulty in attempting to initiate an exchange. Sometimes, such attempts as are made, as we have just noted, are ignored. Sometimes the teacher selects to acknowledge them, where that suits the purposes she has in mind. Elsewhere, though not in fact in this lesson, the teacher will simply resist attempts by the children to initiate, by refusing them the right to "call out". In either case, the differential status and power of the participants in

the discourse is made very clear in the manner in which the choices in the conversation structure operate.

## 8.5.2 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION AND TASK OF TEXT A

As already noted more than once, the TS is very short, and the children have an entirely negligible role in its construction, while the T element is shorter and the children have no audible role in its construction at all. We have chosen therefore, to examine them together. Table 8.4 sets out summaries of the synoptic moves in the Task Specification and the Task.

Table 8.4 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Specification and Task of Text A

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| Task Specification | | |
| DK1 | 1 | 0 |
| K1 | 3 | 0 |
| K2 | 0 | 1 |
| A2 | 2 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 3 |
| Task | | |
| DK1 | 0 | 0 |
| K1 | 1 | 0 |
| A2 | 1 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 1 |

Since both elements are so short, we will set them out, showing the K1 and A2 moves employed by the teacher in the opening teacher monologue of the TS, the subsequent use of a DK1 move, and the one K2 move produced by a child in response. The T element is introduced with an A2 move and a final exchange involving two related K1 moves brings the schematic structure to a close.

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Task Specification</u> | |
| T: all right now you've had time to look | |
| at all these uniforms we should ask | |
| Belinda to thank her mum and dad for | |
| letting us see their uniforms | K1 |
| now remember what we said before | |
| when we looked at other uniforms and | |
| wrote reports about them | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| well, we're going to write about these | |
| uniforms today | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +.....] |
| you can choose any one you like: the | |
| policeman's the train driver's the | |
| nurse's or the one from the Home Pride | |
| Bakery | K1 |
| now what do we have to remember | |
| to write about? | DK1 |
| C: who they are and what they wear | K2 |
| T: yes | K1 |
| | |
| <u>Task</u> | |
| see | A2 |
| | [A1: N V] |
| it's on the board there: | |
| "Who they are. What they wear. | |
| What it looks like. Why they wear it." | K1 |

In the TS the opening K1 move from the teacher serves to foreground both the pedagogical field and the "content" field, while the two A2 moves both relate to the pedagogical field. The subsequent K1 move, and the exchange involving a DK1^ K1^ K1 sequence moves the element of schematic structure to its close. A further A2 move initiates the Task element serving to direct the children's attention to the information on the board relevant to the writing task. A final K1 move brings the element of schematic structure to a conclusion.

## 8.6 Conversation structure in Text B, the "lunch text"

The complete table setting out conversation structure in Text B is set out in Appendix 4.B. The schematic structure for Text B, it will be recalled is:

TO ^ TRO ^ TS1/C1 ^ TS2/C2 ^ T.

Many of the general observations which we have already made concerning the respective contributions of teacher and children in Text A will of course be found to apply here as well. Certainly, the teacher uses a large number of K1 and DK1 moves, while the children have no DK1 moves, a number of K2 moves, and a number of K1 moves, only some of which are acknowledged by the teacher. We will consider the conversational structure in each element in turn, taking the Task Orientation to start.

## 8.6.1 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF TEXT B

Table 8. 5 sets out the summary of moves in the TO of Text B.

Table 8.5 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Orientation of Text B

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 2 | 0 |
| K1 | 25 | 6 |
| K2 | 0 | 3 |
| K2f | 0 | 1 |
| A2 | 4 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 4 |
| others: | | |
| fg* | 1 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 32 | 14 |

*fg represents "fragment"

Just as was true of Text A, the element here opens with a monologue in which the teacher uses a number of K1 moves, more in fact than does the teacher in Text A, whose text we have already observed is the most minimal of the three under discussion. Initially, the pedagogical field is foregrounded, with some expression of the "content" field being found. Then the latter field comes to the fore in the reading of the text from the book, and only after that, while the "content" field is still being foregrounded, do the children begin to participate. While the majority of the teacher's moves in the opening are K1, there are some A2 moves, to do with directing the children's

behaviour. We shall set out the complete opening monologue.

| | |
|---|---|
| T: well now these people are back I want | |
| you to listen to this little tiny short story | |
| like the one we had yesterday | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +.....] |
| you know we had "A Monster Sandwich" | K1+1 |
| and then we made up our own monster | ( |
| sandwiches | K1+2 |
| well today we've got another simple little | |
| story which is called "My Lunch" | K1+3 |
| and I want you to listen to it | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +.....] |
| what happened to the little boy's lunch | K1 1 |
| | ( |
| who came | K1+2 |
| | ( |
| and took the lunch | K1+3 |
| | ( |
| and what happened to it | K1+4 |
| and then what happened to the little boy | ( |
| after he found he had no lunch at all | K1+5 |
| because when we finish reading this | ( |
| story, something's going to happen to | ( |
| your lunch today | K1x6 |
| | ( |
| or we're going to pretend that it does | K1+7 |
| so listen what happened to this boy's lunch | A2 1 |
| | [A1: NV +.....] |
| and we'll think of something that could | ( |
| happen to our lunches our beautiful | ( |
| healthy sandwiches | A2 + 2 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |

"Where's my lunch? It's not here. Miss Gill, look!. Here dog, here, come here. Oh no! Look! Stop dog, stop! We can catch him, said Miss Gill. Good dog, drop it. Oh no, you're a bad dog, go home! Go home dog, go home! Miss Gill, what can I eat? I will see, said Miss Gill, come with me. Oh, I like that, and that, and that, and that. And I like this, and this. Thank you." K1

The A2 moves all direct the children's behaviour in a manner which looks slightly ahead, but also in a manner which requires no overt expression of the children's willingness to co-operate and do as they are told. The strong expectation of the children is that they be silently attentive. As for the K1 moves, the series of clauses which we previously identified as being introduced by textual Themes realised in particular through additive conjunctions are here understood in a different but complementary way as contributing to the building of move complexes with which the teacher initiates the curriculum activity involved. Of the 25 K1 moves of the teacher in this element, 11 are found in this opening monologue, and they clearly have an important role in the establishment of what the lesson is about.

While the children's contribution to the discourse throughout this element is relatively slight, the largest number of moves they take up are K1 moves, of which there are six, all of them involved in offering observations on the details of the story as these are expressed in the pictures in the book. They thus realise aspects of the "content" field. Two examples are:

C: he's got some milk K1

C: he's eating all different things. K1

The teacher uses two DK1 moves in this element, though as we shall see, she does employ considerably more in later elements in the schematic structure. The first, with its corresponding K2 move, is found in the following exchange:

T: what sort of a lunch has he ended up eating? — DK1
C: spaghetti bolognaise. — K2

The other occurs in:

T: what was in his lunch that the dog ate — DK1
C: healthy sandwiches — K2
C: spaghetti — K2

All in all, this overview of conversation structure in the TO shows firstly that the teacher has a relatively large number of K1 moves and that she uses the only two DK1 moves in the element, while the children have three K2 moves and a six K1 moves. An opening cluster of K1 moves from the teacher in the opening monologue serves to initiate the learning activity, while her two DK1 moves serve to involve the children in some talk of the "content" field. The children's moves belong to the "body" of the element, where the "content" field is foregrounded.

## 8.6.2 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK REORIENTATION OF TEXT B

Table 8. 6 sets out the summary of moves in the Task Reorientation.

Table 8.6 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Reorientation of Text B

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 4 | 0 |
| K1 | 17 | 3 |
| K2 | 0 | 4 |
| A2 | 2 | 0 |
| A1 | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 9 |

The general pattern by which the teacher predominates in the conversation is maintained, and the largest single number of moves she takes up are K1 moves. As the teacher initiates the element, she shows that she is clearly in authority through a series of A1, A2 and DK1 moves:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: all right I'll read it through one more time | A1 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |
| now listen carefully to what happens | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +.....] |
| who comes first? | DK1 1 |
| | ( |
| where does the dog come and take the lunch? | DK1 =2 |
| C: the classroom | K2 |
| C: the classroom | K2 |
| T: well you listen | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |

In fact, the pattern which follows in which the teacher stops frequently in the reading of the book to interpolate either DK1 or K1 moves, generates a better linguistic resource from which the

children might draw for writing than does the language from the book alone. As we have already noted in our earlier chapters, the language of the reader is remarkably impoverished, offering models neither in a register nor a genre sense. The teacher's contributions, as well as some from the children at least have the merit that they do offer opportunity for some scaffolding of appropriate language, though a generic structure for writing is not a feature of the language modelled. The teacher begins by citing portion of the book, and then interpolating a DK1 move which initiates some responses from the children:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: "Where's my lunch?" | K1 |
| is he happy when he realises he hasn't any lunch? | DK1 |
| C: no | K2 |
| T: he looks worried | K1 |
| C: all the other people are happy | K1 |
| T: the other children look happy munching away at their lunch, or getting ready to have their lunch | K1 1 ( |
| but he doesn't look happy at all | K1+2 |
| he's probably worried, thinking, where did I put it? why can't I find it? | ( K1=3 |

In all, the children produce four K2 moves, each of them in response to the teacher's four DK1 moves, and they also produce three K1 moves. All are involved in building aspects of the "content" field.

Examples of K1 moves are:

C: all the other people are happy K1

or

C: they're laughing K1.

## 8.6.3 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 1/CONTROL 1

Table 8.7 sets out the summary of moves in the Task Specification 1 and Control 1.

Table 8.7 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Specification /Control 1 of Text B

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 16 | 0 |
| K1 | 26 | 0 |
| K2 | 0 | 11 |
| A2 | 3 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 3 |
| others: | | |
| fg | 1 | 0 |
| cf | 2 | 0 |
| nom | 2 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 48 | 13 |

The teacher has a large number of DK1 moves here - 16 in fact - and that is because in this element she seeks to elicit from the children aspects of their personal experience (about which she is herself

informed) as a basis for writing. She also has a large number of K1 moves and these are involved in the moves she employs to paraphrase the children's construction of their experiences. Between them, then, the teacher's DK1 moves and K1 moves have a major role in the processes by which the teacher seeks to scaffold appropriate language with the children. As we earlier observed in chapters 6 and 7 (sections 6.5.3, 7.5.3) it is a pity that the real facility the teacher shows here is not matched by a concern either for a more challenging "content" for writing or for a more explicit interest in the nature of the genre to be written.

In the opening monologue the teacher uses K1 moves as well as one A2 move to get the element operationalised. (One A2 move and a K1 move, incidentally, are involved in the Control element):

| | |
|---|---|
| T: now what I want you people to think about is something coming along and taking your lunch, or something happening to your lunch so that you couldn't eat it | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| not a dog, that's in the story | K1 |
| well, you can have a dog if you want | K1 1 |
| but it 'ud be better if you think of | ( |
| something else | K1+2 |

Since the pattern of building reconstruction of personal experience relevant to the "content" field of lost school lunches operates strongly in this element, it will be appropriate to examine its consequences for conversational structure in some detail in the case of one child, whom the teacher draws into talk. We have already examined part of the text here above in section 8.3, and we have in addition examined it for the purposes of our Theme and transitivity analyses in chapters 6 and 7. As we can see, the teacher firstly draws the child into building aspects of her personal experience through two related DK1

moves, and subsequently she reconstructs what has been built up. She then goes on to draw the child out further and finally reconstructs what has been said, in effect creating a recount (see chapter 3, section 3.2)

| | |
|---|---|
| T: all right put your hand up if you've thought of something that could come and take your lunch, or something that could happen to your lunch | A2 |
| have you ever had a day when you've had no lunch to eat? | DK1 |
| Jodie? (has not raised her hand) | (nom |
| what happened Jodie, when you had no lunch to eat? | ( DK1 |
| C: mum didn't bring it up | K2 1 |
| | ( |
| she left it at home | K2 = 2 |
| T: left your lunch at home on the bench | K11 |
| | ( |
| and her mum didn't bring it to school | K1+2 |
| | ( |
| and she had no lunch | K1+3 |
| and what happened? | DK1 |
| C: found no lunch | K2 |
| T: and then what happened? | DK11 |
| | ( |
| who had to ring up your mum and dad? | DK1=2 |
| C: Mr. H----- | K2 |
| T: and then what happened? | DK1 |
| C: my mum brought my lunch | K2 |
| T: and who else brought your lunch? | DK1 |
| C: dad | K2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| T: she had no lunch to start with, because | |
| it was left at home | K11 |
| and she thought her mum was going to | ( |
| bring it at lunch time | K1+2 |
| and when her mum didn't bring it, Mrs S | ( |
| rang her mum | K1+3 |
| | ( |
| and she wasn't at home | K1+4 |
| | ( |
| so her dad brought her lunch | K1x5 |
| and then her mum remembered she | ( |
| hadn't brought her lunch | K1+6 |
| | ( |
| and she brought lunch too | K1+7 |
| | ( |
| so she ended up with two lunches | K1x8 |
| | ( |
| she ate the lot | K1=9 |

The relationships established within the move complexes here vary, but they are mostly those extension, as the analysis reveals. Thus are revealed to us some of ways in which scaffolding of language can be constructed through conversational structure.

## 8.6. 4 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION 2/CONTROL 2

Table 8.8 sets out the summary of moves in the Task Specification 1/ Control 2.

Table 8.8 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Specification 1 / Control 2 of Text B

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 0 | 0 |
| K1 | 23 | 0 |
| K2 | 0 | 1 |
| A2 | 4 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 4 |
| others: | | |
| fg | 3 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 27 | 5 |

The pattern of the conversation structure changes interestingly with the entry to the Task Specification 2/Control 2. The involvement of the children in some joint construction of aspects of the "content" field has been finished. Hence the teacher uses no DK1 moves in this element, though she does use 23 K1 moves. Hence, too, in this element the children's general contributions to the conversation structure decline, since their major contribution in any lesson, as we have already seen, is in the building of aspects of the "content" register. However, despite the fact that the task is being specified in this element, most of the discourse in fact relates to the "content" rather than to the nature of the genre for writing, a matter to which we have already drawn attention in earlier chapters.

The opening teacher monologue involves three A2 moves, used in mobilising the children to their task, as well as five K1 moves, which also have a role in directing the children to work. The pedagogical

register is plainly realised through these moves:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: all right, hands down | A2 |
| | ([A1: NV] |
| thinking caps on | A2 |
| | ([A1: NV] |
| get these brains working | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| they're nearly Grade 3 brains | K1 1 |
| I don't have to tell them everything to | ( |
| think | K1=2 |
| | ( |
| you have to get them working | K1= 3 |
| you have to be responsible for what | ( |
| you're thinking | K1= 4 |
| now what you're going | |
| to do.... you're ..... | A1 fg |
| it can be something that really happened | |
| to you | K1 |

The Control element which appears here involves three K1 moves and one A2 move from the teacher:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: Joseph you're spoiling the grade | K1 |
| now wriggle up please and start listening | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| you'll get back to your place | K11 |
| | ( |
| and you won't know what to do | K1+2. |

The Control element having been completed, most of the rest of the Task Specification 2 element involves one long move complex in which the teacher constructs possible"contents" for writing, followed

by a shorter move complex brought about the taking up of a K2 position by one child:

| | |
|---|---|
| what I want you to think | |
| about is something that..... | fg |
| it might be something that really happened | |
| to you | K11 |
| | ( |
| one day you found you didn't have any lunch | K1=2 |
| or it might be something like this little boy | ( |
| in the story | K1+3 |
| | ( |
| a dog came into the school | K1=4 |
| | ( |
| and took your lunch out of the school bag | K1+5 |
| so he ended up with a wonderful lunch that | ( |
| the teacher had to buy him | K1x6 |
| | ( |
| or it might be something different altogether | K1+7 |
| | ( |
| you might have a monster coming in | K1 = 8 |
| | ( |
| and taking it | K1+ 9 |
| you might have someone with the same | ( |
| bag eating your lunch | K1+ 10 |
| and then you didn't like the lunch that they | ( |
| had in their bag | K1+11 |
| | ( |
| so you had to get something special | K1x12 |
| you might have perhaps put your lunch | ( |
| down outside to play a game | K1x13 |
| and some animal, a cat or a dog or some | ( |
| person steps over it | K1+14 |
| | ( |

| | |
|---|---|
| and squashes it | K1+15 |
| | ( |
| or..... | fg |
| C: a bird? | K2 |
| T: or a bird | K1 |
| | ( |
| or.... | fg |
| yes, you could have a bird take your lunch | K1 1 |
| or somebody might throw your lunch away | ( |
| by mistake | K1+2 |

## 8.6.5 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK OF TEXT B

Table 8.9 sets out the summary of moves in the Task of Text B

Table 8.9 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task of Text B

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 0 | 0 |
| K1 | 3 | 0 |
| K2 | 2 | 1 |
| A2 | 4 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 9 | 4 |

Once the "content" field is dealt with, the use of DK1 moves disappears, as Table 8.9 makes clear. In the Task the teacher uses one K2 move to initiate the element:

| | |
|---|---|
| right, who 's got something in their head | |
| that they're going to write about? | K2, |

and apart from that, she employs four A2 moves to direct the children's activity, as in:

| | |
|---|---|
| well you can do it straight in your blue books | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +.....]. |

A child employs a K2 move and the teacher responds:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: what about if they're in your folder? | K2 |
| T: you can have your other spelling sheets | |
| besides you and your folder | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |

Finally the child directs the children to their work:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: all right, let me see who's going to be | |
| first | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| now here's your heading: "What Happened | |
| to My Lunch?" | K1 |

Overall, then, our examination of Text B shows a number of similarities between the general pattern by which the conversation is constructed, and that applying in Text A. Thus, the teacher uses mainly K1 moves, significant in any part of an element, but always important in the opening monologue, where they are often used as well as A2 moves, involved in directing the children's behaviour. A2 moves in the opening part of an element in particular are those in which, as we have seen earlier, use is made by the teacher of behavioural processes or certain material processes or some processes of perception to signal to the children that activity is being mobilised. Apart from K1 moves, the teacher makes frequent use of DK1 moves, and in this she operates very differently from the children, who only rarely use such moves. Her uses of DK1 moves

decline markedly with the movement through the various elements of schematic structure. They are used most frequently in those elements where the object is to elicit information from the children relevant to the "content" field under discussion, and they thus appear in the earlier elements, disappearing in the TS2 and the T elements here.

The teacher's frequent uses of K1 moves and of DK1 moves, like her uses of A2 moves, are of course significant measures of the tenor values applying, and of the power the teacher holds in generally directing the course of activities and the kinds of behaviour in which the children engage. The children produce a number of K1 moves, primarily in the TO, and also in the TRO, where they are engaging in some preliminary consideration of the "content" field as that is represented in the book used. They subsequently make more use of K2 moves, especially in the TS1, where two children in particular are drawn into building aspects of personal experiences. Just as was true in Text A, the teacher sometimes chooses to exploit the children's K1 moves, but she is equally free to ignore them, again a measure of her authority in the situation. The children use no DK1 moves, and as the activity proceeds from each element to the next, the children's contribution in fact reduces, so that they make little contribution in either the TS2 or the T. Their most extensive contributions to the conversation structure are those made at points at which the "content" field is under construction, and this explains why they are most vocal in the earlier elements.

A principal source of difference between the teachers' building of conversational structure in Text B and Text A lies in the fact that the teacher in Text B makes much more frequent and extensive use of move complexes, realising relationships of extension in particular, though there are a number of relationships of elaboration as well, and some of extension. Where the children do contribute, creating K1 moves, their contributions are normally of only one clause. To some

extent, this difference from Text A is to be explained in terms of mode. In Text A, the talk devolves around the display of uniforms, where the object is to make observations about these, with a view to writing about them later. In Text B, where the object is to consider either imaginative or "real life" experiences to do with losing one's school lunch, with a view to writing a "story" about these, it is no doubt to be expected that some greater development of extended move complexes should occur, as part of the process of constructing both personal experiences and possible sequences of events for writing. However, allowing for this consideration, and for the kinds of advantages conferred on the children in listening to and/or contributing to the teacher's modelling of potential events for writing, the fact remains that it would be possible to engage the children in participating much more fully in scaffolding possible models for writing. Gray (1983) for example, has demonstrated ways of scaffolding language in working with significantly disadvantaged Aboriginal children, where they contributed rather more fully than is the case in Text B. Callaghan and Rothery (1989) and Macken (1989a, 1989b) are all currently developing models for teaching in which the teaching strategies involve the children rather more fully in creation of appropriate language for writing. Where such patterns of involvement of the children did occur, we would expect to find the children constructing not only more K1 moves, but also considerably more move complexes.

## 8.7 Conversation structure in Text C

The schematic structure of Text C, it will be recalled, may be set out thus:

TO/C1/C2^ TS/C3^ TRS /C4^ T.

We will begin by examining conversation structure in the Task Orientation/Controls 1 and 2. The complete table of exchanges is set out in Appendix 4.C.

### 8.7.1 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK ORIENTATION AND CONTROLS 1 AND 2

Table 8.10 gives an overview of the moves in the Task Orientation and Controls 1 and 2 of Text C.

Table 8.10 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Orientation/ Controls 1 &2 of Text C

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 12 | 2 |
| K1 | 107 | 37 |
| K2 | 14 | 16 |
| K2f | 11 | 2 |
| A2 | 15 | 0 |
| A1 | 5 | 15 |
| DA1 | 0 | 1 |
| others: | | |
| nom | 9 | 0 |
| bid | 0 | 11 |
| cf | 3 | 2 |

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| rcf | 4 | 1 |
| fg | 2 | 1 |
| exc | 0 | 1 |
| ch | 3 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 185 | 89 |

Mrs L initiates the Task Orientation with a series of A1 moves which we have already cited above in section 8.4, and for that reason we will not show them again here. The use of A1 moves rather than K1 moves reflects the fact that the teacher begins by displaying the book to be used, and talks about what is to be done with it. These A1 moves realise the pedagogical register, and at the point at which the teacher moves the children into dialogue which we have already noted in chapters 6 and 7 (sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1), she uses a DK1 move to elicit what the children know, as a basis for proceeding forward:

> T: Lesley, what sort of creature is this little creature here? DK1

Henceforth, in the "body" of the element, in which teacher and children engage with the "content" field, the teacher uses no more A1 moves, and an interweaving pattern involving the various other moves emerges.

In our earlier discussions of Text C, both in chapters 6 and 7 (sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1) we have already suggested that Mrs L, the teacher in this case, provides an interesting contrast with the other two teachers because she does involve the children rather more fully in the construction of the text, and she permits them a greater role in negotiating with her some shared understandings about the

"content" being developed. The analysis of conversation structure will help to demonstrate in what ways the difference is realised. One matter of immediate difference which emerges from a reading of Table 8.10 is that Mrs L makes much more sparing use of DK1 moves in the Task Orientation than does Mrs S at least, the teacher in Text A. The latter uses 14 DK1 moves in her Task Orientation, compared with 12 in Mrs L's case, and this is the more remarkable when one recalls both that Mrs L's Task Orientation is significantly longer than Mrs S's Task Orientation in Text A, and that in our view, the actual "content" dealt with is considerably more demanding than is true in Text A. Mrs P, the teacher in Text B, makes limited use of DK1 moves in both her Task Orientation (two) and her Task Reorientation/Control 1 (three), because she is actually reading the book she displays as an essential aspect of the "content" of the lesson. However, in her Task Specification 1/ Control 2 in particular she uses 16 DK1 moves, through which she is eliciting from the children reconstruction of their personal experiences suitable for writing.

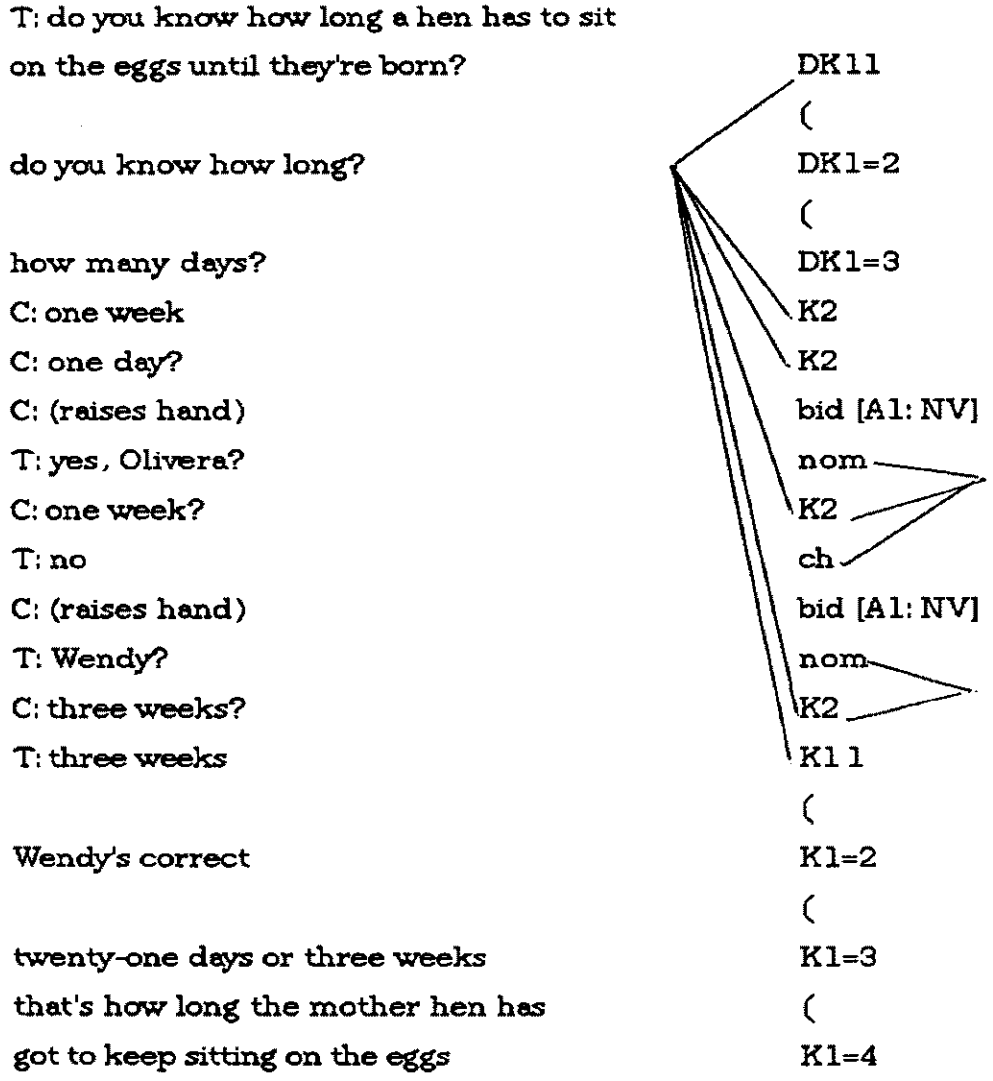
Another interesting point of difference lies in the children's uses of K1 and K2 moves. In the Task Orientation of Text C they produce 37 K1 moves and only 16 K2 moves, while in the Task Orientation of Text A, they produce 26 K2 moves and 22 K1 moves. K1 moves, as we have already seen, represent a speaker's attempt to provide some information of some kind. When children produce them, teachers may or may not respond to them with a K2 move. As we saw when examining the Task Orientation of Text A above in section 8.5.1, the teacher frequently ignores the children's K1 moves. Sometimes, Mrs L ignores them too in Text C, but as we shall see, she normally does not do so, seeking instead to take up a K2 move, and to build the children's contributions into the ongoing direction of the talk. The children's K2 moves may be of two kinds, as we have already seen. Either they are produced in response to a teacher's DK1 move, or they are produced where a child seeks to elicit some information. In the case of Text A, it is notable that not only do the children produce

more K2 moves than K1 moves, but that, with one exception, they are all produced in response to the teacher's DK1 moves. They do not, in other words, respresent attempts to elicit information, for this is not actually encouraged by the teacher. In the case of Text C, on the other hand, the children produce significantly fewer K2 moves than K1 moves, principally because their teacher makes more sparing use of DK1 moves, as we have already noted above. In addition, of the K2 moves the children do produce, some at least represent attempts to elicit information. In other words, they do have greater opportunity to elicit information than do the children in Text A.

Comparison of the children's K1 and K2 moves in the Task Orientation and the Task Reorientation of Text B is somewhat harder to make, since the texts differ a lot. There, as we have already noted, the activity of the teacher's reading the book used constitutes the greater part of both the Task Orientation and the Task Reorientation. In the former element, the children use six K1 moves and three K2 moves, while in the Task Reorientation they use three K1 moves and four K2 moves. The comparison with the Task Specification 1 is the more revealing, because it is in that element that the children engage most overtly with the "content" field, building reconstruction of personal experiences. The children in fact produce no K1 moves and 11 K2 moves, only one of which represents an attempt to elicit information, and the other 10 of which are responses to teacher DK1 moves.

Bearing in mind that a major responsibility of a Task Orientation, as we have revealed it by now, is that it provide opportunity to build a "content" for writing, we believe that the comparative sparsity of DK1 moves in Mrs L's Task Orientation is one of the measures of the fact that she does draw the children into talk in somewhat different ways from the other teachers, Mrs S in particular. She does not in fact involve the children needlessly in attempting to answer questions to

which they are unlikely to know the answers. Hence it is that her 12 DK1 moves tend to come in the earlier part of the Task Orientation, where she is introducing the book, and initiating talk abut chickens and hens. We have already observed in chapter 7 (section 7.6.1),that she stops asking many questions about the "content" field after she judges she has exhausted the children's present knowledge about chickens. If we address the issue in terms of conversation structure, we can say that Mrs L's final DK1 move in the element comes comparatively early in the element, and at the point where the following exchanges occur:



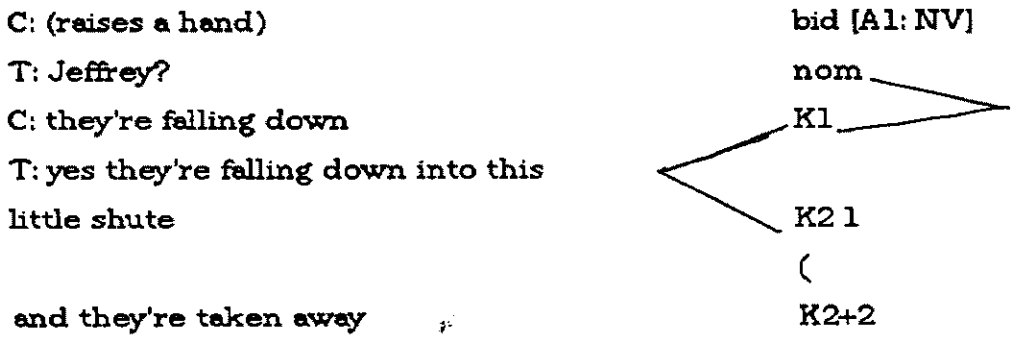
One other measure of the differences between the way in which Mrs L generates talk with her students and the ways used by the other teachers lies in the fact that the children do enjoy greater opportunity to initiate exchanges in her lesson. One child, for example, uses two DK1 moves, creating a move complex, to which the teacher takes up a K2 response. This contrasts with the case in Text A, examined above in section 8.5.1, where as we saw, a child's attempt to initiate an exchange by means of a DK1 move was effectively aborted by the teacher's intervention. The example of the child's use of a move complex involving two DK1 moves occurs in the following in the TO of Text C:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: Mrs L, I know where they are | DK11 |
| | ( |
| I know where they are | DK1=2 |
| T: where are they? | K2 |
| C: they're where you buy the chickens | K1 |
| T: that's right | K2f |

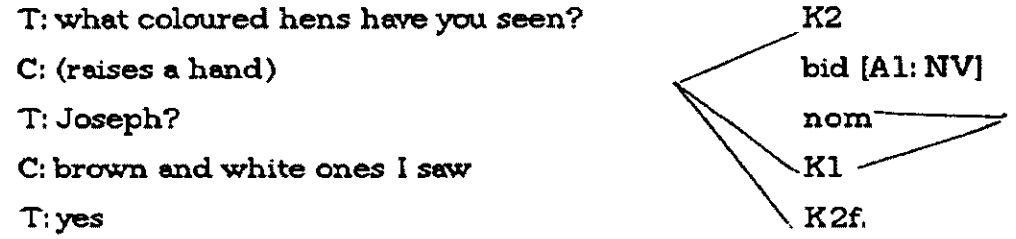
Another attempt made by a child to initiate an exchange is worth drawing attention to, since it shows another strategy a child may use to "get into" the conversation. However, this one does not in fact prove too successful, principally one suspects because the teacher does not see the value of the question asked about a broody hen, though it is in fact a good question:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: Mrs L, I've got a question | DA1 |
| T: yes, Jeff? | nom |
| C: does she have a bath? | A2 |
| T: pardon? | cf |
| C: does it have a bath? | rcf |
| T: what do you mean | cf |
| do you know how long a hen has to sit on the | |
| eggs until they're born..... | |

A strategy often used by the children to establish opportunity to talk is their use of bids, indicated by raising hands. In fact, though in the classrooms of all three teachers, as we have seen, there is an expectation that the children raise their hands preparatory to speaking, it seems that the children more frequently raise their hands in Mrs L's classroom, and that she does respond to them positively most of the time. She responds to no less than 11 bids, allowing the children to create K1 slots in the conversation, which she normally uses to move the talk forward in supportive ways, as in:




Of the children's 37 K1 moves, 28 fall in that part of the element in which new knowledge is being generated about the "content". That is to say, they fall after the teacher's final DK1 move cited above. Five occur in the talk towards the end of the element, where the teacher asks the children about the types of colours they have seen in chickens, as in:




Such K1 moves, while not without interest, do not involve the children in building aspects of the "content" field with respect to the development of chickens in eggs, as is true in the case of their other

K1 moves. In fact, from the point of view of our interest in how students may be allowed to participate in the construction of new knowledge, with one exception the K1 moves they take up after the teacher's final DK1 move, and before they begin to talk of the different colours chickens may have, are the most significant. They emerge, interestingly, as the children follow the teacher's construction of information about chickens, principally built up in talk about the pictures in the book.

The exception occurs earlier in the element, before the final DK1 move occurs. In talk of the developing chicken, a child takes up a K1 move to make a good contribution on an aspect of the chick's growth, which the teacher exploits, responding with a K2f move:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: this is the inside of the egg | K1 1 |
| and this little white spot here is where the | ( |
| little chicken will start to grow | K1+2 |
| that's the yolk that it will feed on | K1 |
| it's got that little tube to his tummy | K1 |
| C: a chord | K1 |
| T: yes, a little chord | K2f |

Throughout the element, the teacher's authority as the person best informed on the subject is never in doubt: in fact, it is critical to the successful building of information here. But one feels, nonetheless, that the children enjoy a capacity to contribute to the building of the information in a manner which gives them a very genuine share in the enterprise. To that extent, they enjoy some parity of opportunity with the teacher, and are in general treated with respect by her for the contributions they make. We will demonstrate the point with some examples. Immediately after it has been established that a chicken takes three weeks to develop in an egg, the teacher takes up a K1 position, and two children create K1 moves as well, overlapping the teacher's talk in a manner which she accepts, much as one

suspects one could demonstrate this kind of thing in normal casual conversation between friends:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: she'll get up occasionally to go and get | |
| some feed but* | K1 |
| C: it has to be hot | K1 |
| C: and they have to be hot | K11 |
| | ( |
| it has to be a hot day | K1=2 |
| T: very warm | cf |

* the underlinings indicate moves which overlap.

As the talk proceeds, and the teacher directs attention further to aspects of the chicken's development in the series of pictures, one child called Anthony raises his hand, making a contribution about what is revealed in the pictures, which is accepted by the teacher:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: Mrs L (raises a hand) | bid [A1: NV] |
| T: yes, Anthony? | nom |
| C: you can see its feet | K1 |
| T: yes | K2 |

The teacher proceeds a little further, and two children offer two K1 moves, to which she does not overtly respond:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: and you start to see its little claws too | K1 |
| C: and its little beak | K1 |
| C: and his eyes | K1 |

Still a little later, the teacher offers a further K1 move, on the basis of which the children are encouraged to offer K1 moves to one of which she does directly respond:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: two weeks or 13 days - nearly two weeks | K1 1 |
| and you can start to see again he's really | ( |
| starting to get like a real chicken | K1+2 |
| C: and he's sleepy too | K1 |
| C: he's turning yellow | K1 |
| T: yes he's turning yellow because he's got | |
| feathers | K2f |

A child contributes shortly afterwards:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: there's not too much of the yolk left | K1 |
| T: no there's not too much of the yolk left | K2f |

A little later, reading from the book, a child takes a K1 move to comment on the length of time the chick has been in the egg and the teacher responds:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: nineteen days | K1 |
| T: nineteen days | cf |

Later still, a child offers a K1 move in response to seeing a picture of the chicken in a new phase of its development in the shell:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: he's squashing | K1 |
| T: he's squashing | cf |

Shortly after this exchange, a child called Susy initiates a change in the direction of the conversation which the teacher accepts, ultimately building some information about chickens from it, before

she returns the talk more directly to the contents of the book:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: (raises hand) | bid [A1: NV] |
| T: yes, Susy? | nom |
| C: well when I went to Melbourne market | |
| we were walking | K11 |
| | ( |
| and I saw this lady | K1+2 |
| | ( |
| and she had this part of her head black | K1+3 |
| | ( |
| and the rest all red like uh, like uh a cock | K1+4 |
| T: like the top of the comb of a hen | |
| or rooster? | K2 |
| C: yeah | K1 |
| C: it looked funny | K1 |
| T: hens and roosters have got a comb | |
| at the top right? | K1 |
| and then they've got - | fg |
| C: it was all red | K1 |
| T: it looked a bit like that did it? | K2 |
| C: yeah | K1 |
| C: a cone | K1 |
| T: no, comb not a cone | ch |
| cone is what you eat an ice cream in | K11 |
| | ( |
| but a comb is that | K1+2 |

Two other K1 moves are taken up by the children, involved in building aspects of the "content" field. After some talk about the effort for the chicken in getting out of the shell, a child proffers a comment:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: it would take a long long time | K1 |

Later still, seeing a picture of a newly hatched chick, a child offers another K1 move, to which the teacher responds:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: Mrs L, that's what Belinda's chicken looked like | K1 |
| T: yes | K2f. |

Turning to the children's 16 K2 moves, two of these reveal evidence of learning in valuable ways. For example, one child repeats what the teacher has said, thus modelling his own language on hers:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: and that white part you know when he comes out and he's all wet? | fg<br>K2 |
| C: yes | K1 |
| T: that's the white part | K1 |
| C: that's the white | K2f 1 |
| | ( |
| and he's all wet | K2f+2 |

Such an exchange invites comparison with exchanges provided by Painter (1986) investigating parent/child interaction in ways which show how critical the adult's role is in helping to scaffold the language that the child learns to use. Gray's work in this respect (1987) has also been very helpful.

Another K2 move from a child allows the eliciting of some useful information:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: what are those little red lines? | K2 |
| T: those little red lines are the blood vessels, right? | K1 |

While the children's K2 moves used to elicit information are thus not numerous overall, they do occur in an overall pattern of conversation in which the collective effect of the moves of both teacher and children is to permit the children a much greater share in the construction of the discourse in useful ways than was true in the Task Orientation of either Text A or Text B.

Towards the end of the element, as we have already seen in chapters 6 and 7 (sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1), the teacher involves the children in "making chicken noises", and we have argued that this is not a pedagogically useful activity, arising from a view of early childhood education which suggests "variation in learning activity" as a necessary palliative to the stresses felt by children in needing to sit still and keep quiet unless asked to speak. Our analysis of conversation structure has shown that Mrs L functions interpersonally with the children very much better than the teachers in Texts A and B. In our view, it is clear that the children do genuinely engage with the "content" in a manner not available to them in either Texts A or B. We would thus argue there is reason to believe that in this lesson at least such variation in learning activity is not necessary. The pattern by which some of the children do perform as chickens need not detain us long, though we will sample the process of selection and performance by one child before leaving the Task Orientation. We will take the first instance, where the

teacher initiates the activity with an A2 move:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: right, let's see if we can get one or two | |
| people | fg |
| seeing that people think they can | |
| make good chicken noises and be good | |
| chickens, we're going to have a little go | A2 1 |
| and see who can be the best chicken in the | ( |
| grade for a couple of minutes | A2 +2 |
| C: (raises hand) | bid [A1: NV] |
| all right, Jeff | nom |
| | ( |
| you can come over here | A2 1 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| and show us you being a chicken | A2+2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| the rest of you must be quiet | A2 1 |
| | ( [A1: NV] |
| or that's when we'll stop | A2 +2 |
| C: (makes chicken noises) | A1 |
| T: very good Jeffrey | K1 |
| you can sit down | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |

In all, the analysis of conversation structure in the TO of Text C has been interesting, principally because of the ways in which the pattern we have found both parallels and differs from that in Texts A and B. Thus, where in Texts A and B, the teachers used K1 moves to initiate the element, the teacher here uses a number of A2 moves to help point directions for the lesson, using teacher monologue to do so. She then, like the other teachers, employs a DK1 move to draw the children into conversation, and she subsequently employs a large number of K1 moves in the "body" of the element, as the "content" field is developed. Like the other teachers, she uses a number of

DK1 moves, all of them designed to draw from the children what it is they know relevant to the "content" field, while the children use no DK1 moves at all. However, she ceases to use DK1 moves altogether when she judges she has exhausted the prior knowledge the children have acquired, and she employs other strategies to draw them into acquiring new or uncommonsense knowledge. Thus, the children produce a number of K1 moves as well as a number of K2 moves, where in both cases the children do have genuine opportunity to contribute to the construction of new knowledge. They do this either by making an observation inspired by listening to the teacher or looking at the book she displays, or by eliciting information from the teacher. The teacher, for her part, makes use of a number of K2f moves, some K2 moves and some cf moves, all of them exploiting and building upon what the children have offered. Many of her K1 moves, while representing new exchanges in the talk, do in addition build upon what the children have said.

Overall, Mrs L functions very much better in her relationship with the children than do either of the other two teachers, and our analysis in terms of conversation structure has been particularly helpful in uncovering why and in what ways her working relationship is superior. Experientially, as our transitivity analysis has shown (chapter 7, section 7.6.1) , she has not moved the children into control of significant new knowledge as well as she might have done, had she had a better and less confused grasp herself of the "content" being taught. This is a pity, since she undoubtedly has real skills in engaging the children usefully in negotiated talk, serving to give us useful evidence of the nature of the kind of conversation structure which might apply where genuine negotiation and scaffolding of understandings were taking place.

## 8.7.2 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION/CONTROL 3 OF TEXT C

Table 8.11 gives an overview of the various moves in the Task Specification/ Control 3 of Text C.

Table 8.11 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Specification/ Control 3 of Text C

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 14 | 0 |
| K1 | 33 | 1 |
| K2 | 1 | 9 |
| A2 | 19 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 15 |
| others: | | |
| nom | 3 | 0 |
| bid | 0 | 7 |
| fg | 2 | 0 |
| ch | 1 | |
| TOTAL | 73 | 32 |

The entry to the TS, as we have already observed, is undertaken in teacher monologue, in which the teacher chooses to congratulate those children who had made "good chicken noises." She also, in the Control 3 element, disciplines some children who have been inattentive. She achieves these things through a series of moves, most of which are A2, and some of which are K1, so that her general authority over the children is fully asserted before the entry to

consideration of the Task element is begun:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: all right before we start some work today, | |
| I like Jeffrey's chook impersonation | K11 |
| | ( |
| and I liked Veronica's chicken one too | K1+2 |
| so I think those two deserve a clap | A2 |
| (class claps) | [A1: NV] |
| well done | K1 |
| right everyone sitting down | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| all right I'm waiting for you please Olivera, | |
| to show me a few manners | A21 1 |
| | ( |
| and not be so rude | A2+2 |
| | [A1: NV ] |
| thanks girls | A2f |
| turn around | A2 |
| | [A1 NV] |
| Gabriel, stand up | A2 |
| | [A1 NV] |
| be quiet | A2 1 |
| | ( |
| and sit down | A2 +2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| that's finished with now | K1 |
| don't you know when to stop? | K2 |

From here on, the nature of the task begins to receive attention, and another monologue, realised partly through a K1 move from the

teacher, but also through an A2 move, establishes some directions:

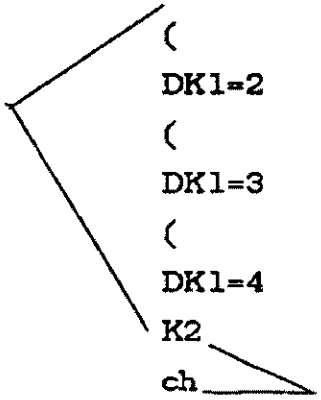
| | |
|---|---|
| T: what I have here is a little sheet I'd like | |
| you to take back with you to your seat | K1 |
| on this little sheet, when you look very | |
| very closely, you may not be able to see it | |
| from the front | fg |
| when you look closely, you'll find there are | |
| pictures, Belinda, of all the stages that a little | |
| chick goes through before it is born | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |

We have already observed in our examination of the earlier texts that the children participate less and less as each element unfolds, since the teacher is intent upon establishing a task to be done, rather than upon establishing some understanding of a "content". This explains the teacher's behaviour here, for she is much less willing to let the children talk than was true in the Task Orientation. Of the 19 A2 moves the teacher employs in the element, most are involved in directing the children to their task, as in the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: now, what you have to do is this | A21 |
| first thing, you've got to sort out which | ( |
| order the pictures go in | A2=2 |
| C: I reckon the mother hen would go first | K1 |
| T: then I'll want you to paste them into your | |
| scrapbook in the correct order | A2 1 |
| | ([A1: NV+....] |
| and then I want you to write a little story | ( |
| about this little chick how it grew and how | ( |
| it hatched into a chicken | A2 + 2 |

Of the total set of 72 moves taken up by the teacher, there are 14 DK1 moves, all of which are involved in directing the children to their task in writing as in:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: who can tell me the very last picture in this little story? | DK11 |
| | ( |
| the very last one Mandy? | DK1=2 |
| | ( |
| can you point to the last one? | DK1=3 |
| | ( |
| why not this one? | DK1=4 |
| C: because that one's the best | K2 |
| T: no | ch |



The children have nine K2 moves, all but two of which constitute responses to the teacher's DK1 moves. One of the two K2 moves calculated to elicit information is actually ignored by the teacher:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: can you put second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth? | K2, |

while the other, as we shall see below, occurs at the end of the element, and it is responded to by the teacher.

Plainly, the teacher is primarily concerned to direct activity and the opportunity for elicitation of information on the part of the children is over.

The pattern of exchanges by which the teacher seeks to develop the nature of the task is actually much less successful than is the pattern applying at its best in the Task Orientation, where some genuine negotiation takes place. The reason, we would suggest, is that the teacher is herself in some quandary about how to define the task

well, and as we have argued in chapters 6 and 7 (sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1 and 7.6.2) nothing of consequence is established about the kinds of generic choices to be made for writing. Instead, the teacher seems preoccupied with the steps of cutting out the pictures, and with some general observations about the possible events for writing the "story". After some talk about the sequence in which the pictures should be placed, built around uses of DK1 moves on the part of the teacher, she actually repeats the advice already given, in a series of A2 moves:

| | |
|---|---|
| first of all Jeff, I want you to cut it out | A2 1 |
| | ( [A1: NV +....] |
| and paste it in the correct order | A2+2 |
| | ( [A1: NV +....] |
| you can leave your colouring till the Clag | ( |
| is dry and till you've written your little story | A2 1 =3 |
| | [ A1: NV +....] |

An A2 move addresses the children to the nature of their task:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: how are you going to go about making up | |
| a story for these pictures? | A2 |
| Deborah? (has not raised a hand) | nom |
| C: um I'm going to look at the pictures | A1 1 |
| | ( |
| and write about how the chicken hatched | A1 +2 |
| | [A1: NV+....] |

The subsequent series of moves demonstrates the confusion in the teacher's own mind about the nature of the writing task. Since she has demonstrated that she can involve the children appropriately in negotiation of learning elsewhere, we must conclude here that it is her own uncertainty which causes her to use the series of moves she

does, to which, be it noted, the children are not allowed to make any response:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: you've got to think about too, first of all, | |
| this little story is different to our eggs | |
| in the incubator because it, the egg here | |
| is hatched by the mother hen right? | K1 |
| because she's the lady, she's the one | |
| who starts it all off | K1 1 |
| | ( |
| she's hatching her little chick | K1 =2 |
| I don't know, maybe if you wanted to | |
| write in your story that the egg was then | |
| taken and put in an incubator, you could | A2 |
| | |
| that's up to you | A2 |
| but you've got to tell us about how the | ( |
| little chick grows inside the egg | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |

It is at this point that the teacher diverts the conversation towards talk about how the chicken "feels", to which we drew attention in our previous chapters (sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1), and from here to the end of the element the talk involves partly consideration, in an anthropomorphic sense, of the chicken's feelings, and partly talk of food for the chickens in the classroom. The actual writing task is no longer really a focus of the talk, and the discussion of feelings serves to confuse rather than otherwise. We will refrain from any further discussion of the rest of the element, noting that it is set out in full elsewhere, showing how the patterns of exchange structures operate.

It is a child who actually brings the talk back to considerations of the task by using a K2 move:

C: what's that? K2
T: it just says at the bottom "How a chicken grows." K1

## 8.7.3 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK RESPECIFICATION/ CONTROL 4 OF TEXT C

Table 8.12 sets out the moves in the Task Respecification/Control 4 of Text C.

Table 8.12 Summary of Moves taken up in the Task Respecification/ Control 4 of Text C

| | Teacher | Children |
|---|---|---|
| DK1 | 3 | 0 |
| K1 | 2 | 2 |
| K2 | 4 | 1 |
| K2f | 1 | 0 |
| A2 | 12 | 0 |
| A2f | 1 | 0 |
| A1 | 0 | 12 |
| others: | | |
| nom | 3 | 0 |
| cf | 1 | 0 |
| fg | 0 | 1 |
| ch | 1 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 28 | 16 |

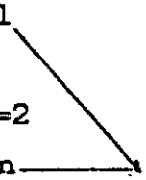
As the table confirms, the nearer the children are actually brought to commencement of their task for writing, the shorter the element tends to become, and the more negligible their contributions to the discourse become.

The element starts with a K2 move from the teacher:

| | |
|---|---|
| T: right, who can tell me again what I want | |
| you to do this morning? | K2 1 |
| | ( |
| who's got a really good memory? | K2 =2 |
| C: I've got a bad memory | K1 |
| T: right, Jodie' s got a good memory | K1 |
| yes, Jodie what have you got to do? | DK1 |
| C: you have to (pauses) | fg |
| T: come on listen 'cause Jodie's going to tell us | |
| all about what you're going to do with this | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| what are you going to do first of all? | DK1 |
| C: I know | K2 |
| T: Jeff? (has not raised a hand) | nom |
| C: cut it out | K2 |
| T: cut it out | K1 |
| then what? | DK1 |
| Jodie? (has not raised a hand) | nom |
| C: paste it | K2 |
| T: paste it | K1 |
| paste them in the correct order | K1 |
| don't just stick them on the same way | |
| as here because it may not be the correct | |
| order | A2 |
| | [A1: NV +....] |
| you can number each little picture if | |
| you like | A2 |
| C: the two top ones are | K2 |
| T: ah, all right good | cf |

Once into the "body" of the element, the children's contributions to the discourse are realised mainly in A1 moves, in itself an indication that a task is in definition.
The Control element at the end of the element involves the teacher in an A2 moves to control unacceptable behaviour:

| | |
|---|---|
| C: (plays with a toy car) | [A1: NV] |
| T: can I have the car please? | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |
| thank you | A2f |
| whose car is it? | K2 1 |
| | ( |
| whose car is it? | K2 =2 |
| Gabriel? | nom |
| C (nods his head) | [A1: NV] |
| Friday, you can collect that | K1 |



## 8.7.4 CONVERSATION STRUCTURE IN THE TASK OF TEXT C

In this element, as often happens, the only exchange involves an A2 ^ [A1: NV] sequence of moves, because the principal object of this element is to mobilise the children to activity:

| | |
|---|---|
| right now will you hop back to your | |
| seats please | A2 |
| | [A1: NV] |

Now that we have examined all elements in the schematic structure of Text C, it is clear that the teacher provides both confirmation of the general picture revealed in examining Texts A and B, and some points of difference. Like the teachers in the latter two texts, she makes much use of K1 and A2 moves, especially to start elements, but also at other points within elements, where she wishes to advise or direct the children towards action. She also makes use of DK1

moves, always to elicit from the children information of various kinds with which to proceed forward. Her K1 moves frequently involve move complexes. What makes her conversation different from that applying in Texts A and B is most apparent in the manner in which she generates talk in the TO of her lesson, where, having used a number of DK1 moves to establish with the children what they know, she proceeds, as we saw, to generate exchanges in which the children's K1 moves find acceptance, such that she herself sometimes takes up the K2 role, although sometimes she chooses to exploit what they offer in K1 moves to go on and construct K1 moves of her own. In both cases, the conversation developed is a much more genuinely negotiated one than that applying in Texts A and B, giving us some sense of what might apply quite consistently in a genuinely negotiated classroom. There is never any point at which the teacher's authority as person possessed of expert knowledge is in dispute, and the teacher does not waste the children's time with fruitless DK1 moves. Nonetheless, the children are allowed opportunity to participate usefully in the construction of the meanings involved.

The teacher is less successful in the TS and TRS elements of her lesson, in that there is less opportunity afforded the children for genuine negotiation. This to be explained, we believe, because she is uncertain and confused both about the nature of the "content" with which the children are dealing and about the nature of the writing task they are to undertake. Hence the quality of the conversation actually suffers in the latter elements of her lesson. This is a pity, since a teacher so successful interpersonally, if possessed of a better grasp of the experiential issues involved, both with respect to the "content" field and the pedagogical field, would be capable of generating much more successsful writing than did actually emerge, as we shall see in chapter 9.

## 8.8 Summary

Looking to what our overall analysis of CONVERSATION STRUCTURE in our three chosen texts has revealed, we would argue that it has served to confirm the general pattern of the schematic structure we have already established in each text. A CONVERSATION STRUCTURE analysis helps us to focus primarily upon the interpersonal character of the texts, and that is both interesting in its own right, as well as illuminating of the schematic structures we have claimed are found in the three texts. In summary, we would suggest that we have established the following:

> 1) The opening part of an element is built through the teacher's uses of K1 and/or A2 moves, both serving to direct the children, and to remind them of her authority in determining what is to be done.
>
> 2) A subsequent DK1 move or moves serves to draw the children into K2 moves in exchange structures which take the children into the "body" of the element. The children then take up mainly K2 moves and some K1 moves, though they also have a number of [A1: NV] moves. They rarely if ever produce DK1 moves.

3) It is in the TO, where the children are allowed to participate most fully in building the "content" field as an aspect of the "body" of the element that they produce most of their moves, the commonest, as just noted, being K2 and K1.

3) With the unfolding of the various elements, the children's contributions decline in frequency. That is because once the "content" field has been established in the TO (as well as in the TRO in the case of Text B at least), and to a lesser extent in the TS, the teacher goes on to direct the children towards the writing task (though here again Text B varies somewhat, since it has two TS elements, in the first of which the children do contribute quite significantly). To the extent that the children contribute as the elements proceed after the TO, they produce mainly K2 moves, and some K1 moves. The teacher produces some DK1 moves, but as she and the children move closer to the definition of the writing task, she uses more A2 moves in

particular, and, less frequently, K1 moves.

3) With the entry to the T element, the teacher always uses at least one A2 move, and sometimes one or two K1 moves as well. The obligation on the children at this point is that they take an [A1: NV] move preparatory to writing.

4) In that the teacher makes frequent use of K1, A2 and DK1 moves, she operates with power: in that the children make very rare use of DK1 moves, relatively frequent use of K2 moves, and of A1 moves, many of them non verbal, the children operate in a position of considerable inequality compared with the teacher.

5) Where the teacher initiates an exchange with a DK1 move, one would expect the unmarked sequence to apply: DK1^ K2 ^ K1. However, the teacher quite often neglects to take up the K1 move, so that the children's K2 move is often not acknowledged, though it does not follow that the children are

confused by this. The teacher's eye contact and sometimes the subsequent K1 move she takes up normally indicate that the K2 move has been acceptable. However, in that the teacher can choose to take up the K1 slot or not, she operates again with power.

6) The children quite often produce K1 moves, though production of these can sometimes be a hazardous enterprise, since the children risk at worse a reproof, and, much more commonly, the penalty of being ignored, on the grounds that they have "called out". Again, the power of the teacher is really at issue here, since it is doubtful whether in other conversations interactants could so regularly ignore K1 moves without being considered reasonably impolite.

7) Our examination of the more successful conversation exchanges in Text C leads us to argue that where teachers are negotiating learning with the children, the children's K1 moves will be much more

> frequently acknowledged by the teacher, in a manner which, while not compromising the authority of the teacher as a person expert in what is to be learned, will nonetheless both accord respect to the children's moves, and seek to build upon them for the expansion and development of the meanings under construction.

## 8.9 Bringing the three analyses together

In this final section of chapter 8, we aim to bring together the fruits of our analyses developed in considerable detail in chapters 5, 6,7 and 8. In chapter 5, it will be recalled, we introduced the notion of the writing planning genre, outlining its principal elements of schematic structure, and discussing both pedagogical and "content" registers in the genre. Then in chapter 6 we introduced the three texts we chose to examine as instances of the writing planning genre, examining them in detail from the point of view of THEME. In chapter 7 we took the analysis into a somewhat different direction by examining TRANSITIVITY in the three texts, and finally in chapter 8 we have examined CONVERSATION STRUCTURE. We have argued that the basic schematic structure of the writing planning genre will have the particulate elements:

TO^ TS^ T.

We have suggested that this is the pattern found in Text A. We have suggested that Texts B and C have variations upon this pattern, so

that Text B has the following particulate elements:

TO^ TS1^ TS2^ T.

while Text C has these particulate elements:

TO^ TS^ TRS^ T.

Particulate elements in the genre we have suggested always operate in an established order. Thus, the TO always comes first, and the T last, while in the "middle" of the element, where the greatest variation occurs, a characteristic order nonetheless pertains. A TRO, where it occurs, will follow a TO, and a TS will follow upon either the TO or the TRO. Sometimes, as we have seen, there will be two TS elements; sometimes, also, there will be one TS element and one TRS, so that where the latter occurs, it will always come after the TS. In that the pattern of operation of the elements is as we have seen it to be, we have said that the elements operate with a "wave-like" or "pulse-like" character through the text.

In addition, we have identified elements we term Control elements which are characterised partly by the fact that they may or may not occur in the genre, and partly by the fact that they can occur anywhere in the overall operation of the schematic structure. They represent the teacher's ongoing intrusions into the development of the genre, and they occur at points where she believes the patterns of acceptable behaviour she expects of the children are breaking down. We have argued that Control elements operate prosodically in the text.

In revealing the manner of the operation of the writing planning genre, we have argued the presence of two registers - a first order or pedagogical register, and second order or "content" register. Following a suggestion of Bernstein's with respect to the operation of

a regulatory discourse and an instructional discourse, we have argued the operation of the two registers in such a way that the pedagogical register is said to project the "content' register.

Schools operate to take the various fields of enquiry of "outside the school" as it were, and "relocate" them for the purposes of teaching them to young learners. The pedagogical register is foregrounded at the start of the Task Orientation, while the "content" register is foregrounded in the "body" of the element. As teacher and children move through the various later elements, this general pattern tends to prevail, so that the start of an element is signalled in the pedagogical register, while the movement to its "body" is often marked by a return to a foregrounding of the "content" register. Since the object is that the teacher teach the children to write about a "content", one would expect that the two registers would converge in the Task Specification in particular. While we do find evidence of a convergence of the two in this element, it is normally very brief, so that the actual teaching and learning about the task of writing of the "content" is of an extremely general and poorly focussed kind. The most critical issue - namely how to master the linguistic patterns in which a "content" is characteristically realised for the purposes of writing - is not in fact ever dealt with well in our chosen instances of the writing planning genre.

That this is the case is to be attributed not to any indifference on the part of the teachers, but rather to the operation of certain ideologies in our schools with respect to young learners and to the nature of knowledge. These ideologies both underestimate the kinds of learning in which young children can engage, and the manner in which significant "contents" or "bodies of knowledge" are actually built up or realised in language. Such ideologies, since they have been sanctioned by general curriculum theory and by language curriculum theory for some years now, have become very widespread in our schools, and part of a familiar legacy of thinking passed on to

the teachers. These ideologies are in urgent need of change, so that we may make explicit both to teachers, and through them, to children, the kinds of linguistic choices they will need to exercise in order to become proficient in writing about the "contents" of their various school subjects.

In the light of our analyses, we attempt to bring together what we have argued with respect to the writing planning genre in both Figure 8.6 and Table 8.13. In the former, we represent the overall schematic structure potential of the writing planning genre. The three principal particulate elements - the TO, TS and T - are shown, as well as the optional particulate elements - a TRO, a second TS, and a TRS. The C element, which is also optional, and which operates prosodically throughout the genre, is also represented. It will be observed that there is a movement through the genre from an initial particulate element in which the language is primarily that of reflection on experience, towards a final element in which the language is that of directing activity. In fact, with the movement from reflection towards action, there is a mode shift. It is because of this that the elements become progressively shorter, and the expectation is upon the children that they say less and less as the lesson proceeds.

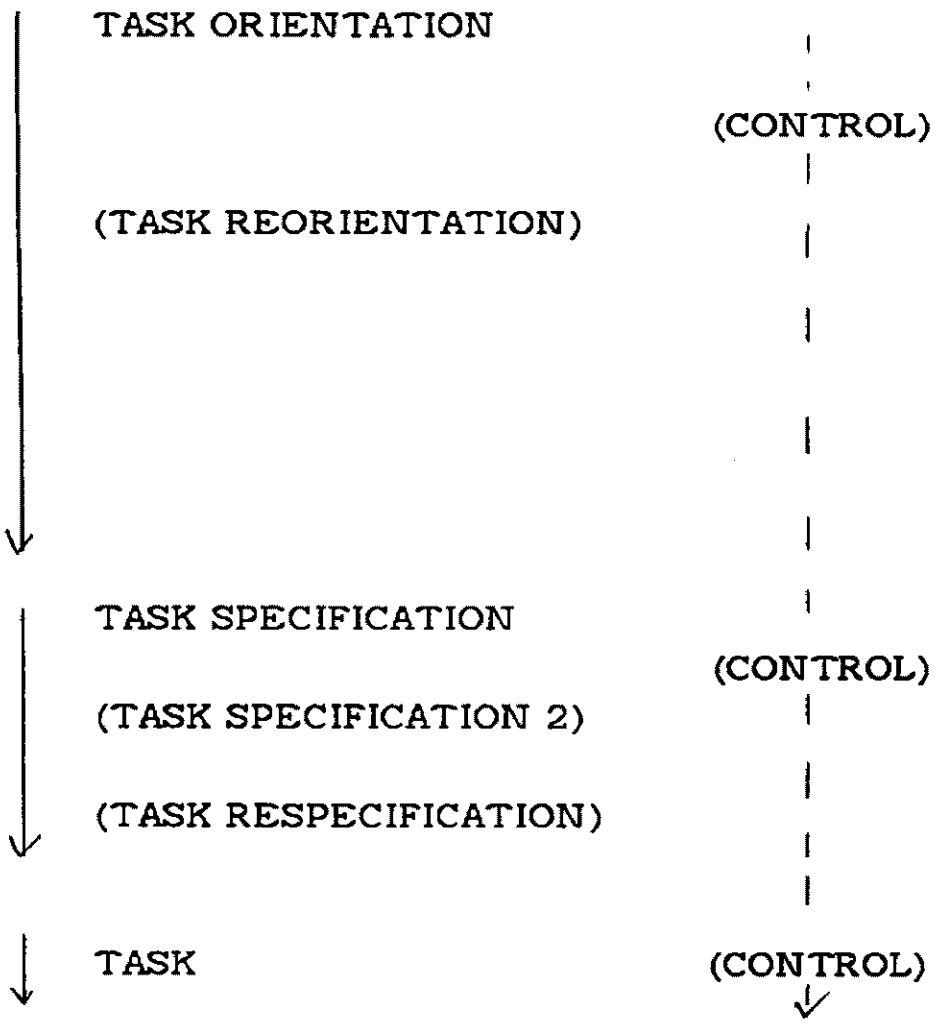



Figure 8.6 The Schematic structure potential of the writing planning genre: from language for reflection on experience towards language for action

Table 8.13 The writing planning genre: a summary of major systems and their manner of realisation of (i) the pedagogical and "content" registers and (ii) the principal particulate elements of schematic structure

TASK ORIENTATION: the longest element in the schematic structure

"opening": pedagogical register is foregrounded

teacher monologue

LANGUAGE Theme choices: textual Themes:

continuatives point directions &/or link to previous activities e.g. "now", "right", "well"

topical Themes:

identify class members as part of operationalising activity e.g. "we", "you", "I"

Transitivity

choices: processes to operationalise activity include:

behavioural: "we're going to talk some more"

perception: "I want you to listen to this little tiny story"

material: "we're going to start off with a little story."

principal participants: identify class members e.g. "we", "you"
secondary participants and/or circumstances: identify aspects of the pedagogical task or the "content" for writing, e.g. "story", "uniforms", "lost", "chickens"

FOR Conversation

structure: either (i) teacher K1 moves which provide information:
"well now today we're going to talk some more
about the things we have been talking about for the
last couple of days",

REFLECTION or (ii) teacher A1 moves which direct action:
"we're going to start off with a little story
this morning (displays book)."

ON

"body": "content" register is foregrounded

dialogue

EXPERIENCE: Theme choices: textual Themes:

(i) some continuatives, e.g. "now", but number declines.

(ii) structurals realised in all conjunctions. They vary depending on the "content" field, & their role is to build links in the development of the field. The commonest are additive "and", & temporal e.g. "then" "after."

topical Themes:

identify aspects of the "content" field e.g. "his feathers", "Emily."

THE interpersonal Themes:

primarily teacher use of (i) WH interrogatives "which", "what", in "what is this?" & (ii) finites e.g. "do" in "do you know?"

Transitivity

choices: processes vary depending on the "content" field, but may include:

identifying: "this is the inside of the egg"

attributive: "he's all wet"

material: "he went along into a take away food shop"

cognition: "I think she wears white stockings"

perception: "see the peaked the cap."

principal participants identify aspects of the "content" field e.g. "the uniform", "the hen", "my lunch."

secondary participants &/or circumstances also identify aspects of the "content" field.

Conversation

"CONTENT" structure: teacher DK1 moves to guide talk:

"what sort of creature is this little creature here?"

teacher K1 moves to provide information:

"this is a green jacket"

teacher A2 moves to direct activity:

"now let's look at the train driver's uniform."

student K2 moves to respond to teacher DK1 moves, or less commonly, to elicit information:

"a hen"

student K1 moves to provide information:

"there was paper in my bread once"

student use of [A1: NV] moves as part of the expectation for a silent response to teacher directions

TASK SPECIFICATION: shorter than the Task Orientation

<u>"opening"; pedagogical register is foregrounded</u>

LANGUAGE

teacher monologue

Theme choices: textual Themes:

continuatives point directions &/or link to previous activities e.g. "now", "right", "well"

topical Themes: (i) may identify class members as part of operationalising activity e.g. "we", "you", "I",

but also (ii) may identify aspects of the "content" or the task as marked Themes, realised in an

an embedded clause in particular, though sometimes a dependent clause or a circumstance

may be involved:

"now [[what I want you people to think about ]] is something coming along and taking your lunch"

PREPARATORY Transitivity

choices: processes to operationalise activity may include:

behavioural: "get these brains working"

cognition: "now remember what we said before when we

looked at other uniforms and wrote reports about them"

attributive: "you have to be responsible for what you're thinking"

identifying: "what you have to do is this"

material: "I'll want you to paste them into your scrapbook in the correct order"

Conversation

structure: particularly:

(i) teacher A2 moves to direct activities:

" now what I want you people to think about is something coming along

and taking your lunch, or something happening to your lunch so that you couldn't eat it"

TO but also:

(ii) some teacher K2 moves to guide activities in a speculative way:

"right, who's got something in their head that they're going to write about?"

and also:

(iii) some teacher K1 moves provide information intended to guide or stimulate activitiy:

"oh I can see some eyes popping"

and sometimes:

(iv) teacher DK1 moves to guide directions taken:

"what have you got to do?"

THE

"body": pedagogical & "content" registers converge

dialogue, but little student contribution

Theme choices: textual Themes:

structurals used to link steps in the task, realised in several types of conjunctions, but most commonly additives, "and" and some temporals, e.g. "then", "after"

topical Themes:

identify (i) class members, "you", &

(ii) aspects of the task, e.g. "that" in "that's your problem", or "this" in "this is your last picture here"

interpersonal Themes:

primarily teacher WH interrogatives, e.g. "which", in "which is the first picture?"

ACTIVITY Transitivity choices:

processes mainly relevant to defining the task for writing may be:

cognition: "what do we have to remember to write about?"

material: "one day you found you didn't have any lunch"

OF verbal: "that tells you something"

behavioural: "write about how the chicken hatched"

identifying: "this is your last picture here."

principal participants identify either aspects of the "content" for writing or of the task for writing, e.g. "this" in "this is your last picture", " a dog" in "a dog came into the school".

secondary participants &/or circumstances also realise aspects of the task or the "content" field.

Conversation

structure: mostly (i) teacher A2 moves to direct activity:

"you can number each little picture if you like"

but (ii) some teacher K1 moves to provide information relevant to the task:

"you can choose any one you like: the policeman's, the train driver's, the nurse's, or the one from the Home Pride Bakery"

and (iii) some limited teacher use of DK1 moves:

"now what do we have to remember to write about?"

WRITING

student A1 moves to establish actions to be taken:

"paste it"

student K1 moves to offer information:

"the two top ones are"

student K2 moves to respond to teacher DK1 moves or, very rarely, to elicit information:

"I know."

TASK: the shortest element in the structure

LANGUAGE pedagogical register is foregrounded

teacher monologue

Theme choices: textual Theme:

continuatives point to action e.g. "now"

topical Themes: may identify students "you", but may be realised in an

DIRECTING imperative, directing action, e.g. "see"

Transitivity

choices: processes: may establish the task or build action or establish someting of what the children are to think as they start to write:

circumstantial attributive: "it's on the board there"

ACTIVITY material: "will you hop back to your seats please?"

possessive attributive: "who's got something in their head?"

principal participants identify class members, "you."

secondary participants &/or circumstances identify aspects of the task e.g. "on the board" in "it's on the board there".

OF Conversation

structure: either (i) a teacher A2 move to direct activity:

"you can have your other spelling sheets besides you and your folder"

or (ii) a teacher K1 move to provide information to stimulate activity:

"oh I can see some eyes popping"

WRITING

In Table 8.13 we bring together our analyses in terms of THEME, TRANSITIVITY and CONVERSATION STRUCTURE, showing how these all operate to realise the pedagogical and "content" registers, and how these in turn realise the principal elements of schematic structure. For the purposes of such a summary we have considered only the obligatory particulate elements, leaving aside both the other optional particulate elements and the Control elements.

Thus, all elements start in teacher monologue. The opening of the TO is marked by the teacher's use of continuatives to forward action and to point directions, while her choices of topical Themes tend to identify class members, who are being alerted that it is their behaviour she is operationalising. The teacher's choices of transitivity processes tend to be behavioural, or material or sometimes processes of perception, all of them involved in operationalising activity. The principal participants associated with these transitivity processes are class members - operating in topical Theme position in fact, as just noted. It is the pedagogical register, in other words, which is being foregrounded. To the extent that the "content" finds any expression at this point, it will be realised in either a circumstance or a range. In terms of conversation structure the teacher uses either K1 moves or A2 moves to direct and guide the children's behaviour at this stage.

The entry to the "body" of the TO is marked by an entry to dialogue, frequenty signalled by a teacher use of an interpersonal Theme realised in a WH interrogative. The teacher's use of continuatives tends to decline, while structural Themes realised through conjunctions in particular become more frequent. The nature of these varies, depending upon the "content" being dealt with, though additive and temporal conjunctions in textual Theme position are very common. All process types will probably be found in the "body" of the TO, though those which dominate will depend upon the "content" field in question. Where uniforms, their characteristics

and the activities of those who wear them are at issue, the processes tend to be either attributive or material. Where lost school lunches are involved, the processes tend to be material. Where chickens and hens, their actions and their characteristics are at issue, the process types tend to be both material and attributive. The participants associated with these processes realise aspects of the "content" field. Some processes to do with direction of the children's behaviour may continue to operate, the commonest being behavioural, processes of perception and material processes. Where these are found, the principal participants identify class members.

With respect to conversation structure in the "body" of the TO, the DK1^ K2^ K1 exchange will often occur, though as we have noted, quite often the teacher does not take up the K1 option here. Teacher uses of DK1 moves are quite frequent in this part of the genre, while the children's moves are normally either K2 or K1. Our analysis has suggested something of the features that will apply where the teacher is keen to promote genuine negotiation of knowledge so that the children participate in the shaping of new information. Thus, the teacher's use of DK1 moves will decline and the children will have enhanced opportunity to take up both K2 moves designed to elicit information, and K1 moves designed to proffer information which is accepted and woven into the ongoing development of the lesson.

Turning to the TS element, this is again initiated in teacher monologue, and again the teacher tends to select continuatives in textual Theme positions to forward directions. It is the pedagogical register that is being foregrounded again at this point. Topical Themes again often identify class members, as part of reminding the children that their behaviour is being guided. However, quite often marked topical Themes appear in the "opening" of the TS, realised through either a dependent clause, an embedded clause or a circumstance. Where such marked topical Themes occur, they serve

to highlight and/or summarise some aspects of what has been accomplished in the previous element as a basis for proceeding forward into the "body" of the element. Where such marked topical Themes occur, they are often used in association with an identifying process, used to help identify a task to be done by the children. Processes more directly involved in guiding the children's behaviour include behavioural and material processes, though at this point there may also be mental processes of cognition, to do with the thinking in which the children are to engage. In terms of conversation structure, the teacher uses either K1 or A2 moves in the "opening" of the TS.

The move to the "body" of the element is again normally signalled with a teacher use of a WH interrogative. It is in the "body" that some convergence of the two registers occurs. Textual Themes in the "body" of the element are structurals, realised in additive and temporal conjunctions, though they may also include for example, causal or contrastive conjunctions, involved in building possibilities in "content" for writing. Process types normally include some behavioural processes, to do with defining the task of writing, though there may also be material or cognition processes. The treatment of the task of writing itself is very general, especially with respect to the linguistic choices to be made in creating a written genre, so that though some processes relate to the task of writing, a number in the "body" of the TS also realise aspects of the "content" for writing. The teacher makes use of some DK1 moves, though their number declines in this element. Instead, she uses A2 moves and occasionally A1 moves, as well as K1 moves. The children make less contribution in this part of the genre, and such contributions as they do offer are mainly K2 moves as well as some K1 moves.

The final T element is the shortest element in the schematic structure, sometimes involving the production of only one clause by the teacher. The language is at this point closest to action, and it is

the pedagogical register which is involved. The children normally make no verbal contribution to this element. A teacher's textual Theme realised in a continuative often starts the element. Quite frequently, an imperative occupying topical Theme position directs the children to action. The process types involved will be either material, directing the children to move, or identifying, used to identify the task for writing. The element is accompanied by a marked change in the physical disposition of the participants. The conversation structure normally involves an A2 move or moves from the teacher, and the children have an [A1: NV] move.

In general, teacher and children spend most time talking in the first element of the schematic structure, and it is the "content" field which finds most explicit realisation in the text overall. However, the manner of treatment of the "content" is badly compromised because of the operation of those ideologies of childhood and of school knowledge which we reviewed in detail in chapter 4, and which we have argued throughout this study operate in early childhood literacy education. Their effect has been to produce a generation of teachers who are deskilled in terms of having an understanding of the intimate relationship between a "content" and the linguistics patterns in which it is realised.

With the movement towards the task of writing, a mode shift characteristic of the use of language for action in fact occurs. That is to say, the language becomes increasingly itself a part of action and not an instrument of reflection, as it is especially in the TO element. The dilemma from an educational point of view, however, is that at the very point at which teacher and children need to address explicitly the particular demands of the written mode and of the nature of the written genre to be produced, the understandings with respect to these matters become implicit. Hence we would suggest following Bernstein (see chapter 1, section 1.2) an invisible pedagogy comes to operate. The children are left to deduce as best they can

what they must do in writing, drawing both from the context of situation and from whatever prior knowledge they bring to the task from elsewhere. In chapter 9 we shall now take up some consideration of the actual written texts produced by the children.

# 9 The children's writing

## 9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we complete our study by reporting on aspects of the writing produced by the children who were the subject of the enquiry. As we stated in chapter 2 (sections 2.1 and 2.2), the original interest in undertaking this study developed out of the concern to understand how the written texts produced by young children are generated. We have noted elsewhere (1987d) that it became clear very early in the study that one could not make any useful observations about the nature of early writing development without understanding the very intimate relationship of the texts produced to the contexts in which they were generated. Hence, as our earlier chapters have now demonstrated at some length, the primary area of focus for this study became the spoken text - the curriculum genre - in which the writing tasks were shaped. Moreover, our general observations about what we have learned of two types of curriculum genre - the morning news genre and the writing planning genre - have caused us to develop perspectives which we would argue have taken the interest here beyond a concern for writing development, and have widened the scope and theoretical significance of this study in at least two important ways. Firstly, we have sought to make a theoretical contribution to the general understanding of genres as ways of undertaking socially valued activities and of achieving important goals. Secondly, through making such a contribution, we have sought to use the study to illuminate much of the present ideology of early childhood literacy education which is implicit in curriculum genres of the kind examined.

In turning now to our general conclusions about young children's writing development, we shall argue that what children produce in written language is very much a matter of what they have been given opportunity to learn to do. That is to say, their grasp of features of the written mode, like their choices of what constitute appropriate genres for writing, depend very heavily upon the types of written language to which they have had exposure, and - of related importance - upon the types of genres which the teacher herself appears to endorse. These general principles apply with equal force, we would argue, in any classroom.

In this chapter we shall concentrate primarily upon the written genres produced by the children as a consequence of participation in instances of the morning news genre and the writing planning genre. The former genre we have considered in chapter 3, while we have considered the latter in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8. We shall, in addition, however, have a little to say of the impact on the children's writing of certain other aspects of their language program, particularly their reading program.

For reasons discussed at length in chapter 4 (sections 4.2 and 4.3 in particular), the contemporary early childhood literacy program appears to value the building of literacy by working with fields of children's personal experience, and by initiating children into reading and writing speech about that personal experience. Hence it is that the genres offered to children in what they first learn to read tend to recall aspects of personal experience and they also tend to be genres of speech, or at least they are very "speech-like" in character. Hence too, the first genres children are encouraged to write frequently both draw upon the fields of personal experience and are very "speech-like" in character as well. Thus, in section 9.2, where we shall discuss the impact on the writing of the children in this study of their initial reading program and their morning news activity, we shall seek to demonstrate that both were of great importance in offering to the children potential models for writing.

We shall suggest, however, that it is doubtful whether the teachers themselves were conscious of these matters, because teachers are currently rather insensitive to the ways in which linguistic patternings work to realise different types of meanings. Language is in fact part of the "invisible" pedagogy of schooling.

In sections 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 we shall go on to consider the types of writing produced by the children in each of our three instances of the writing planning genre. Section 9.3 will summarise some observations made in earlier chapters concerning the instances of the writing planning genre we have examined, while Sections 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 will take up some examples of writing done by the children in each of Texts A, B and C. As our detailed analyses in chapters 6, 7 and 8 have sought to demonstrate, in all three instances of the writing planning genre the actual opportunity afforded the children to examine the nature of their writing tasks was poor. That, we have argued, was not because of any indifference on the part of the teachers, but rather because of their own very rudimentary grasp both of what was involved in writing of the "content" fields with which they were working, and of what learning to write actually requires. Teacher education has much to answer for in this respect, as has the associated and well established tendency to encourage teachers to leave children to work out much of what they must write themselves. We need a tradition of teacher education which engages teachers in proper study of an educational linguistics, and which enjoins them to make explicitly available to their students much about the types of linguistic choices they must learn in order to be successful writers. The more conscious they can be themselves of the kinds of things people do in language, and of the very intimate relationship of language and "content", the better will be a coming generation of teachers. The better too, will be the educational opportunity we can eventually afford all our children.

In undertaking our analyses here, we shall not develop our discussions of the writing done by the children with anything like the degree of linguistic detail we have employed in examining our instances of the curriculum genres in earlier chapters. To attempt such a detailed analysis would not be possible within the confines of the one study. What we shall have to say of the linguistic organisation of the texts examined will, however, be sufficient, we believe, to support the general claims we shall wish to make. In addition we should note that we shall select relatively limited samples from the types of genres the children produced over the study. It will be recalled that we noted in chapter 2 (section 2.3) we did in fact collect all the writing done by the children over the years of the study. Any samples we do select for close discussion are therefore drawn from a large data base, and they are quite representative of the total body of texts involved.

Overall in this chapter then, we aim to do the following:

1) To consider the types of writing produced in response to the reading program and the morning new genre, including labelling genres, observation genres and recounts. We shall argue that both educational activities offered the children potential models for writing.

2) To consider the nature of the written texts produced in response to each of our three instance of the writing planning genre. The general poverty of the texts

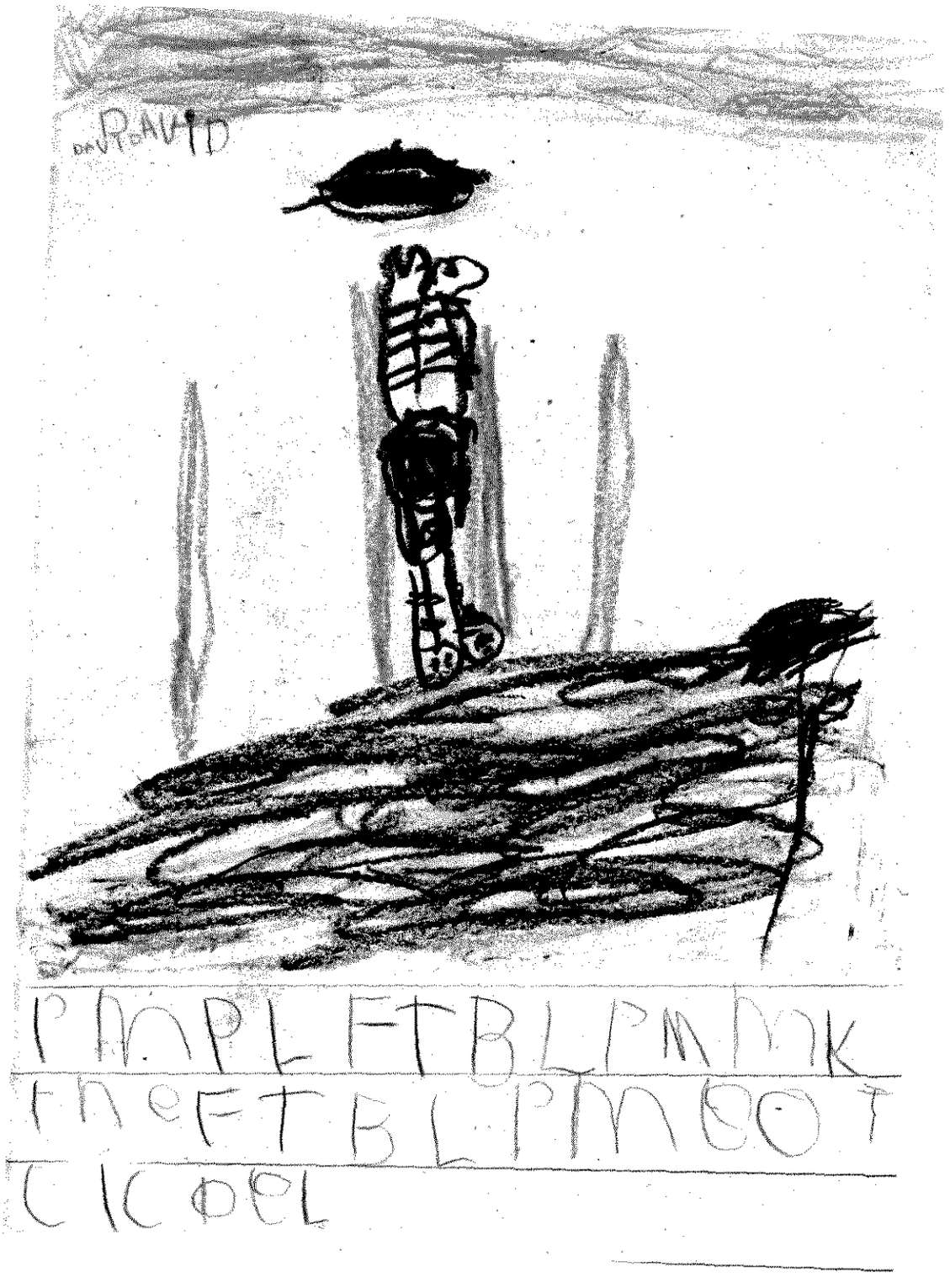
produced, we shall suggest, may be directly attributed to the general poverty of the teacher's advice re the writing.

3) To argue the value to teachers of the study of an educational linguistics. Such a study should teach a conscious awareness of the nature of language, and of the manner in which linguistic resources are deployed to create different types of meaning.

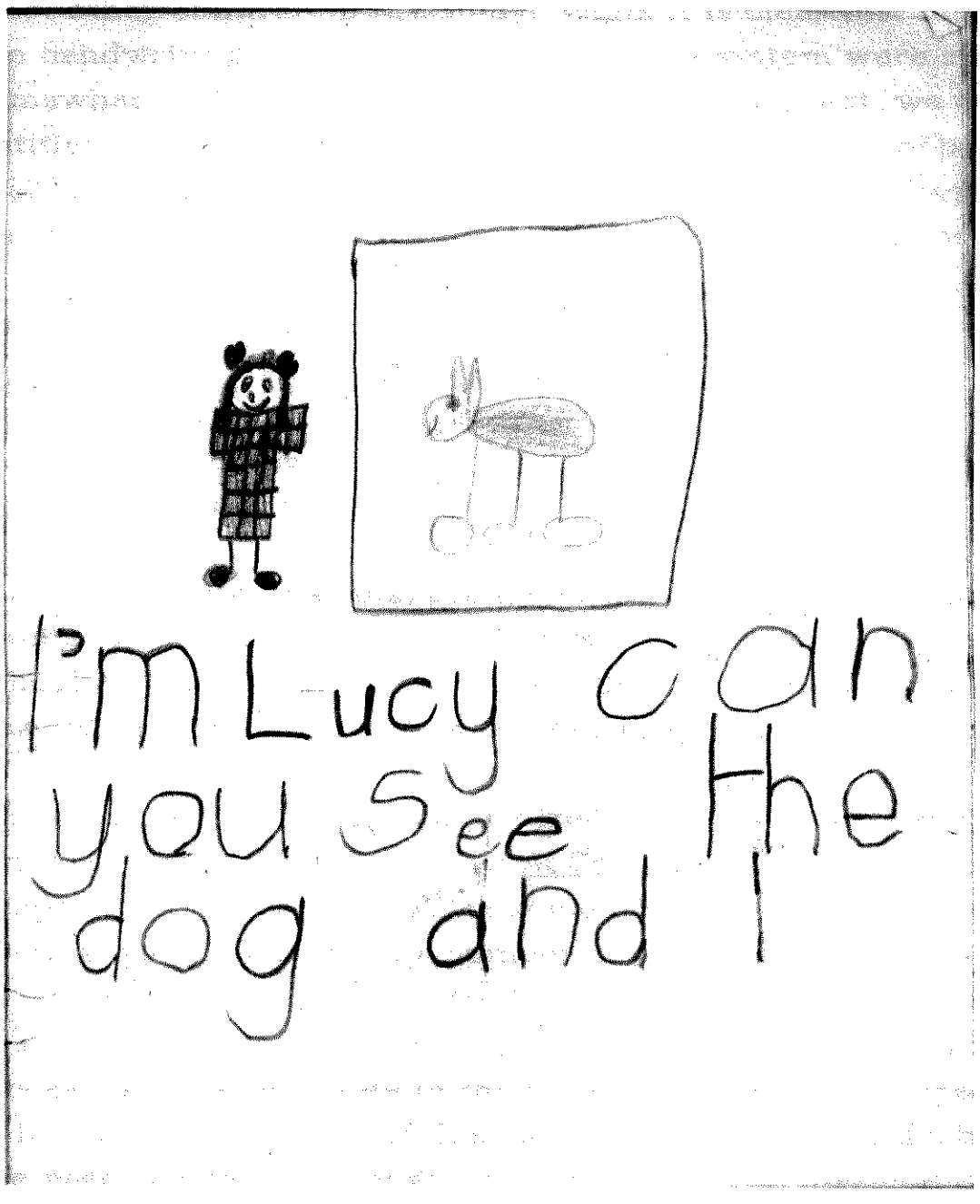
4) To argue the wisdom of developing teaching patterns which promote a much greater degree of metalinguistic awareness in young writers than is currently the case.Young children are capable of undertaking much more demanding examination of language than much contemporary teaching practice often acknowledges. As programs become more demanding, so too, the ideologies of early childhood literacy education should change for the better as well.

## 9.2 The impact on the children's early writing development of the initial reading program and the morning news genre

Since we intend to say rather more about the impact of the morning news genre on children's writing than we do about that of the initial reading program we shall deal with the latter first, leaving us free to go on to deal with other matters rather more fully. As we indicated when we offered a brief discussion of the initial reading program at Normanbury in chapter 4 (section 4.4) the program owed much to the model of the Mt Gravatt Developmental Language Reading Program (Hart and Gray, 1977; Hart, Gray, Walker and Walker, 1977). Like the latter program it employed language which research had suggested was familiarly part of the experience of children's spoken language, and it sought to introduce children to reading such patterns through much judicious repetition. The series of readers were by no means the only books read with the children. On the contrary, from the earliest days of schooling, the children regularly had other books read to them, though most of these were various types of narratives, so that little in the way of factual genres was read to them. The initial reading scheme served to provide the children with basic reading materials which became the first things most of the children could read. At the end of the preparatory year and in the early months of year 1, when the researcher had started to record the patterns of classroom talk, it became apparent that where the children were writing texts with some degree of independence of their teachers, they produced one of two possible types of genre. They were the labelling genre (Martin, 1984e), which was initially the commoner of the two, and the observation genre (Rothery, 1984; Christie and Rothery, 1989), which became more frequent once the children had entered year 1.




Text 9.1




Text 9.2

Texts 9.1 and 9.2 are both instances of labelling genres. The former was produced by a child called David while in the preparatory year (Christie, 1983). In fact David was one of the most advanced writers in the preparatory year, able to produce texts of this sort ahead of most other children in the study. While it is clear that his grasp of the handwriting system and of the spelling system were still somewhat rudimentary at the time he wrote the text, we are also entitled to argue that he had a good developing sense of both, and that he was writing what was identifiably an instance of written English. David's text, with the spelling corrected reads as follows:

> I'm playing football
> I'm marking the football*
> I'm going to kick a goal
> * for the uninitiated, "marking" is a technical
> term in Australian Rules Football

Lucy, who wrote Text 9.2, produced this text in year 1 when she had been at school one month in what was thus her second year of schooling. Her handwriting and spelling are considerably better than David's. In fact, her text was written some six months after Text 9.1.

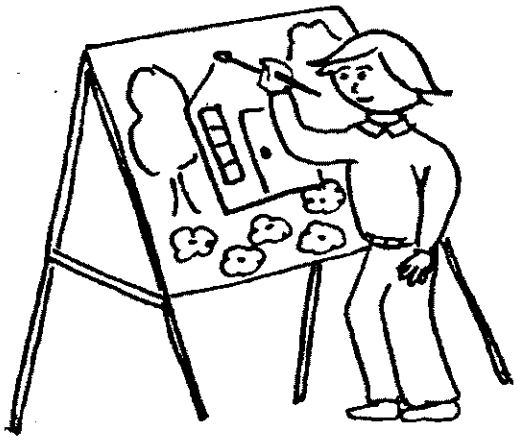
The model for such texts came directly from the little reader the children had been given, called <u>At School</u>, which they received in the preparatory year, and to which some occasional reference was still made in year 1. This had a number of pictures of girls and boys at school doing different activities such as sitting in school chairs, drawing, cutting out, reading and building houses with building blocks. The second page in the book left a large blank space for the children to do pictures of themselves, and written at the bottom of the page was the following:

> I'm at school.
> Can you see me?

I've got a paintbrush.

Look at me.

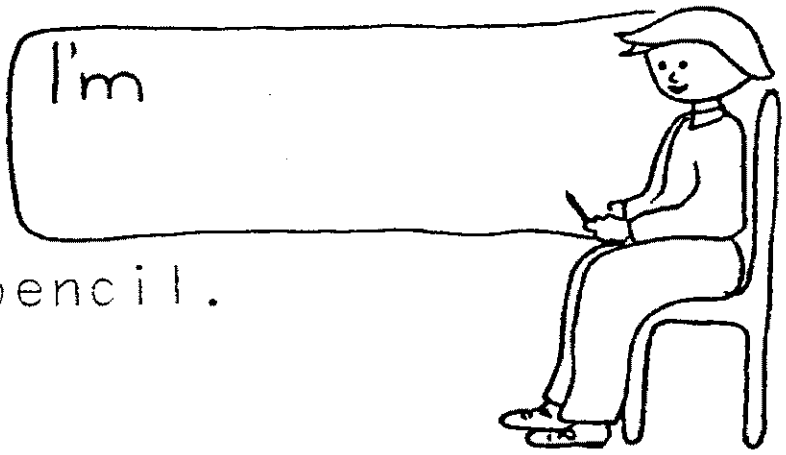
I'm painting a picture.



I've got a pencil.

Look at me.

I'm writing my name.




I've got a book.

Look at me.

I'm reading my book.



Text 9.1 : A page from the Initial Reading Program at Normanbury

Figure 9.1 reproduces one page from the subsequent pages in the book.

A labelling genre is characterised by the fact not only that it accompanies a picture of some kind, but that it makes specific reference to the picture. In both Texts 9.1 and 9.2, the writers employ referential items to refer to features of the pictures. In David's case, he refers to himself, "I", while Lucy refers both to herself "I", and to "the dog". In point of fact, all the readers in the initial reading scheme at Normanbury made frequent use of Labelling genres. They were employed because the principal of the school, who had prepared the books, believed firstly, that it was appropriate to select language like the speech the children used, and secondly, that the pictures provided something about which to construct a text.

Labelling genres are not uniquely genres of early childhood literacy, since they may be found in a number of contexts in adult life. Textbooks, travel brochures explaining places of interest to visit, and leaflets describing gadgets of various kinds are some obvious examples. Martin and Rothery's study (Martin, 1984e) did show that in early primary school years in Sydney such genres were quite common, and the present writer can affirm that they are found in many schools in Geelong apart from the one in which this study was conducted. Where such genres are found as a feature of early literacy programs, the fields upon which such genres draw are those of personal experience. Typically, as was true in the writing program at Normanbury, the teacher invited the children to "draw a picture" - normally of some aspect of themselves and their lives, and to "write me a story about it".

What the children produced in such a situation was of course never a story. Even if such young children were capable of producing a story in writing, we would suggest that the invitation to do a picture first, does in fact dispose the children towards selecting the more usual

type of genre associated with a picture - namely the labelling genre. This will be particularly the case, furthermore, where the written genre most familiar to the children from the model of their reading program is in fact a labelling genre. In fact, like many young children in the first years of schooling, the children in this study were in general keen to learn to write and read. Encouraged to begin writing by their teachers, they chose, not surprisingly, the models of written language first available to them in their reading program.

Early literacy programs need not necessarily operate in this manner. Schools using the Breakthrough to Literacy Programme, for example, which emerged from the Nuffield / Schools Council Programme that Halliday directed, and to which reference was made in chapters 1 (section 1.3) and 4 (section 4.2) would actually involve children in taking their first steps in becoming literate in rather different ways. It would be interesting to investigate the first types of written genres children produced in a literacy program using Breakthrough to Literacy, and compare them with those found in this study. Whatever one found, we may predict with confidence that such genres would be themselves a conseqeunce of the curriculum genres involved, and of the types of written genres which the associated learning activities disposed them to learn. This brings us to some consideration of the other type of written genre found in the children's first writing.

The other type of written genre that began to emerge when the children were in the early months of year 1 in particular was a rather rudimentary version of the observation genre, to which we have already made passing reference above. Observation genres were first identified by Martin and Rothery (1980, 1981; Rothery, 1984), though the original descriptions of such genres have been somewhat amended by Elms (1988) and Kamler (in preparation) who have looked closely at early childhood literacy programs and by Plum (1988), who looked at adults constructing in the spoken mode various "story-like" genres of personal experience.

In a recent discussion of the ways a written observation genre may be identified, Christie and Rothery have said:

> An observation offers the reader some simple reconstruction of experience, and in its complete or mature form, it also offers some sense of the writer's evaluation of the significance of the experience. (Christie & Rothery, 1989, 58)

An example of a written observation genre Christie and Rothery cite (ibid, 59), which is taken from the research of Kamler (in preparation), and written by a child aged six years, is shown here as Text 9.3, with its principal elements of schematic structure indicated.

Text 9.3: an observation genre

| | |
|---|---|
| **Orientation:** | On the weekend my family got a Christmas tree. |
| **Event:** | We are not going to get the Christmas decorations yet. |
| | We have not got it in my house. |
| **Comment:** | It is very very very little. |
| **Description:** | |
| **characteristic:** | It has the same pot that we have at home. |
| **Comment:** | It is prickly. |
| **Description:** | |
| **appearance:** | It has not got a fairy on top of it. Instead it has got a ring on top of it and it has got a bell in the ring. |

The principal elements found in a mature example of the observation genre appear to be Orientation, Event(s), and/or Description(s), and Comment(s). The Orientation serves to establish some sense of temporal and/or spatial setting for what is written, and it very frequently starts with a marked topical Theme realised in a temporal circumstance, as is true in Text 9.3 ("on the weekend"). It will also build Events which typically build aspects of activities in which the writer has engaged, so that these are in particular characterised by

material processes ("my family got a Christmas tree"). Descriptions build some descriptive information about the matters involved in the Event elements, and they characteristically are realised in attributive processes ("it has not got a fairy on top of it"). Comments build something of the writer's evaluation of aspects of the significance of the events dealt with. These may be realised in several possible types of linguistic choices. For example, in "it is very very very little", the repetitive use of "very" is an instance of the writer's use of modality to suggest something of her judgment about the significance of the tree of which she writes.

In the study under discussion, the children for many months tended to produce texts which involved either Event or Description, and only very occasionally did they produce texts involving any Comment element. When originally attempting to describe the early genres the children produced, the writer (e.g.1983, 1987d) tended to term them observation genres and sometimes observation/comment genres (where a Comment element was involved), following categories originally proposed by Martin and Rothery (1980, 1981; Rothery, 1984). More recently, and in the light in particular of the work of Elms (1988) and Kamler (in preparation), she would amend her description, regarding them as incomplete or perhaps immature instances of the observation genre, where Text 9.3 may be regarded as an instance of a mature observation. Examples of immature observation genres, drawn from the data of the children's writing in the first few months of year 1 included the following:

Text 9.4

Event: Me and my buthar went to the beach

Event: We went swimming I rod(e) my sofbode (surfboard)

Text 9.5

Event: I got a new dress and new rib(b)ons on Saturday

Description: It is blue

Very occasionally a child wrote texts such as Texts 9.6 and 9.7.

Text 9.6

Description: Popcorn is delicious yummy and crunchy

Text 9.7

Event: I went swimming in the pool with Dean

Comment: I like the pool.

We would term these immature instances of the observation genre because they contain only some elements otherwise found in the mature instance. Thus Text 9.4 consists of two Event elements, both realised in particular in the choices of three material processes ("went", "went swimming", "rode") Text 9.5 involves an Event element realised in a choice of a material process ("got") and a Description element, realised in an attributive process ("is"). Texts 9.6 and 9.7 involve Comment elements, realised in linguistic items which build attitudinal expression. In the case of Text 9.6 this occurs in an Attribute "delicious yummy and crunchy", while in the case of Text 9.7, this occurs in a choice of a process of affect - "like".

Such texts had begun to appear in the writing of a few children by the end of the preparatory year, and they became increasingly common among larger numbers of the children in the first few months of year 1. The model for these might not be found in the reading program, as the researcher soon realised. Thus it was that the researcher looked with renewed interest to the activities of the morning news activity which was always the first activity for the day, and which was normally followed by a writing activity. In the first weeks of year 1, when Mrs L and Mrs B were teaching the children in two different classes, they began writing in their unlined "scrapbooks" as they were called and in their journals. Close observation of the matter revealed that the children tended to write the same types of genres in either the journal or the "scrapbook"

unless the teacher sought to direct the children to write in some other way, as in the three instances of the writing planning genre we have looked at in detail in chapters 5 to 8. Furthermore, careful thinking about the implications of what happened in the morning news genre led the researcher to the conclusion that in writing as they did, the children modelled what they wrote upon the models of spoken language they used in morning news giving. They did this partly because the activity did provide a context for rehearsing possible linguistic models for "narrating about personal experience", to return to a notion of Halliday's, cited in chapter 3 (section 3.3) and partly because the teacher's very behaviour in the morning news genre indicated her general approval of such linguistic models. Michaels, (1980) in the American context has also observed the significance of "sharing time" as a context in which young children practise some of what she sees as the narratives valued as part of school experience.

When the children wrote early in year 1, then, what they wrote involved primarily the building of event, where sometimes this was associated with an element which involved description as well. Less commonly, they offered some evaluative comment. We might have chosen to describe the various texts collected as instances of Event and Description genres, while a text such as Text 9.6 might have been termed a Comment (Christie, 1984b). However, for reasons we have explained above, we have decided against such a categorisation on the grounds of the very brief and rudimentary nature of the texts involved. As we believe Elms (1988) and Kamler (in preparation) have shown, once children have developed sufficiently to write texts of more than one or two clauses in length - all of them drawing upon the fields of personal experiences, as contemporary childhood literacy education appears to require - they will construct texts representing genres which involve elements of Event, Description and Comment, at least. Many will in addition have an Orientation element to start them. As Kamler is seeking to demonstrate, one

indication of a developing control of the written mode and of the demands in particular of a written observation genre, is the young writer's emergent control of an orientating element of some kind.

If we return for the moment to the instances of the morning news genre we examined in chapter 3, we argued among other matters that sometimes a teacher such as Mrs B (section 3.3) involves the child in the morning news giving role in what we termed an interview, itself embedded in the Morning News Giving element. In such a genre the child is required to offer statements about experience. Some of these, we believe, offer opportunity for rehearsal of possible Event elements, while others involve rehearsal of possible Description elements. Examples taken from our own data (Christie, 1987d) include the following:

> I went to my nanna's on Saturday.
> My dad gave me a new book.
> We're going fishing on Saturday.
> I got a new dress at the markets. It's blue.

What is of interest to note is that where children are encouraged to produce these sorts of statements in an interview genre, it is the teacher who offers evaluative response:

> Did you? That's nice. What did you do?
> Oh that's good. Did you bring it to show us?
> Oh I hope you're lucky and catch a fish.
> I like the colour blue.

In fact, the only teacher in our study who did not involve the children fairly regularly in interview genres was Mrs L, two of whose students we examined in giving morning news in considerable detail in chapter 3 (sections 3.5- 3.5.12). (Even she, by the way, did sometimes build interview genres, normally with children who

experienced some difficulty in talking at any length. ) We would suggest that where there is a frequent use of a teacher/pupil interaction in which it is the children who offer statements of personal experience while it is the adult who offers evaluative comment, then this in itself establishes a particular predisposition in the children in their language use, having consequences for their writing. Such is the value attaching to the teacher's authority in the interview genre that the children learn to recognise both the sorts of fields for writing that the teacher values and the types of generic choices she appears to endorse. What she appears to endorse in the children is the production of texts which create events or descriptions. What she appears to leave to herself to do in language is the production of evaluation or comment about the events or descriptions. It is this we suggest, which explains the fact that when the children in this study commenced writing, they mainly produced texts of the kind found in Texts 9.4 and 9.5. Texts such as Text 9.10 were never very common, though once the children in Mrs L's grade in particular proceeded into their year 1 experience with her, Comment elements did become more frequent features of what they wrote.

In chapter 3, when we examined the embedded genres found in the morning new genre, we saw Susy (section 3.5.12) give a successful instance of the show and tell genre. The expectation there, as we saw, is that the Shower and Teller display objects and talk about these, responding in addition to any questions about them. The activity involved thus tends to lead to the production of a great deal of description. Susy, for example produced the following:

my sister's got a little pet
it's got a stripey tail,

both of them involving uses of possessive attributive processes which help build description. To be sure, the show and tell activity also involves uses of other processes, especially material ones, as in:

> he sucks its thumbs with both fingers,

though as we discussed the matter in chapter 3, (section 3.5.12) we see this as offering commentary upon the object being handled, rather than building action of the kind found in a more "narrative-like" genre. The building of commentary in this sense also disposes the young writer to the production of observation genres.

Overall, show and tell genres conventionally involve children in rehearsing models of language use which may be used in writing as well. Like the patterns rehearsed in an interview, the patterns of the show and tell tend to dispose young writers towards the production of written observation genres. This will be in particular the case because the teacher's general demeanour in the morning news genre, as well as her explicit use of evaluative statements, indicate to the children that she approves these kinds of linguistic choices in them.

In our examination of the morning news genre we saw one other type of embedded genre - namely the anecdote - which was produced by Aaron and Susy. (chapter 3, sections 3.5.6 and 3.5.12) We need now to consider the significance for the children's writing development of the production of such a genre in the morning news genre. The original description of an anecdote genre, already discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.5.6), came from the work of Plum (1988) and Rothery (in preparation). Such a genre, as Plum defined it, was one of a number of "narrative-type" genres found in the oral mode. It differs from the recount, originally identified by Martin and Rothery (1980, 1981; Rothery, 1984) when working on their first description of written genres because, unlike the latter, the anecdote introduces the narrator's reaction to the events reconstructed. A recount simply

recreates a sequence of events, and it sometimes has some element in which attitudinal expression about the events is provided. However, such expression does not in itself constitute a Reaction element as Plum has defined it, or as we saw it operating in both Aaron's and Susy's anecdotes in chapter 3.

An example of a recount, drawn from our data, is provided in Text 9.8, elements of schematic structure being indicated.

Text 9.8 a recount genre

| | |
|---|---|
| **Orientation:** | We went to Werribee Park last Wednesday |
| **Event:** | first we went in the mansion |
| **Comment:** | I lieckt the pots and the heds on the wall |
| **Event:** | we saw a stuft dog |
| **Comment:** | it lookte niece and flufy |
| **Event:** | nexst we went to see the gaden it was a mase I ran a rond |
| **Comment:** | then it was fun |
| **Events:** | then we had lunch |
| | then we saw the ha ha wall |
| | then we got on the bus |
| **Reorientation:** | we went back to school |

Recounts are characterised primarily by the fact that they reconstruct a sequence of events drawn from personal experience. They thus involve clauses in which a large number of material processes are employed to build activity ("we went in the mansion"), and they tend to make use of temporal conjunctions, building a strong sense of a temporal connection of events. As Martin and Rothery (1980, 1981; Rothery, 1984) have described the recount, such genres often begin with an Orientation, establishing persons ("we") in a place ("Werribee Park") and in time ("last Wednesday"). Attitudinal statements building Comment elements are not

uncommon, while there is often also a Reorientation, serving to relocate persons in space or time, and hence tending to "round things off" as the genre is brought to an end.

Recounts are a depressingly frequent an d familiar feature of much writing in schools. Martin and Rothery's study and one undertaken by Walton (1986) for example, have shown the frequency with which the recount appears in the writing program of the primary years. The writer herself continues to be advised by many teachers that once taught to recognise the recount, they have often realised it is the main genre that have asked their students to write throughout all the years of primary schooling. Recounts also occur in the secondary school. They appeared in the writing of the children in this study in mid year of their year 1 program, the time in fact when Text 9. 8 was produced.

Like Martin and Rothery, we have hitherto concluded that recounts are especially genres of the oral mode (e.g. Christie and Rothery, 1989). As such, we have concluded that their frequent appearance in the writing of children in schools is an instance of the manner in which the genres of talk are taken up in writing programs in which the children are afforded little opportunity to learn the many genres of written language. However, in the light of this study, now we have completed it, we find it necessary to amend somewhat our original judgment about recounts and their significance. We would now argue firstly that recounts are certainly very "speech-like" in character, in that they involve much temporally connected reconstruction of experience, and secondly, that the practice of much oral rehearsal of building personal experience in schools does prepare children for writing such genres. However, we suspect that among children at school at least, recounts are found more frequently in writing, while other "narrative-like" genres such as anecdotes are more commonly found in talk.

In fact, on the evidence of the close analysis we have done of instances of the morning news genre in this study, we find that it is the anecdote rather than the recount which is the genre most usually embedded in the Morning News Giving element. To be sure, it is worth reminding ourselves that in this study at least, "narrative-like" genres are in any case a less common feature of the Morning News Giving element than are other genres such as the interview or the show and tell. However, this having been noted, where such genres do occur, they appear to be instances of the anecdote rather than of the recount. The reason for this would seem to be that the narrator operating in the oral mode, as for the audience provided by the morning news activity, apparently feels some obligation to build reaction to the events reconstructed. It is this sense of reaction which gives what both narrator and listeners would regard as a "point" to the reconstruction. Certainly in the case of Aaron and Susy looked at in chapter 3, the other children laughed heartily at the Reaction elements in each instance of the anecdote, thus signalling that the significance or "point" had indeed been understood.

The recount by contrast, as we have seen, primarily builds reconstruction of events, where no particular event involves special reaction. It seems to us that capacity to produce a text representative of an anecdote, in which a Reaction is involved, is a matter of some skill in the young child anyway. Plum believes that the whole point of a successful anecdote is that the narrator relies on some culturally significant knowledge in the audience, to which at best only oblique reference is made in language. In the case of both our two instances of the anecdote, for example, the children involved relied on a knowledge in their audience of certain forms of behaviour required of them by adults, their parents in particular. It was the apparent flouting of these forms of behaviour which caused the amusement associated with the narrator's Reaction elements in each case.

To be able to write with some capacity for capturing an oblique sense of the significance of attitudes or values applying to some behaviour associated with any event is, we suggest, a matter of considerable skill. We would doubt, in fact, that children as young as those in this study could produce anecdotes in writing. The recount is really a simpler genre to handle for the purposes of writing. We certainly have no evidence of any anecdotes written by the children in this study, though recounts did appear while they were in year 1.

That the children learned to write recounts did, we believe, owe something to the influence of the morning news genre, and to the opportunity afforded there for children to rehearse the reconstruction of personal experience. That the children learned to write recounts is to be explained, in addition, by the fact that the early childhood literacy program in general values the reconstruction of personal experience. In other words, the written recount is in particular a genre relevant to fields of personal experience. Since contemporary literacy programs throughout the years of primary school attach the significance to personal experience which we have shown they do, we must conclude that it is this in particular which accounts for their frequent appearance in writing programs.

Thus far in this discussion, we have considered three genres that appeared in the writing of the children in this study, to some extent in the closing months of the preparatory year, but mainly appearing in the first six months of year 1. The genres are: labelling, observation and the recount. We have shown that the labelling genre was a response partly to the model of the initial reading program and partly to the teacher directive to "draw a picture" and "write me a story about it". The observation genre, like the recount, emerged because it was a genre appropriate for the fields of personal experience, and as we have seen, early literacy programs attach significance to the personal experience. As we have also seen, personal experience is of value in the morning news genre, so that

this became a context for rehearsing many of the linguistic patterns subsequently adopted for writing.

All three genres appeared in the "scrapbooks" in which the children were often asked to write or in the journals they were given in year 1 and which they used intermittently for most of that year. None of these genres was the subject of overt instruction on the part of the teachers. They were, on the evidence, nonetheless learned by the children as a necessary aspect of participating in the total early childhood education program, and of learning to handle the patterns of language the teachers quite unconsciously appeared to approve. Indeed, the linguistic patterns the children chose for writing were those that opportunity and circumstance disposed them to learn to use. In no sense might it be said that the children "created" these patterns for themselves, if by that we are asked to subscribe to the view that they generated them for themselves without recourse to models frequently made available to them by their teachers. The latter point seems particularly important to stress, since a number of influential writers talking of children learning to write (e.g. Graves,1983 ; Walshe 1981; Turbill, 1983; Cambourne and Turbill, 1987) have in fact made such suggestions.

Having now completed our discussion of the impact of the reading program and the morning news activity on the writing of the children in this study, we shall turn to some consideration of the writing done in our three chosen instances of the writing planning genre. We shall begin with some general considerations in section 9.3 before proceeding to examine the writing below in sections 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6.

## 9.3 Some general considerations with respect to the writing program

Before we commence our discussions of the writing produced in our three instances of the writing planning genre, it will be worth reiterating several points made earlier and worth bearing in mind as we proceed.

Firstly, then, one general observation needs to be made about the nature of the "content" field dealt with in each of Texts, A B and C. Even in the case of Text C, the "content" is reasonably "thin". In each lesson some learning activity has been selected, in one case devolving around the examination of several uniforms, in the other two devolving around selective use of two books, and it is these which are intended to allow the children entry to the "content" field about which they are to write. Each learning activity was selected by the teacher as an aspect of considering some curriculum "theme" of the kind we outlined in chapter 4, section 4.3. As we also saw in the same chapter, the topics selected as curriculum themes, while in some cases appearing to offer the possibility of useful learning activity, were nonetheless a somewhat arbitrary set of concerns overall. Furthermore, the reasons for their sequence, as well as for the amounts of time devoted to each, were often hard to see. In addition, when we discussed the manner in which the curriculum themes were actually used and learning activities developed in the so-called "integrated" curriculum of the lower primaray school, we saw that a series of lessons developed around a theme were in practice very loosely connected indeed. That, we suggested, was because the teachers lacked principled bases for planning a good sequence of lessons, such that there was a genuine growth of capacity to control a field or perhaps several related fields over a week, a month or a term. It was this problem that lay at the heart of their difficulties in coming to terms with the distinctions between commonsense and uncommonsense knowledge. The problem was

compounded by the general commitment to a view of early childhood, such that it was thought that young children should not be involved in things too "difficult" or "demanding", or even "not sufficiently child-like". Teacher education has as yet very few tools to give teachers with which to guide their curriculum planning more effectively, though we would hope that studies of this kind point some lessons worth taking up in the training of teachers in the future. Where the commitment to a "content" field is as poor as is that of the teachers involved here, they are unable themselves to help the children develop an awareness of that field. In consequence, the children really have very little knowledge of any substance about which to write.

The second general observation we would wish to make arising from our examination of our three instances of the writing planning genre is that no useful advice was given about a possible genre for writing - a matter to which we did allude above in section 9.1. In Text A, four little questions written on the board constituted the most explicit advice given, and they actually related rather more to the "content" field than to the pedagogical field. In Text B the basal reader selected for reading the children offered a linguistically poor model anyway, but the advice to the children concerning the actual writing was also poor. The advice given was at its strongest in terms of modelling possible sequences of events for writing. How these might themselves be transformed into the elements of a "story" remained not so clear. Finally, in Text C, the teacher did rather more in terms of opening up a "content" field with the children than either of her colleagues, and she did develop it sufficiently to make it clear that a scientific field was actually at issue. However, she actually confused the issue badly by proposing that the children write a "story", and by guiding at least some of the talk about chickens into the direction of anthropomorphising chickens in a manner reminiscent of many early children's reading books. The difficulty was further compounded by her handing out a sequence of illustrations to stimulate the writing

which suggested more of an interest in a scientific field than an imaginative one.

These general matters having been stated, we shall proceed to some discussion of the written texts produced as a consequence of participation in Text A.

## 9.4 Writing developed out of Text A

In that element of the schematic structure we have termed the TS or Task Specification of Text A, it will be recalled that the teacher prepared the children to start writing by saying to them:

> Now remember what we said before when we looked at other uniforms and wrote reports about them. Well, we're going to write about these uniforms today. You can choose any one you like: the policeman's, the train driver's, the nurse's, or the one from the Home Pride Bakery.

A little later, in the element we have termed the T or Task, the teacher referred to the questions to guide writing on the board:

> See. It's on the board there: "Who they are. What they wear. What it looks like. Why they wear it."

Above this series of questions was a heading "Uniforms", though the teacher did not read this out aloud.

The researcher was not in fact present for the previous lesson alluded to, though examination of the children's books revealed that the texts written in the earlier lesson had not in fact been reports. Three quite representative examples about a baker, a cleaner and a butcher, had read as follows:

Text 9: 9

I'm the baker. I'm wearing a chef's hat and a scarf and an apron and some jeans and a shirt.

Text 9: 10

I'm a cleaner. I'm wearing a scarf and an apron to clean the floor.

Text 9: 11

I'm a butcher. I'm wearing a tie and shirt and a jeans and a badge.

Their relationship to the questions as proposed by the teacher is in fact difficult to see and while they are of course extremely rudimentary texts, they would not qualify as "reports" as that term is normally understood.

The most complete and comprehensive description so far proposed of the types of written genres required in schooling, including reports, has been that provided by Martin and Rothery (1980,1981; Rothery, 1984, 1985), and by Eggins, Martin and Wignell (1987). In identifying what they term the report genre, Martin and Rothery (see Rothery, 1984) have argued that such genres fulfil a function of organising information of various kinds, in a manner which classifies or sometimes, as Martin (in press) has recently noted, in a manner which decomposes, by taking things apart. Reports begin by offering generalisation about experience, thereafter offering description. The opening element in such a genre Martin and Rothery term the General Classification, while subsequent elements are Descriptions of various kinds. The pattern of General Classification followed by Description may be recursive. One such report genre of a kind which

classifies, used in the Deakin University B.Ed. course Guide Writing in Schools (1989, 24), is set out in Text 9.12, with the elements of schematic structure shown.

Text 9.12 a report genre

**General**
**Classification:** Wombats are marsupials, the female wombat carries her baby in a pouch.
The wombats are noctur(n)al, they sleep at day not like we do.
There are two major species of wombats - the naked nose wombat which has short ear, coarse fur and hairless nose. The hairynosed wombat is silky with pointed ears.
**Description:**
**behaviour:** Wombats eat grass and they will eat any other soft food. Wombats are expert burrowers. Their stout legs are like spades. They lie on their sides to dig.
**Description:**
**appearance:** They can grow to thirty metres long.*
**Description:**
**behaviour:** Because of their great strength wombats can damage farmers' fences.
**Description:**
**characteristics:** The Queensland hairy-nose wombat are now extremely rare. Wombats are very shy creatures.
**Description:**
**behaviour:** They will attack at anything near their young ones. However, they chew up curtains and furnishings.
* The writer presumably meant 'three metres long'.

It would require a fairly detailed discussion here to establish the principal linguistic resources in which the schematic structure is realised, and since that is really beyond the scope of this study, we shall select a few matters only for comment. Firstly then, identifying, attributive and/or existential processes are typically used to build a General Classification. Text 9.10 builds its General Classification in one identifying process ("wombats are marsupials"), three attributive processes (e.g. "the wombats are nocturnal") and one existential process ("there are two major species of wombats"). Material processes will be used to build aspects of Description, as in "wombats eat grass".

Turning to Themes, these are characteristically mainly experiential. It is not a feature of report genres that they make extensive use of textual Themes. In fact, it is experiential Theme choices which become the main means by which the meanings of the text are carried forward. Text 9.10 does employ mainly experiential Themes (e.g. "wombats, "the female wombat", "the wombats", "they", "the naked-nosed wombat", "the hairy-nosed wombat").

Another characteristic of such a genre is that its reference is generic rather than specific. Again, this is a feature of Text 9.12: note the uses of "wombats", "the female wombat", and so on throughout the whole text. Finally, like other reports dealing with scientific fields, Text 9.12 uses the simple present tense, and it is written in the third person.

The principal characteristics of the report genre to which we have drawn attention as being exemplified in Text 9.12 are not, it will be observed, found in Texts 9.9, 9.10 and 9.11. Even allowing for the fact that Text 9.12 was written by a child some years older than the writers of Texts 9.9, 9.10 and 9.11, the latter do not have any characteristics associated with the report, many of which quite young children can easily master where the model available to them is clear.

Consider for example, Text 9.13, by a child in year 1, subject of a study of Elms (1988). This we would consider an incomplete report genre, since it shows several of the features of a report. The writer had been asked to "do some research about animals", and understood herself to be reporting on what she had found out.

Text 9.13 Incomplete report genre

| | |
|---|---|
| **Description: habitat:** | tigers live in the jungle |
| **Description: behaviour:** | they eat anything they can |
| **Description: behaviour:** | possums come out at night |
| | and they go back in the morning |
| **General Classification:** | there can be all kinds of kookaburras |
| **Observation:** | we feed blue winged kookaburras |
| **Description: appearance:** | ants are certainly small. They are |
| | nearly miscroscopic |

Our principal reason for declaring Text 9.13 to be an incomplete example of the report genre is that it lacks a strong sense of classifying phenomena, of the kind provided in the opening General Classification above in Text 9.12, though there is one instance of a General Classification within the text. It does, however, very successfully make use of generic reference rather than specific, and it does build Description of the animals considered. Our reasons for labelling the other elements as we have will be clear, we hope, in the light of our discussion above of Text 9.12, and we shall therefore devote no more space to it.

To return to Texts 9.9, 9.10 and 9.11, we shall observe that while the writer was not actually present when they were written, they were actually written using the model of a book the teacher had read to the children and displayed. Using the model, she and the children had also jointly constructed some other similar instances of written language. The book Mrs S had selected she had regarded as too

demanding for the children, so she had read from it, making most use of parts of the book in which the person holding a particular occupation employed the first person, like Zoe the domestic cleaner:

> I work in people's houses. There is plenty of this kind of work available so I only work for people I get along with.(Goldman, 1984,4)

The teacher had briefly considered several occupational groups - bakers, butchers and milkmen. She had introduced a series of large pictures of each of these taken from the library, and, basing what she did in part on the book used and in part on the kinds of language patterns found in the initial reading program, she had produced some samples texts, one of which read:

> I'm a baker. I wear a white hat and a white apron. I bake the bread.

Whatever the merits of such language as a model for writing, it plainly did not offer a good model of a report. In fact, we suggest that the first person choice necessarily disposed the young writer not to create a report, but rather to create a more "personal" piece in which, among other matters, the reference was specific, not generic. The teacher's choice of such a model for such a writing purpose reflected something of her own uncertainties over what a report was.

Turning now to the four focal questions used by the teacher to guide the writing, it is important to note the potential for serious confusions in writing invited by the teacher's own use of reference. Having written the heading "uniforms", she writes "who they are" immediately beneath it, so that there is a lapse in cohesion here, because "they" does not in fact refer to the uniforms. A similar confusion is later created by the question "what it looks like" following immediately upon the question "what they wear." Apart from these sorts of confusions, there are the problems created by the

practice of posing questions to guide writing. The adoption of the interrogative mood for asking a question necessarily invites an elliptical declarative response, as in the exchange actually found in the spoken discourse of Text A:

> why do people wear uniforms?
> tells who they are.

The latter response is of course quite normal in speech, but inappropriate in writing. In fact, the questions posed constituted perfectly legitimate questions for the spoken mode, and they were relevant to exploration of the "content" field, but they threw no light on the pedagogical field. Overall, given that a primary task for children as young as those in this study is to master the rudiments of the written mode, questions of the kind used by the teacher are quite unhelpful in suggesting possible models of the written language the children might produce.

Of the 25 children in the class, one of the most successful in dealing with the task was Aaron, a child already encountered in his role as Morning News Giver in chapter 3. He wrote Text 9.14.

> Text 9: 14
>
> Locomotive Driver.
> The locomotive driver wears badges, gray
> jaket, gray trousers, black tie and a hat.
> Most of the colors are gray. he wears it
> so he dosent (doesn't) get coal stains on
> his clothes.

We would deem this text reasonably successful on the grounds of its control of the demands of the written mode, in that, with one lapse, it is largely cohesive and appropriately context independent. There

is one problem in one use of a referential item - namely Aaron's use of "it" in the sentence reading "he wears it so he dosent get coal stains on his clothes". Aaron's use of "it" actually makes reference to the final question he had been given to guide his writing -"why they wear it"- but it does not, as it should, actually refer to something written in his own text. That such a problem crept into Aaron's writing was itself a direct consequence of the awkwardness of the question he had been given.

Text 9.14 is not a report since it does not classify information. It is probably best described as a description. It is interesting to note here that Plum (1988) in personal communication with the writer has suggested there is no such thing as a description genre. The various "narrative-like" genres Plum identifies, he would argue, all have a distinct schematic structure, shaped like all schematic structures as a kind of cultural artefact, and recognisably in use where different fields are involved. Description may itself be an element of several genres - certainly of the observation genre (Elms, 1988; Kamler, in preparation), as well as of the report, and of narratives - but it has no identifiable schematic structure of its own, Plum believes. Quite often, we would suggest, children do write descriptions, and we suggest this is often because no stronger sense of a genre appropriate to the "content" field is available to them.

In the circumstances, Aaron actually handled the writing task given him reasonably well. He responded to the experiential intent of the four questions correctly, and his text was more suitably cohesive and context independent than were those of most of the other children. One of his classmates, Cindy, wrote Text 9. 15, which is also a description, and it also has some problems.

Text 9.15

Nurses Aide
A nurses aide wear(s) a blue dress and a white cap and a badge and white shoes. She wears a unifore (uniform). So people know that she is a nurses aide she keeps clean.

As we can see, Cindy, like Aaron, was confused by the final question, and she has responded by answering it, perfectly appropriately were she required to speak, by using the conjunction "so" starting the sentence "so people know that she is a nurses aide". She probably meant to put a full stop after "aide", incidentally, and to create a separate sentence of "she keeps clean".

Looking over even these two examples, it is clear that both children relied very heavily in the linguistic choices they had made upon the model provided in the spoken talk preparatory to writing, and in the four questions given them by their teacher. Both for example chose the simple present tense, used quite consistently throughout the talk, as an aspect of building descriptions of the uniforms worn by the different occupational groups. Both selected the third person, used to some extent in the talk, and also suggested in the choice of person in the four questions. Finally, through different choices in deixis, both sought to use generic rather than specific reference, and to build some kind of general observations about the occupational groups chosen - "the locomotive driver" and "a nurses aide".

In Text 9.16 another child called Robert wrote a much less successful text, showing that he partly sought to write a description of Mr. P, the person who actually owned the policeman's uniform, and partly to write about why policemen in general wear uniforms.

Text 9.16

Policeman
Mr P. is a police man and he wears trousers
and a peate (peaked) hat and back (badge) and
a white shirt and a jacket. It look's like a real
uniform. Becose (because) they has to wear
it to look w(h) en peopl came to see them like
a policeman if you get lost.

The text is written throughout in the third person, beginning by identifying Mr P in the singular number. There is a switch, however, to the plural number at the point where Robert wrote "becose they has to wear it..," and from here the text is adrift, since the child has simply responded to the wording of the question "why they wear it", producing text which is not appropriately cohesive. Problems such as this are not uncommon in young children's writing, and they are sometimes explained as the predictable features of young children's attempts at control of the written mode, where there is an implication that not much can be done about such problems.

We believe that the fact they are predictable features of the written language of young children is to be attributed to the impact of talk, and that as such they are capable of fairly ready remediation. Here, it was the impact both of the talk preparatory to writing and of the questions given Robert and his class mates to guide writing which was at issue. The younger the writers, and the less experienced their knowledge and control of the written mode, we suggest, the more important it is to enable them to see appropriate models of written language as a basis for proceeding into writing. If the teacher were sensitive to the need to model the language for writing rather better, she could take a number of possible steps. She might, for example, involve the children in jointly constructing an appropriate instance of the genre with her, allowing them to see it built up on the board, and

guiding them to help her as she wrote. She might, alternatively, write an appropriate model for display, the details of which might be thoroughly discussed before the children started to write. She might in addition word the questions and/or guideline headings for writing rather differently, pointing the children more confidently into the desirable linguistic choices to make for writing. A general model for appropriate behaviour on the part of the adult here has been well discussed by Painter (1985), examining the critical role of the adult in modelling and scaffolding desirable patterns of language for the young child. The principles involved, she suggests, should be followed in writing as well as in talking.

We will look at only one other written text here, selected because it represents a set of linguistic choices made by one third of the children concerned in the class. Diana wrote Text 9.17.

Text 9.17

I am a nurse aide. I'd wear a blue dress, brown tie, on the tie there is a bage (badge) that says sen ros (senior nurse) Wilson. The hat is white I have a nother (another bage (badge). So if your mum is shik (sick) you no (know) who to get.

The model adopted for writing here is that cited above, as actually coming from a book read the children a day or two before the lesson, and since as we have noted, one third of the children chose this model, we must conclude that for many children it was a clearer one to follow than that suggested in a somewhat shadowy way by the four questions. The choice of the first person to start the text does particularise the piece, immediately pointing the text into "non-report" like directions, and indeed the rest of the text essentially builds description, though the final sentence, beginning with the conjunction "so" appears to be an answer to the question, "why they

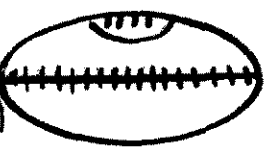
wear it". In fact, a number of children wrote a final sentence starting with "so, including Cindy mentioned above" - a direct response to the wording of the question, and as we have noted, not productive of an appropriately constructed sentence for the written mode.

When we discussed Text A in chapters 7, 8 and 9 we suggested that one of the real problems with the writing task was that the "content" field was in any case of rather dubious value. It is difficult to see what types of written genre might actually be written about such a "content" field. We noted in chapter 6 (section 6.2) that the writer had suggested to the teachers an examination of the types of activities in which the various occupational groups engaged. Such an activity would have taken the children into some useful construction of a "content", permitting among other matters, some treatment of the uniforms worn. The suggestion had not been well received.

That there are possible ways to generate written texts which do usefully deal with such subjects as uniforms may be attested by a brief examination of Text 9.18, about "football". The latter text, written by a boy some years older than the children in this study, came from a unit of work in which the children spent several lessons researching and writing about sports that they enjoyed. Much carefully guided discussion was devoted to the kinds of matters which needed to be considered as well as to the possible ways of ordering such information. It was in the course of such talk that the children involved decided that use of illustrations would be a helpful way to handle aspects of the field. Text 9.18 was completed only after the writing of two drafts, and much experimentation with appropriate illustrations. It will be observed that one aspect of dealing with the "content" field of football involves writing of the uniforms worn by football players. The general success of the text, we suggest, shows not only that uniforms may be usefully written about, but that their importance as a matter for writing rests itself on the significance of the social activity in which they are used. It was this kind of

# FOOTBALL

Equipment - Football is a game in which you use an oval shaped ball. It's sewn up in four pieces, and is put together by strings laced up in the middle. This is what it looks like →



(cost $5 to $10)

For clothes you need socks that nearly reach your knees. This is what they look like, →



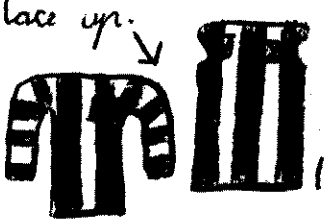
(cost $2.00)

a pair of football shorts →



(cost $3.00)

A football jumper with no sleeves or long sleeves. They have special colors for your team. Some of these are lace up jumpers which you lace up. →



(cost $15.00)

Some players wear mouth protectors which keep your teeth safe. (cost $3.00 to $50.00)

Also you need football boots. They are shoes that go up to your ankles. They have long laces on the them to tie them up. On the bottom of the boots there are studs, which are little things that don't make you slip that much. You can get screw ons. They are ones that

Text 9.18

# FOOTBALL

screw on.



STUDS

(COST $20.00)

Rules - The rules are: no running more than fifteen metres, no trips, no pushing in the back, no fighting or you may be reported. If you take a marks it's your ball, no throwing the ball, no dropping the ball when caught, no grabbing around the neck. When the ball goes over the boundaries on the full it is the other teams freekick.

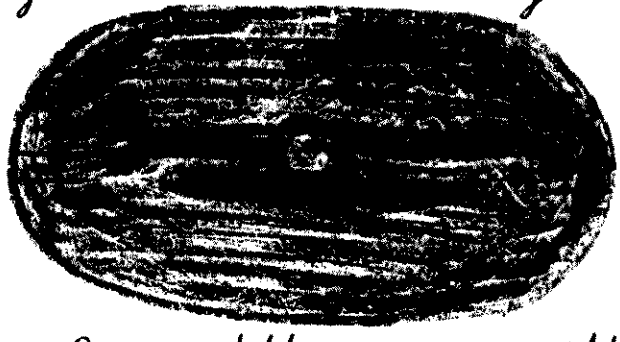
Seasons - The months for football are March to September. Most months are very cold, there is a lot of mud, and alot of injuries due to the weather.

Positions - Back Pocket is a defence player, Full Back kicks the ball out when a points scored. Half Back Flank tries not to let the other side in. Centre Half Back is a very hard position, you have to be able to take a good mark. Wing is a very speedy position because you run all around the ground. Centre he stay off in the centre of the ground and chases the ball.

# FOOTBALL

Half Foward Flank is a creative position because he sets up play. Centre Half Foward is a very strong position, you need to be able to take a good mark and kick long. Foward Pocket is not a very big position he roams the foward line Full Foward is a position in which you are supposed to kick goals.

Facilities - You play on an oval shaped groun It has four sticks at either end. The two in the middle are the biggest ones. The ones on the sides of big ones are small. You try to kick the ball through the big ones, and it is a goal. The ground is covered by grass all over.



Cost - The cost for children is eighty cents. For adults it is four dollars fifty

Spectators - Plenty of spectators go to the game. If its a good match about forty thousand attend. If its not a very good match ten thousand attend But you have a fun time.

appreciation which had lain behind the researcher's recommendations to the teachers that they deal primarily with the activities of the occupational groups in which the uniforms were worn. The kinds of activities in which an occupational group engages do constitute a genuine "content" field for enquiry; but the uniform worn by the group does not itself constitute such a field.

We have said sufficient of the writing emerging from Text A to give a sense of the significant limitations in the children's work, and to suggest factors responsible for those limitations. There is a very general belief that in early childhood education, we can expect little from the children since they are so young, and they have much to learn. It clearly is the case that young children have a lot to learn both about the features of the written mode and about the schematic structures appropriate to writing. However, we would argue strongly that children can perform very much better than they often do in writing, and that they would progress considerably faster, where the teacher taught for an explicit understanding of such matters as mode features and generic characteristics. Many of the limitations in children's writing are not to be explained primarily by reference to the inexperience and ignorance of the children, but rather by reference to the limitations of the teaching practice that guides them.

Some measure of the latter was provided in the conversation the researcher had after the lesson with the teacher concerned - one in which, as she had done before, the researcher sought to explain the features of a report genre, and of the sorts of conditions that might usefully apply in order to teach it to the children. The discussion touched upon the fact that a third of the children had opted not to write a report at all, but rather to write one of the "I 'm a..." texts modelled on the book read earlier in the week, and also at that stage used as a model for writing. The teacher, seeming to miss the force of the points made by the researcher said that the children were

"free to choose as they wanted." Freedom of choice in the manner in which the child writes is often extolled as a virtue in writing programs, developing "creativity" and "self-expression", as we have already noted in chapter 4, section 4.2 in particular.

This continues to be a worrying and confusing theme in much educational discussion, for it begs the whole question of how it is children develop sufficient competence in the first place, with which to exercise the free choice teachers are encouraged to believe is so important. The teacher in the case of Text A did not, it must be admitted, have a well articulated educational theory anyway. However, when feeling the need to articulate something of her motives for teaching the children as she had done, she was able to fall back on an oft repeated position about children's self-expression, for which it must be said in her defence she has been given very general support by a great deal of theorising about language education for quite a long time now. It is a position for example, which has been regularly endorsed by many writers on literacy education referred to in chapter 4 (section 4.2). It was a position also endorsed by certain speakers at a major international conference on language education held in Brisbane in July 1988,[1] at which among others, Harste proposed the importance of :

> a theory of literacy that values hearing individual voices (which) must be judged by a different set of performance criteria than has traditionally been the case. To evaluate... growth on the basis of spelling, grammar, genre or even more generically 'development' is to impose old eyes on a new event. (Harste and Short, 1988)

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[1]This was the Post-World Reading Congress Symposium on Language in Learning, held at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, July 1988

We have no difficulty agreeing with Harste that such things as spelling and traditional grammar represent insufficient yardsticks with which to measure growth. However, we suggest that an appropriate commitment to the notion of the written mode and its differences from speech does provide some functionally relevant criteria by which to consider children's progress, providing a richer sense of the features of language worth teaching to children than conventional grammar does in particular. Harste's and Short's concerns about the notion of genre, as evidenced elsewhere in their paper, suggest a somewhat misplaced appreciation of what the notion of a genre is, at least as it is defined throughout this study. They write pejoratively, for example of a "frozen genre form that could be set up as a criterion," and suggest that a preoccupation with such a thing simply distorts the teacher's or assessor's appreciation of the "new literacy event" in which a child engages in order to write. What matters is the unique literacy event, Harste and Short suggest, in which the "individual voice" of each child's written language is prized above everything else.

Like many others who have argued a similar position, Harste and Short remain extremely vague about what constitutes "individual voice", or about what constitutes growth in the young writer's development. In the kind of classroom they appear to recommend, however, it seems that children should ideally be left, in the words of our teacher in Text A, "free to choose as they want". Dressed up as theory this is merely irresponsible, for it leaves children to "pick up" as best they can along the way, the kinds of capacities they require in order to be competent in handling the written mode. Such a policy serves no children particularly well, but as it happens those who survive most successfully where it does apply, are those who are already advantaged. It was no accident that Aaron, writer of Text 9.14 above wrote what we would deem one of the better texts out of the activity in Text A. He was the child of school teachers who were themselves ambitious that he do well, and who took an active interest

in his school progress. In the books they gave him, as well no doubt as in the talk they generated with him, they must have unconsciously rehearsed with him many of the patterns of language he actually used to good purpose in his school learning. It is not suggested, incidentally, that the parents of the other children were not also caring of their children or concerned about their progress. On the contrary, in the estimation of the researcher, but also in that of the school principal who knew them very much better, most if not all of the parents were very caring and concerned. However, as we noted in chapter 2, one third of the parents actually spoke English as a second language, and in some cases a parent, normally a mother, spoke no English at all. We may surmise that for such parents it would be very much harder to give their children the kind of constant support in mastering language relevant to school learning, than it was for Aaron's parents.

We have said sufficient about the writing generated in Text A, and we will now turn to that generated in Text B.

## 9.5 Writing developed out of Text B

The stimulus material used to develop the interest in the "content" field in Text B, it will be recalled, was a basal reader in the Reading 360 Australia series, called My Lunch! As we saw in our earlier chapters, it offered little to the young writer, either in terms of modelling features of the written mode, or in terms of modelling the generic structure of a story. Aspects of the story involved were actually depicted in the series of accompanying pictures in the book, and this in itelf partly explained the very minimal nature of the text. In addition, is so far as the story was developed in the text, it was told wholly through the recorded speech of the boy whose lunch was taken by a dog, and of the teacher who helped the boy. This is in fact a very common feature of young children's reading books, and

whatever the merits of such an approach, it does not build a very explicit sense of the narrative structure for the beginning writer.

When we examined the Task Specification in particular of Text B, it will be recalled that there was some teacher guided recreation of aspects of the personal experience of several children in the class, all of whose lunches had been mislaid for different reasons. The teacher's role in this element was helpful, we suggested, since the effect of her eliciting talk from the children was that she scaffolded language in quite a useful way. It was unfortunate, we suggested, that she was herself less confident at taking the additional step she might have taken of modelling a possible schematic structure for the story to be written.

Gray (1983,1987), Hammond (1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1987c, in press; in preparation), McNamara, McLoughlin and Baker (1988; McNamara, 1989), Callaghan and Rothery (1989), Macken (1989a, 1989b), and Gilbert (in press) have all recently investigated aspects of desirable strategies for teaching writing, and all have shown the value of clear modelling of the types of linguistic choices the children should make in order to write successfully. Teachers need to scaffold much of the language students need to master in order to write. The work of the classroom researchers just alluded to accords in interesting ways with the work of both Hasan (see some of this cited in Christie, 1985b) as well as that of Painter (1985), in reflecting upon the importance of parents scaffolding language with young children as they learn to talk.

All the evidence suggests, in fact, that where young children are to be asked to write narratives, some clear use of models to help them proceed will be most important.

Weightman (1988) has recently provided interesting accounts of ways in which he models possible narrative patterns with his young students, involving them in discussion with him before they write and in planning subsequent writing activities. Without explicit help many children will be in serious difficulties about the linguistic choices they should make. Among the children in Mrs P's class in Text B for example, Rebecca had considerable difficulty, as Text 9.19 illustrates.

Text 9.19

What happened to my lunch?
I left my lunch at home. So I had (to)
have some of my sister's lunch.

Rebecca wrote the heading here and the first sentence and simply stopped, plainly unable or unwilling to write any more, and she actually started to do a picture. Upon being told by her teacher that she "had not written enough", she wrote the second sentence, and quietly resisted writing any more. When at the end of the lesson the researcher asked Rebecca to read her what she had written, she asked the child why she had not written more. Rebecca shrugged her shoulders and said "I didn't know anything else to write."

Though the teacher did grumble at the shortness of the text Rebecca had written, she did find it acceptable after Rebecca had written the second clause. This is important for us to note for what it tells us of the teacher's actual aspirations for the lesson. In truth, the teacher regarded all texts written by the children as acceptable, and she complained only where the children wrote only one clause, or where their handwriting was very untidy. We are not proposing, by the way, that it would necessarily be a good lesson if the teacher chose to dismiss or reject children's texts indiscriminately, especially where the children were so young. However, what we are drawing attention

to is the absence in the teacher's mind of criteria for what might constitute a good example of the kind of texts she had sought to have the children write, and to which she might draw attention as a model for reading out loud, and perhaps using or adapting in subsequent lessons.

The general absence of criteria which teachers might use in assessing children's development in writing has been commented upon by Rothery (1984), Christie and Rothery (in press) and Macken (1989a; 1989b). It is symptomatic of a general uncertainty concerning growth in literacy, both in terms of how it is recognised, and in terms of how it is promoted. In this connection, it should be noted that the very considerable success over the years 1984-88 of the Deakin University B.Ed Children Writing course, which is offered each year to some 150-200 students, all of them practising teachers, is to be explained partly in terms of the enhanced sense of direction and purpose many students say they achieve from genre-based approaches, especially in terms of developing criteria for assessing and promoting growth.

Earlier in chapter 4 (section 4.2) where we discussed contemporary trends in language theory in some detail, we noted the failure of contemporary practice both in teacher education and in schools, to develop programs of work so that there is an accumulating growth of competence in controlling different fields. The problem is closely related to an associated failure - namely the failure to develop an accumulating sense of genres, and of the potential for making meanings available in different generic structures. Yet, as Rothery (1985) has demonstrated, quite young children are capable of developing a strong sense of different genres, and of recognising over time that they can draw upon a repertoire of different genres for different purposes. Indeed, we would suggest that unless children are encouraged to develop such a sense of the different genres they might employ, and of the intimate relationship of these to the kinds

of "content" fields with which they need to deal in schools, there is a danger that they will understand genres as just so many arbitrary "forms" to be "imposed" upon different "contents". Hammond (1988) has recently drawn attention to this problem with respect to children's language learning. In addition, the evidence is that many of the adults critical of genre-based approaches to language and learning have fallen into the trap of seeing genres as so many arbitrary "forms". Harste, cited above appears to be one such person, but so are Dixon (1987) and Reid (1987).

Good literacy programs must necessarily have a concern both for the development of control of significant "content" fields as well as for the range of genres needed in order successfully to control these fields. Furthermore, over time, such programs need to build an accumulating sense of the rich possibilities of fields and genres, such that more is understood about each and about the relationships of each to the other.

We will look briefly at two other texts which emerged from the activity in Text B. Joseph wrote what was one of the most successful texts in the class, one that had a schematic structure with a recursive pattern of complication ^ resolution. We have set it out showing the principal elements in the schematic structure.

Text 9.20

What happened to my lunch.

**Complication**

One's I forgot my lunch in my room

**Resolution**

Miss P phoned my mum my mum brought
my lunch to school then Santer cam(e) to
school Santer (Santa) put his sack on the ground
so did I. Santer gave toys out

**Complication**

Santer picked the (w)rong sack up then I didet (didn't)
have ane (any) lunch

**Resolution**

then I had a lunch order I had a pie and a drink

Joseph had responded to the teacher's interest that the children be imaginative and create some set of events other than those in the book she had read. While his text lacked a true Orientation, his first Complication did involve a use of a temporal circumstance - "once" in marked topical Theme position. Given the fairly minimal model the teacher had read to him, Joseph had made a quite reasonable effort at writing a story. However, over a year before, while in Year 1 and being taught by Mrs. L, Joseph had written Text 9.21, modelled on the story of The Little Red Hen which his then teacher, Mrs L, had read.

Text 9.21

The little brown bear.

**Orientation**

Once upon a time the little brown bear found
some ap(p)le seed and plant(e)d it

**Complication**

W(h)en the apples grow (grew) who will help pic(k) the
apples

**Resolution**

Not I said the dog Not I said the pig
Not I said the rat. Then I will

**Complication**

Who will help me eat it I will and I will

**Resolution**

No no said the bear I will eat it myself

It is difficult to see that Text 9.21, written in Year 2, represents any great advance in Joseph's narrative writing capacities upon Text 9.20, which he had written a year before. In one way at least Text 9.20 is the more complete, in that it has an appropriate Orientation. As we earlier noted in chapters 4 (section 4.3) and 6 (section 6.6), a disturbing feature of the manner in which the early literacy program operated in the school, was that it was often difficult to see much evidence of growth in the children's literacy development. There was certainly growth from the preparatory year to the subsequent years, in that no child was literate at the start of the preparatory year, and a few did have some rudimentary grasp of literacy by the end of that year, while those not having achieved this went on to do so by the end of Year 1. However, once having gained some functional grasp of literacy, the evidence over the years 1 to 2 suggested that a great deal of what was done represented simply "marking time". In fact, as the researcher was aware, teachers in year 2 often repeated

activities undertaken in year 1, without, it seemed, being aware that they had done so.

The point is an important one, since it supports the general contention adopted here that teachers too often have no principled bases for planning programs of work to bring about development. As we have noted, the problem is as serious for considerations of "content" fields as it is for considerations of a developing grasp of genres. Discussing the use of curriculum themes, Gray (1983) has noted that in his experience in early childhood literacy development, some themes are so substantial as to permit useful development and exploration over periods of weeks. Often they can be revisited from time to time in programs where other themes are taken up as well, sometimes being purused for s school term or more. Where programs of this sort do apply, it is possible also to develop expanding skills in recognising and using different genres.

Thus, where narrative genres are at issue, it is possible to consider and discuss different examples (see Weightman 1988, mentioned above) encouraging the children to be aware of the differences. Given that Joseph and many (though not all) of his classmates were able to write narratives of the kind provided in Text 9.21 in July of their Year 1, he should have been able, with appropriate support in the intervening months, to write considerably better than he did in Text 9.20 in September of Year 2.

Jodie, one of the children who narrated personal experience under the teacher's general direction wrote Text 9.22, while Emily who also narrated personal experience wrote Text 9.23.

Text 9.22

What happened to my lunch?
**Complication**
One day I forgot my lunch
**Resolution**
and Mrs S hat (had) to ring my mum
up to bring my lunch and I got a jam
donut and two pese (pieces) of fru(i)t
and a sosisg (sausage) roll and a drink.
It was yummy. The end.

Text 9.23

What happened to my lunch?
**Complication**
One day I lost my lunch where did I
put it? I must of put it in the wrong
bag
**Resolution**
but who was that at the door my
mum brought my lunch

Both texts, as we have demonstrated, do have a sense of an appropriate schematic structure. Neither, however, represented significant advance upon what the two children involved had been able to write the year before. For example, the previous year Jodie had written Text 9.24, inspired by a reading of The Little Red Hen, and much teacher directed discussion about stories that might be written to a similar model.

Text 9.24

**Orientation**
Once upon a time the little red hen fount
some wheat and planted it. She wote
(watched) it grow
**Complication**
and sed who will help me
cut the wheat
**Resolution**
not I said the rabbit not I said the frog
**Complication**
who will help me mac (make) som(e) bread
**Resolution**
no(t) I said the rabbit not I said the frog.
Then I will said Red Hen
**Complication**
who will help me eat the bread
**Resolution**
I will said the frog no you wont I will said
Red Hen

Incidentally, it might be argued that there is not a series of Complication and Resolution elements here, and that those elements so labelled, with the exception of the final Resolution, all constitute aspects of the Complication. However, the repetitive nature of the text gives it its most distinctive character, and it is for this reason that we choose to label the elements as we have done.

Emily had written Text 9.25, inspired by a class reading of a story book based on the story of Noah's ark.

Text 9.25

**Orientation**
Once upon a time Noah disided (decided) to make
a Ark oly (only) two of etch (each) (were)
al(l)owed
**Complication**
a bee stung Mrs Noah and she scre(a)med nea(r)
the Tiger the tiger roared at the Dog who barked
at the cat who pord )purred) at the zebra who
tried to stand on the duck who q(u)acked at the
Bull who but(t) ed the cat crash went the boat
**Resolution**
look said Mrs Noah we hit a(n) island all the
anim(a)ls ran out to see the sunshin(e) and
they fawnd (found) homes
and lived happily ever ufter (after).
THE END.

Before we leave this discussion of the writing emerging from Text B, it is perhaps worth noting what the teacher said of her reasons for selecting the class reader My Lunch! as a stimulus material. In terms of the reading capacities of the children, it was a very easy book, of the kind which most of the children had successfully learned to read in Year 1, and from the researcher's point of view it seemed a strange choice. The teacher said of her choice that she wanted the children to "write a story about food", and this book was "quick and easy to read" as a basis for writing. It is an explanation which shows little appreciation of the considerations of "content" field or of genre which we would suggest should be borne in mind when planning curriculum activity. As we have already noted, teacher education had failed this teacher, as indeed it continues to fail teachers in many places today.

## 9.6 Writing developed out of Text C

Earlier, in chapter 6 (section 6.6.2), we saw the series of six little pictures the teacher in Text C gave the children, depicting different stages of the chicken's growth. We would suggest that the pictures tended to predispose the young writer towards the writing of a factual genre, the more so because the pictures were labelled "How a chicken grows". However, the teacher also introduced some anthropomorphic talk about chickens in a manner more appropriate to fields of imaginative experience and to the writing of imaginative genres. Joel wrote a very representative text, showing how he was so confused by the teacher's unintentionally mixed directions that he wrote a text that was part narrative, part factual.

Text 9.26

Once upon a time a hen lay a egg inside
the egg a chicken was being born the
chick eats the yolk it make(s) a little
hole now the chick is making a big crack.

Joel actually began with an Orientation, using a temporal circumstance in marked topical Theme position - "once upon a time" - and he correspondingly also chose the past tense, thus advising the reader that narrative was under construction. But then, where he wrote "the chick eats the yolk", he switched to the simple present tense in the first of three clauses in which he built not imaginative or "story-like" experience, but rather the factual description of what a chicken does. This is not a happy result, demonstrating the general point we have argued above in relation to texts produced out of Text B that where children produce a poorly constructed text, the explanation is not necessarily to be offered in terms of their inexperience. On the contrary, close examination often shows that the difficulty is a condition of an inappropriate teaching practice.

Simone, not in fact regarding the request to write a story at all, produced Text 9.27, demonstrating that she had a more certain appreciation than the teacher of the field requirements, and producing what is in fact an explanation genre (Martin, 1989), in itself not uncommon in dealing with various scientific fields. The elements of schematic structure are indicated.

Text 9.27

**Phenomenon:** this is how a chicken grows
**Explanation:** first a Mother hen lays eggs
then the chicken inside gets bigger then the
chicken starts to crack a dotted line around
the shell then the chick pushes out and when
the chicken is out it was all wet and when it
has dryd (dried) it gets yellow and fluffy

An explanation genre is not to be confused with a procedural genre, examples of which are offered in Texts 9.29 and 9.29, taken from the data in this study. Elements of schematic structure are shown.

Text 9.28

Rules for a game
**Implements:** What you need balloons chirs (chairs)
and some people.
**Procedure:** How to play eight or nine people run to
the chir with a Balloon on it and pop the Balloon.
**Procedure:** How to win the poren (person) with there
(their) Balloon po(p)ed wins.

Text 9.29

How to make chocolate eggs

**Implements:** Things we need

water
frying pans
moulds
two bowls
brown and white chocolate

**Procedure:** How to make them

1 put water in the frying pan.
2 put the bowl in the water in pan.
3 put the frying pan on.
4 melt the chocolate.
5 put chocolate in the mould.
6 put the mould in the fridge.
7 tip eggs out of mould.
8 put eggs on the plate.
9 and eat them.

A procedural genre, as the name implies, builds a sequence of steps which need to be taken if an activity is to be accomplished. Procedural genres are characterised by the fact that they direct action, and they very frequently employ the imperative mood, as in Text 9.29, while their transitivity processes are material ("eight or nine people run to the chair"; "put water in the frying pan")

Explanation genres, on the other hand, focus on how phenomena - normally of the natural world - come to be. In the case of Text 9.27, the phenomenon of concern is identifed in the opening element of schematic structure, also called the Phenomenon, while the rest of the text constitutes the Explanation. Transitivity processes are also material ("a mother hen lays eggs"; "the chicken starts to crack a

dotted line around the shell"), though relational processes will also often be used. Here, they are processes of attribution ("the chicken inside gets bigger"; "it was all wet").

Of all the texts written by the children as a consequence of the activity in Text C, Simone's was the most successful. It did in fact also most closely follow the model provided in the textbook, Egg to Chick, which actually offered a good example of an explanation genre. Unlike most other texts written, Simone's had no confusing sense of a text which had tried "to look in two directions", as it were, as was true of Joel's.

Though he had trouble with spelling and an amusing preoccupation with full stops (which he soon abandoned), Joseph, who wrote Text 9.30, also wrote a reasonably successful text, which we identify as an instance of a recount, because it is constructed around a series of temporally related events. The recount genre has been already introduced in Text 9.8, discussed above in section 9.2

Text 9.30

**Event:** an . he. lad .a egg
**Event:** and The. murd sat . on. the. egg
**Event:** and evri. day it got big ar.
**Event:** and The cickn. pecks and. at lust. it cam at
**Event:** it to twnione days
(A hen laid an egg and the mother sat on the egg and every day it got bigger and the chicken pecked and at last it came out. It took twenty-one days.)

One of the reasons this is a recount is that Joseph writes of a particular instance of a chicken and hen. One of the reasons that Simone's Text 9.27 is an explanation, on the other hand, is that it

constructs meanings held to be true for all chickens. This is interesting, since both texts make uses of similar transitivity processes - material and attributive in particular. However, there are critically important differences between Texts 9.27 and 9.30. Simone uses an identifying process to build her Phenomenon element - "this is how a chicken grows" - while Joseph builds the first of a series of Events, using a material process to do so - "a hen laid an egg". Simone uses the simple present tense (with one lapse, incidentally, where she writes "it was all wet" toward the end of the text) while Joseph chooses the past tense.

When, after the lesson was over, the researcher discussed with Mrs L the written texts produced about chickens, the latter was very interested in talk of the unwitting confusion created by using the textbook Egg to Chick and the series of pictures distributed to the children, on the one hand, and the direction to write "a story", supported by anthropomorphic talk of how chickens "feel" inside the egg, on the other hand. The teacher was caused to reflect not only on the relationship of what the children had written to what they were assisted to learn to do in preparation for writing, but also upon the broader questions of purpose and generic choices in writing. She was reminded, she said, of her days both at school and as a student teacher at college, often in doubt about the nature of the assignment or essay she was expected to write, and not always helped by such advice as she was afforded by her teachers. This was a theme she was to return to from time with the researcher, though sadly, shortly afterwards, she ceased to teach the class concerned, and as we noted in chapter 2, she actually died in the course of another few months.

## 9.7 Bringing the study to a close

Our discussion of the selected written texts emerging from the children's engagement in the learning activities in Texts A, B and C is now concluded. While we have not undertaken a detailed analysis of

the writing done by all the children, we have examined enough of the texts to support the general contention that there is a very intimate relationship between what children actually learn to do in writing, and what it is that their teachers enable them to learn to do. Furthermore, we have sought to show that since early childhood teachers do not for the most part have a sensitive appreciation of the mode and genre choices that need to be made in writing about a "content' field in any curriculum "theme," such advice and directions as they do give the children for writing are generally poor. There is an urgent need to devise teacher education programs which take such matters more seriously than has been true in the past, and which, crucially, take young learners seriously as well, providing useful opportunity for them to explore interesting "content" fields.

Much has happened since this study commenced, and as we write the concluding paragraphs of the study there are grounds to believe that we are already closer to the articulation of an educational linguistics of the kind we have been arguing for in teacher education. We shall bring our discussion to a close by commenting on some of the new developments.

Firstly, perhaps, we should comment on developments in the school at Normanbury, where the study was undertaken. The researcher retains warm working relationships with the school, and in particular with the school principal. Of the teachers who were most directly involved in the study, one of them, as we have already noted, died in tragic circumstances. Mrs P moved away interstate while Mrs S took maternity leave and had not returned to teaching at the time of completing this dissertation. Mrs B, one of the teachers involved in the morning news activities reviewed in chapter 3, remains a member of the school staff. The writing program at the school has prospered, mainly because of the energy and leadership of the principal, and her interest in taking up ideas learned from the researcher. In fact, at the time of completing this paper, the

principal had just finished writing up a revised version of the school policy statement on the teaching of writing, and it owed a great deal to the influence of this study. The statement had been developed over several years, during which time the researcher had revisited the school quite frequently to lead in service workshops with the staff. The school policy statement on writing introduces a wide range of genres, using many examples whose elements are analysed and discussed, while guidelines are provided on the teaching of these. All the examples of written genres used were written by children at the school, and developed by teachers steadily implementing "genre-based" approaches to the teaching of writing. The policy statement has been shared with numbers of the parents of the children. Perhaps most gratifying of all has been a recent decision of the local regional educational office to take over the school policy statement on writing for wider distribution to other schools within the Geelong area district. The activities at the school, in the opinion of the local language curriculum consultants, have been sufficiently encouraging to justify a wider distribution and use of the school's work.

Turning to wider developments elsewhere, the curriculum directorate in the state of Queensland has developed an excellent series of language curriculum guideline documents (Board of Secondary Schools Studies, 1987, 1988; Department of Education, Queensland, 1989) which go further than any others known to the researcher towards the articulation of an educational linguistics for teachers. Using the systemic functional grammar, they aim to provide teachers with some principled ways to understand the nature of language, and some principled bases upon which to intervene in and guide the language development of students. In the state of New South Wales, a project sponsored by the Literacy Education Research Network has led to the development of some very useful guideline documents for teaching of writing (Macken, 1989; in preparation). These are intended to support the New South Wales Writing K-12 Curriculum Document, and will receive distribution throughout the

state. These guidelines use "genre-based" approaches to the teaching of writing. They seek to identify particular genres such as the report, to analyse their elements, and to offer teachers guidelines for teaching these. The Disadvantaged Schools Project in Sydney - a project sponsored with Federal Government money to support programs for schools in poorer and disadvantaged areas - has produced a report for teachers specifically on the teaching of factual writing (Callaghan and Rothery, 1989).

Apart from these initiatives, we can point to teaching programs in schools or departments of education in several universities throughout the country which either use various approaches to teacher training drawing upon systemic linguistics, or which adopt approaches drawing upon related fields in other traditions of sociolinguistics or in semiotics.

All these trends mark progress towards the better development of curriculum programs for teachers, of a kind which represent steps to the articulation of an educational linguistics of value. To be sure, the writer has a general concern that numbers of researchers in Australia like herself are now known by the label "genre-based", for like most labels, this one is misleading and superficial. Those of us currently interested in using the notion of the genre as we have sought to use it in this study, do so out of a general commitment to a view of language and of linguistics which we sought to outline in chapter 1. The notion of the genre can be crucially misunderstood unless its status is appreciated as part of a wider theoretical position which sees language as fundamentally involved in the social construction of experience. It is with language that we "sign" or mean. An investigation of the manner in which a linguistic system is employed for the building of meaning is a proper subject for discussion in the name of an educational linguistics. It is useful to use the notion of the genre as a means of referring to the ways in which different text types are created to realise significant meanings and to achieve

important social goals. It does not mean, however, that the theoretical position adopted is to be understood merely as "about genres". The notion of genre is to be understood as part of a broader theoretical argument, in which the associated notions of register and language, discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, constitute essential elements.

In the opinion of the researcher, those who criticise "genre-based" approaches (e.g. Reid 1987; Dixon, 1987; Tucker, 1988; Rosen, 1988) do so out of a failure to understand the linguistic theory which is actually involved and which gives force and direction to the notion of the genre. Looking to the immediate future, the writer believes that it is the underlying linguistic theory which she and others must address, in order to overcome many of the misunderstandings about genres and their place in educational enquiry.

Internationally, it is clear that the climate of thinking about language and literacy is changing. The British Government has recently commissioned a new enquiry into the teaching of the English language, leading to the production of the Kingman Report (1988). The latter is a disappointing statement in the view of the researcher, for it seems to offer more of a return to some older practices in the teaching of language, rather than forging any directions. The production of the report is nonetheless a sign of the times. Concern for the nature of language, for its role in experience and for ways of developing capacity in language, are currently finding better expression than they have sometimes done in recent years. Witness the recent appearance of two new international journals - Language and Education and Linguistics and Education - both of which bring together an interestingly diverse range of linguists, educational linguists, psycholinguists and sociolinguists in their editorial boards. Both should do much to lift the levels of scholarly interest in language in education and hence also to help articulate new traditions of educational linguistics. The signs are that the more romantic

preoccupations with the "processes" of "growth in language" which we reviewed in chapter 4, and which have been so influential since the 1960's are now on the wane.

In this context, we view with interest the emergence of work by scholars like Walkerdine (1982), and Edwards and Mercer (1987), which, like the more recent work of Bruner (1986), and the recent scholarly interest in the work of Vygotsky (Wertsch, 1985) has tended to point towards the development of changing views of learning, and to some important reassessments of the theories of psychologists like Piaget, whose influence in Australia has been quite considerable. Changing views of learning tend to point teachers towards a sense of the essentially social processes in which persons engage in order to make sense of their world and hence in order to learn. In the participation in such social processes, language, it is clear, has a critically important role. The new educational linguistics for which are arguing will draw heavily upon the newer perspectives in psychology to which we have alluded. It will see young learners as apprentices, to return to an older and in recent years somewhat discredited notion, which is currently being revisited (Collins and Brown, 1986). That is to say, young learners will be seen as apprentices, in that they will be understood as needing to find their way around the cultures in which they must learn to operate. Like all other apprentices, they will rely heavily not only upon the example of the teacher, but also upon the many models of what constitutes excellence in language which their teachers will make available to them. Where such policies do operate, the need to engage young learners in dealing usefully with the many ways of handling and addressing experience that the various school subjects represent, should bring about some much needed reassessment of the manner in which different fields of enquiry or "content" areas are realised in language.

Finally, when we have developed a generation of teachers skilled at analysis of language and wise in the ways in which language is used to realise meanings, they will, we suggest, be themselves empowered. In this respect, unlike Cazden (1988, 198-9), who has lamented the need for teachers to develop a "self consciousness" about what they do, we welcome the possibility of a new generation of teachers for whom a conscious appreciation of language and its working is an essential part of their professional preparation.

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