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WHAT IS THE NATURE AND PROCESS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING?

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**WHAT IS THE NATURE AND PROCESS OF
EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING?**

by

Sylvia Margaret Warham

A summary of published work submitted to the University of
Plymouth in partial fulfilment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Rolle Faculty of Education

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Signed: Sylvia Warburton

Date: 25.11.93.

Abstract:

Over the last ten years my thinking and writing have been concerned with the nature and process of effective teaching and learning. Although I have tried to present my thinking as a chronological sequence much of the work developed concurrently. Over the period covered by my publications my thinking has focused on three main areas:

- a. An exploration of the implications for language learning of the shared meaning-making process in reading, reading aloud and writing. (Approx.1978-1982)
- b. An exploration of the influence that a teacher may have in the shared process of meaning-making and its implications for teaching and learning. (Approx. 1982-1990)
- c. The power context of the classroom where the participants employ power strategies in an attempt to influence the outcome of the negotiation. (Approx. 1990- present)

My early interest in linguistics led me to focus on the role of language in the process of teaching and learning. Initially I was concerned with linguistically analysing children's writing in an attempt to explore the ways in which their written language developed. However, I soon began to realise the importance of the learning context and the ways in which meaning is negotiated within that context. It became clear that the linguistic exchanges between the teacher and the pupils had a significant effect upon the learning that was taking place.

I began to linguistically analyse the interactions between teachers and pupils. The linguistic evidence seemed to suggest that the operation of power between the teacher and the pupils affected the quality of learning. Much of my later work has therefore been concerned with describing power relationships and their role in the teaching and learning process. My interest extended to interactions in staff meetings where I analysed interactions between teachers and between head teachers and teachers.

In all of these interactions I observed *dominant strategies* which constrained the future possibilities of action for others and were characterised by:

- * More institutional and less intimate syntax choices.
- * More formal choices in vocabulary.
- * Using high key or high termination choices.
- * Using dominant rising tones
- * Firmer and more emphatic paralanguage.
- * Intermittent or disrupted eye contact.
- * Emphatic gestures.
- * Repetition.
- * Ritual forms of language.

I also observed *less dominant strategies* which facilitated or opened up the future possibilities of action for others and were characterised by:

- * More intimate and less institutional syntax choices.
- * More casual vocabulary choices
- * Mid key and mid termination choices.
- * A soft or moderate voice.
- * Long eye contact.

Once I could describe the linguistic patterns which seemed to accompany dominant and less dominant strategies, I was able to explore the kinds of power strategies operating in the learning situation. I concluded that power strategies circumscribe the degree of co-operation and consent or conflict and challenge in the learning context. I found this was a helpful perspective in trying to describe what may be happening in the teaching and learning process. It can provide a measure of the quality of learning and illuminate different styles of teaching.

(499 words)

Contents:

Acknowledgements

Section One: Critical Appraisal **Pages 1-27**

Section Two: Published Work (bound):

2A. Warham, S.M. (1982) An Attempt to Teach Reading Skills through Writing Skills *Reading* 16,3, pp135-142

2B. Warham, S.M. (1986) *Discourse and Text: A Linguistic Perspective on Reading Skills* (Exmouth, Devon, Rolle Faculty of Education Occasional Papers) 45 pages.

2C. Warham S.M. (1989b) Book Review 'Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work' *Reading* 23,3, pp197-198

2D. Warham S.M. (1991) What is the Role of the Tutor in the Process Curriculum? *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 15,2, pp 94-101

2E. Warham S.M. (1993b) Teaching Writing at Key Stage Two *Collected Original Resources in Education: An International Journal of Educational Research in Microfiche* Vol.17 No.3. 208 pages.

2F. Warham, S.M. (1993c) Reflections on Hegemony: Towards a Model of Teacher Competence, *Educational Studies* 19,2, pp 205-217

Section Three: Published Work (unbound):

3A. Warham S.M. (1989a) *Communicating in Writing: Teaching Infant Writing Skills* (Exeter, Wheatons) 102 pages.

3B. Warham S.M. (1993a) *Primary Teaching and the Negotiation of Power* (London, Paul Chapman Publishing) 98 pages

Author's Declaration

List of Where and When the Research took Place.

1. Warham, S.M. (1982) An Attempt to Teach Reading Skills through Writing Skills *Reading* 16, 3, pp135-142. The research for this publication began at Wheatfields Infants' School, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire in 1978. It was revised and further developed at Rolle Faculty of Education in 1982.
2. Warham, S.M. (1986) *Discourse and Text: A Linguistic Perspective on Reading Skills* (Exmouth, Devon, Rolle Faculty of Education Occasional Papers). The initial ideas and research for this publication began at the English Language Research Department, Birmingham University in 1978. It was revised and further developed at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1982 and 1986.
3. Warham S.M. (1989) Book Review 'Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work' *Reading* 23,3, pp197-198. The work for this publication was carried out at Rolle Faculty of Education in 1989.
4. Warham S.M. (1989) *Communicating in Writing: Teaching Infant Writing Skills* (Exeter, Wheatons). The initial ideas and research for this publication began at Wheatfields Infants' School, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire in 1978. It was revised and further developed at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1982 and 1989.
5. Warham S.M. (1991) What is the Role of the Tutor in the Process Curriculum? *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 15,2, pp94-101 The work for this publication was carried out

at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1989 and 1991.

6. Warham S.M. (1993a) *Primary Teaching and the Negotiation of Power* (London, Paul Chapman Publishing). The work for this publication was carried out at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1989 and 1993.

7. Warham S.M. (1993b) Teaching Writing at Key Stage Two *Collected Original Resources in Education: An International Journal of Educational Research in Microfiche* Vol.17 No.3. (Birmingham, Collected Original Resources in Education Vol.17 No.3). The work for this publication was carried out at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1989 and 1993.

8. Warham, S.M. (1993c) Reflections on Hegemony: Towards a Model of Teacher Competence, *Educational Studies* 19, 2, pp205-217. The work for this publication was carried out at Rolle Faculty of Education between 1989 and 1993.

At no time during the period in which the work submitted was written has the author been registered for any other University award.

The research and publications on which this submission is based are entirely the work of the author.

Signed: *Sylvia Warham*
Date: 25.11.93.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to acknowledge the support of many teaching, academic and publishing colleagues, too numerous to name individually, who have always been prepared to critically comment upon my work, and when necessary, lend a sympathetic ear. However, I am particularly indebted to Professor Michael Newby, Dr. Gordon Taylor and Mrs. Gill Payne for their kindness and patience. They have always found time to listen to my problems and have always been ready with constructive comments. Between them they have spent many hours reading my work and the development of this collection of publications owes a great deal to their care and generosity.

I would especially like to thank Dr. Andrew Hannan whose patience I have sorely tried with endless articles, papers and awkward questions. Without his support and diligence I could not have put together this collection of work.

Finally I would like to thank my husband, Rod, and my son, Giles. The process of publication rarely runs smoothly and for more than a decade they have been my strength.

Section One: Critical Appraisal

What is the nature and process of effective teaching and learning?

Over a period of twenty years I have consistently reflected upon the nature and process of effective teaching and learning. My research interests have been underpinned by a concept of meaning being a shared process of negotiation. For me this has always been a fundamental issue because I believe that the creation and interpretation of meaning has important linguistic and pedagogical implications for teachers and learners. Throughout my professional life my thinking and research have always been closely related to the practical circumstances in which I have found myself. My research has always been of an applied nature produced in response to particular practical problems. Although in this summary I shall attempt to explain my thinking chronologically, much of the work developed concurrently. Over the period covered by my publications my thinking has focused on three main areas, the first of which was:

a. An exploration of the implications for language learning of the shared meaning-making process in reading, reading aloud and writing.(Approx.1978-1982)

Following my MA research in 1978 at the English Language Research Department, Birmingham University, in which I explored the expression of negotiated meaning through

intonation patterns in the process of reading aloud, I became interested in the strategies which readers and writers use to negotiate meaning in writing.

At this time I was teaching five and six year old children and I began to examine some of the features of their story writing. Over a two year period I began to systematically collect examples of stories of children written throughout the three years of infant education. My thinking at this time was particularly influenced by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Coulthard (1977) and Brazil (1978) and it was upon the findings of these studies and my unpublished MA thesis that I based my analysis of the children's stories. Analysis of these stories indicated that some of the important features in the process of shared meaning making between the reader and the writer were: use of detail, sequencing of content, and the use of conjunctive markers in the discourse.

Later, as a teacher of six and seven year old children I wanted to know how to encourage awareness of these aspects of story writing. I developed experimental teaching materials for teaching writing to top infants. The materials were developed over a three year period with consecutive year groups of children in the same school. However, during the second and third years they were also trialled, evaluated and modified by six parallel classes and finally adopted as school policy. In 1980 David Mackay of the '*Breakthrough to Literacy*' Project visited my classroom with a view to

incorporating the materials into the *Breakthrough* Project. However, the impact of 'Real Books' on research and publishing interests led to the cancellation of further development of the *Breakthrough to Literacy* materials. At this time I was asked to lead in-service courses for teachers, which required the preparation of handouts, but I did not attempt to publish any of the work that I had done.

b. An exploration of the influence that a teacher may have in the shared process of meaning-making and its implications for teaching and learning.(Approx. 1982-1990)

In 1982 I took up my appointment at Rolle Faculty of Education and this immediately provided me with opportunities to discuss my work with students and experienced teachers, focusing my attention on the role of the teacher in the processes of learning to read and write. I began to revise, refine and write up, the previous work. At this point I produced an article: *An Attempt to Teach Reading Skills through Writing Skills* (Publication 2A) summarising my work and its recent developments.

In hindsight, although this publication represented a step forward in my own thinking and was an important vehicle for my own learning, as a piece of research it had some serious weaknesses. Judgements about the children's achievements were based on the perceptions of teachers and the feedback from their parents. Whilst this is important evidence, if I

had been a researcher rather than a busy teacher at the time, I would have organised the research data and their collection differently. I was dissatisfied with the case study approach. Many of the observations were interpretive and I began to desire a more systematic approach to collecting data which would enable me to be more confident about my conclusions.

In retrospect, I also feel that the thinking underpinning this research was limited. I set out on the task asking myself *'How can I teach these children to write more effectively?'* when perhaps I should have been asking: *'How can I assist these children to learn about writing more effectively?'* Although the work carried out across parallel classes in the school was eventually extensive, I view this work as a piece of action research with all of the limitations of an action research project.

In 1985 a grant was obtained by the Education Department at Rolle College to fund a series of internal publications and I was asked by the Head of the Education Department to write a monograph about my ongoing work (Publication 2B). Two thousand copies were produced for sale of which eleven remain. This monograph naturally drew on the earlier work produced in my MA thesis *'A Study of the Intonation of Aloud Reading of Stories and Newspaper Articles'*. However, it differed in that, although the underlying theory and many of the examples remained unchanged, the monograph concentrated on the practical applications of the work for

teachers in the classroom. This was an initial attempt at bringing together my work on the processes of reading and writing and my growing interest in the importance of the teacher and the learning context. This theme was later developed in my first book '*Communicating in Writing: Teaching Infant Writing Skills*' (Publication 3A).

This book had its foundation in my earlier language experiments in the classroom, but the thinking had developed considerably. At Rolle I worked with initial training students and with teachers on in-service courses which provided opportunities to develop my thinking about the role of the teacher and the learning context. This book attempted to bring together the linguistic and sociological aspects of the process of writing. It takes the Brunerian (1983) view that teaching and learning writing is a highly structured public experience with an internal private space. It attempts to ask: *What do teachers need to teach children about the public aspects of the writing system in order that children can develop writing for their own purposes?* and *What are the best ways of doing this?*

The first draft of this book included explanations of the linguistic, sociological and pedagogical philosophy underpinning the activities for children, but this was simplified and omitted in the final version to meet the marketing requirements of the publisher. In hindsight this proved to be a mistake because the thinking underpinning the

book challenged the then dominant pedagogical notions of literacy. Theoretically, I had serious reservations about *Real Books* (Waterland 1985), *Whole Language Theory* (Newman 1985) and *Emergent Writing* (Graves 1983). This approach seemed to place too much emphasis on the sociological aspects of literacy, whilst paying little attention to the vital linguistic knowledge and interpretive skills required by readers and writers.

On the other hand I cannot accept the view currently promoted in the *Revised Orders for the Teaching of English* that children should be taught to read by phonic methods. This view emphasised linguistic code breaking skills rather than the more sophisticated negotiation of meaning that I had observed, and it seemed to ignore the sociological context of reading. My own view lay between these approaches to language learning. I felt that whilst the sociological context of reading was important, so too was the linguistic knowledge of the public code. I attempted to describe this 'middle' view as a *reader/writer relationship* and this is the main theoretical contribution of my first book. It sought to take a more eclectic and sensitive view of what might be happening sociologically and linguistically when readers read and writers write.

In the meantime, in 1989 I was asked by Dr. Robin Campbell, Review Editor of *Reading*, to write a review of a recent book about teaching writing, *Through Teacher's Eyes* (Publication

2C). This was a particularly thought provoking task because the work took a contrasting view of teaching writing from my own work.

I pursued my interest in the *reader/writer relationship* in children's writing by collecting as many different examples of writing as I could, right across the Primary age range. Theoretically my thinking was moving towards the social construction of meaning and at this time I was particularly influenced by the work of Hoey (1979), Gumperz (1982) Frow (1985), Cook-Gumperz (1987) and Mumby (1989). This work continued for four years and I began to prepare the manuscript of another book for publication. *Teaching Writing at Key Stage Two* was not published until 1993 (Warham 1993a: Publication 2E) but it is in this work that I really began to explore the relationship between the linguistic and sociological contexts of reading and writing.

I began to systematically analyse samples of writing from every stage of Primary education, and it was here that I really began to experience dissatisfaction with my work. Although I attempted to use several different linguistic tools for analysis, I always felt unsure about the inferences I had made from my observations, because the analysis was not as clear-cut as I would have liked it to be.

There were too many instances where an analytical tool such as Hoey's (1979) *Situation, problem, solution, evaluation* was

ambiguous and inconclusive. For example, occasionally I was unable to tell whether I was looking at the evaluation of one 'chunk' of discourse, or the situation of the next 'chunk'. Similar problems were also described by Coulthard and Brazil (1979) in *Exchange Structure*. At this point I began to think more critically about the kinds of analytical tools available. The ambiguity inherent in many kinds of linguistic analysis was a considerable problem.

Owing to the analytical problems this manuscript is the one about which I feel the least confident. However, I do not look upon this lack of confidence in negatively. It was a turning point in my thinking where I began to be more discriminating and critical about the quality of my research. What I had done simply was not good enough. I think this was an important moment in my personal development. It was the point at which I decided that if I wanted to continue with my research and publications, then I must find more effective ways of answering the questions that I had been asking myself.

For all its weaknesses, I still feel that this manuscript was worthwhile not just for the contribution it made to the development of my thinking, but also for some of the insights it produced about the reader/writer relationship. The main contribution of this book is its attempt to sketch out the social and linguistic interface between the reader and the writer. It attempts to provide an approach to understanding how the writer's use of written language is shaped by

considerations for the reader and the perceived social context.

Whilst it had been necessary to focus my thinking on children's writing during the writing of *'Teaching Writing at Key Stage Two'* (Publication 2E), during this period I became more urgently interested in the crucial role of the teacher in the teaching and learning process. It was clear from my earlier work that the way in which the teacher negotiated the meaning of the task with the pupils had vital consequences for the way in which the children understood and performed their tasks. At this time there was also a pressing need in my own teaching, where student response to seminar work was variable and unpredictable. In an attempt to think through these professional issues, I carried out a small action research project at Rolle Faculty of Education. This involved recording the negotiation of seminar work with 25 students, keeping my own log, informally interviewing students to gain their perspectives on their learning, and comparing this with their written assignments. I wanted to find out what kind of learning experiences were most valuable for students from my perspective as their teacher, and whether this concurred with student views.

The one major point of agreement amongst the students seemed to be that they learnt more from a highly structured situation with some degree of informality. The informality presented opportunities for the students to take part at

whatever level they were able to participate. A central point to emerge was that the use of language by the students in the negotiation of the seminar work greatly influenced the students' perception of what they were doing, and why they were doing it. It also affected their ability to take part in the seminar. The more articulate students created more opportunities for participation than less articulate students. This in turn affected the way they valued the work and consequently their motivation to participate. My own language interests led me to question the language used by different students. The most successful students seemed to have more accurate ideas about what kind of language was related to issues of teaching and learning. At this point I began to formulate the view that the most successful and highly motivated students were in some way more 'professionally literate'.

In hindsight, when I had completed this project I knew that it was another action research project limited by the fact that most of the evidence I was collecting was still very much of my own interpretation. I could not claim with any degree of confidence that I had lighted on 'the' correct interpretation. I was not even certain that there was a 'correct interpretation'. At this point I became very preoccupied with the methodology. The dilemma I faced was, that on the one hand I felt that the kinds of interpretive methods I had been using were probably the most productive for the kind of research I was carrying out, yet, on the other hand I needed to

be able to support the inferences I was making with adequate evidence. The kind of questions that I was asking were hermeneutic rather than scientific but I needed a more systematic framework in order to be more confident about my observations. These were problems which have been faced by many researchers and yet I could find no really satisfactory solutions.

The importance of this case study was that it set me thinking about 'professional literacy' and this was a critical point in my research and thinking. I began to reflect on the work of literacy theorists such as Friere (1976), Bhola (1979), Bloom (1987) Tuman (1987) and McLaren (1988). This led to the writing of an article in 1991 *What is the Role of the Tutor in the Process Curriculum?* (Publication 2D). At this point, because I had not managed to find a solution to my methodology problems, I began to explore theoretically what 'professional literacy' might involve. My thinking at this time was particularly influenced by readings from Vygotsky (1962), Stubbs (1980 and 1983), Carter (1982) whose psychological, sociological and linguistic views on language helped me to develop a broader view of language and language use, leading my interests towards work on discourse and power by writers such as Bennett (1983), Cherryholmes(1983), Malcolm (1987), Treichler et al (1987), and Sholle (1988). At this point there was a long and thoughtful hiatus in my activities, I needed to think critically about the methodological and theoretical problems

that I had created before I went any further.

c. The power context of the classroom, where the participants employ power strategies in an attempt to influence the outcome of the negotiation. (Approx. 1990-present)

Ever since my work on intonation in 1978, I have been fascinated by the discourse of teachers and learners and have analysed over seventy audio and video-taped examples. After discussions with students in my earlier project I began to realise that some kinds of tutor behaviour facilitated learning whilst others constrained it. I began to wonder how far this enabling and constraining activity was a part of being 'professionally literate'. I wondered how one might best describe and illuminate the process by which linguistic enabling and constraining takes place in the classroom. I began to perceive teaching and learning as a power situation and the classroom as a hegemony, where teachers used language to constrain and facilitate learning. However, the very notion of power presented great difficulties.

Treichler *et al* (1987) point out the concept of power is '*problematic and elusive*' (page 175). In my own work there seemed to be different sources of power in operation. One source of power, suggested by Friere (1976), Bourdieu (1986) and Friere and Macedo (1987) is, that it is generated institutionally and is concerned with social control. A

second source of power suggested by researchers such as Foucault (1982), Gumperz (1982) and later by Ferdman (1990) has been that power is something which pertains to individual identity and is generated by individuals. A third source of power suggested by researchers such as Cousins and Houssain (1984), Wickham (1983) Treichler *et al* (1987) and Malcolm (1987) is that power is generated in discourses and is a product of interactions between individuals.

If power itself is '*problematic and elusive*' its analysis in spoken interactions is very difficult indeed. My previous work led me to the view that it was important to take an eclectic position regarding the analysis of power strategies in language, much after the position described by Janicki (1990). I arrived at this conclusion because adopting any particular system of linguistic analysis eliminated vital aspects of the power situation. I discovered that it was important not to disregard any aspect of the communication which may affect the negotiation of meaning and power.

Although I had not planned it at the start, my collection of data fell into two distinct parts. In the first part I collected my own material and analysed it with a view to developing my own perspective about power relationships. However, as the work progressed, the analysis of audio and video-taped examples led to yet another methodological problem. I began to wonder how, when collecting the material, I could be certain that I was not subconsciously

looking for examples of the operation of power? With these questions in mind I began to analyse materials which had been collected by other researchers for different purposes, and also to analyse teaching videos produced for broadcasting. Although I cannot claim that this completely solved the problems of data collection and analysis, I felt that it limited my concerns.

There were also other methodological problems such as those outlined by Delamont and Hamilton (1984). For example, merely being present as a participant observer affected the power situation and the kinds of language used. How could my analysis overcome these problems, or at least limit them? I felt that this dilemma was of a philosophical nature. I was trying to carry out research which was attempting to explore the significance of the moment, whilst trying to remove or minimise some of the essential elements of that moment. In the circumstances I decided to continue analysing the videos with an awareness that I and others had been present as participant observers. We were a part of that moment and any interpretations of that moment must take this fact into account.

In hindsight, this was a mistake. There were other options that I had not thought about. For example, if I had to repeat this exercise I would ensure that I recorded the interpretations of what had happened of both the teachers and children. It was not until I had completed the work and

was able to reflect upon it, that I realised how much more confident I could have been about my observations if I had taken this precaution. This has been an important aspect of my own learning, which will certainly affect the way in which I conduct my continuing work.

I proceeded with my field work by analysing twenty case studies in detail, looking at the intonation of the pitch sequences and the tone choices, the structure of the content, the completeness of the syntax, the lexical choice, the paralanguage, the use of silence and the kinesic information to try to isolate the features of the discourse which attempted to constrain or facilitate '*the future actions of others*'. (Foucault 1980). In spite of the methodological problems I had experienced in my earlier work, I found that looking at a wide range of data and analytical techniques seemed to eliminate some of the difficulties. When I began to look at a much larger cross-section of linguistic data I could see patterns which had not been obvious when I had looked at fragmented details.

The technique of collecting many different observations and combining several different tools for analysis was not without its flaws. I was very conscious that rather than improving my analytical tools, I may in fact have collected together a Pandora's box of weaknesses. However, in practice this appeared not to be the case. When I made observations which were ambiguous, or about which I was

uncertain, there was now a whole range of other reference points to appeal to. This approach to the linguistic analysis seemed far more satisfactory than my earlier attempts. It enabled me to develop analytical tools which seemed far more appropriate for the analysis of power than I had hitherto found in the literature.

Applying my new analysis to the case studies, I observed a wide range of strategies which ranged from dominant to less dominant. These strategies were operated by both teachers and children, and in staff meetings by the head teacher and the teachers. I discovered that dominant strategies, which seemed to constrain future action, were characterised by particular features of the linguistic context:

- * More institutional and less intimate syntax choices.
- * More formal choices in vocabulary.
- * Using high key or high termination choices.
- * Using dominant rising tones.
- * Firmer and more emphatic paralanguage.
- * Intermittent or disrupted eye contact.
- * Emphatic gestures.
- * Repetition.
- * Ritual forms of language.

Less dominant strategies which seemed to facilitate future action were characterised by:

- * More intimate and less institutional syntax choices.
- * More casual vocabulary choices
- * Mid key and mid termination choices.
- * A soft or moderate voice.
- * Long eye contact.

Once I was able to isolate linguistic patterns I was able to begin to explore the operation of power in classroom discourse. Something I had not anticipated about the operation of power presented itself in terms of the *unpredictability of the perlocution* (Coulthard 1977, page 19). Power operated not so much in terms of what each speaker said, but more in the effect it had on the listener, and the way the listener chose to respond to the discourse. This made the power situation a very dynamic and unpredictable process. My thinking at this time was influenced particularly by Foucault (1972, 1979 and 1982), Giroux (1981), Giroux, McLaren (1987) and Ball (1990).

The methodology I had started to develop enabled me to examine not just the linguistic evidence, but also to isolate some of the power strategies used by teachers and children. I observed teachers operating the following dominant strategies:

- * Changing the subject.
- * Using strategies of disengagement.
- * Protesting.

- * Continually establishing and re-establishing a state of consent and co-operation between the teacher and pupils.
- * Curtailing contributions from some pupils to allow others to speak.

Some of the children's dominant power strategies consisted of:

- * Interrupting the teacher.
- * Fiddling whilst she was talking.
- * Yawning.
- * Not paying attention.
- * Distracting the other children.
- * Arguing with their peers and with the teacher.
- * Refusing or failing to respond to the teacher's questions.
- * Answering questions that have been asked of another child.

The teacher and children also used less dominant strategies such as:

- * Nodding assent.
- * Trying to explain.
- * Requesting the teacher to look at their work.
- * Smiling.
- * Establishing eye contact with the teacher.
- * Paying careful attention.
- * Waiting until the teacher had finished what she was doing.
- * Responding to humour

- * Politely seeking explanations when confused.
- * Requesting permission to move to a more suitable working position.

In 1993 I published a book '*Primary Teaching and the Negotiation of Power*' (Warham 1993b : Publication 3B) which begins to explore the nature of teacher competence. The main contribution of this book is its situating of teaching activities in a professional context of power relationships, in which the teacher is cast as a manager of power relationships in the classroom.

As with my first book, much of the academic thinking underlying the book was edited out to meet the marketing needs of the publisher. In an initial attempt to publish a theory of teacher competence based on 'professional literacy' I wrote '*Reflections on Hegemony: Towards a Model of Teacher Competence*' (Publication 2F). However, this is only the beginning of a much larger piece of work in progress, where my current thinking has been influenced by writers such as Shotter (1993) and Jaworski (1993). The notion of a 'professionally literate teacher' places far greater emphasis on an *unfinished model* (Shotter 1993) of competence, where the professional skills of the teacher are described in a context of literacy, discourse and power.

Generally, It is difficult to evaluate my work because it is

far from finished. I can only describe what I have done over the last ten years as a continuous but invigorating struggle, from which I have learnt a great deal. My struggle has not only been to answer questions which seemed simple at the outset, but which proved to be very complex. It has also been a struggle to develop a methodology in which I felt more confident. In some ways, it has also been a struggle to piece together a theory which might further illuminate my questions. In this appraisal I have tried to explain how my work has suffered from many weaknesses, and although in many instances I have not managed to find solutions to my problems, the struggle has produced some small achievements. For example, the methodology, as I have indicated, is far from flawless, but I think it is interesting and original. It has provided some useful insights. The notion of power has caused me much concern, but the concept that is beginning to emerge from my work is a perspective which may have useful applications to other areas of research in the future. For example it may provide insights into management strategies. However, the development of a more satisfactory linguistic analysis is perhaps the achievement that I value the most. I think that this approach to analysing power in discourse has much to offer any research which seeks to consider language, discourse or power. It is something which I intend to develop further in my continuing work.

I am submitting this folio of publications for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy because I believe that my work has been systematic in its studies of children's writing and classroom discourse. The principle of negotiated meaning which underpinned my analysis of children's writing and my later analysis of classroom discourse has remained unchanged. I also believe that my work has been critical in several ways: first, the early development of my ideas was prompted by misgivings about the then current dominant literacy debate. Secondly, my work has been critical in that I have always tried to recognise my own weaknesses and have continually made efforts to refine and revise my thinking. Finally, during the writing of my books and articles I have deliberately sought and responded to critical comment. The willingness of colleagues, editors and referees to provide detailed feedback on my work has been a major factor in its development.

My work demonstrates progression in that it has evolved from looking at children's writing to analysing classroom discourse. Initially I was concerned with what the children produced, but this progressed to thinking about the role of the teacher in influencing what the children produced. I then began to think about the ways in which the teacher and pupils negotiate the learning task, and then refined my thinking towards the view that the negotiation of meaning involves power relationships. More recently I have been looking at teacher competence from the point of view of the 'professionally literate teacher' in which the teacher is cast

as a manager of power relationships in the classroom.

My work is coherent in that its ongoing concerns are still rooted in the original question that I asked myself. My attempt to describe a concept of teacher competence from a perspective of 'professional literacy' is based upon the fundamental question that I was asking myself in 1982: What is the nature and process of effective teaching and learning?

(4989 words)

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2A. Warham, S.M. (1982)

An Attempt to Teach Reading Skills through Writing Skills

Reading 16, 3, pp135-142

A description of an attempt to teach reading skills through writing skills to top infants

Sylvia M. Warham

The context and the problem

One of the advantages of progressive education is that it has focused attention on the difficulties of the learner. This has brought new insights into the problems of learning to read. It has made teachers aware of the mismatch between the spoken sound and the written symbol. In addition there is the question of punctuation in text, but more than anything else we are becoming aware of communicative differences. I do not mean by this that speech cannot mean the same as text, but that the systems used for communication are quite different in speech and text.

This happens because a speaker can see his hearer and is able to make very precise assumptions about him, whereas the writer writes for a much wider audience about whom he can only make the most general assumptions. Consequently spoken communication differs considerably from written communication.

The evidence that this difference exists can be found in top infant and lower junior classes, where the differences manifest themselves as acute learning difficulties. The problem is that of the child who has already overcome the first hurdles in learning to read. He has mastered the sound-symbol differences, and in purely mechanical terms he can 'read'. That is,



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he can work out what the words 'say', but he does not necessarily understand what he has read. The problem therefore is: how can a teacher help children to understand what they read?

It is not a new problem, and in the past many questions have been asked about the kind of comprehension skills a reader may require to understand a text. In 1953 Taylor developed the technique of cloze procedure to help overcome the problem. Robinson (1961) set out a model of comprehension techniques in his description of SQ3R. The SRA comprehension materials for the classroom were developed by Parker (1958).

Whilst each of these techniques was successful in its way, each raised problems of its own. The SQ3R technique was intended for use with adults and is not easily adapted for use with younger children. The interest level of SRA does not always appeal to younger children, and indeed it is difficult to suggest how this problem can be overcome. Cloze procedure has subsequently been used in very valuable discussions about text, and at the present is perhaps the most useful technique open to teachers. However, the sustaining of a worthwhile discussion demands great skill on the part of the teacher. This may not be possible in the case of young, inexperienced or less able teachers.

Comprehension in the classroom generally takes the form of a set of exercises, and as Niles (1963) points out, 'Many exercises are tests for the application of skills rather than devices for teaching them.' In the case of young children the problem remains unsolved. Undoubtedly some children overcome their difficulties without any kind of specific instruction, but they are the minority. What of the majority? Which is the way ahead for the teaching of these children?

In her studies of early writing skills Clay (1975) suggests that the teaching of early writing skills was beneficial for early readers because it focused attention on the nature of written text. It seems logical to suggest that if knowledge of written text helps children in the early stages of reading, there seems to be no reason why this should not also apply to the later stages of reading.

This paper sets out to examine the issues: (a) what are the comprehension skills which young children need to acquire? and (b) a description of a teaching programme planned to help children acquire these skills.

What kind of skills do young children need to acquire?

In the introduction to this paper I noted that spoken communication was very different from written communication. Perhaps this is the place to examine the differences in greater detail. When children arrive in school they have already learnt a great deal about spoken communication and are in most cases competent in understanding speech and making themselves understood. In highlighting the differences between speech and text we may develop a general concept of what children may already know about communication and what they still need to learn.

Coulthard (1977) has demonstrated that communication takes place on the basis of shared knowledge. In speech a speaker can make very precise assumptions about the state of knowledge of his hearer because he receives constant feedback:

Speaker: Yer know that track down by the canal?

Hearer: Mmm. (nods confirming understanding.)

Speaker: Well I was walking down there . . .

The situation for the reader and writer is very different. Not only does the writer not have any feedback, but he is also not certain of the exact nature of his audience. Writers are able to make only the most general assumptions about the state of knowledge of their readers.

Second, a hearer who has failed to understand a spoken message may ask for further clarification. Writers do not have this privilege. They have only one attempt to communicate their message and no recourse to further clarification.

Third, besides the actual language used in speech, there are other meaning systems functioning. The intonation of the voice helps the hearer understand whether the speaker means:

My *brown* coat.

or

My *brown coat*.

Intonation, as such, does not form a part of written communication, and writers have to find other ways of conveying this subtle difference.

Meaning in speech is also conveyed by the kinesic systems of eye contact, facial expression and body posture. Again these systems have no place in written communication because the reader and writer cannot see each other. We must ask where the sources of this kind of information are located in text, and what kind of compensations does the writer have at his disposal?

We can begin by saying that text is not spontaneous, that in order to communicate his message the writer has to plan carefully and logically. He has to work out in advance exactly what the message will be, and the exact language it will be written in. Niles (1963) hints at the delicacy of the organization a reader might expect to find in text:

'The first of these abilities is the power to find and understand thought relationships: in single sentences, in paragraphs and in selections of varying lengths. Ideas are related to each other in many ways . . . These four kinds of thought relationship — time, simple listing, comparison/contrast, and cause and effect plus others occur in a great many combinations, some of them complex. The ability to observe and use these relationships seems to be one of the basic comprehension skills.'

If we consider this description in the light of the differences between spoken and written communication skills we can refine the concept even further. We could suggest that the combination of the lack of feedback and the ability to make only general assumptions about the state of knowledge

of the audience induce the writer to be much more explicit, and at several different levels:

1. Writers have to be explicit about how the larger parts of the text are related.
2. Writers have to be explicit about the relationship between sentences: sentences cannot occur in just any order if they are to be meaningful; they need some kind of sequence.
3. Writers need to be explicit in the details they provide: for example, a writer cannot write

She put it on.

When he is trying to express the idea that

Carole put the pan of potatoes on the cooker to cook.

Details are an essential part of comprehension because they supply information which is carried in speech by the kinesic systems:

Mary staggered into the room, slumped into a chair and closed her eyes.

In a spoken communication these details may have been observed but not commented upon. Here the writer is acting as the 'eyes of the reader'.

4. Owing to the fact that the writer has only one chance to get his message over he has to organize it carefully into sentences whose defining features are capital letters and full stops. This organization is not identical to the organizations of speech. It is therefore important to make children aware that it exists. It is perhaps important to point out too that the punctuation system carries some of the intonation functions of speech, where

It is mine!

does not mean exactly the same as

It is mine?

By way of summary let us return to the original question: what do writers and young readers need to learn about written communication which they do not already know from their experience of spoken communication?

Summary

1. Writers and readers need to understand that text is organized into sentences, and that sentences have defining features.
2. Readers and writers need to pay attention to detail in text, because it conveys information carried by several different meaning systems in speech. Writers need to think of themselves as the 'eyes of the reader'.
3. Ideas in text are sequential.
4. The relationship between ideas may be one of time, simple listing, comparison-contrast or cause-effect. It may be a combination of more than one of these.
5. Quite the opposite of speech, text is a preplanned and logically organized set of ideas. Readers need to be able to recognize this organization.

Description of an attempt to plan and carry out a teaching programme

With these thoughts in mind I set out to plan a teaching programme for top infants. Initially I wanted to improve their text composition skills, but hoped that this might also transfer to comprehension skills. The children in the class I chose were already well accustomed to using 'Breakthrough to Literacy'. Consequently they were familiar with the concept of writing in sentences and using the defining features of sentences.

I could not decide upon a hierarchical order for the issues dealing with sentence order, 'being the eyes of the reader' and attention to detail. These factors seemed equally important and I set about planning a simultaneous programme for teaching them.

Attention to detail

In order to develop descriptive skills a series of 'blindman' activities were undertaken to make children aware of the importance of their eyes in spoken communication. It was then much easier to develop the notion of being the 'eyes of the reader'. In addition the class were asked to look at stories in books and to talk about instances where the writer was acting as the 'eyes of the reader'.

Sentence order

This was a difficult topic to teach. Speech is only loosely ordered in terms of subjects covered, and this is reflected in the writing of top infants, who nearly always put the end of a story first. A great deal of sequencing work was necessary. Initially it was a taught group exercise using a 'story board' on which the sequence of existing stories was worked out. This was supplemented by individual work with picture sequencing and sequencing sentences below the pictures. For individual writing, a technique of writing on strips of paper was developed to enable children to sequence their work *after* they had written it, or to receive help with sequencing if they were unable to perform this task for themselves. In addition, sets of text on card were cut into sentences and children were asked to put them in the 'right order'.

At first the children were puzzled to find that a text may have several 'right orders' according to the interpretation placed upon it. I felt that this was a very valuable exercise in developing the concept that a text has to be interpreted if it is to be meaningful. At a later stage children explored the different interpretations of their own writing by changing the sentence order. For the first time they began to realize the importance of sentence order for conveying the desired interpretation.

Grosser organization of text

Activities in ordering 'topics' and 'events' were carried out in a manner similar to the sentence organization activities. It led to similar insights and experiments with the children's own writing. They began in time to comment upon the organization of stories read to them, and I felt that this was an important step forward to acquiring more advanced reading skills.

The different types of sequential relationships found in text

Planning a teaching programme to cover the nature of sequential relationships in text was much more difficult than any other part of the programme. I had to ask myself how writers made explicit in text the relationships of time, simple listing, comparison-contrast and cause-effect? From my previous studies of aloud reading (Warham, 1978) I noted that there were cues in text to which writers gave apparent weight and to which proficient readers seemed to pay attention. For example:

1. Time sequencing seemed to be indicated by words such as once, long ago, then soon, after that.
2. Simple listing may be cued in text by first, second, next, in addition, and.
3. Comparison-contrast relationships may be indicated by however, in spite of this, nevertheless, but.
4. Cause and effect relationships may be signalled by on account of this, because of this, owing to, as a result of, consequently.

However, I found that although one kind of relationship was usually clearly indicated, there may be some overlap between the actual cues used in simple listing and time cues. I was concerned that there was clearly a danger in presenting clearcut categories where there was a complex overlap in definitions. In addition, after examining many texts it emerged that writers do not always make the relationship explicit; it is left for the reader to infer.

In the early stages I could not convince myself that an infant classroom was the appropriate place to teach inference skills when there were so many other basic skills to be learnt. The proper place for teaching inference skills might be in the lower junior classes, but if that was the case it was important to lay a firm foundation in the top infant class. Finally I compromised and planned activities in writing and story sessions involving only simple listing and time sequence cues.

In practice this proved even more difficult than I had anticipated. It required more time than any of the other activities. However, in hindsight it was probably the most valuable, because there was apparent evidence of transfer of writing to reading skills. Towards the end of the year-long programme it was not uncommon for a child to bring out a story he was reading and pronounce: 'Look they use those words like we do . . . *First* she

put on the porridge, *then* she set the table.'

I think this approach to direct textual cues was very valuable. If I had to plan this project again I would pursue this aspect of text composition skills in greater depth. Generally, I felt the work was encouraging in terms of the writing skills of the class concerned, although this can be only a subjective judgement. Unfortunately the group consisted of only 31 children, and I feel it is not valid to make judgements about reading skills from such a small sample without a control group. At this stage one can only tentatively suggest that there seemed to be a transfer from the taught writing skills to reading skills, and that this may possibly be an area of fruitful research in the future.

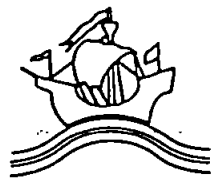
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*Discourse and Text: A Linguistic Perspective on
Reading Skills*

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Discourse and Text

A Linguistic Perspective

on Reading Skills

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ROLLE COLLEGE

FACULTY OF TEACHER EDUCATION

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

An important part of any teacher training faculty must be the continual search for a greater understanding of the processes involved in teaching and learning. The pressures of course development, teaching practice, administration and the continual need to satisfy innumerable groups of people that the course is meeting national criteria tends to draw energies away from other important aspects of work such as research.

It is therefore with great pleasure that I write this foreword to the first in a new series of occasional papers produced by the Faculty of Teacher Education at Rolle College. The sharing of information leads to renewed discussion and this professional dialogue sustains the growth and forward thinking necessary to ensure that the teachers of the future have the best possible background to sustain their training. I look forward to reading this and other similar papers. I trust all readers will be stimulated by the contents of these occasional papers and I know that the authors will welcome correspondence.

*M Preston
Principal*

Discourse and Text

A Linguistic Perspective on Reading Skills

Abstract

From the research of recent years a global view of reading has emerged. Reading is no longer considered to be a code-cracking process, but a whole variety of psycholinguistic strategies. However, whilst a considerable amount of literature on the pedagogic, philosophical and psychological aspects of reading exists, there is relatively little from a linguistic point of view.

This paper takes the view that any kind of behaviour connected with speech or text is essentially linguistic by nature. It sets out to examine the kind of insights which might be gained by applying modern techniques of spoken discourse analysis to the analysis of what happens when a reader reads a text.

* * * * *

Discourse and Text

A Linguistic Perspective on Reading Skills

I

Introduction

In recent years reading research has been particularly consistent in one of its aspects. Researchers have become increasingly confident in their insistence that reading is not merely a word or letter decoding skill. There can now be little doubt that a reader does a great deal more than look at printed symbols, but beyond this certainty there are very few consistent suggestions about what actually happens.

Crystal (1976) suggests that reading is a process of matching written patterns to spoken patterns. As far back as 1967 Goodman described reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, whilst Smith (1978) described reading as a process of predicting and hypothesising. All of these researchers offer valuable insights into the process of reading, but relatively little attention is paid to the linguistic behaviour of readers. Until recently the linguistic aspects of reading have been overlooked by those interested in reading, and are of little interest to those involved in the study of language.

This was not an unfortunate oversight on the part of linguists. It arose because, until recently there was no linguistically analytical approach suitable for application to the study of reading skills. It is only since the emphasis of research on the reading process as one of recovering meaning, that modern

linguistic approaches have become applicable. However, now that there is a closer proximity between the study of reading and the study of language, we are in a position to ask from a strictly linguistic point of view: "What happens when we read?".

II

What happens when we read?

At its most general we might begin by saying that reading is 'some kind' of human behaviour which takes place in connection with written language. However, the purpose of any kind of language is to communicate meaning. In this sense reading and writing are quite comparable with speaking and listening, for this also is a human behaviour taking place in connection with language, with the intention of communicating meaning. It therefore seems quite logical to suppose that devices for communicating meaning in speech might in some way be related to devices for communicating meaning in written text.

We can see that certain features of spoken language play an important part in the interpretation of written text by taking a single written sentence:

Ex.1

"My garden is a big one."

One reader might read this sentence:

My garden is a BIG one.

Another reader might read this sentence:

My GARDEN is a big one.

The first reader was emphasising that his garden was a big garden. He did this by placing the speech stress on 'big'.

The second reader was emphasising the fact that whilst his garden was large, his house, car, or other item under discussion, was not large. The readers arrived at different meanings for this sentence by placing the speech stress in the appropriate place. We can see therefore that the precise interpretation of the sentence depends largely on the decisions the reader makes about it, but this raises the question of what kind of decisions a reader makes, and on what criteria does he base his decisions?

JB Carroll (1975) described the mature reader as one whose eyes move together in a swiftly well co-ordinated manner. A series of fixations and rapid jumps are made along the lines of print from left to right, or occasionally near the lines of print. He suggested that some words may never actually be recognised, but are anticipated or apprehended from the context of the reading material. The number of fixations and the place at which they are made varies from reader to reader, but during the fixation there is an instant recognition of between one and five words. Carroll's second stage of the description concerns the point at which the rapid fixations 'somehow merge together in such a way as to build up in your mind an impression of a meaningful message ...'. We can only surmise that this is the point at which the reader decides which items in the text are important. He can only do this in the light of what he has already read, so in one sense, extracting meaning from a text can be seen as a retrospective process. However, the meaning extracted from a text inevitably influences the expectations of what is to follow, and Carroll's description does not attempt to explain how this happens. Further, this description only accounts for readers reading a text for the first time, that is, they have no foreknowledge of the contents. Whether Carroll anticipates that different processes would take place if the

reader had already read the material, is unclear.

Goodman (1967) explains the reading process from quite a different point of view. He claims that:

"Reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language Reading is a selective process. It involves the partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected or refined as reading progresses."

This description states the fact that the reader, beside decoding the written words is also anticipating what is to follow. As his expectations are confirmed or rejected the reader is making decisions about the written text. So that from Goodman's point of view, reading is an anticipatory process in which the reader projects his expectations, which are confirmed or rejected in the light of what the reader actually finds in the text.

This is an interesting point because it raises the possibility that readers may make different decisions about texts. The possibility exists that some readers may have different expectations about a passage of reading, and that their expectations may therefore be satisfied in differing degrees. Further, it seems that decisions made about texts based on differing expectations may possibly vary between readers reading the same text.

Here there are two completely different points of view describing what is thought to happen when a reader reads. The first is a retrospective decision-making process and the second is a forward projecting anticipatory process. Smith (1971) also sets out a description of reading as a decision-making process, by which the reader 'reduces his uncertainty'. He defines 'uncertainty' in terms of the number of alternatives

from which the reader has to choose. The information contained in the message allows the reader to eliminate all but one of the available alternatives, thus reducing his uncertainty. The process of reducing uncertainty is therefore a decision-making process, in which the reader selects the most appropriate alternative from the available information, and eliminates the remaining two options. This description is similar to that of Goodman. It is again an anticipatory process, but it differs from Goodman in that it is a moment-by-moment decision-making process. The alternative which the reader selects is from the information present in the text, that is, one piece of information is more important to the expectations of the reader than the rest of the information. This one piece of information reduces the uncertainty of the reader whilst the other alternatives are eliminated. However, if it is the case that readers may have different expectations of a text, it is also likely that the important piece of information which reduces the uncertainty of the reader is also going to differ. As we saw at the beginning of this section, different decisions about a text also produce different meanings, and Smith's description does not take account of this dynamic aspect of the reading process. However, in passing Smith does observe that:

"The potential informativeness of a sentence lies in the extent to which it will reduce the uncertainty of the reader ... Such a theory implies that one cannot discuss the 'meaning' of a sentence as such, but only its meaning to a particular listener. This relative approach is not as tidy as an 'absolute' one that looks for intrinsic meaning in every possible utterance."

From this comment we can see that Smith perceives 'meaning' as a state of a listener or reader, not as a property of text. That is, we should view meaning as something which a listener or reader creates from utterances and texts, rather than meaning

as something which is contained in texts and is 'worked out' by readers. Meaning is to be seen as a dimension which a reader brings to a text, rather than something which he takes from it. Taken to its logical conclusion we might argue that a text is a set of marks on a page which become meaningful when readers make decisions about them.

Perhaps the most important point arising from Smith's observation is the note that the same reduction of uncertainty applies to both readers and listeners. From this we infer that the same kind of decisions are made by readers to reduce their uncertainty as are made by listeners in a speech situation. This is a crucial observation because it implies that decisions made in processing written text are the same as decisions made when speakers and hearers interact during a spoken conversation. This raises a very interesting question: "Does a reader interact with a text in the same way that a speaker interacts with the hearer?". "Do they make the same decisions?" If it is the case that readers interact with a text by making the same decisions as speakers and hearers, we could learn a great deal about the reading process by asking how a speaker interacts with a hearer.

III

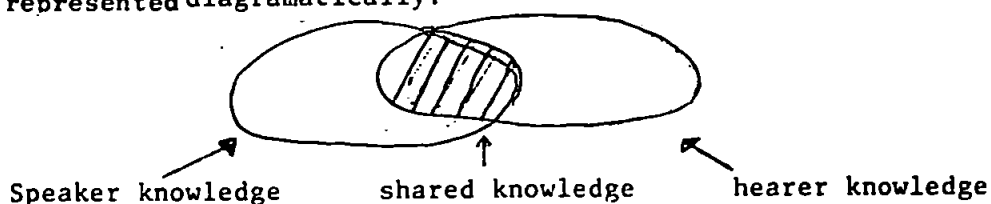
How does a speaker interact with a hearer?

Modern linguists describe a conversation between two or more people as a discourse, because it is a situation in which the participants have to interact and co-operate together to create a shared experience. The discourse hinges on the basis of shared knowledge between the participants. In his "Introduction

to Discourse Analysis" Coulthard (1977) notes:

"... the crucial importance of shared knowledge in a conversation; not simply shared rules for interpretation of linguistic items, but shared knowledge of the world to which the speaker can allude or appeal."

Coulthard presents a view of spoken discourse as a coming together of the two separate sets of knowledge of the hearer and speaker. The communication can only take place within the area where the knowledge overlaps. This has been represented diagrammatically:



Throughout the discourse the speaker marks information which he considers to be new, and the information, which he considers is part of the shared area of knowledge. These signals are carried in the intonation of the speaker's voice.

The meaning correlates of the intonation system were described by Brazil (1977) in the following ways:

Tone Choice

The tone system consists of five tones:

Proclaiming tones	:	P	:	falling	:	\
Intensified Proclaiming	:	P+	:	rise/fall	:	^
Referring tones	:	R	:	fall/rise	:	✓
Intensified referring	:	R+	:	rise	:	/
Neutral tone	:	0	:	level	:	—





When a speaker uses a proclaiming tone choice he marks information which is new to the shared area of knowledge between the speaker and hearer. Similarly a referring tone marks information which the speaker considers is already part of the shared area of knowledge between the speaker and hearer. Brazil describes

the choices as functioning to tell the hearer what the utterance "does":

"Intonation contributes to the communicative value of an utterance (or part utterance) by helping to determine what the utterance 'does'. Very simply the assertion that 'Dogs bark' may do either of two things: it may tell the hearer what dogs do, or what animals bark. It will be shown that intonation can determine which."

From this we can see that intonation adds a different dimension of interpretation to a discourse. By using a different tone choice even a simple single lexical item can have quite different meanings:

Ex.2

- | | |
|---|--|
|  | suggesting 'I am greeting you.' |
| or | |
|  | suggesting 'is there anyone here with me?' |
| or | |
|  | suggesting 'haven't we met before?' |
| or | |
|  | suggesting 'what a surprise to see you!' |

Even very simple examples such as these indicate that the lexis and syntax of English grammar are open to wide interpretation when they are part of a spoken discourse.

Prominence

Prominence is a system for highlighting items in the discourse. Prominence is a sense selection in the context of the discourse, thus in any given set of circumstances the following may occur:

Ex.3

- a) I am going to the SUPERmarket
- b) i AM going to the SUPERmarket
- c) i am GOING to the SUPERmarket
- d) i am going TO the SUPERmarket

e) i am going to THE SUPERmarket

f) i am going to the SUPERmarket

In his use of prominence a speaker can indicate which items of the discourse he wishes his hearer to pay attention to, and thus he sets up expectations of what may be about to follow.

Key and Termination

The key system has three choices, high, mid and low key. Key choices allow the speaker to set up relationships between different parts of the discourse. For example:

Ex.4

a) i want the BLUE bag //

High key choice is contrastive suggesting 'I want the blue bag rather than the yellow one'.

b) i want the BLUE bag //

Mid key choice is additive suggesting 'I want the blue one as well as the yellow one'.

c) i want the BLUE bag //

Low key choice is equative suggesting 'the blue bag, the one I told you about'.

Key and termination choices also have a structural significance in the form of pitch sequences.

Pitch Sequences

In his work on spoken language, Brazil (1978) observed that tone units seemed to occur in sequences, which move from a high to a low pitch. He called them pitch sequences, and his observations led him to define them by referring to their closing pitch level:

"It is defined, therefore as any stretch of language which ends with low termination and has no other occurrences of low termination within it."

NOW //
P

implies that the whole of this pitch sequence has a contrastive relationship with the whole of the preceding pitch sequence. In addition to the pitch sequences beginning with a high key choice, Brazil observed that sequences may also begin with a mid or low key choice. However, low key initial choices are uncommon. The following examples of mid key pitch sequences were found in Brazil's data:

Ex.6

- 1) P now TELL me // P WHY do you EAT // P all that FOOD //
- 11) R MY window // P opens onto a SIDEroad // a- //P the DIRT //
- P is tre-
MENDous //

Again the initial key choice has structural implications in that it determines the relationship between this pitch sequence, and the previous pitch sequence. Brazil characterised an initial mid key choice as expounding an additive relationship between the two sequences. In the following example the additive and contrastive implications of the pitch sequence initial choices can be seen functioning together:

Ex.7

- Doctor: P is there ANYthing in the DYES // P have
the DYES altered do you think //
- Patient: P WELL // R we've JUST got in this new cloth which
is portu
GUESE //
- R+ YOU KNOW // R but WHETHER THIS has got anything to do with it //
- R because it DOESn't seem to affect anyone (you know)
ELSE //

Doctor: P NO //

Patient: R+
NO //

Doctor: P NO // P well ALL RIGHT // I'M-// well R going

GIVE you an
to OINTment // P to apPLY //

The first pitch sequence has a mid key choice which indicates that this sequence is additive to the previous sequence, where the patient had indicated that he worked in a clothing factory. The question of dyes arose out of this information and can therefore be considered additive to it. The Doctor's:

P NO //

and the patient's:

R+
NO //

form the next pitch sequence. This sequence has a mid key initial choice and is directly related to the question of dyes in the clothing factory. Again it is an additive sequence.

The next pitch sequence spans only two tone units:

P NO // P well ALL RIGHT //

Again it has a sequence initial mid key choice and an additive relationship with the previous pitch sequence. The final pitch sequence has a high key choice on:

well I'M-//

Here clearly there is a sense of a new beginning. The Doctor has finished discussing the likely causes of the rash, and is announcing what he proposed to do about it. The relationship with the previous sequence is therefore contrastive.

This example is particularly interesting because it illustrates that the pitch sequence is not tied to a specific utterance.

The pitch sequences in the above example span a whole exchange:

Doctor: P NO //

Patient: R+
NO //

Similarly more than one pitch sequence may occur in only one utterance:

Doctor: P NO // P well ALL well I'M-// GIVE
RIGHT // R going to
you an
OINTment ...

It seems from these examples that the pitch sequence is not determined by an utterance, because there may be several pitch sequences in one utterance, or alternately, a pitch sequence may span a whole exchange. It seems that the pitch sequence cannot be equated with any formal structural feature of spoken language. It seems more likely that the pitch sequence is a structuring of the communication between the speaker and the hearer as it occurs. That is, the pitch sequence does not coincide with the utterance of a single speaker, it seems to structure the flow of information between the participants. From Brazil's data it has been demonstrated that there is a structuring of spoken language taking place which is not related to the length of an utterance. The important question which this raises is: "Does this kind of ordering exist when written language is read aloud?" Are there any pitch sequences, and do they begin in either or both mid and high key? Is there a relationship between mid key and high key sequences which is comparable with those found in spoken language? Finally, in spoken discourse Brazil distinguishes between direct and oblique orientation.

Direct and Oblique Orientation

Brazil observed that speakers may make different decisions in speech. On the one hand a speaker may orientate his speech directly towards a hearer, if the perceived purpose for the speech demands a sharing relationship. Alternately the speaker may orientate his speech obliquely towards the language if he perceives a nonsharing relationship in the purpose of the speech. Brazil described it in this way:

"We must now, however, make a fundamental theoretical distinction between two modes of speaker orientation. The speaker may orientate towards the hearer in the sense that tone choices are made in the light of assumptions he makes about the state of convergence; or he may orientate towards the language of the utterance, without regard to any such assumptions. A set towards the hearer we will call direct orientation; a set towards the language oblique orientation."

This does not imply that a speaker will adopt one form of orientation entirely. In the course of an utterance it is likely that a speaker will change from one kind of orientation to another in his moment by moment perception of the purpose, or purposes of discourse.

In speech we can describe the different kinds of orientation in the following ways:

- a) If a speaker holds an everyday conversation he orientates towards his hearer. This is direct orientation.
- b) If a speaker digresses from the conversation and, for example, quotes a poem, the quotation is more likely to be orientated towards the language. This instance would be oblique orientation.

So far we have seen how, in speech, a speaker organises in detail, and instructs the hearer about the 'state of play' in the discourse. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) in their study

of classroom interaction suggested that even larger 'chunks' of discourse are organised by the speaker, and the hearer is instructed to pay attention to them by means of 'Frames'.

Frames

Frames are particularly interesting in classroom discourse because they are always marked by a small group of lexical items:

well, now, right, good, O.K.

These words are not normally stressed in the intonation for their information value. However, Coulthard observes that this is not the case in classroom interaction:

*"Their normal meaning is suppressed -
'now' has no time reference 'right' or
'good' have no evaluation function -
though at other places in the lesson
these same items are used normally."*

Coulthard suggests that the meaning of these words is suppressed because they are performing a completely different function to their normal lexical purpose. He described their function as one of structuring the discourse. They inform the hearer that one transaction in the discourse has ended, and that a completely new one is beginning.

To summarise, we have an overall picture of a spoken discourse functioning on the basis of shared information between the speaker and the hearer. The speaker can highlight items on which he wishes the hearer to focus attention, and he can mark items which are considered new or already existing in the shared knowledge of the speaker and hearer. The speaker can signal relationships between larger sections of the discourse through his use of pitch sequences, and he can mark even larger 'chunks' of discourse with a frame marker. Finally, the speaker may orientate the discourse towards a hearer, or towards the

language of the discourse. Whichever decision the speaker makes, the discourse is clearly organised, so that both the speaker and hearer know exactly what stage the discourse has reached, and are able to anticipate what is likely to follow. The fact that spoken discourse can be described in terms of the decisions the speaker makes, raises some interesting speculations about the way a reader may read a written text. Does a reader make the same kind of discourse decisions that a speaker makes? Does he work on the assumption of shared knowledge? Does a reader structure his reading into pitch sequences, and if he does, how does this compare with the sentence structure of the text? Do frames exist in text, and does a reader use them to structure his reading of the text? Does a reader make decisions about the orientation of his reading? In what sense can a reader be described as interacting with a text, in the same way that a speaker interacts with a hearer?

IV

Does a reader interact with a text?

In trying to answer this question we are faced with a completely different dimension of communication, yet, as we have seen from the earlier discussion, it does not seem unreasonable to expect that there will be some similarities in the way speakers and readers make linguistic decisions to arrive at an interpretation of meaning.

Whilst it is impossible to know what happens inside a reader's head when he reads, what happens when he reads aloud is open to examination. The examination of reading aloud is important

because in reading aloud, a reader makes explicit the decisions he has made about the text. Examining intonation patterns of reading aloud is in some measure a study of the reader's output of the decisions he has made mentally about the text. As such it can provide some very instructive insights into the question of whether or not a reader interacts with a text. In an attempt to answer some of the questions we have raised, readers were asked to read aloud some stories for children and several articles from the newspaper. The intonation patterns were analysed according to the system described by Brazil, and the findings were as follows:

Tone choice

Examination of the tone choices made in reading aloud showed clearly that a reader used a falling tone to mark new information and a rising tone to mark shared information. The decision about which tone choice to select seemed to be made on the basis of shared information in exactly the same way that a speaker and hearer operate. For example the reader may say:

Ex.8

R+ Father bear/P looked after the flowers / P in the garden/

R+ MOTHer bear/ P kept the ROOMS / P NEAT and TIDY /

In this example the reader read 'father bear' in a rising tone choice, because father bear was an already established part of the shared area of knowledge. he had already appeared earlier in the story. The fact that he looked after the flowers was new, and is marked with a proclaiming tone choice. Similarly, the fact that the flowers were in the garden rather than a vase or flower pot, is also treated as new information. As soon as reference was made to mother bear, who had also already appeared in this story, we see that the reader's tone choice

is that of a rising tone. Again indicating shared knowledge.

The two facts that mother bear kept the rooms and kept them neat and tidy, are treated as new information. In the assessment of this reader, not even the male and female sex roles are to be taken for granted.

Examining the tone choices made by readers over longer stretches of text, it is clear that a pattern emerges. As the reader comes across each item in the text, he scans it with a view to deciding whether he will treat it as new or shared information. Initially either a falling or rising tone is acceptable. The reader could equally have read:

Ex.9

P FATHER bear /P looked after the FLOWers // P in the GARden //

He can do this ¹⁰because it is quite acceptable to treat 'father bear' as new information in the context of the garden. This interpretation of the text would imply that father bear rather than mother bear looked after the flowers, and this is new information, legitimately treated as such. Therefore, we can conclude that the decision made by the reader is not simply as 'is it' or 'isn't it' new in the text decision. In fact the reader does not make this decision purely with reference to the text, but to his interpretation of it. In effect the rising and falling tones are an outline sketch of the reader's interpretation of the text at that moment in time, and this may vary. If the reader were to read the text again it is more than likely that he would alter some of the decisions made about tone choices, because in the light of a previous reading the reader aloud is likely to make different assumptions about his hearer and the text itself. If we follow this argument to its logical conclusion, we must also assume that the meaning

interpreted by the reader is not necessarily the meaning that the writer intended.

A study of different readers reading the same passage aloud supported this view. It was clear that readers vary considerably not only in their choice of tone, but also on which item was to be the tonic syllable. Even where readers aloud chose the same tonic syllable they did not make the same tone choice. Some readers selected a rising tone whilst others chose a falling tone, but each decision was in complete accordance with the interpretation being made of the text, on a basis of new or shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer.

Prominence.

Brazil described prominence as:

"The incidence of prominence represents the speaker's assessment of the information load carried by the elements of his discourse ... Very informally we may say that the presence of a prominent syllable is a signal that the word must be attended to; absence of prominence indicates that it is informationally superfluous."

Thus prominence is a device for indicating that an item is important.

Brazil related this to the concept of predictability, whereby items which a listener is unlikely to be able to predict are made prominent. Conversely, items which a listener is likely to be able to predict, are less likely to be prominent.

In the study of reading aloud there were the following examples from the reading of newspaper items:

Ex.10

JOHN PAGano // RESidential DIRECTor // of JOHN MIChael // of
BLADES // HAIRdressing SALon // has won FIRST PRIZE // in a HAIR
dressing COMPetition // run by WOMan MAGazine // to find the
BEST hairdresser // in BRITain //

From this example we can see that items which would be difficult for the listener to predict, have been made prominent. In the

tone unit //HAIRdressing SALon // HAIRdressing is prominent because it is new information which the listener could not have been expected to predict about John Pagano. HAIRdressing in the tone unit //in a HAIRdressing COMpetition // is prominent because it is information which the listener might not have been expected to predict about the competition. However, in the tone unit //to find the BEST hairdresser // in BRITain //, hairdresser is not prominent because in the sense context of the passage it is far more likely to be predicted by the listener than in the previous tone units.

In the story readings there were the following examples of use of prominence:

Ex.11

- a) FATHER bear Always SAT on his OWN VERY BIG CHAIR, SLEPT on his OWN VERY BIG BED AND ATE out of his OWN VERY BIG BOWL.
- b) MOTHER bear Always SAT on her OWN MIDDLE-sized CHAIR, SLEPT on her OWN MIDDLE-sized BED AND ATE out of her OWN MIDDLE-sized BOWL.
- c) BABY bear Always SAT on his OWN TEENY-WEENY CHAIR, SLEPT on his OWN TEENY-weeny bed and ATE out of his OWN TEENY-WEENY BOWL.

This is a rather different use of prominence from the first example, and from the many examples of this type found it was clear that story reading was very different from reading newspaper articles.

In story readings there are examples of items made prominent for their information value, just as in the newspaper items, but in example 11 we are seeing a different use of prominence. It might be described as prominence for the sake of the listener, picking out the repetitious and interesting features

of the language. We might call this interactive use of prominence. When a reader uses prominence for interactive purposes, items are not made prominent simply on a 'given' or 'new' basis. In Brazil's terms items are made prominent for the information load that they carry. The information load in example 11 seems to be one of linguistic form, in that the content of the prominent items was easily predictable by the listener, and as such is not part of the information load. Here the information load is concerned with the form of the language.

Interactive use of prominence raises the question of how decisions made by the reader are influenced by the text. Studies of three readers reading the same piece of text produced the following examples:

Ex.12

- a) WHAT a STUPID CHAIR // GOLDilocks CRIED // now its ALL
BROKEn UP //
- b) WHAT a STUPID chair // GOLDilocks CRIED // now its: all
BROKEn UP //
- c) WHAT a STUPID chair // GOLDilocks CRIED // now its
ALL broken UP //

Clearly readers have some freedom about their decision to make prominent syllables, and this inclines us to the view that readers do actually construct their own very individual interpretation of a text. However, where the text is repetitious and the information load is concerned with the linguistic features of the text, the reader's freedom of choice is severely limited. In short by producing very repetitious text a writer may be able to constrain the decisions a reader can make. On the face of it, this may

seem to be a distinct advantage for the writer. If he can constrain the decisions made by the reader, then perhaps he may have a greater chance of conveying his intended meaning more successfully.

Experienced readers may dispute this claim, since repetitious texts are notoriously difficult especially for beginning readers. They do not contain enough information for the reader to practice skills of constructing meaning, and beginning readers inevitably 'word call' when faced with a repetitious text. Nevertheless, examples 11 and 12 highlight the degree of freedom exercised by readers in the decisions they make concerning prominent items in the text.

Pitch sequences

Brazil described high key pitch sequences where the speaker began speaking at the upper end of his normal pitch range, indicating to the listener that this part of the discourse was contrastive, and separate from what had gone before.

One of the many examples of high key pitch sequences found in the samples of reading aloud was:

(Square brackets have been used to indicate the sequence boundaries.)

Ex.13

[Father bear always sat on his own very big chair, slept on his own very big bed, and ate out of his own very big bowl.]
[Mother bear always sat on her own middle-sized chair, slept in her own middle-sized bed, and ate out of her own middle-sized bowl.]

The first pitch sequence begins with the first high key choice 'Father bear', and ends with the low termination

choice 'bowl'. The pitch sequence immediately preceding this was concerned with how the bears spent their time, that is, father bear looked after the flowers whilst mother bear kept the rooms neat and tidy, but this first pitch sequence is more concerned with what father bear possessed. This difference is marked in the intonation by a high key pitch sequence instructing the hearer to treat this part of the discourse as discrete from what has gone before. The second pitch sequence is concerned with what mother bear possessed. This again is a new departure from the previous sequence and is marked as such with a high key choice. It is as if the readers cluster together items of knowledge which in their interpretation belong together, and order them into a pitch sequence. Exactly the same was true of the readings of newspaper articles, where, for economy, square brackets will be used to show the pitch sequence boundaries:

Ex.14

[Post office contractors will shortly be demolishing and rebuilding a manhole and side shaft in the road on the A428 at Roxton Hill] [the work is scheduled to start on the twentieth of september and will take approximately two to three weeks to complete] [single line working with traffic lights will be in operation in the area but during peak business periods to keep delays to a minimum traffic will be controlled manually.]

The whole of the first sequence is concerned with what is going to happen and where it will take place. The second sequence is concerned with when the work will begin and how long it will take. The final sequence is concerned with the emergency arrangements that have been made to organise the

traffic during peak periods. As it happened, each of these pitch sequences coincided with the sentence structure of the news article, and it could clearly be argued that the sequences were produced as a result of the way the writer wrote his text. This may well be the case, but that argument is far more difficult to substantiate in the following example, which compares the pitch sequence structure of three readers reading the same piece of text:

Ex.15

Square brackets indicate contrastive high key pitch sequences. Round brackets indicate additive mid key pitch sequences. The full sentence structure of the written text is included.

R1 Soon, the poor chair began to creak and quite suddenly two
of its

R2 [Soon, the poor chair began to creak and quite suddenly two
of its

R3 [Soon, the poor chair began to creak and quite suddenly two
of its

R1 legs broke right off. Up went Goldilocks' feet into the
air and

R2 legs broke right off. Up went Goldilocks' feet into the
air and

R3 legs broke right off. Up went Goldilocks' feet into the
air and

R1 then down she tumbled on to the floor.] ["What a stupid chair!"

R2 then down she tumbled on to the floor.] ("What a stupid chair!"

R3 then down she tumbled on to the floor.] ("What a stupid chair!"

R1 Goldilocks cried. "Now it's all broken up!" Then she made
up her

R2 Goldilocks cried.) ["Now it's all broken up!" Then she made
up her

R3 Goldilocks cried.) ["Now it's all broken up!") (Then she made
up her

R1 mind to go upstairs and see if she could find a comfortable
bed to

R2 mind to go upstairs and see if she could find a comfortable
bed to

R3 mind to go upstairs and see if she could find a comfortable
bed to

R1 lie on. So upstairs she went.] [To her delight, Goldilocks
found

R2 lie on.] [So upstairs she went.] (To her delight, Goldilocks
found

R3 lie on.) [So upstairs she went. To her delight, Goldilocks
found

R1 three beds in a row. There was one very big bed and one

R2 three beds in a row. There was one very big bed and one

R3 three beds in a row.] [There was one very big bed and one

R1 middle-sized bed and one teeny-weeny bed.] ["I'll try them
all,"

R1 Goldilocks told herself.] (And with that she lay on the very

R2 Goldilocks told herself.) (And with that she lay on the very

R3 Goldilocks told herself.) (And with that she lay on the very

R1 big bed which was Father bear's bed.) (But Father bear's
bed was not

R2 big bed)(which was Father bear's bed. But Father bear's
bed was not

R3 big bed which was Father bear's bed.) [But Father bear's
bed was not

R1 right for Goldilocks.)

R2 right for Goldilocks. -----

R3 right for Goldilocks.]

From this comparison it is evident that the pitch sequence boundaries do not occur in exactly the same place for all of the three readers.

Even in places where the pitch sequences do coincide, they are rarely of the same type. That is, where one reader aloud chose a high key pitch sequence another chose a mid key pitch sequence. This is especially evident at the end of the above passage where each reader exercised a different option. The first reader ended a mid key pitch sequence. The second reader did not end a pitch sequence at all, and the third reader ended a high key pitch sequence.

It seems that each of the readers was imposing an interpretation on to the reading which was quite individual to that reader, and none of the readers imposed quite the same structure of pitch sequences as either of the other two readers. These findings reinforce the suggestion made earlier, that the pitch sequence is neither dependent upon, nor determined by the sentence structure of the written text. The pitch sequences are an organisation imposed upon the reading by the reader at the moment of reading.

Having reached this conclusion about the imposition of pitch sequences in the reading of the stories, it is instructive to consider the following example of three readers reading newspaper items aloud. The high key pitch sequences are marked with square brackets.

Ex.16

- R1 [Lloyds Bank are negotiating for the lease of the old Dudeney and
 R2 [Lloyds Bank are negotiating for the lease of the old Dudeney and
 R3 [Lloyds Bank are negotiating for the lease of the old Dudeney and
 R1 Johnstone premises in the High Street, a spokesman for the bank
 R2 Johnstone premises in the High Street, a spokesman for the bank
 R3 Johnstone premises in the High Street, a spokesman for the bank
 R1 confirmed this week.] [Dudeney and Johnstone were taken over
 by Civils
 R2 confirmed this week.] [Dudeney and Johnstone were taken over
 by Civils
 R3 confirmed this week.] [Dudeney and Johnstone were taken over
 by Civils
 R1 of Northampton last May, and the High Street shop closed
 in June.]
 R2 of Northampton last May, and the High Street shop closed
 in June.]
 R3 of Northampton last May, and the High Street shop closed
 in June.]

In this example readers only chose high key pitch sequences, and all of the sequences in each of the readings conformed to the sentence structure of the news item. I have so far argued, that the pitch sequences are an organisation imposed by the reader, and that they are not determined by any formal structures of the written text. I have further argued that pitch sequences are imposed by the reader at the moment of reading, and are a result of the communication taking place between the reader and the listener. The decision to adhere to the sentence structure of the newspaper articles seems to reflect the fact that there is a change in the reader/listener relationship.

When reading the stories, each of the readers communicated an interpretation of his own to the listener. However, when reading the newspaper extracts, far from communicating an individual interpretation, the readers adhered very closely to the written text. The emphasis was to communicate what was written on the page, whereas in story reading the emphasis was on the communication of the reader, as an individual, and his listener. Thus it is that we can see how reading behaviour changes according to the way the reader perceives the purpose of his reading.

Frames

A further discourse feature related to frames was observed in the samples of aloud reading. Coulthard (1977) described frames consisting of a small group of words : Right, now, good and O.K. These were words used by teachers in their lessons, to indicate that one part of the discourse had ended and a new part was beginning. None of these words occurred in the texts read aloud, and this was to be expected, since the use of language was completely different. However, a similar group of items was observed.

In the samples of reading aloud, items which would not normally have been made prominent for their information load appeared. In the intonation they were always given a rising tone choice, contrary to Coulthard's findings that frames always appeared with a falling tone choice. This further indicated that the function of the items observed in the reading aloud was not identical to the function of Coulthard's frames. Further, unlike Coulthard's frames they did have a semantic context, and their meaning was not entirely suppressed. In the readings of stories examples such as the following were found:

Ex.17

R+ ONce upon a TIME // R+ LONG AGO // R+ ONce // R+ SOON //
 R+ THEN // R+ NEXT // R+ AND // R+ MEANwhile // R+ in the END //

It seemed in each case that readers were picking out a time sequence in their reading, and that this overall time sequence structured the whole discourse. Examination of several readers again showed that whilst all readers picked out a time sequence in stories, they did not pick out the same time sequence items. This confirmed earlier findings that these are decisions made by individual readers about the text, and that the decision was made with reference to the speaker/hearer relationship, rather than with reference to the written text.

In texts other than stories readers picked out the following items:

Ex.18

R+ to BEGIN with // R+ HOWEver // R+ NEver the LESS // R+
 BEcause of THIS // R+ AND // R+ for this REASon // R+ BUT //

Here the readers seemed to be picking out relationships between the different parts of larger sections of the reading. Again, examination of several readers reading the same texts showed, that whilst readers picked out some of the relationships between larger sections of text, they did not pick out all of the possibilities, and items selected varied from reader to reader. Again this seemed to confirm earlier findings that these selections are representative of decisions made by individual readers about the text. The fact that decisions varied from reader to reader indicated that the decisions were again made with reference to the reader/hearer relationship rather than with reference to the written text. The presence of these

items suggests that a reader structures what he reads at a much higher level, and in far greater detail than has so far been envisaged. In order to differentiate these items from Coulthard's frames I shall refer to them as Reading Discourse Markers.

Reading Discourse Markers

Although the markers observed in reading were not identical to those observed by Coulthard, it seems important that they should not be dismissed out of hand, because they are performing a function in the reading process which has not so far been identified.

In the samples of reading aloud there were two kinds of reading discourse markers. There were those conjunctions which were simply prominent, as in:

Ex.19

SOON //

after THAT //

In addition there were the same conjunctions but this time expressed as both prominent and with a tonic syllable:

Ex.20

R+ SOON //

R+ THEN //

R+ after THAT //

The tone choice was predominantly a rising tone choice. Those reading discourse markers which received prominence seemed largely to be related to the sequence of events within the story but this raised the question of: "What was the function of conjunctions which were both prominent and received a tonic pitch movement?"

In their work on temporal conjunctive cohesion Hasan and Halliday (1975) define two uses of the conjunction in text: the internal function related to what is happening in terms of real time, and the external function related to time in terms of the content of the sentences (in this case the story). The external function is described as:

"It is a relation between events - first one thing happens then another. The time sequence, in other words, is the thesis in the content of what is being said."

The internal function is described as:

"... here there are no events; or rather, there are only LINGUISTIC events, the time sequence is in the organisation of his discourse."

Here Halliday and Hasan illustrate the difference in the use of the conjunction 'so':

- "a. She was never happy here. So she's leaving.*
- b. She'll be better off in a new place - So she's leaving?"*

In a. there is a causal relation between the two events - or two phenomena, let us say, since the first is a state rather than an event. The meaning is 'because she is not happy, she is leaving'. In b. there is no causal relation - but it is within the communication process; the meaning is, 'because you refer to her about to be in a new place, I conclude she's leaving'. This is a typical parallelism we find between the two planes of conjunctive relations, the external and the internal."

It seems that conjunctions which receive prominence are performing the first external function, whilst those which are prominent and receive a tonic syllable are performing the second internal function. Hasan and Halliday describe the internal and external functions of temporal conjunctions in relation to the discourse:

"It would be possible to describe the nature of the temporal relation in terms of speech acts, the time sequencing being a performative sequence, 'first I say one thing and then another'... this is not so much a relationship between speech acts as a relationship between different stages in the unfolding of the speaker's communication role - the meaning he allots himself as a participant in the total situation ... it is a relation between meanings in the sense of representations of the speaker's own stamp on the situation - his choice of speech role and rhetorical channel, his attitudes, his judgements and the like."

Placed in the context of reading aloud the significance of the difference between a prominent conjunction, and a prominent and tonic conjunction is a little clearer. It seems likely that a prominent conjunction is a decision made about a text with respect to the listener. That is, it is made prominent because it is important to the story, and the reader wishes the listener to attend to it. The decision to make a conjunction tonic and prominent is a rather different decision. It is a decision about the state of knowledge between the reader and the listener. The former is a decision about the listener's state of knowledge about the story, whilst the latter is a decision about the state of convergence between the reader and the listener. At this stage it is perhaps important to note that reading discourse markers were only prominent in the samples of newspaper texts read aloud. There were no reading discourse markers which were both prominent and tonic. This observation indicates yet again that the relationship between the reader and hearer when stories are being read is very different from the reader and hearer when newspaper articles are read aloud. The first might be described

as a sharing relationship, whilst the second is a non-sharing relationship. From this point we are now in a position to discuss the implications of orientation more fully.

Orientation

Throughout the discussion so far I have differentiated between reading behaviour observed in the reading of stories and the reading behaviour observed in the reading of newspaper items. We are now in a position to bring these differences into a sharper focus under the heading of orientation. I argued earlier, that the behaviour of the reader varied according to his perception of the purpose of his reading task. Let us now see if we can describe the purpose of the reading task in greater detail.

When readers read aloud, I demonstrated that their decisions varied according to their interpretation of the text. This was true in the case of placing prominence, tone choice, placement of pitch sequences, choice of both high and mid key pitch sequences, choice and placement of reading discourse markers. When readers read newspaper items aloud, I demonstrated contrary effects on the decisions made by readers. Prominence was restricted to items which were predictably prominent for their information load. Tone choice was restricted to proclaiming or zero tone choices. There were no referring tone choices indicating shared information. High key pitch sequences were coterminous with the sentence structure of the text, indicating an orientation towards the language rather

than the hearer. Clearly there is a difference in the orientations of the two readings.

Story reading seems to be directly orientated towards the hearer, whilst news item reading is obliquely orientated towards the language. The only explanation we can give for this drastic change in behaviour is that readers perceive the two reading tasks to be quite different. However, this raises the question of: "On what criteria do readers perceive differences in reading tasks?" It seems there may be two possible sources to which we may look for the answer, a general sources and a specific source.

Specifically, it seems likely that the relationship between the reader and listener must be related to the purpose for which the reader thinks he is carrying out the task. If for example, the reader saw the purpose of reading aloud as a sharing event for entertaining children, it is likely that he would make different decisions about the text, from a reader who perceived his task as one of informing the listener of the contents of the written text. The perception of the purpose for reading is therefore a very individual matter. It is possible that one reader would consider reading a story as a 'more sharing' activity than another reader, who may perceive his task as informing the listener of the events of a story. In this way the task would be perceived as a 'less sharing' activity. In this way we can account for the individual differences found in the readings of stories by different readers.

Individual perceptions of reading purposes are also related to a second general source, which must also be considered. Generally, purposes for reading are related at a much deeper level to our culture. For example, if two readers consider their purpose for reading a story is to entertain children, the decisions about the texts made by both readers are likely to vary, with their perception of their relationship with the children in question. Similarly, newspaper extract reading may be explained with reference to the same general and specific sources. In all of the reading aloud samples I demonstrated that all of the readers perceived their relationship with the listener as a non-sharing relationship. With reference to the specific sources, each of the readers shared the same perception. However, as I showed in the earlier discussion, alternative tone choices indicating a sharing relationship would have been quite acceptable. Put another way, the readers, if they had chosen, could have perceived the purpose for reading newspaper extracts as a sharing activity, and could have made entirely different decisions about the text. To explain the fact that none of the readers perceived their task in this way we must refer to the general cultural sources.

Traditionally the reading of news has been treated as a non-sharing activity by professional newsreaders serving the media of radio and television. It is only in recent times that different 'kinds' of news-reading have been produced by professional news-readers. It is possible that this very strong tradition of news reading influenced

the very similar task of news extract reading. In other words, the very similar readings produced by the readers aloud are indicative of very strong cultural influences. The general picture emerging from the study of the intonation patterns of aloud readers indicates the very great complexity of skilled reading. However, this indication in itself raises the question with which I started: What insights into reading can be gained by adopting a linguistic perspective?

V

What insights into reading are gained by adopting a linguistic perspective?

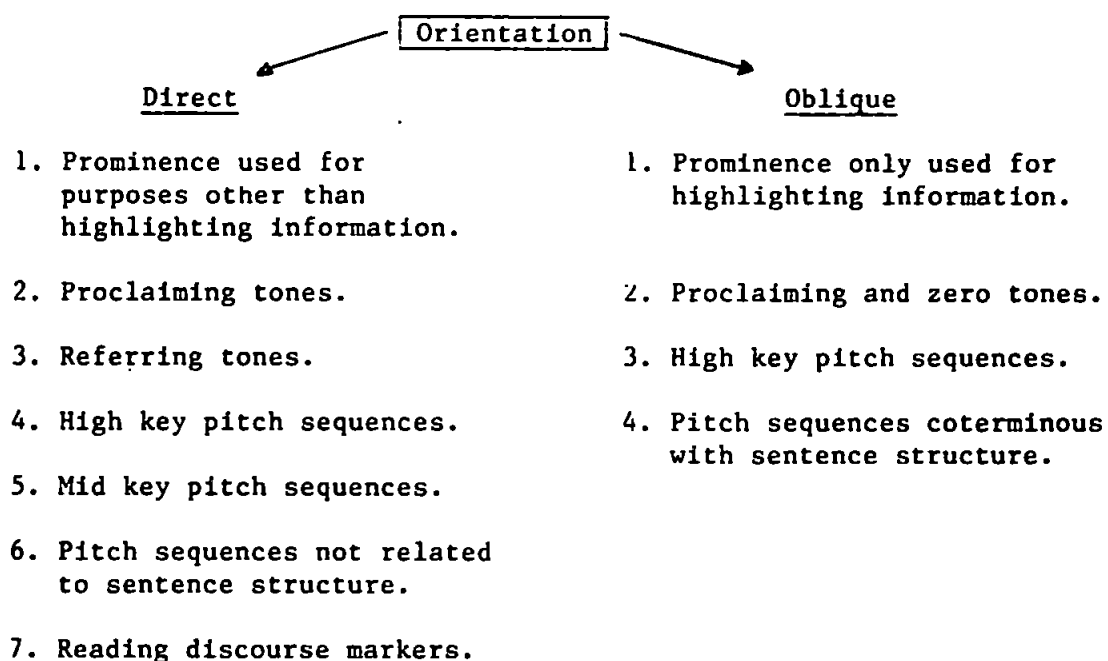
In order for the meaning of a text to be communicated, it seems that the reader has to make interactive decisions about it. That is the process of constructing meaning from a text is, in part at least, a process of the reader interacting with the text to make it meaningful. Adopting the view that reading is a process of interacting with the text allows insights about the nature of reading and the nature of the text, and from these considerations we can draw further implications for teachers of reading.

1. The Nature of Reading

From the discussion of the findings of what happens when readers read aloud, we can now define reading aloud as: the performing of decisions made about a text with respect to the state of convergence of knowledge between the reader and listener, as it is assessed by the reader at the moment of reading. Further, if the point of view is

adopted that it is the interaction of the reader and the text which makes the text meaningful, then it is a logical assumption that readers also interact with a text when they read silently, and that this is a general description of reading which does not just apply when readers read aloud. Taking a linguistic point of view has enabled us to be quite specific about the kind of decisions according to their perceived purpose for reading, and this is a very individual decision. However, once the purpose of the reading task is perceived readers are likely to orientate their reading directly towards a hearer, or obliquely towards the language of the written text. The decision about orientation affects the kind of decisions readers are likely to make from that point onwards. We can now summarise these decisions diagrammatically, however, the diagram does not imply a hierarchy, or order of decisions, beyond the initial decision concerning orientation.

Linguistic decisions made in the process of reading



Further, if we take the view that readers make moment by moment decisions about the text, in the light of their assessment of the state of knowledge between the reader and listener, we are also implying that the reading process is a linear process. That is, the reader reads along the lines of text, and makes decisions as he goes along.

Developing the flexibility to orientate reading directly or obliquely is extremely important in this model of reading. Experience with beginning readers suggests that early readers have no difficulty in developing the skill of word and sentence 'calling', which in linguistic terms may be described as oblique orientation. However, the ability to develop the skills of direct orientation seem much more difficult to develop, and it is perhaps worthwhile to examine direct orientation in greater detail at this point.

What exactly is the sharing relationship between the reader and listener? It might be described as the ability to create a social context for the language. Any reader who deviates from the minimal spoken form of tone units and high key pitch sequences is creating a social context for the language, in that they are taking a hearer into account. This has important implications for the 'amount of meaning' it is possible to derive from a text. We can illustrate this point by taking a single written sentence:

Ex.21

"The cat sat on the mat."

If the reader read this sentence in the minimal spoke form of:

Ex.22

P the CAT // P SAT on the MAT //

The semantic implications of this reading might be:

"A cat somewhere sat on some kind of mat."

However, the reader might situate this sentence in a specific social context and read:

Ex.23

R the CAT // P SAT on the MAT //

Depending on the shared area of knowledge, the reading might imply:

"the cat, you know the marmalade tabby who usually sits on my garden wall, well, on this particular morning she sat on the mat, and do you know ..."

The choice of referring tone on CAT recalls all of this previously established knowledge about the cat. The choice of mid key and termination on 'SAT on the MAT' leads the listener to expect more to follow. Similarly a reader might have read:

Ex.24

R the CAT // R+ SAT on the MAT //

Again depending on the shared area of knowledge between the reader and hearer, this reading might suggest:

"the cat, you know the marmalade tabby who usually sits on my garden wall, well on this particular morning she sat on the mat, you know, the one I had just cleaned and left out in the garden, and do you know ... "

The referring tones re-invoke the shared knowledge, and in this way everything that has gone before is reorganised and brought into the state of play.

There can be little doubt that in situating the text in a social context, the reader adds an extra dimension of

meaning to what was actually written. In creating a reader/hearer relationship the reader is actually applying his social skills, and knowledge of language, to recreate the text as it might have occurred in a social context in real time, and in doing so, he creates a further dimension of meaning.

Generally we may speculate that when a mature reader reads aloud there are at least three processes taking place simultaneously. Firstly the reader is decoding the written language. From the general meaning the reader makes appropriate decisions about the social context of the language. In this part of the process the reader has a choice between a sharing and a non-sharing social relationship. Finally, the reader performs decisions he has made about the text in the appropriate organisations of spoken language.

2. The Nature of Text

From the previous discussion we have seen that a reader interacts with the text to construct his own meaning, and this may vary from the meaning the writer intended. It may also vary between consecutive readings by the same reader. This observation explains the often intuitive sensation that a text 'meant' something different on second reading. This leads us to the view that a text is a body of written language with potential meanings. Which meaning finally emerges depends on the decisions made by the reader.

This is an important observation because it has implications for those involved in the study of levels of text difficulty. Besides considering vocabulary levels,

sentence length and structure, perhaps a further dimension of text difficulty is on an explicitness/ambiguity continuum. By this, I am implying that a text, such as a repetitive text, which is very explicit about the decisions the reader is permitted to make, may in fact be one of the most difficult forms of text to interact with. In addition, as we have seen in the discussion on prominence, a further dimension of text difficulty may lie in the frequency and predictability of informing items. Too much information in a text may saturate the reader's short term memory, whilst too little information may confuse his expectation that there will be something informing about a text.

The discussion of Reading discourse markers suggest that the gross organisation of written text is extremely important to the reader's individual construction of meaning. Again, the use of the reading discourse markers may make the difference between a difficult and an easy text. The fact that a time sequence was observed in stories, and other relationships between large parts of the text were observed in other readings, suggests that different kinds of text may have different kinds of inter-textual relationships. This may be of value to text linguists interested in Register. It may be the case that readers recognise different registers by the kind of inter-textual relationships they perceive, and this no doubt affects their perceived purpose for reading.

The discussion of direct orientation noted that readers may select high or mid key pitch sequences, and that these may or may not be coterminous with the sentence structure of the text. The implication of this observation is that in

constructing discourse, a reader constructs higher linguistic units than a sentence. Initial observations suggest that these units may be related to the content of the text as the reader perceives it, but at present this is mere speculation.

3. Implications for teachers of reading

At this point we can reaffirm the belief held by teachers and researchers that a great deal of practice in spoken language is necessary, before a beginning reader can understand the interactive nature of the reading task. By the time a reader reaches the stage of needing to interact with a text, he must already be very competent in his handling of spoken discourse. The responsibility of the reading teacher lies in making the beginning reader aware that the task of reading is an interactive process. Once a beginning reader is aware of this process he should be quite capable of applying his linguistic resources to the task.

Awareness of the reading process can be developed by listening to experienced readers read aloud, not just stories, but a many different kinds of written text as possible. Not only does the beginning reader need to hear others reading aloud, but he also needs to see the text whilst it is being read. In this way a great deal can be learnt from seeing the written text and hearing the spoken discourse.

However, asking a beginning reader to read aloud for anything other than monitoring purposes is probably unproductive. When a beginning reader is asked to read aloud, he is being asked not only to decode the written text, but also to produce it in spoken form. We have seen the complexity of this task from our

earlier discussion. Aloud reading is the performing of decisions made about a text in the light of the reader's assessment of the state of shared knowledge between himself and his hearer. In different situations the hearer may be the teacher, a large audience or an imaginary audience. It is therefore not difficult to understand the reluctance of inexperienced readers to read aloud. Alternately, silent reading may be described as a situation in which the reader makes linguistic decisions about a text in the light of his own state of knowledge, and this would seem a much more realistic demand to make of inexperienced readers.

Nevertheless, there are occasions when it is essential to ask beginning readers to read aloud for monitoring purposes. In this case it is essential for teachers to be aware of the nature of the task they are setting, and to allow the reader an opportunity to look through the text before it is read aloud. This allows the beginning reader an opportunity to rehearse the social context of his reading.

For more fluent readers the situation is rather different. As we have seen from the earlier discussion, the skills of situating a written text in an appropriate social context are very desirable. The possibility that a reader can construct extra meaning by situating the text in a social context, implies that the reader himself has derived more, or alternative meanings, from his reading. The logical implication of this point of view is that a reader's ability to situate a text in a social context has a great effect on his comprehension of the text. We can see from this implication how important social and linguistic skills influence our comprehension of a text.

Limited experience in either of these areas may result in alternative meanings in a text simply not being available.

In order to develop the necessary skills for situating the text in a social context, it is important that as readers become more experienced, they have the opportunity of hearing themselves read aloud. In this way they can hear the decisions they have made about a given text. It is also essential that more fluent readers are made aware, that texts may have several interpretations, and that they are taught through discussion, to look for alternative interpretations in the texts they read.

Finally readers need to be made aware of the way the content of different kinds of texts is organised. It is important that teachers of more fluent readers are aware of the need to teach readers to look for reading discourse markers. It is also important that readers are taught to recognise the relationships existing in the different kinds of text. At a later stage readers need to be aware of different purposes for reading, and how this may affect their organisation to the reading task.

In short, the responsibility of teachers of all stages of reading, is to encourage pupils to develop an awareness of text, not merely as a lot of words on a page, rather, as a body of communication of extremely dynamic dimensions.

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2C. Warham S.M. (1989b)

Book Review 'Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work'

Reading 23,3, pp197-198

Perl, Sondra and Wilson, Nancy: *Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work* (1986). Heinemann, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 272 pp. ISBN 0 435 08248 5

A cross between a diary and a novel, this book makes riveting reading. The first chapter places the teaching of writing at Shoreham-Wading River Central School district in an historical context. Subsequent chapters take the form of case studies of teachers of writing working with different age groups. The case studies are based upon teachers' own journals, notes made by the researcher/observer and comments from the pupils themselves. Good use is made of examples of the children's own work. Chapter two focuses on the writing of eleventh grade children, chapter three on first grade (six year olds), chapter four on eighth grade pupils, chapter five on the twelfth grade, chapter six on the fourth and fifth grades, and chapter seven on the eighth grade. The case studies are written sensitively and with great honesty. They present sympathetic insights into the problems faced by teachers of writing. Teaching is seen in its bewildering complexity, and the lasting image is one of teachers struggling to articulate and come to terms with inextricable problems.

Although the book does not aim to produce a theory of teaching children to write, inevitable generalisations are drawn from the case studies and the final chapter includes a description of a technique for encouraging children to write. The technique would undoubtedly be useful to teachers in many classrooms, although the case studies themselves highlighted the fact that it is far from a panacea for the problems of teaching writing skills. However, the teaching

technique creates (for me) the unresolved and irritating contradiction of this book.

In each chapter teachers follow a technique learnt at the Summer Institute course for teachers, which involves getting children to "invest themselves in their writing". Time and again the children are encouraged to "write for themselves", and I personally could not see how developing the concept of writing for oneself could help the children understand the nature of writing. How could it help prepare them for the writing demands of their adult life? Afterall, very few adults are prone to dashing off a quick story or poem, or even attempting to express their deepest feelings in writing. For the most part adult writing is pragmatic writing, that is writing aimed at a specific audience to achieve a specific purpose. In adult life, perhaps the most important aspect of writing to be developed is that of a sense of audience, and on the surface, this book pays very little attention to audience awareness.

The contradiction is compounded by the inclusion of the teaching technique which requires readers to "share" and "give feedback" to the writer. Thus in their practice the writers acknowledge that the response of the reader is important to the writing process, (and therefore the developing skills of the writer,) without actually including this in their description of the writing process. On this point I began to mistrust the credibility of the authors.

My overall reaction was that six case studies was too many. There was so much crammed into one book that many of the snippets of wisdom seemed to disappear in the voluminous text. It may have been better to divide the material into two shorter publications aimed at specific age groups. In terms of the usefulness of this book credit must be given for the many valuable insights it contains for teachers of writing, and the fact that it faces some of the teaching problems, such as that of reluctant writers, without flinching. From this point of view, this is one of the most revealing books I have ever read, but its value lies in its description of the teaching and learning process rather than the writing process. As an insight into the teaching and learning process this book should be on the bedside bookshelf of all practising teachers and students in training.

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What is the Role of the Tutor in the Process Curriculum?

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What is the Role of the Tutor in the Process Curriculum?

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Introduction

In their article 'Is Student Pedagogy "Progressive Educational Practice"?' (JFHE 12 (3) Autumn 1988) Bates and Rowland claim that there is a trend towards 'student centred learning' and the 'process curriculum' in Higher Education, but what is the process curriculum, and how does it affect the traditional role of the tutor? The process curriculum arises from a particular view of the nature of knowledge. If we assume in a rapidly changing society that knowledge is also constantly changing, then immediately we have to consider the importance of the process curriculum, a curriculum concerned to equip students with the ability to cope with the constantly changing state of knowledge. As Blenkin and Kelly (1981) put it:

'Clearly, if we accept the hypothetical and provisional nature of knowledge we are committed to recognising that all knowledge changes and develops, that in common with all natural phenomena it is subject to some kind of evolutionary process . . . The corollary of this is that teachers must concentrate on the process of education. Children must be assisted in the process of developing and structuring their own knowledge and thus of learning how to go on doing so, how to contribute to the continuous evolution of knowledge'.

The process curriculum therefore necessitates a move away from traditional transmitted knowledge curriculum, towards the development of personal knowledge, which will allow students to '*develop and structure their own knowledge*'. However, in their article on student-centred learning Bates and Rowland (1988) argue that the nature of student-centred learning creates a dynamic tension between the role of the tutor and the needs of the student:

'The tension arises . . . out of apparently contradictory sets of criteria upon which we base our teaching: the one concerned to work within students' frameworks of meaning, the other concerned to move the students beyond that framework or, at least, to develop an awareness of other frameworks. This tension is bound to be felt more acutely when the gap between our students' frames of reference and our own seem to

be greatest'.

But is it necessarily the case that there is a tension between the frames of reference of the tutor and students? At Rolle Faculty of Education, Polytechnic South West, the Educational Studies Section decided to carry out an Action Research Project to explore the role of the tutor in relation to the quality of student learning. The Educational Studies team decided to plan the work on the basis of a student-centred approach. The topic of 'assessment' would be explored by the students through a piece of research on assessment. Placing the students in the role of 'researcher' would make them active participants in the learning situation, would give them an opportunity to work on primary sources and gain first hand experience of the current professional discourse on assessment. The 'Assessment Project' for students took place in four one hour sessions over a period of four weeks.

An Experiment to Explore the Role of the Tutor in a Student-Centred Learning Situation

During the first week the students were presented with questionnaires on assessment which had previously been sent to teachers in schools for completion. The questionnaires were to be used as data for following up the students' own selected areas of interest. Initially the students divided into three self-selected groups and began to try and identify areas of common interest. After initial discussions most groups had selected two or three questions of interest. However, it was clear from the responses that the students did not know how to extract the most interesting and valuable information from the questionnaire because they did not understand how it had been constructed. At this point an explanation was given in the design and structure of the questionnaire, as was a worked example of how to use it. By the end of the session each of the three groups had isolated an area of interest, and took away the sample questionnaires, to work in small groups extracting any relevant information to be brought back for presentation to the main group during the next session. The students were encouraged to present their findings in any way they felt was appropriate.

During the second week the first group presented their topic of *Cross-Curricular Assessment*. Their findings were presented in the form of a radio 'Does the team think' format. The whole episode was carefully scripted, and carried out with great humour, quickly involving the 'observer' members of the larger group who, once the 'scripted' activity ended, proceeded to ask and answer their own questions.

During the third week the second group chose *Testing for the English Attainment Targets* as their topic. They presented their findings to the rest of the group in the form of an unscripted play. Also in the fourth week the third

group selected as their topic *Teacher attitudes to Testing* and presented it in a 'play' format. This activity lasted for half an hour, and in the remaining half hour each group was asked to comment upon their presentation for the rest of the group.

These sessions were followed by preparation for school practice, then school practice itself. Before school practice students were invited to negotiate the title of their assignment, which was an attempt to explore any aspect of assessment in their school practice schools.

Discussion

From the description of the four sessions what can be learnt about the process curriculum and the role of the student in relation to the role of the tutor? Perhaps the most appropriate place to begin thinking about this question is in the very early stages of a child's education, where the foundation is laid for work at higher levels. Infant teachers, who for many years have implemented a process curriculum, conceive their role, for example in the teaching of reading and writing, not in terms of teaching children (or encouraging children to learn about) *language*. Rather it is a question of encouraging children to become literate. That is, literacy in the widest sense of the word, not merely a question of being able to read and write, but being able to use written and spoken language appropriately in different social contexts.

During the last decade concepts of Literacy have developed considerably from the narrow definition of simply being able to read and write. From the work of Vygotsky (1962), and Bruner (1983) and Meek and Mills (1988) Literacy has become defined as the ability to use language appropriately in different cultural contexts. Literacy functions in three different dimensions: social context, social discourse and culture. Bruner (1983) described the acquisition of language, or the process of becoming literate as:

'So when we say that a child is acquiring language, we must account for another aspect of what is being acquired — that is, its function or communicative intent or how to 'get things done with words'. Here the criterion for judging progress is not so much well-formedness or sense and reference, but something more like effectiveness. Can the child request, can he indicate, can he ingratiate or promise or support or show respect by the use of communicative means? And can he meet the conditions that the culture places on speakers who would do these things — conditions of preparation, sincerity, essentiality and affiliation?'

Thus for any student the 'end product' of the process curriculum is one of *Professional Literacy*, not just of processing knowledge about one's profession, but also having the ability to use it and function effectively. Therefore

in the example of student teachers might not our attention be more appropriately focussed on how effectively students *get professional things done in the cultural context of being teachers*? It would be more appropriate to focus attention on interdependency of the cultural context of being a teacher, the interpersonal professional discourse that being a teacher engenders and the social context of being a teacher which controls what teachers *do*. All of these elements are present in the learning situation, indeed, they *are* the learning situation. If Bruner's analysis is correct, they are the tools by which human beings learn, and by which they become 'literate'.

If the aim of the process curriculum in the context of teacher education is one of professional literacy, this in turn raises questions of: what happens in a process curriculum, and what is it that students actually learn?

What happens in a Process Curriculum, and what is it that students actually learn?

In his work on mother/child interactions Bruner (1983) suggested that children develop literacy through *formats of interaction* with the mother. In effect the mother presented the child with a simple game (in this case peek-a-boo). It was a highly selective and structured activity. The purpose of the game was to induct the child into two important aspects of becoming literate:

'The mother's objective seems to be twofold and she is prepared to tune her responses to her child with great subtlety to achieve both of them. The first is linguistic in the sense that she is trying to get him to operate on a primitive semanticity hypothesis that vocalisation "stands for" something that the mother and child are sharing visually and to get him to appreciate that there is a standard vocalisation that is required. These are steps in the direction of becoming a standard speaker of language. But she also pursues a second cultural goal: communicating to the child that there is a canonical way of negotiating reference . . . The child is being "trained" not only to know language but to use it as a member of a cultural community'.

In his description Bruner pointed out how in the early stages the partners in the discourse were very unequal, the mother knowing a great deal, and the child knowing very little. However, the mother responded to the child as if he were an equal partner in the discourse. The mother for her part progressively handed over the responsibility for the game to the child as he became more competent. Bruner describes this supporting and progressive handing over to the child as a process of *scaffolding* the child.

What important insights might these descriptions hold for those of us who are concerned to encourage students to become professionally literate? First

of all we see the mother. She copes well with the tensions of encouraging her child to create personal meanings in a cultural context. She has a firm, but specific agenda in her mind about the social, cultural and linguistic conventions towards which the child must standardise his behaviour. But, within this framework she creates a space for the development of personal meanings. For her there is no tension in Bates' and Rowland's sense, between what she *expects* her child to learn, and the individual meanings that she encourages him to create.

Next we see the child, at first a very unequal partner in the social discourse, but *treated as though* he were an equal partner. In many repetitions and variations of the game he began to predict what might happen. He developed personal knowledge within the confines of cultural conventions. He learnt the appropriate social discourse, and the appropriate linguistic responses, that is, those that were socially acceptable. In time the child took over the game himself, and developed different forms of it with other children, an interesting extension. The child did not only take on the values of the caring adult, but developed his own forms of the game, then extemporised his knowledge with other children. Thus in time, the child not only became literate, took on the literacy of his society, but developed that literacy into something quite different. This is an important and timely reminder that becoming literate is not a *once and for all process*, it is an ongoing process in a society where the literacy is continually changing.

This insight is particularly helpful when we are deciding exactly what we are trying to encourage students to do. In a sense, we are trying to induct students into a new culture, that of being a teacher in the current educational climate. But it is not just a process of induction, our ultimate aim, like Bruner's mother and child, is that students should function effectively within the culture, that they should be able to take on the culture for themselves, extend it and change it.

Drawing parallels between Bruner's description of the learning process, we can begin to address the question of what processes took place in the Assessment Project. To encourage students to become *Professionally Literate*, it is important for the tutor to have a firm and specific agenda about the social, linguistic and cultural conventions toward which students must standardise their behaviour, and the agenda must be presented in the form of a *format of interaction*. In the Assessment Project the format of interaction was contained in the questionnaire, and the students were required to standardise their behaviour in terms of extracting information from the questionnaire. Within this format of interaction a space was presented for students to create individual meanings by responding in any way that was felt to be appropriate.

The questionnaire in itself represented a highly *scaffolded* activity, because the students had neither the time nor the experience to perform this part of

the activity for themselves. The nature of the scaffolding was interesting. The students were required to formulate their interests within the conventions of a research context. Their first attempts at formulating their interests within the appropriate conventions were unsuccessful because they were unfamiliar with the use of the questionnaire, its purpose and design. The activity had to be further scaffolded to help them understand what was required and what form an appropriate response might take, and further support was necessary when they returned to their small groups. But in terms of *Professional Literacy*, what did the students learn?

What did the students learn?

During the first week the students learnt about the construction of questionnaires, and the techniques for extracting the most valuable information from them. They also had the opportunity to apply their new skills. In their own time between the sessions students extracted and assimilated the information contained in the questionnaires. During this process they familiarised themselves with the professional language used for discussing assessment. In formulating their presentation for the rest of the group they were encouraged to use the professional terms (such as SATS, cross-curricular assessment, norm-assessment, criterion assessment). This process provided students with the opportunity not only to become acquainted with new terms of reference, but also to have a chance to explore the different meanings in relation to their own personal knowledge.

In their presentation to the main group students had an opportunity to explore in their own ways the aspects of assessment that interested them most. This was an opportunity to explore the new knowledge on assessment in a classroom context. In contextualising the knowledge the students explored opinions and social roles which may have been 'difficult' or 'dangerous' in a real-life situation. Role playing was a safe method of exploring the farthest limits of the social context.

From this analysis it can be seen how the different kinds of learning situation, from the formal tutor teaching to the informal role playing are processes which contribute to the professional context, the professional discourse, and the culture. But how well did the students learn?

How well did the students learn?

The concrete evidence of what students had learnt, and an indication of the depths of their understanding lay in their assignments. Their assignments differed considerably from previous assignments. The thinking and arguments sprang from the students' own understanding, and it was clear that they were still working through the process of answering their own questions. On the whole students had gathered a great deal of material from schools and had

incorporated it into their answers. This may have been an attempt to contextualise their thinking. In the past students had particular difficulties relating theory to practice, but in this set of assignments the theory was no longer divorced from the practice. In this sense the students had learned well.

The main emphasis of the assignments was practical. This was partly a consequence of the topic, which required analysis of a practical situation, nevertheless, the assignments contained less theory than in the past. This might have been attributed to the fact that as one new skill is acquired, existing skills may suffer a temporary setback. Whatever the reason for the reduction in references to the literature, it was an indication that although students may have learnt the current lesson well, there was a great deal of learning still to be done.

Conclusions

In much of the recent literature the emphasis has been placed on the *process* model of education. From this discussion I would suggest that the process of education is one which involves becoming *Professionally Literate*. Whilst there can be no discussion that students need to develop their own meanings, *Professional Literacy* is a more sophisticated concept. Being able to develop personal meanings alone is inadequate, they have to be developed within an appropriate cultural context. *Professional Literacy* requires students to frame their personal meanings within a professional culture, that is, within the parameters of the ongoing professional debate.

The implications of *Professional Literacy* for the role of the tutor are wide ranging. In order to foster *Professional Literacy* it is important to be conscious of the social, linguistic and cultural dimensions of 'literacy'. Different kinds of learning experiences foster different aspects of *Professional Literacy*. Firstly, the focus of the learning, rather than being content oriented, must change to one that helps students acquire and present information in a meaningful manner, but also within specified cultural conventions. In order to achieve this, it is important that the tutor and the students are in a learning *partnership*. The apparent tension between the role of the tutor and the needs of the student should not exist where the tutor and the student are in an active partnership, the students developing personal meanings, and the tutor assisting students to frame their meanings within the conventions of the cultural context.

Perhaps the most important skill of the tutor is the need to be finely tuned to the responses of students, which in the daily rush and external pressures on tutors, may not be easily achieved. The structuring of the learning event is important too. How far would it be possible for us to organise the learning in terms of an informal situation within a formal one, not sequentially as it has always been, but *simultaneously*? Thus the role of the tutor in the process

curriculum is an area which must present challenges to all of us. It is not something that can be lightly dismissed, or taken for granted, since it is crucial to the quality of the students' learning.

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Teaching Writing at Key Stage Two

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***Teaching
Writing at Key
Stage Two.***

Sylvia Warham

Contents:

Introduction.

Chapter One:

Two different writing situations.

Chapter Two:

Meeting the needs of the reader: the discourse structure.

Chapter Three:

Helping the reader: chronological sequences.

Chapter Four:

The writer, the reader and the information: using references.

Chapter Five:

Helping the reader through longer texts: non-chronological sequences.

Chapter Six:

A change in the relationship: literary writing.

Chapter Seven:

The teacher's role.

Appendix 1

Suggested activities for teachers and students.

Suggested Reading

Introduction

Introduction.

1.

The Writing Process and the Role of the Teacher.

In Britain in 1985, the SCDC National Writing Project demonstrated how all over the country teachers were involving children in successful writing projects. These ranged from four year old children writing about baking cakes in Newcastle, to top junior children in Handsworth writing a book about Hinduism. In America too, Graves (1983) outlines the importance of emergent writing. Perl and Wilson (1986) describe how through the process of conferencing children develop into well-motivated effective writers. During the 1980's the emphasis was rightly placed upon children as writers, meaning makers and negotiators of meaning.

However, as teachers we cannot escape the fact that writing is always produced for an audience, even if that audience is the writer him or herself. Writing is part of a shared meaning making process which is negotiated between the reader and the writer and this has important implications for teachers. It means that although writers are meaning makers in written form, they must also learn to express their meanings in a publicly accepted code so that a reader will be able to interact with it and understand it. Writers not only negotiate meaning, they negotiate meaning with a reader. Writing is not only a meaning making process, it is also the development and maintenance of a relationship with the reader. In recent times, one of the most neglected aspects of being a writer has been that of the reader/writer relationship, the expression of meaning in a publicly accepted code with which a reader can easily interact.

Therefore, the process of becoming a writer does not simply involve the ability to express meanings in writing, it is far more complex. It is a process of becoming literate, learning to express meanings in a code which is accepted by every other member of a literate community. One of the neglected questions of the 1990's is: How do teachers help children to become literate?

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

How do teachers help children to become literate?

In the extract which follows a teacher is conducting a literacy lesson. She talks to seven year old Sally whose mother tongue is English and Mia whose first language is Italian. Sally and Mia are planning to make a coffee cake. They are looking at a cookery book to find out which ingredients they will need to include on their shopping list:

Extract 1.

Teacher: Could you erm . . . well, how do you make coffee cake?

Mia: It's what you have with your coffee . . .

Sally: (Reads from the cookery book) You put . . .

Teacher: Go on then, read it. . . Take it in turns to read the recipe to each other to decide if you are going to be able to do it.

Mia: Well. . . but where is the recipe? Where's the recipe?

Teacher: Well where is the recipe?

Sally: There . . . (points to the list of ingredients.)

Mia: Oh. . .I thought it was here. . . (points to the pictorial instructions on the lower half of the page).

Teacher: Well it is . . .

Sally: It's there as well . . .

Teacher: M-mmm. . .That's . . . What does the word RECIPE mean?

Mia: Recipe? (Smiles at the teacher embarrassed).

Teacher: M-hmmm. . .

Mia: Recipe! (bewildered).

Teacher: Well it tells you first of all what you need (Points to list of ingredients) and then it tells you . . . (Points to instructions).

Mia: (Misunderstanding, reads from the book) You will need. . .

Teacher: (More insistently) Mia, what do these pictures tell you?

Sally: It tells you what to do.

Mia: What to do (The girls say this together).

Teacher: What do . . . Both these things are in a recipe, what you need and how to cook it . . . so read

that through to each other first, bef. . . before you really make up your minds, and then write down the shopping list. All right?

In this example of a literacy lesson we can see how the teacher draws on and extends the existing cultural and linguistic knowledge of the children. She says:

Teacher: M-mmm. . . That's . . . What does the word *RECIPE* mean?

Mia: Recipe? (Smiles at the teacher embarrassed).

Teacher: M-hmmm. . .

Mia: Recipe! (bewildered).

When the children have put forward their own limited understanding of the word *recipe*, the teacher proceeds to explain the publicly accepted version:

Teacher: Well it tells you first of all what you need (Points to list of ingredients) and then it tells you . . . (Points to instructions).

Mia: (Misunderstanding, reads from the book) You will need. . .

Teacher: (More insistently) Mia, what do these pictures tell you?

Sally: It tells you what to do.

Mia: What to do (The girls say this together).

Teacher: What do . . . Both these things are in a recipe, what you need and how to cook it . . . so read that through to each other first, bef. . . before you really make up your minds, and then write down the shopping list. All right?

Here we see the teacher encouraging the children to work out for themselves what a recipe might be and what form it takes in the book, but she does not leave the children to work out a solution for themselves, she also explains the publicly accepted understanding of both the word *recipe*, what a recipe does and its publicly accepted presentation in a book.

During the last decade concepts of literacy have developed considerably from the narrow definition of simply being able to read and write. From the work of Vygotsky (1962), Bruner (1983) and Meek and Mills (1988) literacy has become defined as the ability to use language appropriately in different cultural contexts. What we are beginning to see in this

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

example is that:

** Literacy draws on three interdependent elements: the social context, the language and culture.*

Newman (1985) explained the importance of these three inter-related aspects of literacy:

"As more pieces of the puzzle have fallen into place we have come to appreciate the extent to which learners themselves create meaning out of their experiences with language, both oral and written. We've learned to recognize the importance of the social nature of learning, the role which language plays in creating the learning environment, and the extent to which language is itself determined by the social situation . . . We've learned that readers need to supply knowledge about how language works, knowledge about the world, knowledge about what strategies to try in order to create meaning as they read."

From this comment we begin to see something of the complexity of literacy, how language expresses the culture, and how the culture is itself defined by the language used. Bruner(1983) demonstrated in his studies of early learning that teachers draw on the cultural and linguistic knowledge of the children. During this process the teacher interacts with the children to broaden their linguistic and cultural knowledge and understanding.

This interaction with the children is an extremely important part of the process of becoming literate. In his work on mother/ child interactions Bruner(1983) emphasised the importance of interaction between the child and a caring adult. Bruner(1983) claimed that the objective of such interactions with children was twofold:

". . . The child is being "trained" not only to know language but to use it as a member of a cultural community."

In this example of a literacy lesson we see these children undergoing the same twofold learning process. Firstly, under the guidance of their teacher:

** The children learnt the conventions of the culture*

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

and the language in a specific social situation.

and secondly:

** The children explored and extemporised their own meanings within that social context.*

Both Bruner's study of early learning and this example of a literacy lesson suggest that the caring adult has a very important role to play in the literacy process. Perhaps at this point it would be helpful, in considering what it is that successful literacy teachers do, to ask: What is the role of the teacher in the process of becoming literate?

3.

What is the role of the teacher in the process of becoming literate?

This example of a literacy lesson illustrates one of the fundamental issues raised in the current research into literacy. For example when the teacher says:

Teacher: Yes. You put things in it to get the lumps out.

Sally: You put it in er. . . so you don't have lumpy flour, or sugar, or lumpy butter. . .

Teacher: You don't put butter in. . . (smiles)

Sally: (Laughs). . . lumpy-y-y flour.

Teacher: Flour. . . that's it. . . go on.

The teacher draws on and extends Sally's existing cultural and linguistic knowledge. However, whilst the teacher may tell Sally that it is not normal to sieve butter, it is up to Sally to learn and remember these differences for herself. She must take the responsibility for incorporating this new knowledge into her existing knowledge. In the last decade one of the main findings of literacy research (Cazden 1983, Tizard and Hughes 1984, Wells 1985) has been that the initiative for becoming literate rests mainly with the child. In the language that this teacher uses, we can see that she clearly recognises the importance of the child's own initiatives. She says:

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

Teacher: Go on then, read it. . . Take it in turns to read the recipe to each other to decide if you are going to be able to do it.

and later:

Teacher: What do . . . Both these things are in a recipe, what you need and how to cook it . . . so read that through to each other first, bef. . . before you really make up your minds, and then write down the shopping list. All right?

As Hall(1987) puts it:

.... Wells (1985) claims that adults 'are intuitively aware that the major responsibility for actually mastering the resource of their language rests with the child rather than with themselves and that their role is essentially one of sustaining and encouraging the child's self-activated learning."

The point Hall makes is that children have a natural disposition to learn about and control their environment. Therefore,

* The role of the caring adult or teacher in the child's process of becoming literate is one which encourages and facilitates the child's desire to learn.

* The role of the caring adult or teacher is to draw on and extend the child's existing cultural and linguistic knowledge.

* The role of the teacher is to help children express their meanings in the accepted code of the literate community.

A further observation we might make about this example of a literacy lesson is that the children would have had great difficulty in coping with the recipe if the teacher had not helped them. Mia for example, did not know what coffee cake was, did not know what a recipe was, and did not know anything about sieves or sifting.

What we begin to see in this lesson is that the teacher

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

and the children were unequal partners in the interaction, the teacher knowing a great deal, and the children knowing relatively little. However, the teacher responded to the children as if they were equal partners in the interaction. The teacher for her part progressively handed over the responsibility for writing the shopping list to the children as they became more competent. Bruner describes this supporting and progressive handing over to the child as a process of *scaffolding* the child. He suggests that:

** Scaffolding the child is a process of supporting the child's incompetencies, and rectifying them by intervention.*

The teacher in this example has a firm, but specific agenda in her mind about the social, cultural and linguistic conventions towards which the children must standardize their behaviour. Yet within this framework she creates a space for the development of personal meanings and the children were eventually allowed to create their own recipes for *ribena* cake, and *teacher* cake. There can be no doubt, that here we are seeing a twofold operation:

** There are some things which the teacher expects the children to learn*

but in addition:

** There are individual meanings which she encourages the children to create for themselves.*

With plenty of *scaffolding* the children began to predict what might happen. They developed personal knowledge within the confines of cultural conventions. They learnt the appropriate social behaviour with sieves and sifting, and the appropriate language for describing such operations. But they probably would not have managed to do this without the help of their teacher.

This brings us to the second major point of agreement arising from literacy research that children are unlikely to become literate without some kind of assistance. Literacy is not a process which can be achieved unaided. This point was stressed by Garton and Pratt (1989):

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

"For both spoken and written language the child requires assistance - usually adult assistance. Although the mechanisms for development may be different, we contend that one vital ingredient for facilitating literacy development is an interested adult, prepared to help the child's spoken and written language development by interacting with the child."

We might further infer then, that:

- * The role of a caring adult or teacher is to interact with and assist the child.

The interactive nature of the adult assistance was also stressed by Meek and Mills (1988). The adult is important because:

- * The child learns about the forms and uses of language in particular social situations.

- * The child learns how his world is mediated by language.

Bruner(1983) emphasised the interaction of the learner and the teacher, but he spelled out the teaching role in a more detailed way:

"If the 'teacher' in such a system were to have a motto, it would surely be "where there was a spectator let there now be a participant". One sets the game, provides a scaffold to assure the child's ineptitudes can be rescued or rectified by appropriate intervention, and then removes the scaffold part by part as the reciprocal structure can stand on its own."

Here we can see where the theory and the practice describe the same important points. They describe for us how the teacher:

- * Sets the context of the interaction in a very structured way.

- * Provides a scaffold to assure the child's ineptitudes can be rescued or rectified by appropriate intervention.

- * Then removes the scaffold part by part as the

Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

reciprocal structure can stand on its own.

Nevertheless, these activities raise important questions for teachers. Whilst writers must be encouraged to express their own meanings in writing, what is it that they need to know about the public code in order to communicate with a reader? Furthermore, what do teachers themselves need to know about the public system in order to encourage the development of writing in their pupils?

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Writing at Key Stage 2: Introduction.

Chapter one

***Two different writing
situations***

Chapter One.

Different Writing Situations.

In the National Curriculum document Attainment target three level five states that writers should be able to:

Write in a variety of forms for a range of purposes and audiences, in ways which attempt to engage the interest of the reader.

Example: Write notes letters instructions stories and poems in order to plan, inform, explain, entertain and express attitudes or emotions. (Page 13)

This means that a writer should be able to write for a variety of different purposes, and further, it implies that a writer must be able to take on different roles appropriate to the purpose of the communication. But one of the first questions any teacher needs to be able to answer is: What do the children already know about different writing situations?

Looking carefully at children's writing can help us to answer this question. The examples of writing which follow were samples of self-initiated writing taken during the course of a single day, from a group of six year olds. They can be divided into two different writing situations, letter writing and advertisements.

What can they tell us about the children's knowledge of different writing situations?

1.

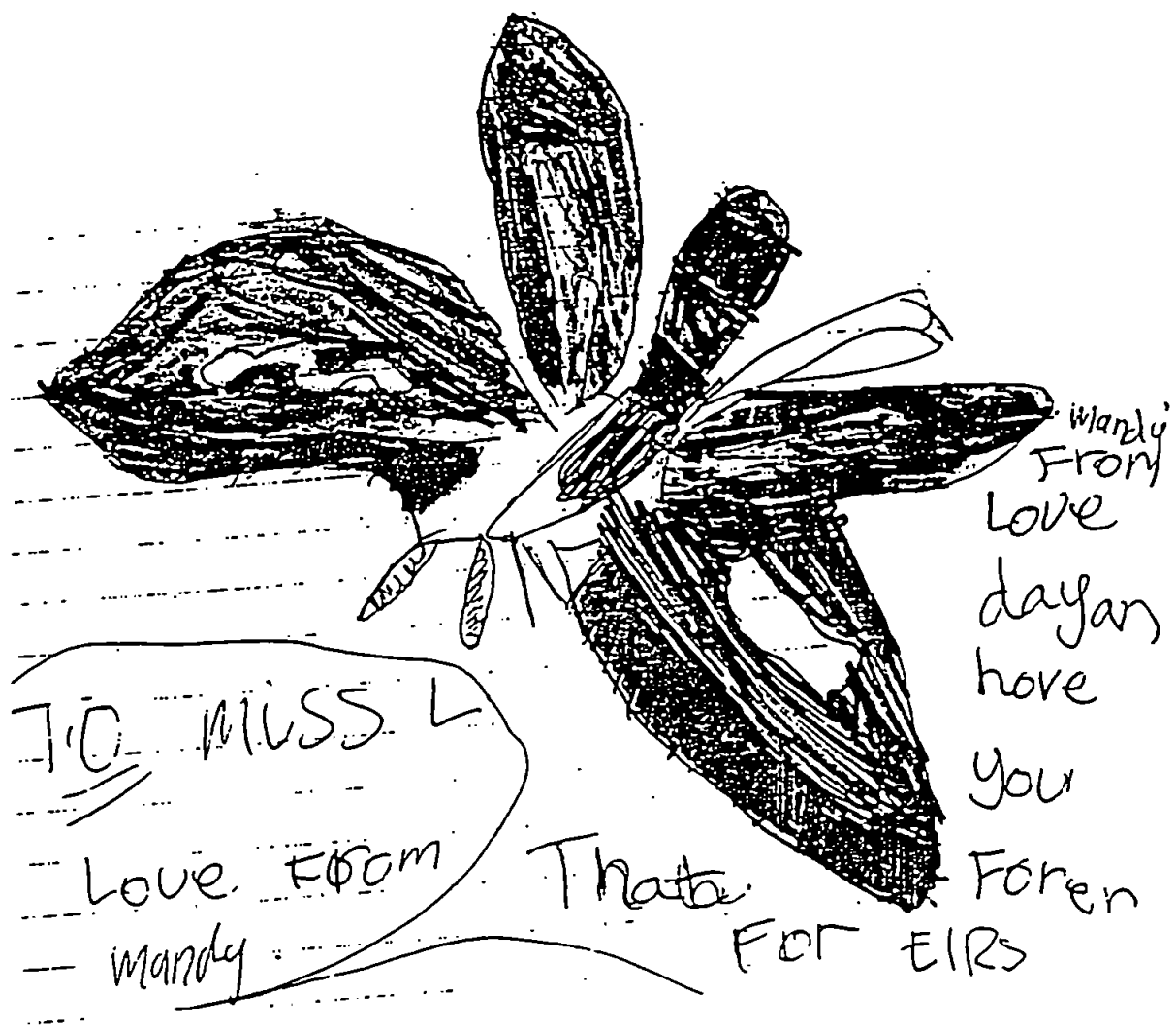
Letter Writing.

What do the children know already, and what do they need to learn?

The first letter from Mandy to her teacher is not laid out in a conventional way. It illustrates Mandy's understanding that writing is used to communicate a message from one person to another. Mandy also knows that letters have to be addressed to the person for whom they were intended, and they have to indicate to who has sent the letter. She also understands that

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

A letter from Mandy to her teacher.



Mandy age 6.

writing can be used for communicating feelings.

Sarah has written a letter to Louise, asking if she may go to Louise's house at seven o'clock. Here again Sarah has clearly understood the purpose of sending a letter to Louise, but she has not indicated who has sent it. This letter differs from Mandy's letter to her teacher, because Sarah wants a response. She understands that writing can be used for eliciting information from another person.

Below Sarah's letter we see the response from Louise. Louise has addressed her letter directly to Sarah, but has omitted her own name. She clearly understood that Sarah's letter was seeking information and needed a response, and Louise has responded.

David's letter, like Sarah's, is addressed to specific people, and it too requires a response. This time the response will not take the form of writing, but will consist of an action, that of visiting the shop. Interestingly David has not seen the need to put his name on the letter either. These children probably did not see the need to include their own names, because they may have thought that the person who received the letter would know who had written it. Here we see a difference in the understanding of these children, and adult letter writers.

Stacey sent a greeting card to Suzanne. The greeting this time contains the names of both the writer and the recipient. In addition we see a different purpose for writing. Stacey demonstrates here that she has understood that writing is a means of simply maintaining contact with another person.

Next we can see the practice signatures of Andrew and Laura. Although many of the children who wrote letters did not see the need to sign their letters, or to indicate who had written them, these children knew that their names were important in writing, even though they did not know when it was appropriate to produce a signature.

These children's letters show that they have already understood that in spoken and written language there are two roles. For example, in her letter Sarah took on the role of the *initiator*, because she initiated the communication, but in taking on this role she has allotted Louise the role of *respondant*.

The *respondant* is the role of the person who responds

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

A letter from Sarah to Louise (6)

To
LOUSE can
I come UP your
house to 7 o
clock

Louise's reply to Sarah (6)

Sarah
you can come to
my ~~house~~ house Sarah
I don't No run you
come at my house

A letter from David to his teacher and her husband.

MTS and MT Howe
can you come to
the SHOP David.

David aged (6)

card from Stacey to Suzanne. (6)

To
Suzanne

FROM
Stacey



AN EXAMPLE OF A SIGNATURE

A handwritten signature in black ink. The first part of the signature consists of the letters 'A' and 'A' followed by a series of loops and flourishes. Below the main signature is a separate, wavy horizontal line.

Andrew (6)

A handwritten signature in black ink. It starts with a small 'L' followed by a series of loops and flourishes. Below the main signature is a separate, wavy horizontal line.

Laura (6)

to what has gone before. This response may be in terms of *doing something*, such as David's letter required, or producing a written response, such as Sarah's letter required. The role adopted by the writer is important, because, as Sarah's letter shows, the initiator of the interaction has a free choice of topics with which to begin the communication. But the respondent, in this case Louise, is writing to a specified topic and making comments upon the writing of another writer.

In the role of the respondent the writer uses quite different writing skills. Louise, for example, has less freedom about the topic upon which she will write, and her comments have to be closely related to what has gone before. This kind of writing probably puts more demands upon the writer than writing in the initiator role, because the writer is far more restricted in terms of what it is, or is not appropriate for him or her to write.

From the letters written by these children we can see that Mandy, Louise, Sarah, and David already have quite a sound understanding of letter writing. Whilst Louise and Sarah have understood their social roles in the interaction they have not yet learnt to standardise their letter writing to adult conventions.

The children already know a great deal about writing letters, but there are still some things that they need to learn. They have not realised that letters may be addressed to more than one person, or may be written to someone who is not personally known to them. In their own letters the children have simply addressed each other by their names, or as 'you'; but perhaps now is the time to create a situation where they will interact with someone who cannot be addressed in this informal way. They will need to learn that there are different ways of addressing people who are known and people who are not known. They will need to learn that different kinds of language are used when letters are written to people who are not known to them.

Thus, if we look carefully at what a child writes, it is not difficult to pick out both the strengths and weaknesses in the child's knowledge about a particular writing situation.

How could a teacher encourage these children to extend their knowledge?

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

As we saw in the introduction, literacy learning takes place in a meaningful context, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to be certain that the child has the opportunity to write in the widest possible variety of letter writing situations. But how can teachers tell the difference between one letter writing situation and another? How could they ensure that they are actually providing opportunities which would make demands upon, and extend children's linguistic and cultural knowledge?

For teachers, it is helpful to draw on Joos' description of degrees of formality and informality in language. Wilkinson's (1971) summary provides teachers with a clear framework of different writing situations within which children need to be competent. This Children need, for example, to write letters which are:

- * *Intimate: letters to close friends or relatives.*
- * *Casual: letters to friends or colleagues, people who are personally known.*
- * *Consultative: letters to people who the children may have met, but with whom they do not have regular contact.*
- * *Formal: letters to people who are not known to the children.*
- * *Frozen: letters of a literary nature.*

For teachers it is helpful to remember the variety of situations which may give children experience of a particular communicative role. In the general everyday work of the classroom, it is important to try to include activities which will encourage children to further develop their understanding of the different communication roles. For example tasks demanding an initiator might be:

1. Invitations.
2. Giving Directions.
3. Letters requesting help or information.
4. Designing programmes.
5. Designing Questionnaires.
6. Designing interview schedules.
7. Giving instructions.
8. Holding a ballot.
9. Stories.

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

- 10. Poems.
- 11. Plays.

Activities requiring the writer to take on the role of respondent are:

- 1. Giving explanations.
- 2. Giving confirmation of events.
(Receipts, memoranda, letters etc.)
- 3. Filling in questionnaires.
- 4. Reporting on interviews.
- 5. Giving written feedback on any classroom activity.
- 6. Letters of acknowledgement and thanks.

But it is important that these activities arise out of a meaningful context. There are many interesting and original opportunities created by teachers for raising the social and cultural awareness of young writers. Some teachers have felt that this is a good opportunity in which to involve parents, relations and other interested adults in communicating with writers, and taking on the different writing roles.

One class I taught, had been looking at the role of the extended family in different cultures. The class had become very much aware of the plight of old people, their isolation, and, owing to failing faculties, their inability to perform tasks requiring good vision or hearing. The class decided to set up a talking newspaper for old people in the community. This required a great deal of writing in a newspaper format.

The articles, puzzles and jokes then had to be recorded ready to be sent out to the local Age Concern group. Making arrangements for the tapes to be delivered and heard required the writing and answering of many letters, and in this way the young writers had a real opportunity to communicate in writing, with real people, for a real purpose.

In another school, I saw a collection of writing called: "A Day in the life of the people at our school". This involved interviewing kitchen staff, caretaker, dinner ladies, secretary, teachers, head teacher, pupils in different classes, and the lollipop lady. First of all the children had to design questions for interviewing. This in itself required them to take on the role of initiator. When the children themselves were interviewed they took on the

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

role of respondent. This frequent role changing made different demands upon the children's linguistic resources.

Another very successful teacher I saw, had been carrying out a historical project on recent history with a group of ten year olds. She wanted to have some primary source material for the children to work on, so a plea went out to the parents. Within a matter of days she had a parents group working in school. At first they tentatively brought in photographs, clothing and objects from their own childhood. Some of the parents also wrote short passages describing their feelings and events in their own childhood. As time went on, it was clear that the parents were enjoying themselves, and getting a great deal out of helping with their children's education. Some of the parents volunteered to give talks to small groups of children, and they began suggesting how the materials they had brought in could be used with the children. Soon the project escalated right through the school, and there were parents in nearly every class writing for and with the children.

Another way of encouraging children to develop their linguistic resources in the initiator and respondent roles is to let the children make collections of puzzles and cartoons, to be used as a library book by other children. The actual writing of the puzzle puts the writer in the role of initiator. Once children's work is collected it can be used as an exercise for layout, and discussing the needs of the reader. When children solve the puzzles and cartoons they are being encouraged to take on the role of the respondent.

2

Writing Advertisements

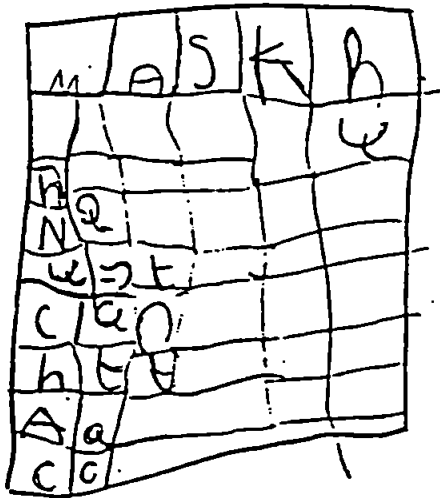
What do the children know already, and what do they need to learn?

During the day on which these self-initiated samples were collected several children had written their own advertisements. Charles' advertisement states: *I want to buy a teddy bear.* At the age of six Charles has a well formed notion of writing situations. He knows that he can use writing to communicate with other people, and he understands how to use writing to get something done. Charles demonstrates quite clearly

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

Games and puzzles made up by children. 21:

Three examples of word searches.



Mask
hot
cat



Look
Tom
God
Roy



Kelly's Instructions for a Game

RULES Board
 You have a board with
 Black and red squares.
 The queens go on red
 squares and Kings on

1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6

and
 black. You take 2 Kings, 2 Queens
 each King and Queen has a letter
 on it. When you pick your Kings and
 Queens you can't see what letters
 are on them. You have to try and
 make a word. You get 2 points for
 each word you make.

Kelly (11)

Samples of games and puzzles made up by
children:

An advertisement by Charles (6)

I wanted buy a teddy bear
05675

Charles

"I want to buy a teddy bear."

An advertisement by Lisa (6)

Fdsd Sdk
a pusa
to BUSd
and my nsd is
259255' 20p

Lisa

"For sale: a crashed toy bus. zop
And my number is 259255 Lisa"

An advertisement by Zoe. (5)

17N185K Q B U M S S 7 W
 / K N S 6 0
 6 F S Z K X
 57346441X

Zoe

"I want to buy a pair of red shoes"

Telephone: 57346441X

Zoe.

Note the stylized way in which she writes her name. It is already her 'signature'.

that he knows that he must state clearly what he wants to do, he must tell the person reading the advertisement who he is, and he includes his telephone number so that any respondents will know where to contact him. He is clearly hoping for a positive response.

Lisa's and Zoe's advertisements are interesting, neither of the girls has mastered the conventions of writing an advertisement, but both of them clearly understand what is required socially. Lisa attempts an 'f' at the beginning of 'for', and an 's' at the beginning of 'sale'. She knows that there is a standard way of writing her message, although she cannot yet produce it. The format of her message: 'For sale: a crashed toy bus. 20p. And my number is 259255. Lisa.' illustrates just how much she has learnt about the socially appropriate way of carrying out this interaction. She states the purpose of the writing:

For sale, then she states exact message: a crashed toy bus, followed by the price, her telephone number and her name. She clearly understands a great deal about the kind of information that a reader of an advertisement needs.

These children know a great deal about writing advertisements already, but what do they still need to learn? If we look at an adult version of what the children were doing we can see how the children's cultural, linguistic and social awareness differs from that of their adult counterparts.

CLOSING DOWN SHOE SALE

- NOW ON -

Hurry! to save on

MEN'S - LADIES - CHILDREN'S

UNREPEATABLE BARGAINS

Many HALF- PRICE

Handbags - Slippers - Wellingtons

Trainers for all the Family

P E N N Y L O C K

28, The Arcade, Belgrove. Tel: 3785
Open: Mon-Fri 9-5 (Closed 1-2 lunch)

We can see immediately that there are several differences. Whilst Charles, Lisa and Zoe simply announced that they wanted to buy or sell something, the adult counterpart is far more sophisticated. The adult who has written this advertisement realises that advertising is not simply a matter of making an announcement. It is also a question of stimulating the reader's interest, and perhaps more importantly, persuading him/her that this is a worthwhile reason for parting with his or her money!

We can see this greater sophistication of the adult writer's social understanding reflected in the language of the advertisement. For example, this writer had several different purposes for writing. One of the writer's purposes is to report the closing down sale, but the writer is also trying to persuade the reader that there would be bargains in the sale. Further, he presents the reader with an invitation to come along to the sale. So he reports, informs, persuades and invites simultaneously.

Here again, the children's writing makes plain the strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge about this particular writing situation, and teachers must concern themselves with strengthening and extending that knowledge. Therefore, for teachers it is helpful to know about speech acts. In his work on speech acts Austin (1969) showed how any communication may have several simultaneous intentions. For writers these intentions can be most simply described in the form of three questions:

1. What is my purpose in writing?
2. What information do I need to give my reader?
3. What effect am I trying to achieve on my reader?

From these questions we can develop a more specific framework for thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of the writing we are assessing. In the case of the children whose writing we have examined, we can begin to see exactly where a teacher might have extended the children's existing knowledge, and what s/he might have had to teach them.

If the teacher had talked to Charles, Lisa and Zoe when they were writing their advertisements, to explore the purpose of the writing, the information needed and the effect upon the listener, the children's deeper social and cultural understanding would have made greater demands upon their linguistic resources. For example

Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

the teacher may have had to help them think of words for describing the things they were wishing to sell in a more appealing way. She may have encouraged them to provide more details and use more persuasive vocabulary. Support from the teacher at this point would have extended the children's cultural and linguistic knowledge, and they may have produced even more convincing advertisements.

This social, cultural and linguistic approach helps teachers to see exactly where, and in what ways the children's attempts at written communication may need help. It provides teachers with a framework for drawing upon and extending the children's cultural and linguistic knowledge of the different writing situations. It will help teachers to ensure that children are provided opportunities to write in a wide variety of writing situations.

It further emphasises the point that teachers need to be very specific when setting writing tasks for children. This kind of analysis makes highlights the point, that writing tasks in the classroom are made more difficult if the writer does not fully understand the social situation of the writing s/he is about to perform. At the very least writer's need to know:

- * *For whom they are writing.*
- * *Why they are writing.*
- * *What kind of effect this writing is intended to have upon the person who reads it.*

The social situation in which the writing is taking place is critical to the effectiveness of the writing.

- * *Writing should be thought of in terms of a relationship between the reader and the writer.*
- * *Writing is a negotiation of meaning between the reader and the writer in a particular social situation.*
- * *Writers have to anticipate the needs of the reader in the process of negotiating meaning.*

As the samples of the children's advertisements illustrate, young writers may need to particularly think about the effect that their writing will have upon their reader.

How could a teacher help these children to extend their knowledge.

Teachers are very skilful at providing opportunities for children to acquire these insights into writing situations. A class of eight year olds I saw, had been thinking about signs and symbols as a means of finding their way about. This presented a good opportunity to lay a trail around the school and its grounds. The children themselves decided that it would be more interesting if it was a treasure trail.

This was an excellent opportunity to practise communicating with a reader who was not present, but this arrangement had the advantage of having some direct feedback at the end, so that the writers could see how successful their communication had been. It was also a good 'problem solving' approach to communication, which made the children think about alternative solutions to the problems they were faced with.

I saw another group of eight year olds who had been looking at maps, and giving directions. They decided to write letters in code, inviting their friends to meet them at a secret venues on the maps they had drawn of the school. The code was worked out by performing addition and subtraction sums, which helped their maths considerably. The child receiving the letter had to work out the code, and decide whether he would meet the writer in the specified place. He then had to reply in code confirming that he would or would not be at the specified place.

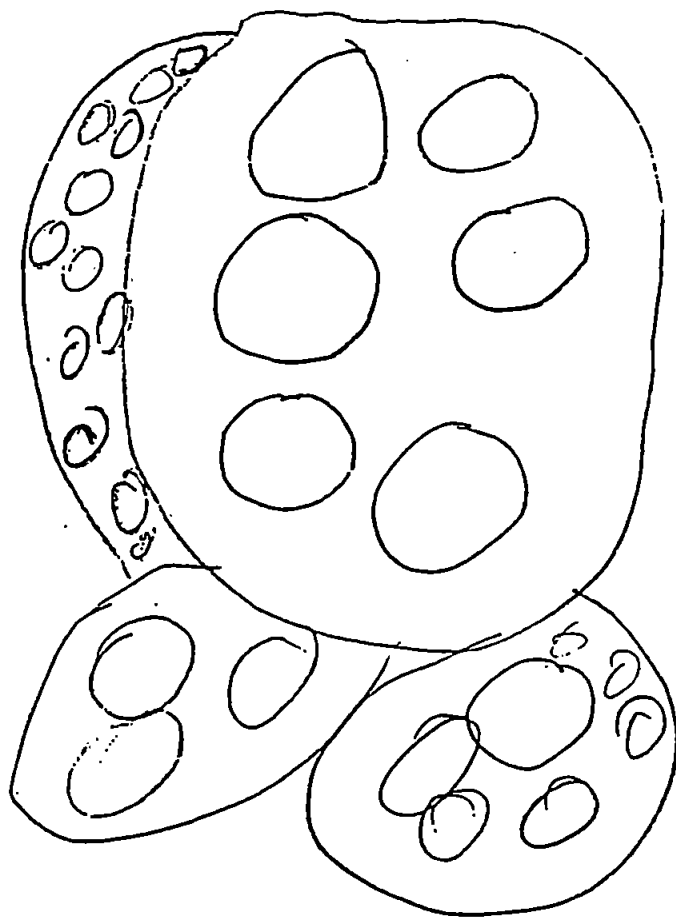
Sometimes the work in school lends itself to particular forms of writing. I once watched a student take a class of seven year olds for RE. It was "Children in Need Day", and many of the children had come to school with 'red noses'. They were very excited and the student drew on their excitement to discuss different relationships, focusing on what makes a kind, thoughtful person, as opposed to a selfish person. After the discussion some of the children set about making a game for 'red nose day'.

3.

Summary

From looking at only two different writing situations
Writing at Key Stage Two/1.

A game for the 'children in need' red nose day.



How many red
noses can you
see, 28

How many red noses can you see?

it is clear that by the time children are six, they may already understand a great deal about how writers help readers in the shared process of negotiating meaning through writing.

* They understand that writing is a communication from themselves to another person, or several people.

* They are aware that they have a personal identity in the interaction, and that they can take on different roles.

* They are aware that writing can be used to communicate feelings and information, and that it can be used for getting things done.

* They are aware that there are standard requirements for social actions such as writing a letter and producing an advertisement, although they may not yet be able to standardise their communication to adult conventions.

* They are aware of some of the different purposes for writing, and the different uses of written language.

* They are aware that different kinds of information may be important in different writing situations.

From these examples of children's writing we can see that it is important that children have opportunities to write in different writing situations. The differences in writing situations lie in:

* The social and cultural context of the writing.

* The relationship between a writer and his or her reader(s).

* The purpose of the writing.

* The information needed by the reader.

* The effect that the writing is likely to have upon the reader.

* The initiator and respondent roles adopted by the writer.

Chapter two

***Meeting the needs of the
reader: the discourse
structure.***

Chapter Two.

Meeting the Needs of the Reader.

1.

The National Curriculum for English Attainment Target three level two states that children should be able to:

a) produce, independently, pieces of writing using complete sentences, some of them demarcated with capital letters and full stops or question marks.

b) structure sequences of real or imagined events coherently in chronological accounts.

c) write stories showing an understanding of the rudiments of story structure by establishing an opening, characters, and one or more events.

Examples: An account of a family occasion, a practical task in mathematics, or an adventure story.

A story with an opening which suggests when or where the action takes place and which involves more than one character. (Page 12)

What can the writing of seven year olds tell us about the children's growing knowledge of the needs and expectations of a reader?

Hoping to stimulate the children's creative imagination, the teacher had brought into school a raincoat which had supposedly been 'found' on the way to school. She had brought out of the pockets of the raincoat some coloured tissues, some shells, and a piece of screwed up paper. In an initial discussion she prompted the children to think why the raincoat was not with its owner, and what the significance of the contents of the pockets might have been, then she asked the children to write a story about it. The children's writing has been divided into three groups for ease of discussion.

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

Group 1: Emergent discourse structure.

Elise wrote:

the raincoat had got shells in too and the raincoat had tissues in the pokets and the raincoat is yellow and the raincoat has splits

Clearly Elise has listened carefully to the teacher's preparatory discussion, and she is able to reproduce some of the facts for a reader. Beyond this we can see that she has some difficulties. For example, there are no capital letters or full stops, and there is a misspelling.. However, these are only superficial comments. If Elise had been able to spell 'pockets' correctly, and even if she had punctuated her work correctly, there are still some serious difficulties in her writing. In order to be able to understand Elise's difficulties we need to be able to understand what her writing is telling us about her state of social awareness.

Elise has several problems, but perhaps the most obvious is the lack of any kind of direction in her writing. The ideas are not very well organised, and for this reason it is difficult for a reader to work out exactly what she is trying to do, and what kind of effect she was trying to achieve. Her writing does not seem to have a definite beginning or end. There is no recognisable structure which the reader can latch into. In terms of the relationship between the reader and the writer, the reader is left not knowing quite 'where s/he is up to.'

Christopher decided that the raincoat belonged to a 'queen's soldier'. His older brother had just joined the army, and 'queen's soldiers' were a permanent feature of his work at this time. In addition he had been out for a picnic with his grandparents at the weekend, and had greatly enjoyed it. Christopher experienced difficulties in concentrating and did not find written work easy. With a great deal of help and encouragement he wrote:

Once there was a queen's soldier. He went to a picnic. He eat cook. (ate cake) He had jam tarts. He eat sausages. It was a good picnic.

In spite of his obvious difficulties Christopher's

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

the mystery of the raincoat

the raincoat had got shells in too
and the raincoat had tissues in the pockets
and the raincoat is yellow and the raincoat
has 5 plies

ELSE

Elise's writing (7)

Notice the lack of structure related to misunderstanding of the purpose for writing, and misunderstanding of the needs of the reader. This structure only includes a situation. There is no problem, solution or evaluation.

Christopher's writing (7)

Notice:
 ① He provides enough detail, but his discourse structure is incomplete : Situation and evaluation only.

Once there was a queen's soldier.
He went to a picnic.
He eat cook.
He had jam tarts.
He ate sausages.
It was a good picnic.

Once there was a queen's soldier.
 He went to a picnic.
 He eat cook.
 He had jam tarts.
 He eat sausages.
 It was a good picnic.

writing illustrates that he knew a considerable amount about story writing. His story has a definite beginning, and uses the appropriate story language 'Once there was'. In terms of the reader/writer relationship, Christopher clearly understood more about story telling and the needs of his reader than Elise.

In Christopher's writing we see something of a developing discourse structure. According to the work of Hoey (1979), we might have expected to see a discourse structure of: *situation, problem, solution, evaluation*. Christopher has included a substantial and recognisable part of this structure in his story. There is a clear situation at the beginning:

Once there was a queen's soldier. He went to a picnic. He eat cook. (ate cake) He had jam tarts. He eat sausages.

and at the end an evaluation:

It was a good picnic.

Michael's story, although it seems to contain more than Christopher's, lacks some of Christopher's understanding. Notice his use of *I* throughout the story, without giving the reader any indication about the importance of this person.

In Michael's writing there are some details about the raincoat and the tissues in the pocket, but they leave the reader wondering: *What kind of bag? What raincoat? Whose bag or raincoat?* This is something we shall return to in Chapter Four.

Further, we can see that Michael did not understand the need for a structure in his discourse. He presents only a situation, without any problem, solution or evaluation. In terms of a reader/writer relationship, this writing is less effective than Christopher's writing, because it presents so many difficulties for the reader. The reader is unsure of the purpose of the writing, and therefore unsure about what kind of action is required. It is very difficult for the reader to understand 'where this writing is going.'

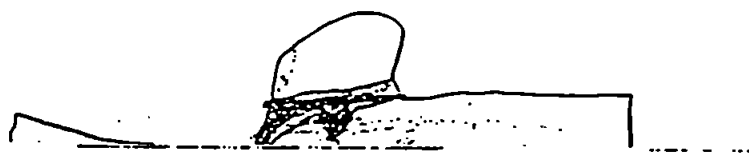
Group 2: Established discourse structure.

Roberta's writing demonstrates a clearer understanding of the needs of the reader. Her story has a definite

mystery of the raincoat

MICHAEL

day I found a bag in a field one day and I opened the bag and I found a raincoat and the first pocket I checked one of the pockets and it was only some tissues.



Michael's writing. (7)

Notice the form of address "I"

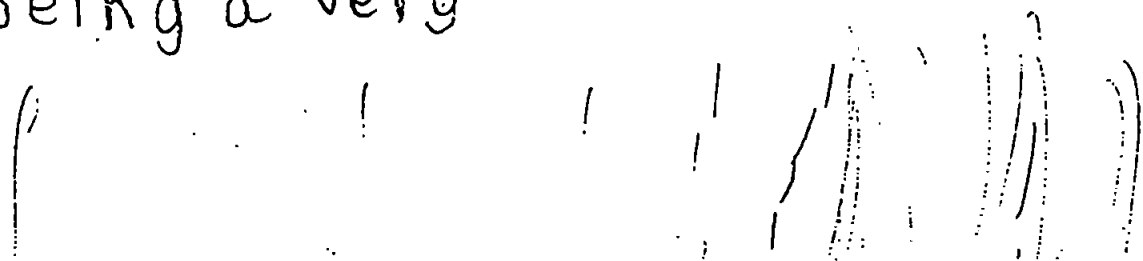
Notice the lack of contextual details: What kind of bag? What kind of raincoat? (Mainly euphoric references)

Notice the lack of an ending. The structure of this writing only includes a situation. There is no problem, solution or evaluation.

The mystery of the

ROBERTA.

Once upon a time there was a Raincoat. It was lying on somebodys garden. I put my hand in the Raincoat and I found these things some shells, a piece of paper, and some old tissues. The piece of paper said this adress. Frances Stoke 10 Greenfield road Cullompton Devon. there were three shells in the Raincoat. There were some different coloured tissues. The Raincoat had one cut in it. And it ended up being a very useful Raincoat.



Roberta's writing. (?)

Notice the repetition of the shells, paper and tissue
 Notice the beginning and ending: situation - evaluation

beginning, and she uses conventional story language to signal this beginning. She introduces the raincoat and further tells the reader that 'It was lying in somebody's garden'. As with the other writers we can see Roberta's emerging awareness of the structure of the discourse. Her writing consists mainly of a situation, and is concluded with an evaluation:

And it ended up being a very useful raincoat.

Sometimes when we look at children's writing, it is tempting to think that because a child has perhaps not written a great deal, this is because the child does not like writing, or is not very confident about writing, or perhaps is not able to write very well. However, in the case of Toby's writing, this would certainly be a mistaken assumption. Toby was a very able child, who was easily distracted, but whose sense of humour was sharp and witty. He never missed an opportunity to make humorous comments. Although he has not written very much, what he has written illustrates that he is an able writer.

He makes the purpose for his writing clear in the opening phrase 'Once upon a time', and he continues using story language 'there was a coat all alone. . .'. Already and quite skilfully he is moving the discourse structure from a situation to a problem, because the reader already suspects that the reference to the coat being 'all alone' is going to be important to the story. He confirms the reader's suspicion with:

He had no little boy to look after him or to wear him.

Toby's writing exploits the readers expectations in an original way. It is quite ordinary to talk about little boys who do not have a coat to wear, but it is very original to create personhood and character for a raincoat who does not have a little boy to wear him.

Toby introduces the details and characters carefully. His discourse structure achieves what none of the other writers have so far achieved, in that he creates a very plausible situation and a very unusual problem. The writing is clearly unfinished. Toby had found other matters of interest to distract him before he could conclude his writing with a solution and an evaluation, but he was quite capable of finishing the structure in the conventional manner.

The mystery of the rain-coat

Once upon a time there was
a coat all alone he had no
little boy to look after him
or to wear him.



Toby's writing (7)

Although Toby has not written very much he is an able writer.

- ① Notice his clear purpose for writing (story)
- ② Notice how he uses 'story language'
- ③ Notice how he introduces his main ideas to the reader. A good situation and problem

Given time and encouragement he could have developed this piece much further.

Group 3: Extended discourse structure.

Anthony's writing about the mystery of the pot demonstrates a clear grasp of the reader/writer relationship. Notice how he carefully introduces details only when the reader requires them, and only details that the reader will need to make sense of the story.

Anthony creates a careful and logical time sequence so that one event in the story follows the next in a logical manner. He uses his knowledge of story language and story structure to create an impressive effect on his reader. We can easily pick out his intended discourse structure:

Situation:

One day David found a pot. . .

Problem:

When David got home he looked very well and he saw some writing . . .

Solution:

And he said them out allowed. . .

Evaluation:

David was very pleased . . .

With one or two minor adjustments, this story could easily have been written by a much older and experienced writer.

Marcus carefully introduces the relevant details as the reader needs them. He also has a complete discourse structure which we can see in:

Situation:

One day I was digging in the garden. . .

Problem 1:

then my mummy told me to come in for lunch. . .

Solution 1:

I asked my mum if I could go outside and she said yes.

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

Anthony's
writing (7)

The mystery of a pot
One day David found a
pot by a river but little
did he know it was a
magic pot. But as soon
as David saw the pot
he thought what a pretty
pot I'll take that home
When David got home
he looked very well
and he saw some writing
and he said them out
allowed ^{aloud} and this is
what it said hay how
ho nay fill this pot

with food. And as soon
as the words left his
lips and the pot was
full of food and this
was a good gift for
David and his family for
they were very poor
and they lived in a
desert and there was
only an oasis. So
when David showed his
family they had a
feast and David was
very pleased and his
mum dad and his
brother and sister were
pleased as well to
have such a great
boy in their family.
What a good pot to find. 😊

Notice:

- ① The way he introduces all of the details a reader needs to make sense of the story. (Endophoric reference)
- ② He has a careful and logical time sequence.
- ③ He sticks closely to the appropriate language

MARCUS

one day I was digging
in the garden and I
found a box and it
had a key in the
box I turned the key
and pulled it out and
then my mummy told
me to come in for
my lunch and when I
had finished my lunch
I asked my mum if
I could go outside
and she said yes
so I went outside

and I went and found
the box and this time
I just had time to
open the box because it
started to rain so I
picked up the box and
raced into the garage
and I waited in there
until the rain stopped
and I had to open
the box in the garage
and when I had opened
the box I found out
that there was gold
in there.

Marcus' writing (7)

Notice:

- ① How he carefully introduces the relevant details
- ② How he manipulates the reader's expectations of finding out what is in the box, and creates suspense by manipulating the discourse structure

At this point we see Marcus divert from the expected evaluation, to create a second problem:

Problem 2:

It started to rain . .

Solution 2:

I picked up the box and raced into the garage. . .

Problem 3:

I waited in there until the rain stopped. . .

Solution 3

I had to open the box in the garage . . .

Evaluation:

when I opened the box I found out that there was gold in there. . .

Analysing the story in this way we can see how well Marcus not only understands the needs of his reader, but also knows how to achieve particular effects in the shared negotiation of meaning with his reader. He knows very well how to manipulate the expectations of the reader. He has used the structure of the discourse here to create suspense by not immediately satisfying the reader's curiosity to know what was in the box. This example illustrates just how much some children have learnt about the relationship between the reader and the writer at the age of seven. They not only understand how to manipulate the social expectations, but are aware of the cultural and linguistic conventions for achieving particular effects in the relationship between the reader and the writer.

These samples of writing illustrate how at the very young age of seven children's social, cultural and linguistic knowledge varies enormously. If there were space within this chapter we could also look at examples of children of eight, nine and ten years old who still have, and have not, taken the needs of their reader's into account.

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

2.

What does the discourse structure do?

Before we can answer this question, it is important to be clear about what the discourse structure is, and the part it plays in the relationship between the reader and the writer. Perhaps one of the most important points is that discourse structure is not found only in children's stories. It occurs in most adult writing situations such as letter writing:

GOING ON THE PILL

I am sixteen and would like to have details about going on the Pill. Could you tell me what I have to do?

ANNE

Consult either your family doctor or your local family planning clinic, either of whom will be able to advise you.

You are right to have thought seriously about the risk of pregnancy, but have you thought equally seriously about the wisdom of pre-marital sexual intercourse? Please don't just assume this is an almost automatic part of a romance.

Initiator:

Situation: I am sixteen . . .

Problem: Could you tell me what I have to do . .

Respondant:

Solution: Consult your doctor . . .

Evaluation: You are right . . .

In this example the initiator of the correspondence produced a situation and a problem, leaving the respondent in no doubt about the anticipated response. Correctly anticipating the response the respondent produced a solution and evaluation. So the discourse structure helped the respondent to know how s/he was to respond to the situation.

In the return of thanks (below) we see how the situation, problem and solution have already occurred and this notice in the newspaper is an evaluation.

RETURN THANKS

PANKHURST. Mrs. Rosemary Pankhurst and family wish to express their sincere thanks for the letters, cards and expressions of sympathy received during their sad loss. To everyone who helped Ron in their own special way, to all who attended the funeral service and sent flowers. A special thanks to the duty doctor.

The underlying pattern of *situation, problem, solution, and evaluation* helps the reader here to understand the purpose of the return of thanks, and to understand that no further action is required.

Finally, we see the same underlying pattern in this notice in a dentist's waiting room:

NOTICE IN A DENTIST'S WAITINGROOM.

If you are a new patient we would like to take this opportunity of welcoming you to this practice. It is our practice philosophy to promote dental health at all times. Therefore we recommend regular check-ups. These will also help to keep down the cost of your treatment. Some people feel a deep-seated anxiety about dentistry. We understand. Please discuss your fears with us and we will do everything we can to help.

Situation: If you are a new patient . . .

Problem: Some people feel a deep-seated anxiety about dentistry. . .

Solution: Please discuss your fears with us.

Evaluation: We will do everything we can to help.

Here the discourse structure is complete, and the reader can therefore be certain that this notice is for information purposes and that no further action is required. The complete discourse structure here helps the reader to understand that the purpose of this notice is 'for information'. Therefore, the discourse structure:

* helps the reader to understand where s/he is up to' in the communication

* helps the reader understand the purpose of the

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

communication

and

** it sets up expectations about the kind of action (or otherwise) that might be required.*

The children's stories at the beginning of this chapter show how the discourse structure begins to emerge at a very early stage in the process of learning to negotiate meaning in writing situations. It is clearly an important part of the process of negotiating meaning between the reader and the writer.

3.

How can teachers help children to extend their knowledge of the discourse structure in writing situations?

The discourse structure is very important, but what kind of writing situations would encourage children to develop a discourse structure in their writing? This may seem a difficult question, but it is made much easier by the fact that children already have an intuitive understanding of discourse structure, because they use it in their speech. This intuitive knowledge is something which teachers can draw upon. Any activity which is very close to speech will draw upon the children's linguistic knowledge of discourse. For example, scripting a play can be a very useful writing situation for developing and extending this knowledge.

In Delia and Claire's self-initiated play we can see the state of their knowledge about the discourse structure anticipated by the reader:

Situation: Hello Claire, Hello Delia

Problem: How are you

Solution: I am fine.

Evaluation: Thank you.

Situation: I know what

Problem: Let's frighten Mike Reson and our teacher Miss Grise and Mrs. L

Solution: Yes

Evaluation: We will

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

A Self-Initiated Play by Claire and Delia

Thursday May 4th

Delia and Claire

Delia Hello Claire

Claire Hello Delia

Delia How are you

Claire I am Fine Thank you

Delia I no What That's Frighten Mike Reson

Claire and are Teacher Miss Grise and Mrs L

Delia yes we will we will meet tonight

Claire What time

Delia 10 o'clock

So They Did

Situation: Hello Claire. Hello Delia

Problem: How are you?

Solution: I am fine.

Evaluation: Thank you.

Situation: I know what

Problem 1: Let's frighten Mike Reson, and our teacher Miss Grise and Miss L

Solution 1: Yes we will. We will meet tonight

Problem 2: What time?

Solution 2: 10 o'clock.

Evaluation: So they did.

Situation: We will meet tonight

Problem: What time

Solution: 10 O'clock

Evaluation: So they did

Any writing situation which draws heavily on the children's knowledge of negotiating meaning with a listener in speech is likely to encourage the development of a discourse structure in writing. The kinds of activities therefore might include:

1. Scripted plays
2. Reports of interviews
3. Questionnaires
4. Surveys

However, it is important that the tasks set by teachers do not simply make demands upon the children's linguistic resources to produce a discourse structure. This would create repetitive situations in which children would not have an opportunity to extend their knowledge of discourse structure in writing. Teachers need to be able to provide children with a wide variety of opportunities to be certain that existing knowledge is developed and extended. But what kind of opportunities would produce the variety that children need?

For teachers it is important to be conscious that children need to be able to produce different parts of the pattern. Children need opportunities to produce simply a situation, or a situation and a problem, or a solution and evaluation. This will extend their knowledge of the different purposes for writing in different writing situations, and their knowledge of the kind of expectations their writing is setting up in a reader.

One group of children were putting on an evening entertainment for their parents. The preparation included writing invitations, making tickets and a programme. In terms of the discourse structure each of these different writing situations had provided opportunities for the children to produce different parts of the discourse. The different writing purposes set up different expectations about the kind of action required by the reader. The writing of the invitation required the reader to accept or reject the invitation. The purchase of a ticket committed the reader to attending the performance, but the programme was 'for information purposes only'. At least it would have been, had it not been for the inspiration of

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

Presentation of Accounts for the Readers Evaluation.

Accounts for Evening Event 22nd March

Food	Estimated costs	Programme Price	Scrounge	Earnings
CRISPS	£ 2.00	50p for family Programme	Plates:	30
CHEESE STRAWS	£ 2.00		Cups:	Programmer 15
SCONES	£ 2.00		Marg:	40
GINGER BREAD	£ 2.00		Jam:	Programmer 2:
= <small>total</small>	8.00			
DRINKS	Estimated costs			
TEA	£ 2.50			
ORANGE	£ 1.00			
= <small>total</small>	3.50			
Finished total	= 11.50			

Estimated costs = 11.50
 Loan applied for = 15.00

Any profits will be used to
 Purchase end of term treats
 for class 5

a very creative teacher who encouraged the children to present their fiscal accounts as a part of the programme.

Here the children had produced the situation, problems and solutions, and had presented their accounts for evaluation. This was perhaps the most innovative aspect of the writing situation, because the presentation of the accounts in the programme for the reader's evaluation, now set up expectations for action on the part of the reader.

In another school I saw some children carrying out a writing survey. These children were nine years old, but surveys are a very useful writing situation for all children at Key stage two. Firstly the children had to decide on the situation, and they decided to set up a survey about writing. Another group decided on a survey about school uniform.

The children then had to set up the problem, that is, they had to devise the questions for their questionnaire. After this each group asked members of other groups to fill in the questionnaire. Faced with a situation and problem, the children now had to be the 'reader' and produce some solutions, or answers to the questions. Some of the questions were quite hard, and some of the children complained that they could not read the handwritten questions. This provided immediate feedback for the writer about the effect of the writing on the reader. This is an important point, because it underscores the importance of detailed feedback for writers.

** When learning to think about writing as a relationship between the reader and the writer, feedback about the effects of the writing upon the reader is essential.*

When all of the writing questionnaire's were completed, and had been discussed with those who wrote them, the results were collated. Then each group produced a wall chart, presenting the conclusions of their survey for the rest of the class, or any passing reader to evaluate.

From the samples of writing by seven year olds we have seen how in any kind of spoken or written communication there is an underlying communicative structure which is anticipated by all of the participants. This is the discourse structure. The discourse structure helps the participants to understand the purpose of the

Writing at Key Stage Two/2.

Writing Survey

1. What is writing? ~~etc.~~ something that's been written
I like to write
 2. Where do you like to write? at school when it's quiet.
 3. What does it mean to be good at writing? To be good at writing ^{means} you have thought about what you are writing.
 4. What is an author? Are you an author?
an author is someone who writes books or stories.
yes, I am an author because I
 5. How is writing different from speaking? write stories
writing is different from speaking because you ~~use~~ ^{use} a pen and paper.
 6. What do you like about writing?
I like writing because I can write what I think.
 7. What's difficult about writing?
writing is difficult sometimes because you can't always write down things that you can say.
 8. What kinds of writing do you most enjoy?
I like the sort of writing ~~and~~ when you can write what you think.
 9. What kinds of writing do you find boring?
I like almost every type of writing. The most boring is dictation.
 10. Where do your ideas come from?
my ideas come from what I think that situation means.
-
1. When I write I think about.....
I write what I think ~~others~~ is right not what others think.
 2. When I have finished a piece of writing I like it to be.... I like to be certain I write what I ~~thought~~ was right.

Writing Survey

1. What is writing? a Subject That every body uses
 2. Where do you like to write? at School
 3. What does it mean to be good at writing? So you can become a writer
 4. What is an author? Are you an author?
 Some when now writes Books ✓ eg
 5. How is writing different from speaking? when you speak you can't prove what you want to say But in writing you can prove what you want to say
 6. What do you like about writing? you can write what you feel whether you feel happy or sad
 7. What's difficult about writing? when you don't know how to spell or you don't know what to write
 8. What kinds of writing do you most enjoy? what I feel and adverbial strings
 9. What kinds of writing do you find boring? Handwriting
 10. Where do your ideas come from? common sense and a sense of humor and brain
-
1. When I write I think about..... what I feel and I can look at it and think what I really feel
 2. When I have finished a piece of writing I like it to be.... the best so I can have it up on the wall

Writing Survey.-

1. What is writing? It's something you sit when you sit down and write maybe a story, poem or play.
2. Where do you like to write? I like to write in my bedroom or at school. - at my desk
3. What does it mean to be good at writing? It means something I can do well.
4. What is an author? Are you an author? An author is someone who writes books. yes I am a author.
5. How is writing different from speaking? When you speak you saying it to someone when your writing your putting all the words on paper.
6. What do you like about writing? I like writing because I can do it when I like and where.
7. What's difficult about writing? When I write sometimes I can't think straight and I have to stop for a while.
8. What kinds of writing do you most enjoy? I like writing stories best of all.
9. What kinds of writing do you find boring? I find when I'm trying to write a poem it gets boring.
10. Where do your ideas come from? When I look at a book or watch T.V and see something that ^{really} ~~feels~~ happening. That's when I get an idea.
1. When I write I think about....different things say I'm writing a story about a worm I think funny things about worms
2. When I have finished a piece of writing I like it to be.... able to make it into a book and show mum + dad and then give it to Mrs Lancaster.

Presenting the results of a writing survey for evaluation

1. What is writing? ^{Writing Survey} ^{Some Things Hidden In Verbal}

2. Where do you like to write? ^{Why write?}

3. What does it mean to be good at writing? ^{to write well} ^{Descriptive}

4. What is an author? ^{Are you an author?} ^{Some are} ^{Who writes books} ^{Author Handwriting}

5. How is writing different from speaking? ^{you can not hear it}

6. What do you like about writing? ^{Stories}

7. What's difficult about writing? ^{Leaving}

8. What kinds of writing do you most enjoy? ^{Journal}

9. What kinds of writing do you find boring?

10. Where do your ideas come from? ^{My head}

1. When I write I think about ^{concepts}

2. When I have finished a piece of writing I like it to be good ^{Responsible good}

communication, and sets up expectations about the kind of action that may be required.

The discourse structure is particularly important in a writing situation, where the reader and the writer are not both present at the same time. In a writing situation the writer can help the reader to understand the purpose of the writing by setting out the discourse structure clearly. In order to learn how successful the discourse structure has been, writers need feedback about the effect of their writing on the reader. For teachers, who frequently are 'the reader' it is important to remember that the feedback given to a writer needs to include:

- * *Information about how clear the purpose of the writing is*

- * *Information about the clarity of expectations the writing set up in the reader*

and where children are only just beginning to include a discourse structure in their writing:

- * *Encouragement, by careful questioning and prompting:*

Why did you write this?

What effect did you want to have on your reader?

What did you want your reader to do?

It is also important that children have opportunities to write in situations which require a variety of combinations of the basic discourse structure. That is:

- * *Opportunities to write in situations with any combination of: Situation, Problem, Solution and Evaluation.*

Chapter three.

***Helping the reader:
chronological sequences.***

Chapter Three.

Helping the Reader

1.

The National Curriculum Attainment target three level 4 states that pupils should:

** produce independently. pieces of writing showing evidence of a developing ability to structure what is written in ways that make the meaning clear to the reader; demonstrate in their writing generally accurate use of sentence punctuation.*

** Begin to use structures of written Standard English and begin to use some sentence structures different from those of speech.*

As children grow and learn during their primary years, how capable are they of carrying out these requirements in the National Curriculum. If we look at the following samples of writing of children at eight years old, what kinds of things have they learnt?

Context of the writing.

These samples were taken from a complete group of eight year old children who were reporting on a school trip to the beach. On the train the teacher had encouraged the children to count the tunnels and bridges under which the train passed. For ease the samples are grouped according to how much they can tell us about the children's state of social, cultural and linguistic awareness.

Group 1: Emergent chronological sequences.

The first group of samples contains the writing of Alison and Jonathan. From their writing we can see that the early use of the word 'you' which we saw in the letters of the six year olds has not yet disappeared. Alison writes:

Yesterday we went to the docks. . . .

Writing at Key Stage Two.

She does not attempt to explain for her reader who 'we' are and which docks were visited. There is very little of the anticipated structure in this writing, but one interesting development may have taken place. The writing begins:

Yesterday . . .

Here we are possibly seeing the first indications of an emerging chronological sequence. The chronological sequence simply tells the reader '*this happened first, then that, and in the end. . .*' It is a way of helping the reader '*know where he is up to*' in the communication. At this stage we cannot be certain that Alison used this word deliberately, or whether it occurred naturally in her speech, and was then transferred to the writing.

Similarly with the sample of Jonathan's writing. He writes:

We went to Exmouth on the train . . .

Again he uses 'we' without attempting to explain who 'we' are, but his opening words suggest that he is beginning to understand that his reader may need some kind of preliminary explanation about this writing.

As writing becomes more complex and sophisticated the writer needs to help the reader to understand why the writing is being produced, and how the main ideas are organised. Jonathan attempts at the beginning of his writing to do this. We cannot tell whether this was intentional or unintentional, because there are no other attempts in Jonathan's writing to help the reader to understand how the main ideas are organised. So at this point we can only suggest in a very speculative manner that Jonathan's opening phrase may possibly be construed as an emerging chronological sequence.

Group2: Established chronological sequence.

The second group of samples contains clearer evidence of a chronological sequence. For example Elaine writes:

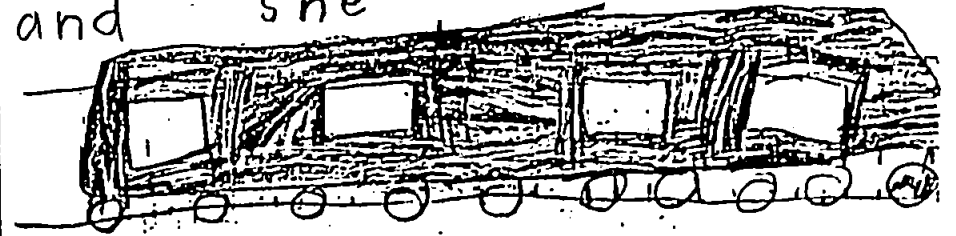
Yesterday we went on a trip . . .

Elaine still has not fully realised that the reader will need to know who 'we' are, but her opening words

Writing at Key Stage Two.

We went on a train and we saw some
shells and we went down
a bit and we saw some
huts and then we
saw some boats and we
saw some holes on the
mud and the mud was
wet and we saw this
lady and she was
looking for cockles and
you have to look for a
hole and you

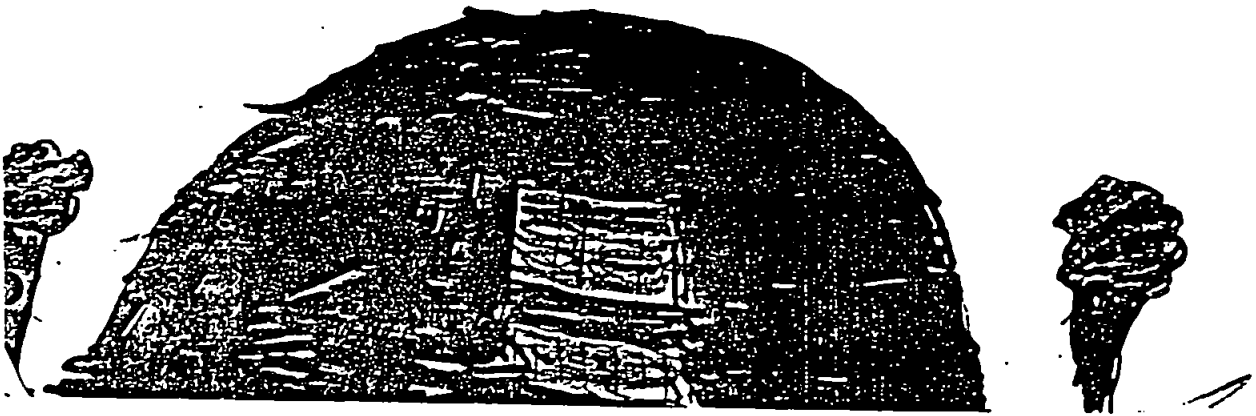
put your finger in
the hole and this
lady she cooks them
and she eats them



ap
Jonathan (8)

Alison (8)

yesterday we went to the docks. it was smelly
 on the docks we saw a man sweeping up the
 coal there was a trailer tent too we saw some
 rubbish in cubes too. we went to the train
 and went home



Notice:

'Yesterday' - the beginnings of
 chronological sequence

suggest that she is beginning to realise that the reader may need some help to understand her writing. After the initial burst of ideas, she indicates a structure to the reader in:

and then we stopped . . .

then follows the next group of ideas.

Similarly in Christine's writing we see the opening chronological sequence:

On Tuesday we walked to St.James' Park. . .

followed by:

First we went in a really long dark tunnel . . .

Concluding with:

then we were at Exmouth.

Here we see a first real intent to give the reader some idea of the chronology of the day.

We see this again in the writing of David and Geoffrey. David writes:

Yesterday we went on a school trip. . .

And then I saw a crane. . .

And then I went for a paddle in the sea. . .

and Geoffrey writes:

Yesterday we went to Exmouth by train. . .

And then we got to Exmouth

And then we went on the beach. . .

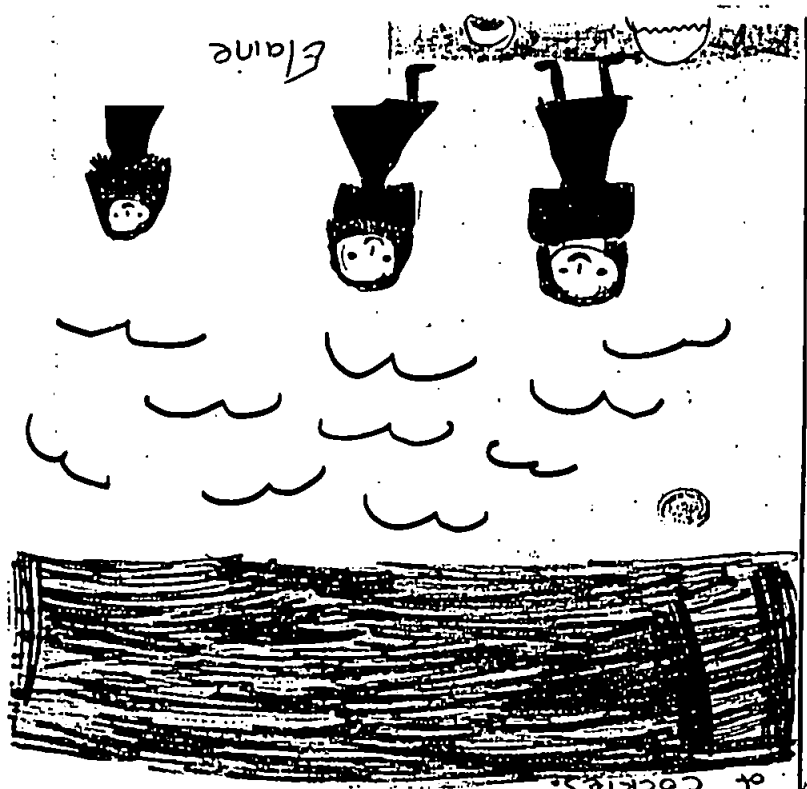
Here we are beginning to get a sequence of ideas, with an intentional indication from the writer of how the ideas are organised.

Group 3: Extended chronological sequence.

By far the largest group of writers at eight years old, was the group which had an extended chronological sequence in their writing. Carl for example, takes his organisation of ideas a little further than the writers in group 2. He writes:

On Tuesday we went to Exmouth for a trip. . .

Writing at Key Stage Two.



Yesterday we went on a trip and we
went by a train and we went
7 stations and the last place was
exmouth and we stopped at exmouth
and we went half way and we stopped
to eat our snack and when we had
eaten our snack we walked on a bit
and then we stopped to take our
baby car and so did Thomas
But Thomas found a bigger car
then me and Samantha found a
big one and it was dead and
I found a shell and there were

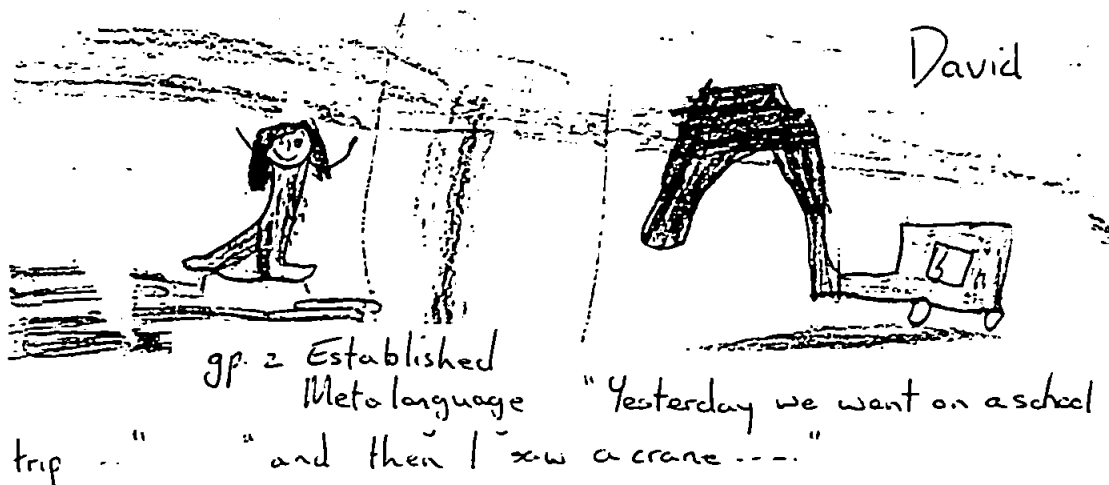
snail in it and there were to
snails and I found a cockle and
we saw a woman and she was
looking for cookies she had lots
of cookies.

on Tuesday
 we walked to James park
 we walked for the train the single
 went amber and the train and
 we got on to went
 we were of first we
 in a really long and a dark bunk
 and we went past motor
 garden and we motor bikes
 ways and cabs and a sign called
 and houses too and trees and
 Exton and we at Exmouth
 busnes then we at
 gp.2 established "On Tuesday"
 metalanguage

Christine (s)

yesterday We Went on a
 School trip and We Went by
 train and We Went to the estuary
 and woked to see if we could Find
 any thing interesting and We
 bought a paper bag to put
 things in. it was a bit
 smelly in the docks and I saw
 some lorrys and then I saw a
 crane and then I Went for
 a paddle in the sea.

David



gp. 2 Established
 Meto language

"Yesterday we went on a school
 trip ..."

"and then I saw a crane ..."

Yesterday We went to Exmouth
 by train and we, went passe
 five stations and and then
 We got to Exmouth and
 then we went on the beach
 and I found lots of
 cockles and I found
 lots of crabs and
 I saw lots of
 dead fish

Geoffrey (s)

"Yesterday we went to Exmouth by train ..."

"and then we went ..."

Qp. 2 Established metalanguage

And we went back. . .

And the train had different seats when we went back. .

Here Carl indicates for the reader a definite beginning and a definite end to his trip. Edward similarly understands that it is helpful to signal a beginning, middle and end to the reader when he writes:

Yesterday we went to Exmouth by train. . . .

and then we had dinner. . .

after that we went to a different beach. . .

Then we went home on the train. . . .

And Hazel writes:

Yesterday we went to Exmouth on a train. . .

and then we had are crisb. . .

and then we had a paddel in the sea. . .

and then we had a padel

and then we went home. . .

Here there is a straightforward sequence: beginning event, middle events, ending event. Some children have a well developed sense of organisation of their ideas. Barry for example writes:

Yesterday we went on a train to Exmouth . . .

During the day. . .

And after we had to go to the station to go home. . .

Although Barry has not written a great deal in terms of quantity, what he has written illustrates a well developed sense of the reader's needs. This might be described as a short, but effective communication.

Notice how carefully Nigel steers the reader through the events of the trip to Exmouth. He writes:

Yesterday we went to Exmouth on the train. . .

When we got there. . .

Then we took our shoes and socks off. . .

Then we went on to the mud . . .

When we were having our lunch. . .

After we had our lunch. . .

Interestingly Nigel provides the reader with an evaluation:

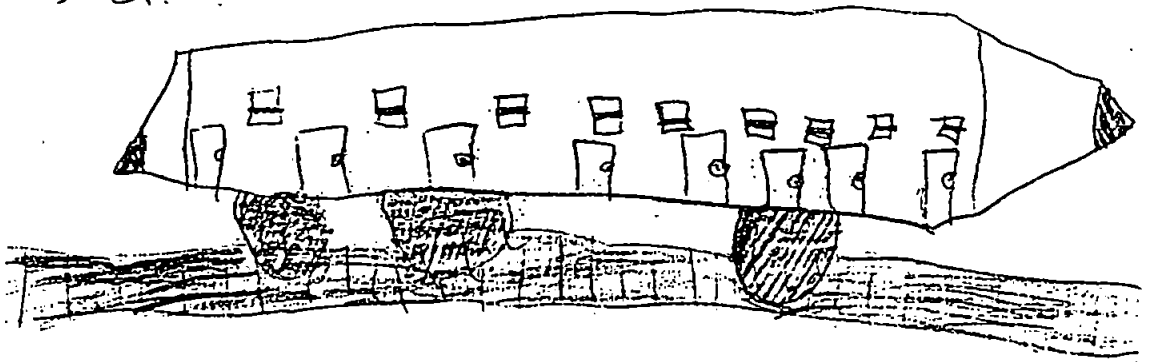
I didn't like the smell in the docks.

Here we are beginning to see this young writer bring together different aspects of his social awareness. He

Writing at Key Stage Two.

Carl (5)

On Tuesday we went to Exmouth for
 a school trip and we went
 by train and there was seven
 stations and on the back
 we saw some cars and some
 big shells and we saw
 some to and we had our lunch
 on the beach and we went
 back and the train had
 different seats when we went
 back.



Qp.3 Extended metalanguage: 'On Tuesday we went
 to Exmouth for a trip...' 'And we went back...'

yesterday we went to Exmouth by train
 and we went through 5 bridges and went for
 a snack and we got off our shoes and I
 got sun cockle shells and then we had
 dinner I had cheese sandwiches and after

dinner we played in the sand after went

We went to a different beach I made
 a sand castle then we went home on the
 train.



up
 Edward (3)

Extended metaphor

yesterday we went to Wymouth
on a train and the train
station was called St. James
park and then we had
ice cream and I got

Some shells and we put
our finger in a hole

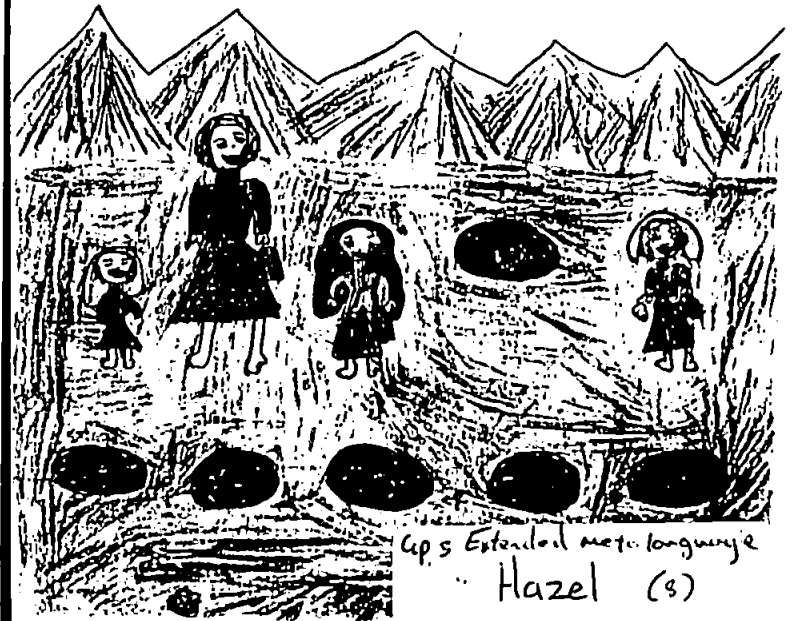
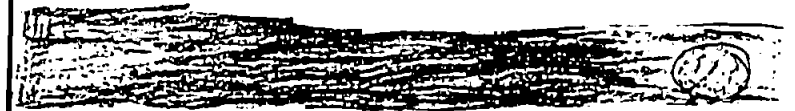
and we got a cockle

and then we had a
paddle in the sea we

played Jaws and then we

had a paddle and then

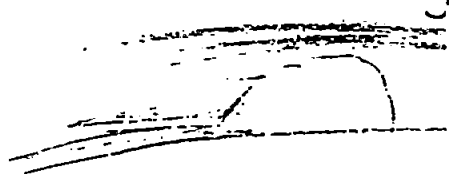
we went home.



up s Extended met. language
Hazel (s)

Yesterday we went on a train to Exmouth
 During the day we went to the docks and
 here was a scooper it was unloading a boat
 & coal and the lorry took it away
 and another took over it.

and we went back for a
 paddle and after we had to go to the
 station to go home

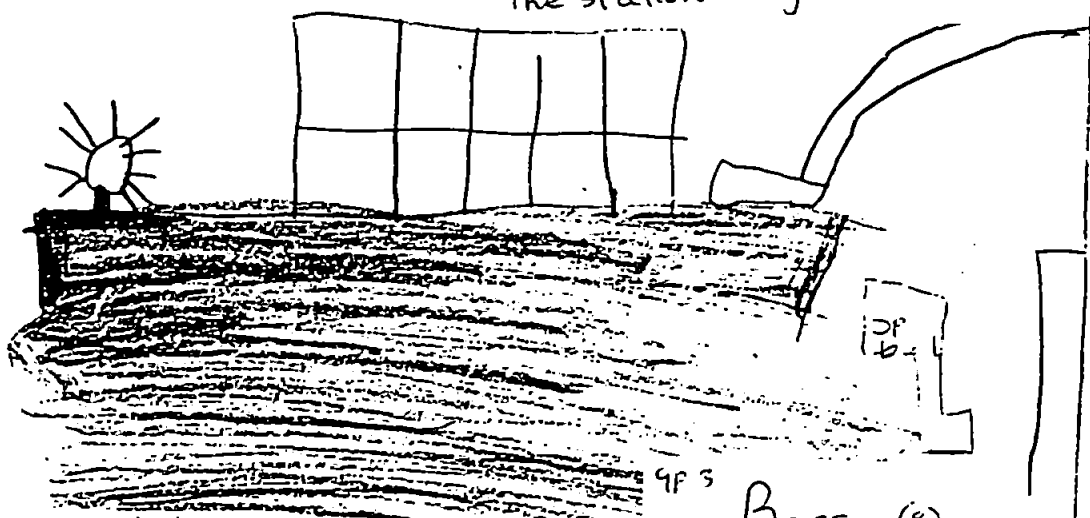


gp. 3 Extended metalanguage:

(1) Yesterday we went on a train
 to Exmouth...

(2) "During the day..."

(3) "And after we had to go to
 the station to go home..."



gp 3

Barru (s)

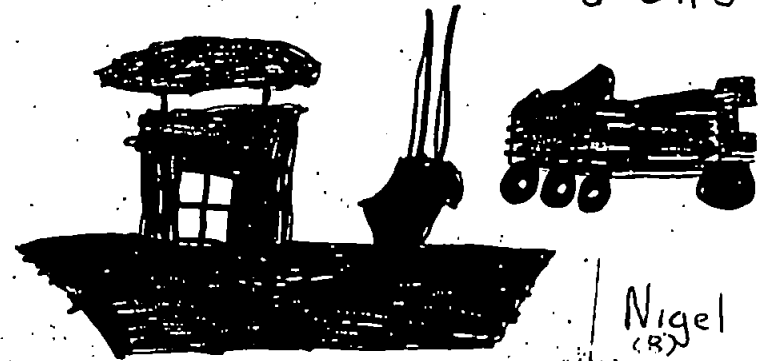
yesterday we went to Exmouth. When we were having our
 on the train. the station was lunch. after we had our
 called St James Park. when lunch we went to the
 we got there we had a docks I didn't like the
 break. then we took our smell in the docks
 shoes and socks off.

then we went on to
 the mud. I found lots
 of shells. there were

lots of coloured shells.

I saw lots of boats

I saw a life boat



Nigel
 (8)

Notice the emergent metalanguage:

"Yesterday we went to Exmouth on the train."

"When we got there..."

"Then we took..."

"Then we went..."

"When we were having our lunch..."

"After we had our lunch..."

gp.3 Extended metalanguage.

has provided a situation and an evaluation for the reader. In time to come he will also understand the need to provide a problem and a solution.

Although Brenda has not written as much as many of the other children, her writing is immature and not as easy to read, notice how carefully she guides the reader through the events of the day:

We went on a school trip to Exmouth by train. . .

Here in the opening few words we have the purpose for writing, and most of the endophoric references that the reader is going to need. She continues:

*When we got there. . .
And then we went on to some grass. . .
And then Mrs.Davey. . .
And then we jumped down. . .
And on the last beach. . .
And when we had finished digging. .
we went home on the train. . .*

In the space of ten lines of large writing Brenda has provided for the reader no less than seven indicators of how her ideas are organised. She is very conscious of the needs of her reader.

Michael's writing demonstrates an even greater sense of the reader's needs when he writes:

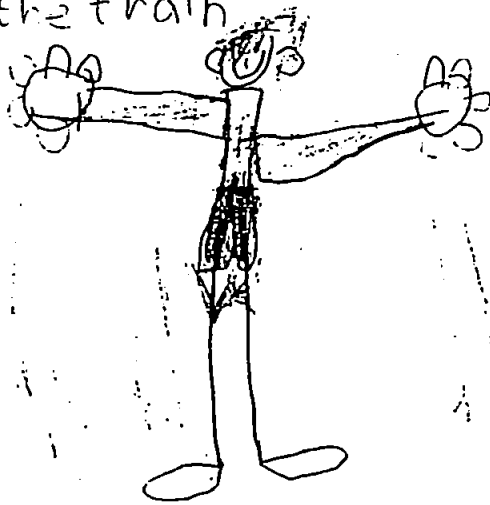
*On Tuesday we went to Exmouth on a train. . .
And we saw . . .
And we went on the beach. . .
And we paddled in the sea. . .
Then we went home on the train. . .*

Here there is a beginning and an end, but also a sequence of events between the beginning and the end, indicating that Michael has developed an awareness of the needs of his reader. But Michael's writing is also interesting because it clearly illustrates the use of 'and' instead of a full stop and new sentence. This is a common feature of children's writing during the primary years.

Many teachers and parents complain when children use this continuous 'and . . . and. . . and. . .', and of course, from a stylistic point of view it is definitely a problem. However, in terms of telling us about the child's state of social, cultural and linguistic awareness it is a positive indicator that the child has some understanding that the reader needs guidance to

yesterday we went on a school trip
to Exmouth by train and we had to stop at
seven stations. when we got there we went to
toilet and then we went on to some grass and then

Mr. Davey told the mums where we were
going and then we jumped down from a
high piece of rock and on the last beach
me and Simon dug some tunnels in the
sand and when we had finished
digging the tunnels we went home on
the train



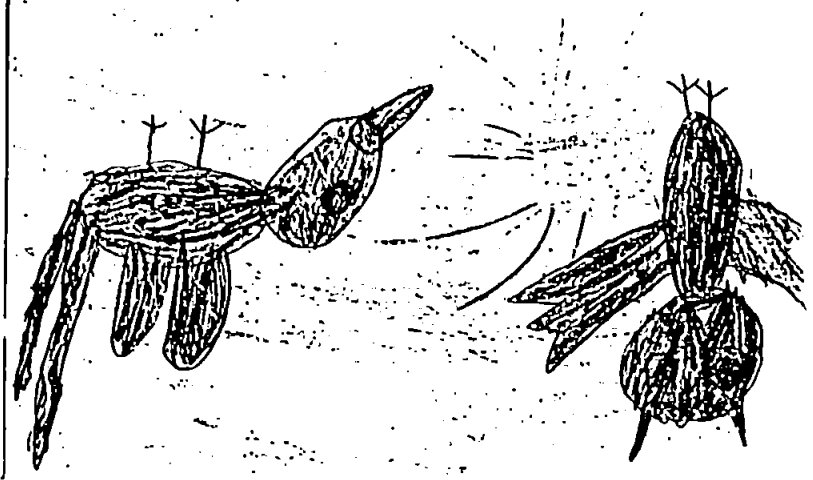
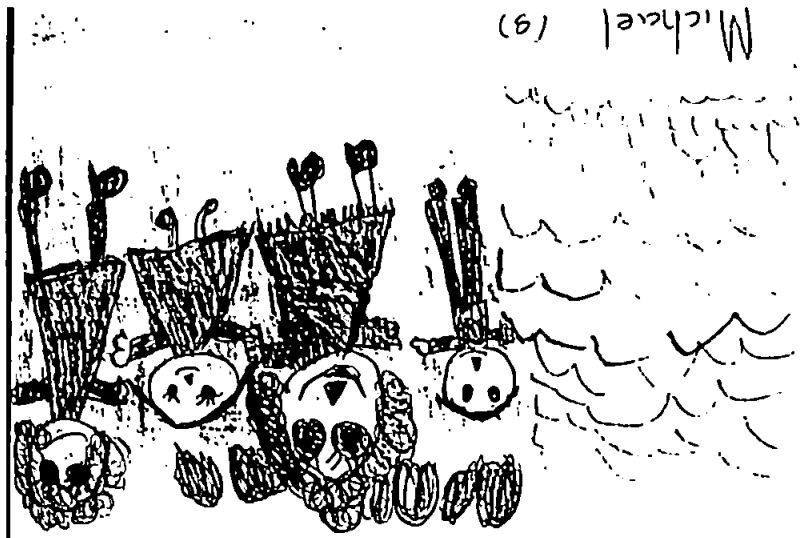
gp.3: Extended metalanguage

'Yesterday', 'When we got there',
'then', 'then', 'then', 'When
we had finished' and 'we
went home'.

Brenda (5)

4p 3 Extended metaphors

Michael (9)



on Tuesday we went to
 Exmouth on a train We
 started at St James Park
 station and we ended at
 Exmouth we past 5 station
 and we saw the docks
 and look of are shoes and
 socks and we went on the
 beach and had lunch and
 we paddled in the sea I
 nearly fell over in the sea
 I saw a man looking for
 worms and a lady looking
 for cockles to eat and
 then we went home on
 the train.

follow complex sequences of events. The 'and' in this case is a signal from the writer that 'this is the next thing that happened. . .' For teachers trying to monitor the progress of children's writing, it is an important and positive indicator that the child has made considerable progress in understanding the difficulties of his reader.

This feature is also evident in Dawn's writing, but careful examination of the way she uses 'and', in conjunction with the other features of reader awareness evident in her writing, would suggest that this is not a cause for concern. Dawn has a clear organisation of ideas:

Yesterday we went on a train to Exmouth. .
 When we got there. .
 then we had our lunch. . .
 And we went to the harbour. . .
 then we went on to the beach . . .
 then I paddled in the water. . .
 And we went home.

Here Dawn produces a clear sequence of events. She is showing that she has grasped two major areas of knowledge important to writers. Firstly she is showing that she understands needs of her reader to have some kind of indication of how the ideas are organised. Secondly she is showing that she understands the systems how to use the systems of the text to do this. This is an indication of the level of her social and linguistic understanding. She is using language not just to express her own meaning, but also to anticipate the needs of her reader.

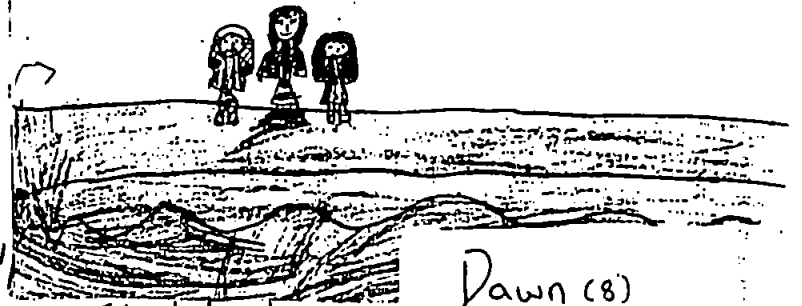
Felicity shows just how conscious she is of the needs of her reader. Her observations are more sophisticated. She does not simply write the things that the reader might have expected, but also includes personal insights. She writes:

Mrs. Bristow's class went with us
 I saw some cows and some horses
 We were nearly there and I could just see the station
 the train was slowing down and it stopped and we where
 at Exmouth

These observations make the writing more interesting because they help the reader to experience the day out as Felicity experienced it. But as the detail increases, the report would be increasingly difficult

yesterday we went on a train
to Exmouth when we got there
we went on the estuary and we found
lots of things and we saw a man
digging and he was digging for lug
worms and as he dug more down the
mud went black. we saw a lady and
she was looking for cockles and
then we had our lunch and we
went to the harbour and we saw

a boat lifting some coal and there
was a man in a tracked pushing all the
coal together and a man was
sweeping all the coal up then we
went on the beach and Sarah and
I buried MRS Davys Feet then I
paddled in the water and we
went home.



gp 3 Extended metalinguistic

Dawn (8)



Yesterday we went to Exmouth on a train. Mrs. Bristow's went with us. When we were going to Exmouth we stopped at six stations and went under five bridges. I saw some cows and some trees. We were nearly there and I could just see the station. The train was slowing down and it stopped and we walked to Exmouth. We went to the beach and stopped for a while. Then we went to a hut where we had some food. I took the sand and we sat on it. We took our shoes and socks off and we started looking for things. I found some shells and we saw a lady and she came over to us and showed us how to find cockles. She said you have to find a hole and dig it up and I went off digging and I found some shells. Then we had to go to a beach to eat our dinner. When we finished our dinner we went to a beach to play in the water and a show. Miracles later we had to go home.

Felicity (6)

gp3 Extended metalinguage

for a reader to understand if Felicity had not carefully organised her ideas, and signalled her organisation in the text:

*Yesterday we went to Exmouth on the train. . .
We were nearly there. . .
We sat on a rock and took our shoes and socks off. . .
Then we had to go to a beach. . .
When we finished our dinner. . .
A few minutes later we had to go home. . .*

Finally, Peter's writing tells us a great deal about his state of reader awareness. Peter displays great panache. His chronological sequence begins:

Yesterday when me and class four went on a school trip by train to Exmouth. . .

In his opening few words he has provided the purpose for writing and all of the information that the reader will need. Notice how carefully he guides the reader through the events of the day:

*Yesterday when me and class four went on a school trip by train to Exmouth. . .
When we got to Exmouth. . .
After that we went on the beach and I found a pipe. . .*

Then something interesting happens. Peter breaks into and digresses from the chronological sequence.

And I have got 38 cockles altogether . . . but Daddy ate them all.

This may or may not have been an intentional break in the narrative. Conscious that he has moved out of the sequence of the day's events and given the reader a flashback, Peter then signals a return from the diversion:

shall we get on with the trip now

Although this is perhaps not the most conventional or effective attempt at shifting from one focus of attention to another, and then back again, Peter understands that metalanguage can be used in this way, and is experimenting with it. The sequence of the trip then continues:

*After that. . .
And after that we went on another beach. .*

Writing at Key Stage Two.

Yesterday When me and class
 four went on a school trip by
 train to Exmouth the train was
 like a coach and we went through
 11 tunnels and 7 stations and

When we got to Exmouth we got
 off and we walked down the
 road and we sat on the
 grass and we had something to
 eat and drink and after that we
 on the beach and I found a pipe

Well I think that's what it was
 Well after that a laddy told me
 how to cockle and this how
 you do it

Find a small
 hole you put your finger down
 the hole and when you pull your
 finger back up you have a cockle

and I've have got 38 cockles
 altogether but daddy ate them all
 shall we get on with the trip

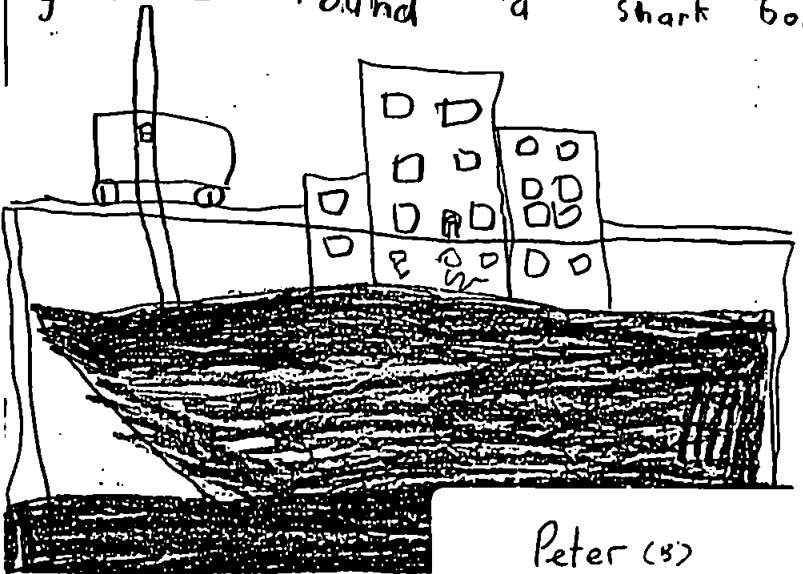
now after that we had
 are packed lunch then we went
 to the docks and we saw
 a crane unloading a ship and the

ship was a coal ship and
 the crane was a scooper and
 the coal in a dumper was putting the

go over a swing bridge and we had to
 to the docks and see the ship
 unloading and after that we

went on another beach and we
 that

train we came on and
 I wish we can go there
 again and I forgot to tell
 you I found a shark bone



Peter (5)

"Yesterday when me and class four went on a
 school trip by train to Exmouth..."
 "When we got to Exmouth..." "After that we
 went..." "Well after that a laddy..."
 "Shall we get on with the trip..." "Now after
 that..." "and after that we went on another
 beach..." "after that the train came..."
 Evaluation: "I wish we can go there again..."
 Qp.3 Extended metalanguage

After that the train came. . .

Finally Peter provides an evaluation for the reader:

and I wish we can go there again. . .

Peter is at a growth point in his writing. He is just beginning to realise exactly how much help the reader will need as his observations, and therefore his writing, become more sophisticated. He is just beginning to experiment with different ways of presenting a chronological sequence and using metalanguage to help his reader follow what is happening.

For teachers this is an important point. We need to be able to recognise the many and varied ways in which a writer may use a chronological sequence to help the reader to understand how the ideas in the text are organised.

2.

How could a teacher encourage children to extend their knowledge of chronological sequences?

It is only when we think of writing in terms of the reader /writer relationship, that we begin to understand something of the demands of the National Curriculum to think of language as a *decision making process*.

** Being a writer entails the ability to make accurate decisions about the reader.*

Once we think about language as a *decision making process* there are immediately several important points to be considered. Knowing when and how to use a chronological sequence means that the writer must know in advance what form the main line of thought in the communication is going to take - where it will start and where it is going to, and where the reader is likely to need guidance. All of these points imply that:

** Young writers need detailed feedback about how*

Writing at Key Stage Two.

effective their writing has been.

** Young writers need opportunities to talk about their writing with their readers.*

And here we can begin to understand why the process of conferencing is so beneficial for young writers. Further, we can also appreciate the need for planning.

** Writers need to plan their writing very carefully.*

Planning writing

Many young writers develop idiosyncratic techniques for planning their writing. Angela and Alistair developed a topic web to organise the main ideas for their writing about 'Being Sad'. Catherine preferred to plan her story in note form. James planned his computer game through a series of cartoon drawings, and Eleanour was thinking about charts and diagrams as she planned her discussion on school uniform. These techniques are very helpful in organising the ideas which will go into the writing, but they clearly do not plan to take the needs of the reader into account. It is therefore very important that children are given time to plan writing carefully, but are supported through some of the more complex stages of planning the ways in which their writing will help their reader.

In one classroom, I saw a very effective method of helping children to understand the importance of planning their writing carefully. The teacher carried out a very careful planning process by guiding the initial discussion with the children. She focused the children's thinking in several stages:

Discussing the main ideas to be communicated.

Putting the ideas in an order which will help the reader.

Picking out the ideas which will be most helpful for the reader.

Leaving out ideas which are interesting but perhaps not particularly helpful to the reader.

Thinking about the effects different ideas may have on the reader.

Thinking about the places where it would help the reader to provide a summary or further explanations

Writing at Key Stage Two.

Catherine's Plans for a story.

84

Plan

8th January

Who ¹ Lucy Smith, ² Sharon Davis
³ , ⁴ George Stuart
⁵ Sally Hills

1. Lucy Smith has a sister called Jenny
her interests are netball, jumps and
swimming.

2 Sharon Davis has a baby brother called
Ross. interests are swimming, Rounders and
Reading.

3 ~~Thomas Whitehead's brother called Ben interests
Football and swimming~~

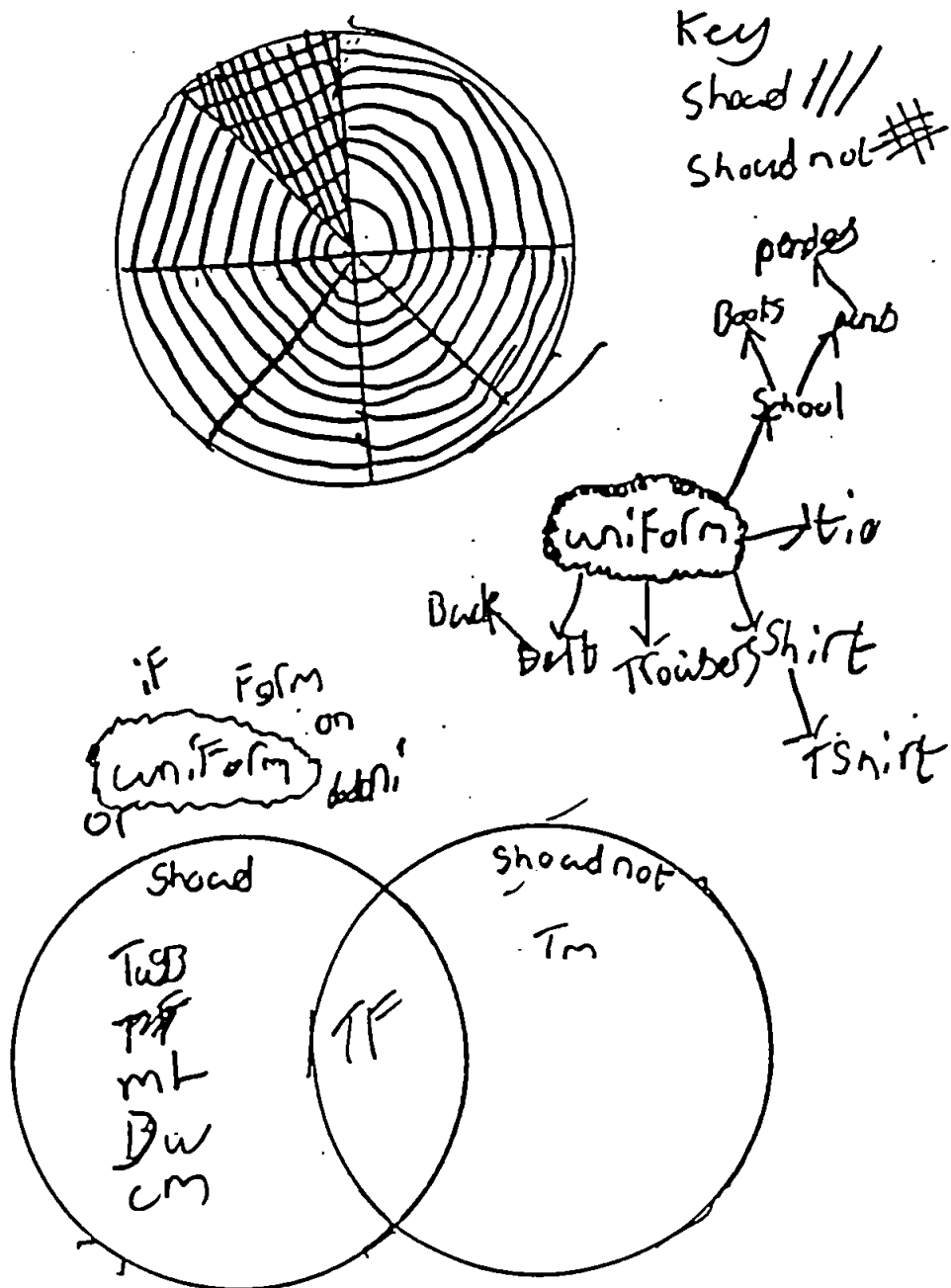
4 George Stuart's 2 sisters Emma and
Louise. interests. Computers, pets and football.

5 Sally Hills Brother called Scott interests. drawing,
hiking and Reading.

James' Plans for a Computer Game



Eleanor's Plans for writing about "School Uniform"



etc.

Planning writing so that it will be easy for the reader to follow and understand.

The children's initial attempts were thus carefully guided by the stages of thinking through, and planning the writing. However, once the children were confident and able to take on the interaction with the reader by themselves, the teacher handed over to the children, and assisted them in developing personal meanings within the framework she had set out for them.

3.

Summary.

These samples of writing by eight year olds illustrate some of the ways in which a writer helps the reader. The main points arising from examining these samples of eight year olds writing are that:

- * The writer helps the reader to know where s/he is 'up to' in the communication by indicating a sequence of events.

- * Teachers can encourage children to use a chronological sequence in their writing by encouraging to think about how far their writing will help the reader.

- * Teachers can extend children's awareness of the reader/writer relationship by providing assistance with:

- a. Planning writing,
- b. By giving detailed feedback about the effect that their writing has had upon the reader.

- * Children can be encouraged to evaluate the effect of their writing upon the reader.

Chapter four

***The writer, the reader
and the information:
using references.***

Chapter Four

The Writer, the Reader and the Information.

In the last two chapters of this book we have explored different aspects of the reader/writer relationship and how a writer might use the language itself to help the reader. However, we have not yet looked at one of the most important aspects of negotiating meaning, that is, the state of knowledge of the reader.

In spoken conversations, if the speaker makes comments which the listener does not understand, then it is quite easy for the listener to ask the speaker to repeat, or to explain what s/he meant. This is not possible in writing situations where the reader and the writer are not likely to be present at the same time.

One of the most important assumptions a writer may make about the reader relates to the reader's state of knowledge. The writer must understand the information needs of the reader if the shared process of negotiating meaning is to succeed.

The National Curriculum programme of study for attainment target three level two states that pupils should:

** produce simple, coherent non-chronological writing;*

Level three states that pupils should:

** write more complex stories with detail beyond simple events and with a defined ending;*

** produce a range of types of non-chronological writing;*

Writing at Key Stage Two/4

Level 4 states that pupils should:

* write stories which have an opening, a setting, characters, a series of events and a resolution and which engage the interest of the reader; produce other kinds of chronologically organised writing;

Level 5 states that pupils should:

* assemble ideas on paper or on a VDU, individually or in discussion with others, and show evidence of an ability to produce a draft from them and then to revise and redraft as necessary;

* show in discussion the ability to recognise variations in vocabulary according to purpose, topic and audience and whether language is spoken or written, and use them appropriately in their writing;

What can the writing of nine year olds tell us about the amount and kind of information that they are supplying to their readers? Again the samples of writing are divided into three separate groups for ease of discussion.

Group 1: Emergent understanding of references.

Caroline writes:

The haunted house is very spokey and if you are very caurfull BIG - BIG spiders will crep. in the midnight I am aslep all I can hear is . . . noi. . .noi. . .noi - noise very spokey Whons to if you are cuerus (curious?) then cuerus noies aper out of nowher and out of nowher is in the cupboard cuerus isunt it.

Caroline still has a great deal to learn about writing and writing situations. One of the areas where she needs help is in the kind of information that she supplies to her reader. She writes about 'the haunted house', 'spiders', and 'the cupboard' without attempting to tell the reader anything about them. The reader is therefore left wondering: Which haunted house? Which spiders? Which cupboard? and Why are they important to this piece of writing?

Caroline (9)

The haunted house is very spooky
and if you are careful Big —
Big spiders will creep in the
midnight I am asleep all I can
hear is noi . . . noi . . . noi —
noise very spooky whons to
if you are curious then curious
noises appear out of nowhere and
out of nowhere is in the cupboard
curious isn't it.

gp 1 Emergent understanding of references.

The haunted house, the spiders and the cupboard all refer to objects in the writing situation, and for this reason, linguists call them References. So in language terms, Caroline has a problem of reference. There are several different kinds of reference described by linguists, but two of them are particularly useful in diagnosing Caroline's weaknesses.

Firstly there are references of the kind that Caroline has used. As readers we cannot understand exactly what she meant by *the haunted house, the spiders and the cupboard* just by reading her writing. In order to try and guess what she meant a reader must draw on his/her own knowledge of haunted houses, spiders and cupboards. So in Caroline's references all of the information needed by the reader is not contained in the writing. The reader must look beyond the writing to his/her own knowledge to understand what is meant. This kind of reference is called an *Exophoric (situation-dependent)* reference. We can also see the same weakness in Kevin's description of a bean growing experiment. He wrote:

We got paper in the jar and beans in the jar and water in the jar. We went outside and soil in the jar and beans.

The reader is left wondering: *What paper? What Jar? Which beans? Where is outside? (Where is inside!) Which soil? Why put them all in the jar?* Clearly Kevin has not yet begun to think about the kind of information that the reader may need to understand his writing. He needs to be more explicit. Paul also has the same weaknesses. He writes:

We chose some beans and planted and later they might of grown and they might of into beans. And then we did a experiment. And we got some soil and put some beans in.

Here again, even with a great deal of imagination, it is difficult for a reader to be certain about exactly what Paul is describing. His writing leaves the reader wondering: *Who are 'we'? Which beans and why were they 'chosen'? Why only 'might' they have grown? Did something go wrong that they did not grow? Who were 'they'? Why did 'they' do an experiment? What was the experiment? What were 'they' trying to find out, and why?* These difficulties are created for the reader because Paul

Writing at Key Stage Two/4

Thursday ^{Kevin} 1st March.
 We got paper in the
 jar and beans in the
 jar and water in the
 jar. We went
 outside and soil
 in the jar and beans.

gp. 1 Emergent understanding of references.

th¹ Paul
Thursday March

We chose some
beans and
planted And Later
on they might of
grown And they
might of in to
beans. And then

We did a experiment
And we got some
soil And Put some
beans in.

gp. 1 Emergent understanding of references.

has used too many exophoric references.

Finally in Tom's story we see the same difficulties, but here there are signs of growth. Tom writes:

Spot's Christmas

"Supper time Spot Where are you Sot Come on Spot"
 "I am looking for my presents" here they are come on
 it is Christmas eve" "alright mum" "Spot has had
 supper im goes to bed.

Father Christmas is coming at last and Father Christmas
 gave Spot a INTERNATIONAL GRAND PRIX PACE CAR RACING
 and a cat
 the end

Here the writing begins with exophoric references which assume that the readers knows who 'Spot' is, and that it is 'mum' who is talking to him. But the writing does have a title: *Spot's Christmas* which gives the reader some idea of what may be about to follow. In the second paragraph, perhaps by accident, Tom tells us that Father Christmas brought Spot:

a INTERNATIONAL GRAND PRIX PACE CAR RACING and a cat. .

Here there are three references, the title and both of the christmas presents, whose meaning is completely contained in the writing. The reader only needs to read them to understand them and is not left asking too many unanswerable questions. This is the second kind of reference which it is important to know about when assessing the strengths and weaknesses of a child's writing. It is called an *Endophoric* reference. Endophoric references are references that can be understood by reading the text (text-dependent), and they do not require the reader to look beyond the writing and draw on his or her own knowledge to understand them.

Group 2: Established understanding of references.

At nine years old many children have quite a good understanding of the reader's need for information. In Maria's writing we can see how there are far more endophoric (text-dependent) than exophoric (situation-dependent) references. In her notice in a newspaper Maria writes:

Writing at Key Stage Two/4



Spot's Christmas

"Supper time Spot where are you Spot Contra GP
 Spot "I am looking For my Presents"
 here they are come on it is
 Christmas eve "alright Mum" Spot has had
 supper Im goes to bed.
 Father Christmas coming at
 Last and Father Christmas gave
 Spot a INTERNATIONAL GRAND
 PRIX PACE CAR RACING and a cot
 the Eke By Tom Pollard

gp. 1 Emergent understanding of references

Boy living in alleyways

Mr and Mrs Pake chuck
 there son out of there
 house the child is 10 years
 old and is living in dirty
 alleyways and begging
 other people for food
 if he find money on
 the floor he takes it.
 he eats bread that's on
 the floor and even
 drinks rain water he
 wears black t-shirt and
 black trousers with black and
 white shoes if anyone can
 find him can they take
 him to Cetto Lodge Green St
 London
 Thank you.

gp² Established understanding of references

Mr. and Mrs. Bake chuck there son out of there house the child is ten years old and living in dirty alleyways and is begging other people for food if he find money on the floor he takes it. he eats bread thats on the floor and drinks rainwater he wears black teashirt and black trowsers with black and white shoes if anyone can find him can they take him to Cedda Lodge Green St. London

Thankyou.

Although Maria is beginning to supply most of the information that the reader needs to understand the writing, there are still one or two points that might be improved. The reader does not know for example, who Mr. and Mrs. Bake are, or what Cedda Lodge is, and why it is important that the boy should be taken there.

Alec's newspaper article also shows a clear understanding of the kind of information that the reader needs. Notice how concisely he introduces the main character in his writing:

BOY LIVING IN A SHACK

12 year old Sam lives in a shack in glasgo used to have 2 pets a rabbit and a Dog The rabbit got shot by his stepfather Brase the dog got ran over also by Bracie (?) Very unhappy lives on stolen food There is a tap which has not been disconeded Has been handed over to the police once but he escaped.

The weakness in Alec's writing is that he has not supplied quite enough information. We have here the barest outline of a story, and the reader is left to supply the details for him or herself. Alec needs to be encouraged to understand what kind of effect this lack of information will have upon the reader.

Nevertheless, economy of detail can be a very good attribute in a writer. In Colin's writing we can see how economy of information contributes to the effectiveness of the writing. In Colin's 'Rules for Snakes and Ladders'. He writes:

Out the dice in the shaker the youngest starts. If you get three on your dice you move on 3 spaces if you

Writing at Key Stage Two/4

Newspaper Article

BOY LIVING IN SHACK

12 year old Sam	lives on Stolen Food
lives in a shack	there is a tap which has
in glasgow used to	not been disconnected has
have 2 pets a rabbit	been handed over to
and a dog the rabbit	the police once but
got shot by his	he escaped
stepfather because the	
dog got ran over	
also by Grace	

Very unhappy

gp:2. Established understanding of reference.

Colin (9)

Rules for snakes & ladders

Put the dice in the shaker the youngest starts.

If you get 3 on your dice you move on 3 spaces. If you get 5 move on 5 spaces.

If you land at a bottom of a ladder then you can go up it. If you land on a snake's head then you have to go ~~home~~ down.

If you get a 6 on the dice then you have another go. The first one to get to 100 is the winner.

gp. 2 Established understanding of references.

get 5 you move on 5 spaces if you land at the bottom of a ladder then you can go up it. If you land on a snake's head then you have to go down if you get a 6 on the dice then you have another go the first one to get to 100 is the winner.

Here we have quite a good logical explanation of the game of snakes and ladders. There is enough information here for the reader to go away and play the game.' The only weakness is that Colin has not punctuated his writing, which makes it difficult for the reader to work out where one part of the explanation ends and the next begins. However, in terms of Colin's understanding of the kind of information, and the amount of information needed by the reader, this piece is quite good.

Group 3: Extended understanding of references

The following four samples of writing illustrate how well some children in the Primary school understand the information needs of the readers. In her story of 'Peter's Party' Teresa begins by introducing and naming her main characters and their context:

Once there lived a little girl and a boy there names were Peter and Deborah. One day it was school tonight there was a party at Peters. So in the morning Peter got dress and made his bed and went to his desk sat down opened his draw took out his invitations and shut his draw again.

By the time Peter gets to the point of inviting his guests to the party the reader is familiarised with the context and the main participants. Similarly in Rachel's story of 'The Flower with the red Stem', she begins by giving the reader very explicit detail. She writes:

Once upon a time there lived a princess. She was a pretty princess. Her name was Emma. She was a good girl. She was never naughty.

She introduces the reader immediately to her main character and the details about the character which are

Teresa (9)

103

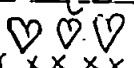
Once there lived a girl and boy
their names were Peter and Deborah.

One day it was school to-night --
there was a party it was Peter's.

So ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the morning Peter --
got dress made his bed and went

to his desk sat down opened his
draw took out his invitations

and shut his draw again. Peter
got one and writ in side it Dear

Deborah I have invented to
party... Love from Peter.  xx.xx.

date... 1st June the first Ramsey
Road... St. canbs you are invented to.

My party... From Peter.

Soon it was time to go
School..

Teresa (9)

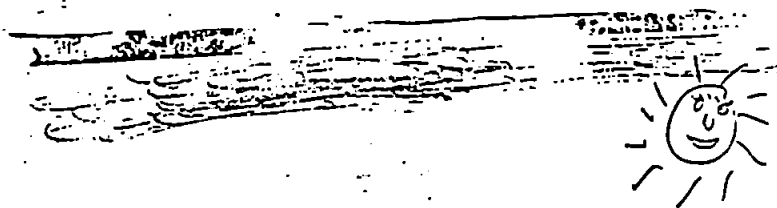
~~Peter gave the invitation to~~
~~Deborah. Then Deborah said thank~~
~~you.~~

~~Soon it was time for the party~~
~~Deborah was there for sea bay~~

had ice-cream and jelly and
 jam cakes and jelly babies and

They had chips and all of
 that. Soon the party was over.

So they all got on home cars
 and then they all went home



Deborah



Peter



The flower
With the red stem.

Once upon a time
there lived a princess. She was
a pretty princess.

Her name was ~~Erika~~ She was
a good girl. She was never
naughty.

Once the princess went
for a walk in the wood
and saw a sad flower. It was
weeping.

She said "What is a matter?"
"No one likes me because
I have got a red stem."

Rachel

The princess was kind to the
flower. She said "Wait a minute
I can run home to get my paint box."

Then she was back with her
^{paint} box. With the flower.

"This is my plan, I will paint
your red stem green." So the
flower agreed.

So the princess painted
flower stem green.

~~After~~ All his old friends
like him they said "how did you
get a green stem?" "It's a secret!"

They all lived happily ever.
After.

going to be important to the story. Then she continues to describe the context and main problem in her story:

Once the princess went for a walk in the wood and saw a sad flower it was weeping.

There then follows an expansion of the problem:

She said, 'What is the matter?' 'Oh no one likes me because I have got a red stem.'

Then follows the solution:

The princess was kind to the flower. She said 'Wait a minute.' She ran home to get her paint box. Then she was back with her paint box with the flower. 'This is my plan, I will paint your red stem green.' So the flower agreed. So the princess painted the flower stem green.

Then the final evaluation:

All his old friends like him they said 'how did you get a green stem?' 'It a secret', he said. They all lived happily ever after.

In this story Rachel carefully structures the events, and with each development of the structure of the story Rachel includes more details, but she is economical with her details, and only provides the facts which the reader will need to understand the story at a given point in time. There are very few details included that are not relevant to the story. Rachel has imagined a situation which she wishes to communicate to the reader, who was not present at the time the situation took place, and has not observed any of the details for him or herself. Therefore, Rachel acts as the eyes of the reader. She has to communicate all of the details that the reader cannot observe for himself.

In Mark's account of 'The Crash' we see that he gives all of the important contextual details at the beginning:

I went in the vegetable shop and it had a telephone. Just then there was a crash outside. So I rushed to the telephone to dialed 999.

He then proceeds to give extra details which answer questions that the reader might be asking, such as,

Wednesday in my class I was shopping
I was in the vegetable shop and saw a car accident

Just then there was a crash with a car

So I rushed to the telephone booth and

The police came and the people
in the crash went to hospital

I went to the police station

I told the police I was shopping
in the vegetable shop and I heard it

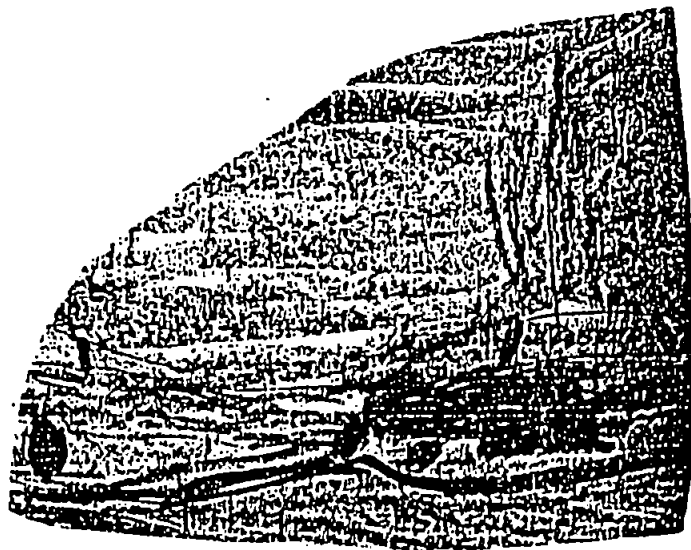
crash So I went to the telephone booth

So I dialled 999 and then I went
to the site

My friend was in hospital so I went
to see him in hospital

Then I went home. I wrote
a story of the crash at the vegetable shop

Mark



'what happened'?

The police came and the people in the crash went to hospital. I went to the police station I told the police I was shopping in the vegetable shop and I heard a crash. So I went to the telephone. So I dialed 999 and then I went outside.

Mark drew a picture to accompany his story, showing exactly how the crash happened. This is an interesting development, because it illustrates two further important points. It tells us that Mark has understood that

* Pictures can be useful alongside a text to communicate details.

* Pictures can communicate information that would not normally be included in the text.

What Mark has done here is to provide information about the situation which was not included in the text.

2.

What kind of writing situations might encourage writers to develop their awareness of the reader's information needs?

a Getting to know the information needs of the reader:

The samples in the first two groups seem to indicate that children at this age are still unsure of the information needs of their readers. Children seem to have difficulties knowing which information will be helpful to the reader, and either include hardly any information at all, or so much irrelevant detail that the writing becomes confused. These children can be helped by blindfold activities. It is helpful to ask the children to work in pairs, one of them blindfolded and the other required to describe a picture or an object. In this situation they gain concrete experience of the reader's information needs. Sometimes children simply do not know enough about other people to be able to provide the right kind of information. With limited social experience children

can only base their assumptions about another person's knowledge on the knowledge that they themselves possess. Many children assume that because they personally know something, then everybody else will also know it. Role play can help children to understand the kind of contextual and character information that are important to the reader in certain writing situations. But more importantly, children need to actually experience the knowledge and views of the audience for whom they intend to write.

There are many social questions that writers need to be able to answer about their readers. Readers respond to writing in different ways not only according to their state of knowledge, but also their attitudes towards the subject which they are reading about, and it is important to encourage writers to become aware of these differences.

Writers could develop an awareness of the differences in readers' information needs by carrying out some audience research. Writers need to have the opportunity of finding out about their audience. They might think about some of the following questions:

What does the reader know about the subject of the writing already?

What will the reader need to be told?

What are the likely attitudes of the reader to the subject of the communication?

Is the reader likely to agree with what is going to be written or disagree with it?

Will the reader need persuading?

Does the reader have any very strongly held views which will need to be taken into account when the writing is carried out?

If children are not given opportunities of this kind, how can we ever expect them to understand the wide range of differences which exists between individuals? How can we expect writers to understand that their writing needs to be adapted to the needs of the reader?

Perhaps the greatest problem associated with writing

for different audiences is that of developing an awareness of another's point of view, and being able to take this into account when writing. On an in-service course one group of teachers made it quite clear to me that they felt an even more fundamental problem for writers was that of targeting their reader accurately.

In the discussion that followed we explored the kind of questions which might help children to target their readers accurately.

One teacher, Peter, gave the children in his class the list of questions, and asked them to design a questionnaire to find out how their readers felt about going on holiday. During the next in-service session Peter told us about his experiment and showed us some examples of the results he had achieved.

Alec was an eleven year old working in a group who were going to write about their holidays in Spain. Alec decided to use his mother as the reader. He decided which questions he needed to ask her, and brought his sheet back to school the next day. After some discussion of the answers to the questions and the inferences that could be made about peoples attitudes to going on holiday, Peter asked his class to write down the five most important things that the children had found out about their reader. Alec wrote:

What my mum thinks about going, on holiday.

My mum doesn't like going on holiday. It is a lot of work getting ready to go away and she is scared of flying. She didn't like the hotel because it was noisy and she says she will stay at home next year.

Underneath Peter had written:

What do you think about this Alec? Are you going to try and persuade your mum to go away again next year, or do you think that she should stay at home?

Immediately there was a purpose to Alec's writing. Because he knew his reader and the attitudes that had been expressed there was suddenly much more point to his writing. Alec produced a fervent argument for going on holiday to Spain again the next year! For

111

What does my mum think about going on holiday?

1. Do you go on holiday every year?
2. Do you think holidays are a good thing?
3. What do you like most about going on holiday?
4. Is there anything you don't like about holidays?
5. Will you go on holiday next year, and where will you go?

Alec's Questions. (Age 11)

Alec's Summary of his Audience.

What my mum thinks about going on Holiday

My Mum doesn't like going on holiday. It is a lot of work getting ready to go away and she is scared of flying. She didn't like the hotel because it was noisy and she says she will stay at home next year.

What do you think about this Alec? Are you going to try to persuade your mum to go away next year, or do you think that she should stay at home?

Questions teachers might use to encourage children¹¹² to think carefully about their audience.

1. What is the topic you intend to write about?

.....

.....

2. What does your audience know about this already?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. What will your audience learn that they do not know already?

.....

.....

.....

.....

4. What are your audience's views on your topic?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Will your audience need persuading to your point of view?

.....

6. Does your audience have any strong opinions that you need to take into account when you write?

the first time Alec was involved and he knew what he was trying to achieve, and this showed in the effectiveness of his writing.

b. Adapting the writing to the needs of the reader:

Social awareness of the reader/writer relationship means that writers need to continually ask themselves:

"Will it help my reader?"

Writers need to be encouraged to look at the details that they have included in their writing and ask themselves :

"Is this the most important detail I need to give my reader? Is this the next most important detail? etc."

Writers can be encouraged to be socially aware of the needs of the reader by discussing the details that they might include in their writing in small groups or with the whole class. Social awareness of a need for detail can be heightened by going through several important processes before writing:

1. Encouraging writers to produce a list of the details that they are thinking of including in their writing. (Or go through an existing piece of writing picking out the details that the writer has included.)
2. Cross off the list those details that are not essential to the reader's understanding of the writing.
3. Put the remaining details in order of importance by asking: "Which is the most important thing I need to tell my reader?" The next most important . . etc.
4. Checking that everything is included that the reader will need to know. Has anything been forgotten?

In one class a teacher of nine year old children reminded her pupils of their first few difficult days in the primary school, and asked the children if they could think of any ways in which they could make the transition from the infant school to the primary school easier for next year's children. After much discussion the children decided that if they could visit the infant children and tell them about the school, the

fears of the new entrants might be eased. After the first visit when the infants had asked many questions, the nine year olds decided that their efforts would be wasted if they did not keep in contact with the infants.

The teacher suggested that frequent visits might be arranged if the older children wrote letters and stories for the younger children, and kept in contact with them in this way until it was time for them to come to the primary school. Early attempts at writing letters to the infants were not very successful because the children felt that they had little in common with such 'little ones', but attempts at writing stories were more successful.

First of all the nine year olds drafted out stories which they decided to try out on the younger children. A visit was arranged and the stories duly read. The stories presented all kinds of problems for the younger children. They wanted to see the illustrations which the older children had drawn, but these initially were detailed, complex and difficult for anyone but the original artist to understand. There was clearly a need for simpler and more colourful illustrations.

Some of the infant children could read quite well and wanted to read the stories for themselves, but again this was problematic because they had difficulty in reading the 'joined up' writing of the older children.

So a much simpler text was needed. Some of the initial attempts at writing the stories were difficult to understand because they did not have enough detail or were not simple enough. The children quickly realised that stories which may seem interesting to a nine year old may have little interest for a six year old. Thus a great deal of re-thinking and re-drafting was necessary for this very young audience.

The nine year olds set about solving these difficulties in the most original ways. They divided themselves into groups to write group stories, because this was much more manageable than trying to produce individual stories. They experimented on the computer until they could produce a large clear print, then they chose Cordelia, who they judged was the best artist, to draw simple illustrations, which the other children would colour.

This done the groups set to work on their stories, choosing the best story in their group, and working on

ways of improving it with the kinds of detail that their young audience clearly needed, and better organisation of ideas so that the stories would 'read well'. The stories produced for the younger children were worth all of the time and effort spent on them. One group wrote the story of:

'The Lion who couldn't find a home'

another group wrote:

'The Day I went to Hospital'

The third group wrote:

'The Day the Cook Lost his Recipe Book',

and the fourth group wrote:

'Sean's Emu'

c. Putting information concisely:

The third group of writers in this sample illustrates the point that as writers become more aware of the information needs of their readers, they learn to be more concise. Writers use different strategies for presenting information concisely. At quite an early age children are aware of the simplest strategies. Matthew, for example, drew a chart to show who had the most leggo. Alan produced a calendar to show the days on which he played football. When writing about his family, Martin wrote:

'My stepfather is always cross'

Then, by way of explanation he drew a caricature of his stepfather with a slipper in his hand, and thought bubbles coming out of his head. The bubbles showed Martin and his younger sister, and the words

'they are never good. . .'

The caricature expressed details that Martin was either not able to, or did not want to include in his text. Similarly, David wrote a report about the day he moved house. In the margin of the text he included a drawing of a parrot with the words:

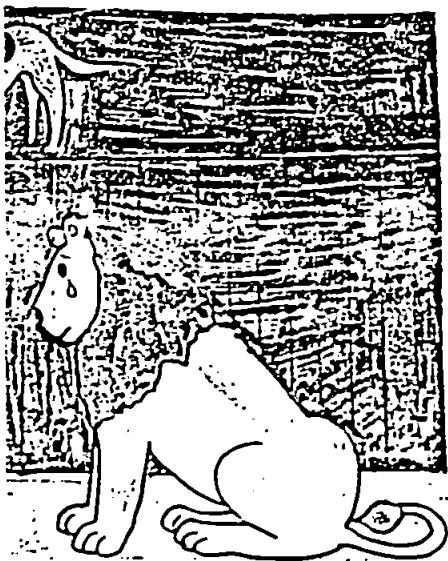
The Lion who couldn't find a Home.

Once upon a time there lived a lion who had nowhere to live. So the lion decided to go and find a new home.



He saw some birds but they just flew away.

He saw a squirrel but she just carried on collecting nuts. He saw a cat, but the cat was frightened.



Soon the lion got tired and started to cry. Then he heard a tiny squeaky voice calling: "What is the matter?"

"I can't find anywhere to live," said the lion.

"Do you want to come and live with me?" squeaked a little brown mouse.

"Yes please," said the lion. The mouse and the lion lived together very happily from that day.

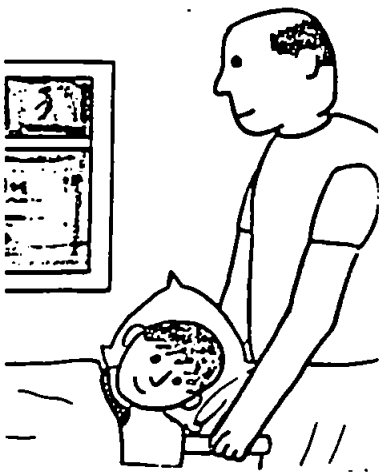
The Day I went to Hospital

On Monday morning I went to hospital with my mummy in the car. I had Emu and monkey and teddy on my lap. We saw the doctor and then we went to the ward. Mummy had to see the sister. Then I played some games till it was dinnertime. After dinner we all had a rest. There were lots of other children. We all went for a walk and had a blood test.. After that we went back to the ward. We played some more games till teatime. Then we had a bath and got ready for bed. I watched television till bedtime.

It was very hard to sleep because there was a baby crying and the nurses kept gossiping.

In the morning I could not have any breakfast. We had a bath and got changed. Then a very big trolley came to the ward with a very fat man. He put one of the children on to it.

After their operation the children came back to the ward. Then it was my turn and I cried a bit. A man put something on my face and I went to sleep. When I woke up mummy was there. I had some sandwiches. Then I went home in the car.



The Day the Cook Lost his Recipe Book.



One day there was a cook
The cook was a very good
cook. He cooked for all of
the people.

One day the cook lost his
recipe book. One day he
forgot how to make the jam
tarts. Everyone was hung



He tried to make some cakes
but they went wrong, they
tasted awful. The cook
asked the wizard to help him.

The wizard gave him a
special book. The book had
magic recipes in it.



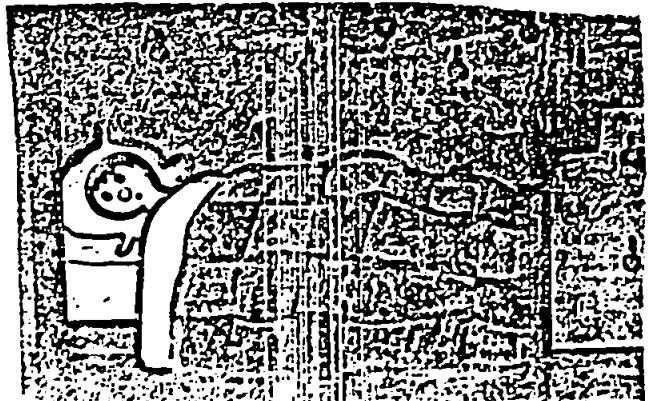
They were the best cakes
that he had ever made.
Everyone enjoyed them and
they were never ever hung

Sean's Emu

Once there lived a little boy called Sean. Sean had a toy Emu. He called his Emu Bluebells.

One night Sean went to bed and took Bluebells with him. Soon Sean was fast asleep and Bluebells came alive. Bluebells got out of Sean's bed and opened the bedroom door. Then he went downstairs. Bluebells went into the kitchen. He opened the kitchen door and went outside. Bluebells went into the garden and opened the gate. He walked out of the garden and along the path. Soon he came to the Baker's shop, but Bluebells did not stop. He kept on walking. Then he came to the sweet shop, but Bluebells did not stop. It was too near morning and Bluebells had to get back home.

Soon it was morning and Sean woke up. Sean could not find Bluebells, so he went downstairs to tell his daddy. Daddy said, "Why don't you look under your bed?" So Sean looked under his bed, but Bluebells was not there. Then Sean asked his mummy. Sean's mum said, "Look under your pillow," but Bluebells was not there. So Sean thought of a place himself. He looked under his desk. He looked under his wizard's hat, but Bluebells was not there. So Sean gave up and lay on his bed. When he lay on his bed he felt a lump in his back. He looked to see what it was. It was Bluebells! So Sean found Bluebells and they lived happily ever after.



'Shut that door. . '

This was the only reference to the parrot in the whole report, but it is equally an effective method of communicating information which could not be included in the text.

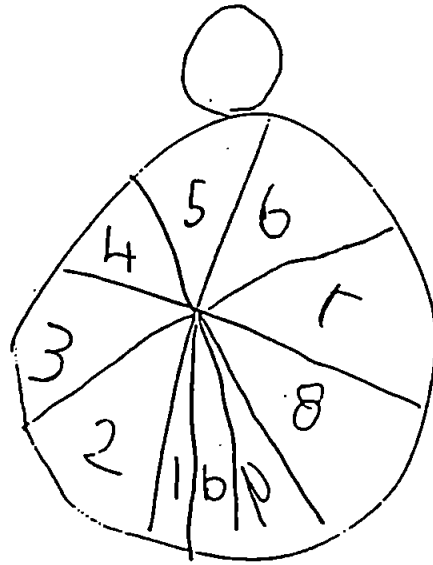
Valerie included a drawing of herself and her friend Lisa, who had been sleeping at her house. Valerie's illustration shows just how much she understands the value of illustrations for communicating information alongside the text. In Valerie's drawing we see an early example of labelling, to be certain that the reader can reconstruct the message.

Susan wrote a report about a colour mixing experiment that the children had been carrying out in the classroom, where she had created her own 'new' colour. She used a cartoon to add a personal comment to her writing. On the other hand Mark, when asked by a student to write about 'himself', found the task extremely difficult. He sat staring out of the window for a very long time. Even with encouragement and suggestions from the student, he seemed unable to formulate anything in words. Finally, in the last few minutes of the lesson he drew a hasty sketch of himself, which expressed sentiments which he could not put into words.

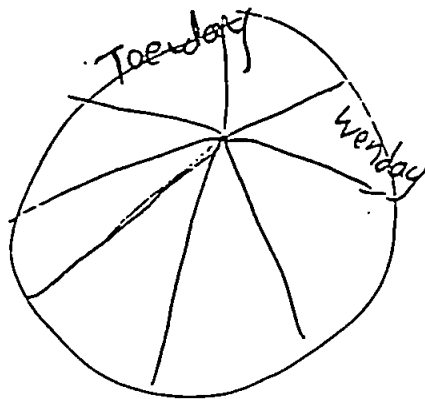
Melanie aged 7 drew a speech bubble to make her own personal comment on a bible story. Here we have a selection of the simplest strategies for presenting information concisely. For teachers it is helpful to remember some of the more sophisticated strategies for presenting detail concisely which may extend and develop the child's knowledge. For example, writers may be extended by opportunities to use:

1. Notes.
2. Summaries.
3. Lists and boxes.
4. Flow diagrams.
5. Pen drawings and photographs.
6. Plans and diagrams.
7. Maps.
8. Charts.
9. Cartoons.
10. References and footnotes.
11. Appendices.
12. Bibliographies.

Matthew (s) ¹²¹



Matthew drew a chart to show who had the most leggo.



Alan (8)

In an attempt to clarify which days he played football Alan produced a simple chart.



Martin wrote caricatures of his family. Of his stepfather he wrote:

"My stepfather is always cross ..."

Then by way of explanation he drew a cartoon of his stepfather thinking "they are never good."

Valerie (8)



Valerie understands that illustrations can be used to communicate extra information. Here we see an example of labelling drawings.

David (9)



In a report of a house move David included a drawing of his parrot saying: "Shut the door." This is the only reference to the parrot in the whole of the report.

Summary

Some of the main points arising from this examination of children's writing are that:

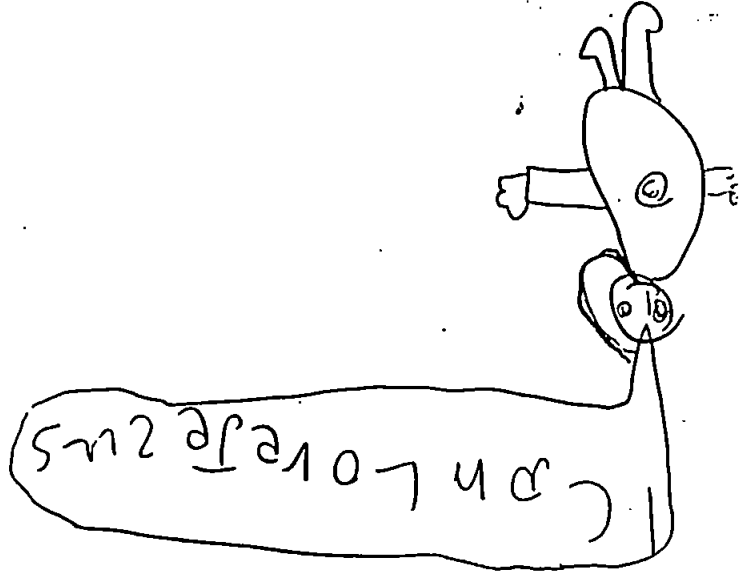
* Children in the primary school vary enormously in their awareness of the reader's information needs, and these differences are evident in their writing.

* Children in the Primary school tend to produce situation-dependent writing because they are not socially aware of the information needs of their reader.

* Children can be helped to understand the social differences in their readers by carrying out audience research.

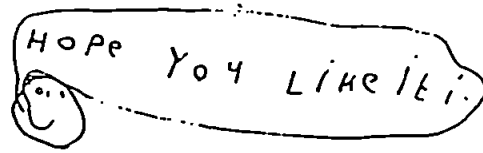
* Children need opportunities to use the wide range of strategies used by writers for communicating information concisely.

Melanie (7)



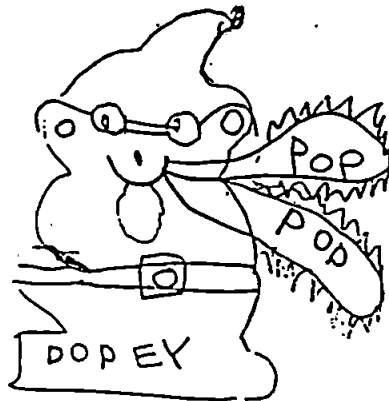
Melanie drew a speech bubble to make her own personal comment on a bible story.

Susan (9)¹²⁷



Susan (9) drew a cartoon on the bottom of her report on a colour mixing experiment where she had created her own 'new' colour.

Mark (9)



When asked to write about himself by a student, Mark sat for a long time and wrote nothing. Eventually he drew a cartoon of himself, expressing the things he was not prepared to put into words.

Chapter five

***Helping the reader
through longer texts: non-
chronological sequences.***

Chapter Five.

Longer Texts.

1.

So far in this book we have considered the different strategies a writer uses in the shared process of negotiating meaning with the reader in specific writing situations. However, in longer texts different strategies are used by writers to assist readers through the text. The National Curriculum programme of study for key stage two requires that pupils should:

** Think about ways of making their meaning clear to their intended reader in redrafting their writing.*

** Pupils should be helped to recognise explicitly the different stages in the writing process:*

- drafting (getting ideas on to paper or computer screen, regardless of form, organisation or expression);
- redrafting (shaping and structuring the raw material either on paper or screen- to take account of purpose, audience and form);
- rereading and revising (making alterations that will help the reader e.g. getting rid of ambiguity, vagueness, incoherence, or irrelevance);
- proof-reading (checking for errors eg. omitted or repeated words, mistakes in spelling or punctuation).

What can the writing of ten year olds writing tell us about the devices a writer may use to help the reader through longer pieces of writing? The samples of writing which follow have been divided into three groups for ease of discussion. The first group of writers are only just beginning to show evidence of helping readers through their text.

Group 1: Emergent use of conjunctive markers.

In the first sample of Katie's writing we can see some indication of a chronological sequence. The chronological sequence is particularly important in stories and is usually the first kind of sequencing to appear. Katie simply writes:

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

"In the Shed"

Kate(11)

Katie

In the outside shed I think theres
ghosts and monsters everywhere.
It gives me a fright as I walk
Past the ^{garden at night} shed. Mum shouts
get the ^{shovel} shovel from the shed.
No thanks theres a monster in there
I'm not going in there. I walked slowly
Past the garden shed ^{shivering,} shivering
With fear. I gently opened the door
I peered in and flew back in the house
I se shouted "mum theres a ghost in the
garden shed." Don't be silly.

Then I flew back into the house. . .

Here the reader has to make many assumptions for her/himself about the chronology of events, and this could result in ambiguity.

Keith is a little more specific in his story of 'The Birthday Party'. He writes:

*One day it was. . .
then we went to tea. . .
when everybody had gone. . .
Then I went outside. . .
Then I went inside. . .
Then I went to bed. . .*

Keith includes a clear chronological sequence in his writing which helps the reader to understand the sequence of events. What we see in this group is the writer's preoccupation with organising the sequence of events in such a way that it will help the reader. However, the samples of writing in group two not only contain a chronologically marked sequence, but also other kinds of non-chronological sequences.

Group 2: Established conjunctive markers.

Maralyn's story of the budgerigars has a clearly organised sequence of ideas. She includes a chronological sequence for the reader:

*When we let them out . . .
Once Chips sat on a plant and broke it. . .
When we want them to go back. . .*

However, Maralyn also writes:

But sometimes they sit on my head . . .

Here we have an indication in the use of the words:

But sometimes. . .

that the text which follows is in contrast to the text that has gone before. In this story there are instructions to interpret different parts of the text with chronological and non-chronological relationships. This is a different kind of organisation from the sequencing of content that we have already observed.

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

Keith
(10)

The birthday party
 Oneday it was my birthday I invited
 all my friends to my house.

At the birthday party we played musical
 Statues.

We played lots of games then we
 went to the table had some cakes.
 I blew out the candles.

I opened all my presents

When everybody had
 every thing I gave I played with
 my toys

I got a new car with a radio
 and a new electric motor
 on my jeep on my motor.

Sept.

When I played cards on Sunday
 when the day.

Then I went to play

with them outside.

Then I went inside to make my model

airplane.

I played with my new car and

my army car. And I played with my model

airplane on the table.

Then I went to bed.

Keith has a clear chronological sequence:

'One day...' 'then we went in for tea' 'when everybody had gone'
 'Then I went outside' 'Then I went inside' 'Then I went to bed.'

Gp1 - Emergent conjunctive markers

We have got two bugies. We call them chicken and chips. There colours are green and blue and yeellow. They have redbeaks. When we let them out they fly up and sit on the light. Once chips sat on a plant and broke it. My mum was very cross because all of the leaves fell off. But sometimes, they sit on my head and pull my hair in there beaks. We clean them out once a week, but they are not very dirty. When we want them to go back in the cage they sit on our shoulders and we lift them gently in.

Maralyn (6)

Time sequence: 'Once'

Contrastive sequence: But sometimes

Gp. 2 Established conjunctive markers.

This 'But sometimes' occurs at the beginning of the sentence because it is important. It is a signal to the reader that the long stretch of text that has gone before is related to the long stretch of text that follows in a particular way. The 'But' indicates that the first part of the text is being contrasted with the text that follows this signal. Halliday and Hasan call this an 'adversative sequence', because the first part of the text is an adverse relationship to the part following the signal. The 'But' is called a 'conjunctive marker'.

So here we are beginning to see not only how the writer organises the content chronologically, but also a different kind of organisation in which the writer is indicating the non-chronological relationships between the longer sections of text.

Sean's story of 'The Birthday Party' also illustrates these different relationships. Firstly we can see his chronological sequence when he writes:

One day Philip . . .
Then we played musical bumps. . .
Then we had something to eat. . .
Then they went home. . .

But the second to sixth lines are particularly interesting. Sean writes:

Sean was the first person, then Jeremy was the next person to arrive Stuart was the third Matthew was the fifth. Martyn was last.

Here we have one event in the story 'the people arriving', but it has a sequence of its own about the order in which the guests arrived. This is what Halliday and Hasan (1976) called an *additive sequence*. It is additive because one section of the text is simply 'added on' to the next. One of the ways in which the reader/writer relationship is sustained in longer pieces of writing is by this second kind of non-chronological sequencing.

In her writing we can see how Karen sets out a very well defined chronological sequence. She writes:

One day it was a little girl's . . .
then she went downstairs. . .
Meanwhile when Kate went downstairs. . .

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

The Birthday Party

One day Phil had a Birthday
 Sean was the first person then Jerem
 was the next person to arrive
 Stuart was the third Matthew
 was the fifth
 Marilyn was last and we played
 musical bumps. Then we played
 musical statues. Then we had
 something to eat. Then they
 went home. We then
 got home they went to
 bed.

- ① Sean includes a time sequence in his story:
 'One day' 'Then we played' 'Then we had something
 to eat' 'Then they went home'
- ② But we can also see an emerging additive sequence:
 'Sean was the first person...'
 'Then Jeremy was the next person'
 'Stuart was the third'
 'Matthew was the fifth'
 'Marilyn was last'

Gp. 2 Established conjunctive markers

Karen: (10) Party by
golf n

One day it was a
little girls birthday
she made her bed
then she went down stairs.



Meanwhile when Kate went down stairs
she was surprised when she went in
the living room. There hanging from the
ceiling was a huge ribbon that is what it said

Happy Birthday. Kate then her friends
came. Kate asked her mum if she
and her friends could go for a picnic
her mum said 'No' so Kate played
musical chairs and she won a coke.
Then she played musical bumps.

When the music went off she
was still in the air.
Then she was out. A naughty
boy knocked over a little boy. Then
he started to cry.

Then it was time for tea. They
had sandwiches and flapjacks and
for afters they had ^{coconuts} ~~concoons~~.

When the party was over, they saw
things home with them.

then they went home.

Karen includes a very well defined time sequence in her
'One day', 'then', 'Meanwhile', 'Then her friends', ...

But then there is a different kind of sequence: 'So'.
Then the time sequence continues. 'then', 'then', 'then it is'
'then they went home'

Then she played musical bumps. . .
 Then she was out. . .
 Then he started to cry. . .
 Then it was time for tea. . .
 When the party was over. . .
 Then they went home. . .

But in the middle of Karen's writing we also see a non-chronological sequence. She writes:

Kate asked her mum if here and her friends could go for a picnic her mum said "No" so Kate played musical chairs and she won a coke.

When Karen uses the word so in 'so Kate played musical bumps' she creates a cause and effect, or causal sequence. Because she could not have a picnic Kate played musical bumps. This is a helpful clue to the reader who interprets this marker as saying 'the part of the text that follows is related causally to the earlier part.' This is a further kind of sequence which Halliday and Hasan identified as a 'causal sequence', which signals that the preceding part of the text is related to the succeeding part in a cause and effect relationship.

Domenico's writing is interesting, because he was writing in a second language, but he clearly understood the importance of placing markers in the text to help the reader to understand how different parts of the text were linked in chronological and non-chronological ways. Firstly there is a clear time sequence. Domenico writes:

One day there was a party on. . .
 And when the sun came out. . .
 Then a milkman came. . .

We can also see an adversative sequence when Domenico writes:

But one day. . .
 But the milkman did not run off. . .
 But when the milkman. . .

There is also a causal sequence:

the postman saw the cat. So he ran away. . .

Although Domenico is clearly struggling with the written form of a second language, his writing is difficult to read, there are many spelling and

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

Domenico (10)

One day There was a
Party on. They had a cat.
But one day the cat
was big.
And when the sun came ^{out} at
the Postman saw the cat.
So He ^{ran} ~~had~~ a way. There

was no cards for the
Party

Then a milk man came
but the milkman did
not run off ^{like} the
Postman. But ^{when} the
milkman saw the cat he did
not ^{run} off.

One day there was a party on. They had a cat
 but one day the cat was big. And when the
 sun came at the postman saw the cat. So he
 ran away. There was no cards for the party.
 The milkman came but the milkman did not run
 off like the postman. But when the milkman
 saw the cat he did not run off.

Sp-2 Established conjunctive markers.

grammatical errors, he clearly has a sense of audience.

Domenico understands a great deal about the needs of his reader, and his inclusion of chronological and non-chronological sequences gives his writing a texture which is not present in many writers of this age group.

Group 3: Extended use of conjunctive markers.

In the writing of William we see a very dextrous use of time sequencing. William implies a time sequence by non-specific references. He writes:

*A play . . . was being produced. . .
Almost every day . . .
On the night. . .
The second performance. . .
At the end of the last performance. . .
all the work we had done towards the play had finished.*

There are also non-chronological sequences in:

I was, of course, very nervous . . . (a causal sequence)

and:

but it was o.k. (an adversative sequence)

The same kinds of sequencing are also illustrated in Lesley's story of 'Pippa and Poppet'. There is a chronological sequence:

*Every day when. . .
Sometimes. . .
One day. . .
Meanwhile. . .
At last . . .
After that. . .*

This specifies the chronology of the events. But there is also an additive sequence:

*And at home. . .
And her name . . .*

There are also two adversative sequences:

*But we have another cat too. . .
Or at other times. . .*

And a causal sequence:

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

is it
true?
ACTING
EXPERIENCE

A play called 'Is It True?' was being produced at our school. It is basically a story about what happened when Christ was born. The story is asking what the things Christ could do and the things that were happening outside him where one.

I played the part of one of the wise men. My name was Melchior Kattina. Almost every day we went over to Miss Boudens class to practise the play. Me, Simon, and Nick wrote most of our own script. We had to do a lot of research to find out the ^{information} about the wise men. I found it quite hard to find out the places to say my lines because I was away for quite a long time. On the night of the performance I was of course very nervous but it was O.K. The second performance was not very good. I made two mistakes and I felt very embarrassed. At the end of the last performance I felt almost sad because all the work we had done towards the play had finished.

Notice how William indicates the relationship between different parts of his text.

"I was, of course, very nervous ---"

"but -- it was O.K."

Qip 3 Extended use of conjunctive markers.

Lesley
(107)

Every day when we finish school we go home. And at home we have two cats waiting for us. We have a very fat one because she has long fur. And her name is Poppet. But we have another cat too. She has short fur. And her name is Pippa. Sometimes Pippa sits on my bed, and Poppet sits on my knee sometimes. Or at other times she sits on my bed. One day Pippa and Poppet went missing. We looked everywhere for them. We even looked in the kitchen cupboard, but they were not there. Meanwhile I had an idea. Why don't we look in our old house? At last we got there, and there were Pippa and Poppet. I don't know how they got there. Because we didn't want them to go back to our old house my mum put butter on their paws. They sat and licked it off and enjoyed it. After that they never went away again.

Time sequence: 'Every day' 'Sometimes...' 'one day'
'Meanwhile' 'At last...' 'After that' -

Additive sequence: 'And at home' 'And her name'

Contrastive sequence: 'Or at other times'

Cause and effect sequence: 'Because we didn't ...'

Op. 3 Extended use of conjunctive markers

Because we didn't want them . . .

Lesley is clearly very skilful at instructing the reader to interpret a combination of additive, adversative, causal and chronological relationships.

2.

What do the sequences do?

We have now seen examples of all of these different kinds of sequences in the writing of ten year olds. But what part do they play in the relationship between the reader and the writer? It is interesting to note that if Lesley's markers were removed from her text, although the story would be more difficult to follow, the story of events, or content, would remain undisturbed:

When we finish school we go home. We have two cats waiting for us. We have a very fat one because she has long fur. Her name is Pippa. Pippa sits on my bed, and poppet sits on my knee sometimes. At other times she sits on my bed. Pippa and Poppet went missing. We looked everywhere for them. We even looked in the kitchen cupboard but they were not there. I had an idea. Why don't we look in our old house? We got there, and there were Pippa and Poppet. I don't know how they got there. We didn't want them to go back to our old house my mum put butter on their paws. They sat and licked it off and enjoyed it. They never went away again.

The conjunctive markers we have observed in these samples of writing nearly always occur at the beginning of the sentence. When we remove the markers from the story, it does not disturb the content of the story. By removing the markers we can see that the organisation they are signalling is quite different from the organisation of the story content.

This combination of markers creates a series of events running alongside the events of the story. It is as if the writer creates his own commentary on the story for the benefit of the reader. This is the point where we can see how the writer sustains the relationship with the reader.

** The purpose of these markers is to assist the reader in the shared process of negotiating meaning.*

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

In effect, when we communicate in speech or writing, we are interpreting events at two different levels. At one level, writers unfold the events within the content of their writing. At another level, writers unfold a commentary on the events in the story, which helps the reader to negotiate the meaning of longer stretches of text.

We can see this happening very clearly in the writing of Annette. Annette sequences the longer stretches of her writing very skilfully for her reader. Firstly we can see the temporal sequence:

*In the morning. . .
Then we went. . .
Then we went. . .
Then it was getting late. . .
At last. . .*

Then the additive sequence:

And Tom said. . . .

And the adversative sequence:

But I said . . .

And the causal sequences:

*Because we had been noty. . .
So we got the train. . .*

There is also a more experimental use of:

'We will see. Now you go to bed. . '

This is a marker commonly used by teachers in speech, and called a *framemaker* by Sinclair and Coulthard (1976) because it marks a new *frame*, or linguistic event, between speakers and listeners in spoken communication. Here we see Annette incorporating it into the speech of her mother. This is an interesting development and an indication that Annette is sensitive to the different ways of using markers in speech and writing.

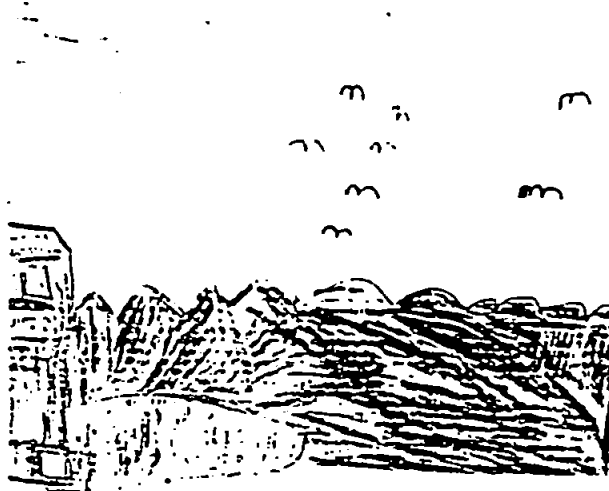
What is beginning to emerge is that writers organise their writing at two different levels: the content, and the reader/writer relationship. The most important points for teachers to bear in mind are that:

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

The Day we went to London.

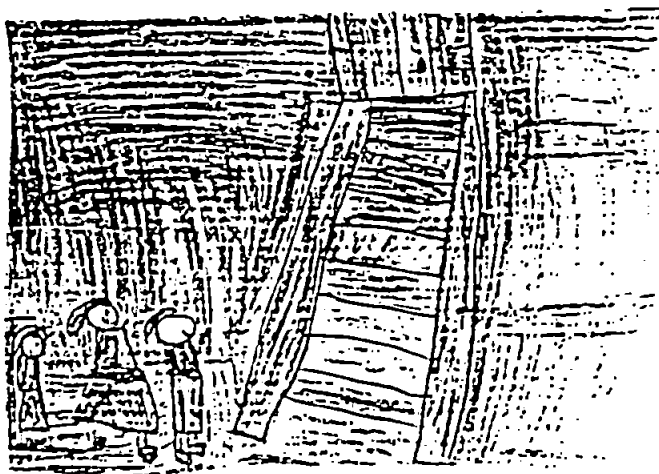
Annette 144
(10)

Me and my brother Tom live in Devon by the sea, and one day we desided that we would like to go to London.



We wanted to see Big

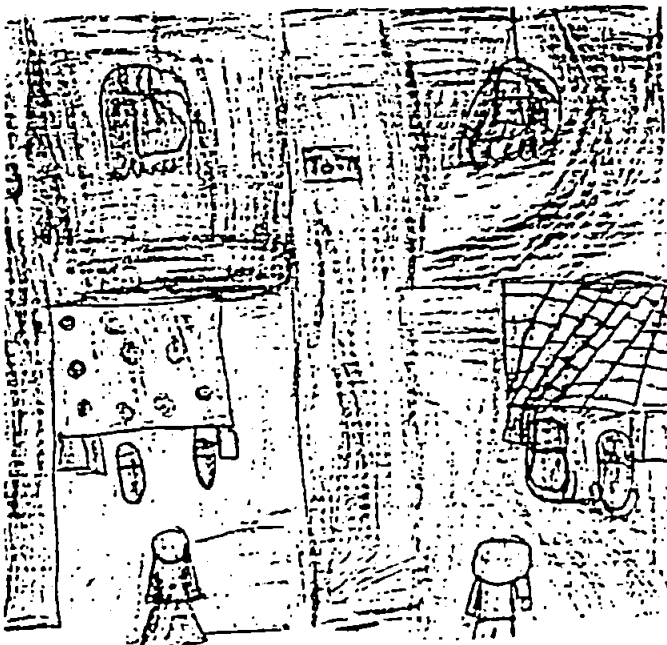
Ben and Buckingham palis. We asked our mum if we could go, and she said, "We will see. Now you go to bed and I will talk to Dad when he comes in." We weren,t asleep when my dad came in, and we krepd out on the landing to see of mum would ask if we could go to London. Tom said she wouldent, But I said she would. I knew she would. They talked for ages and we couldent hear what they were saying. It was freezing and went back to bed, but Tom stayed up trying to hear what they were saying. My dad found him asleep on the stairs. Because we had been noty my dad said we wouldent go to London. I got back into bed and I cride. And Tom said I was a baby.



In the morning it was Saturday and mum woke us erly. She said, "Get up and get dress quickly we are catching the train to London. I couldnt beleeve it. We went to see Big Ben and Buckingham palis.



Then we had a picnic in Trafalgar square, but the pidgens kept flying by. I didnt like it there. The pidgens kept trying to get my dinner. Then we went on the underground. It is very noisey and smelly and there are lots of people. I got scared I might get lost in the crush and I hald my mums hand. We saw the tower of London and the crown jewils. They were very pretty. I wish my mum had some jewils like that. Then it was getting late. So, we got on the train again and came home. I was tired and slept until the train pulled into Exeter. At last we got home and went to bed.. It is a long way to London, but I am glad we went.



** Children need to be able to organise their writing on two different levels.*

** Level one: Content organisation is concerned with ordering the events in the story, or the content of the writing.*

** Level two: Reader Organisation is concerned with signalling the relationship between longer stretches of writing to help the reader negotiate the meaning of the text.*

For teachers it may be helpful to remember that Reader Organisation markers nearly always occur at the beginning of a sentence. And further, is helpful to know what kind of sequence is signalled by a particular conjunctive marker. Halliday and Hasan suggest that the important markers used by writers to show how the different parts of the text are related are:

Additive: And, also, furthermore, in addition, besides, alternatively, incidentally, by the way, likewise, similarly, in the same way.

Adversative: yet, though, but only, however, nevertheless, despite this, on the other hand, rather, on the contrary, in any case, whichever way it is, anyhow, at any rate, however it is, et least, I mean.

Causal: So, then, hence, therefore, for, consequently, for this reason, because of this, for this purpose, with this in mind, to this end, in that case, under the circumstances, otherwise, in this regard, with reference to this, this aside.

Chronological: then next, after that, just then, at the same time, previously, before that soon next, at once, thereupon, one day, once upon a time, long ago.

The children whose writing we have examined clearly know a great deal about the help a reader may need in longer stretches of text. From these samples of writing we can also see how, at the age of ten, there is a wide variation in children's abilities to communicate in writing. Again this raises questions for teachers: What kind of writing situations would encourage children to develop their existing awareness further?

3.

What kind of writing situations would encourage children to develop their existing awareness further?

At this point it may be helpful to think about the stages a writer goes through in the production of his/her writing.

Diane had been asked to write about herself by a student who was taking the class for the first time and wanted to get to know the children. After a little preliminary discussion Diane produced a first draft. Looking at her draft we can see how she assembles the details about herself that she is going to communicate to her reader.

*I have fair hair, and blue eyes, freckels and I am not very tall. . .
My sister. . .
I have a dog. . .
I like nice clothes . . .
I used to live in York. . .
I live in Devon now. . .*

She tells us many personal details about herself, but there is little in the way of context setting or explanations. Her main concern seems to be with the content of the writing and her Content Organisation. There is no sign of chronological or non-chronological sequencing, and from this writing we might think that Diane had little awareness of the needs of her reader.

In a transcript of a feedback session in which her classmates, Debbie, Mark and Alister helped Diane to redraft her writing:

Mark: Well I didn't find it all that interesting. . . I mean you told us lots about yourself. . . but all this stuff about the colour of your eyes and stuff. . . well that could have been anyone. . . I still don't know much about you at the end of it. . .

Debbie: Yeah, you need to find some way of telling us about you . . . I mean, what you do in your life. . . It kinda boring just to know how tall you are and what colour hair you have.

Diane: D'you think it'd help if I told you about my mum

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

Diane
(10)

Myself

I have got fair hair and blue eyes and freckles on my face. I ~~am~~ am not very tall and I am quite fat. My sister is older than me. She is 15. I don't like her very much. I have a dog called Brandy, a cat ~~cat~~ called Mustard and a goldfish. I like nice clothes and my favorite pop star is Ziggy. I used ~~to~~ to live in York and I liked it in York. I live in Devon now.

- A. Diane uses this draft to assemble the details about herself that she is going to communicate to her reader. There is no sign of sequencing. Later Diane redrafted her writing calling it 'my mum'.
- B. We see a hint at metalinguage in the title

Ap.2. Established conjunctive markers.

and dad. . . .

Debbie: Yeah, tell us about what is special in your life. . . special to you I mean. . . y'know, how you feel about things. . . that's much more interesting .

Mark: You've gotta remember that . . . erm. . . that we don't know anything about you. . . not really. . . we might be in the same class. . . and we might've . . . erm . . . even been round your house. . . but I know I don't know much about you. . .

Diane's second draft illustrates how carefully she listened to the advice of her fellow writers, and how much she learnt from their detailed feedback. The title of the writing changes to:

My Family.

The second draft contains many new ideas:

*Diane's mum and dad.
Her relationship with her mother.
Her family history.*

Here immediately we have a context developing. Diane is beginning to tell us about herself through her family and her relationships with them. Indirectly this has the effect of telling us a great deal about Diane's characteristics and her personality. This more complex collection of ideas created content organisation problems for Diane. We see:

She was born on September 20th 1956

in the middle of:

I like York better than Devon

and:

York was nicer.

We don't really know who 'she' is, or why Diane put in this sentence right at the end. Her level one organisation is much more complex and she seems to be struggling with the organisation of the ideas.

Nevertheless, this draft also includes some Reader Organisation. There is a chronological sequence:

*When me and my mum are at home. . .
When they had the shop. . .*

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

My Family

My dad's name is Peter and he married my mum in 1972 in York.

They were tour guides for York tours.

My mum got lost and my dad was sent to find her and they got married.

When me and my mum are at home together we get in the kitchen and bake. I love baking with my mum.

My mum used to own a baker's shop, but when my sister was born she gave it up.

When they had the shop they lived in York, but now we live in Devon.

I like York better than Devon. She was born on September 20th 1958. York was nicer.

There is also a adversative sequence:

But when my sister . . .

From this draft of the writing we begin to glimpse the processes through which Diane moves as a writer. Firstly she carried out an organisation of content, then she redrafted her writing in such a way that it took account of the needs of her reader.

Michael's first draft of 'The Bells at Brugge' indicates quite a clear organisation of content:

*Me and my dad climbed the clocktower. . .
The clock struck twelve. . .
Unfortunately the clock plays a tune. . .
The tower was vibrating. . .
Once we got home I could still hear the bells after they had stopped. . .
Even though it was three hours after we had been up the tower. . .*

In this first draft there is good content organisation right up to the last two sentences, when, through fatigue or simply excitement, Michael lost track of what he was writing. There is good reader organisation in the form of a chronological sequence, adversative sequences, and a causal sequence.

However, in the second draft we can see how Michael has taken much more care with the presentation. He has attempted to write neatly so that the reader can read what he has written and some of the spellings have been corrected. The last sentence illustrates how Michael has tidied up the organisation of his ideas at the end of the writing, to make it easier for the reader to understand. He simply writes:

I can still hear the bells ringing in my head. . .

Much of Michael's content organisation and reader organisation were present in his first draft. In the second draft he has gone through a process of 'polishing up' his work to make it easier for the reader to understand.

In his writing about 'The Day I found some Cassettes', James proceeds quite clearly through different stages in his writing. His first draft is simply a list of ideas. His main concern is clearly with the content organisation.

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

First Draft.

Michael
(10)The bells at Brügge:

Ma and my dad climbed the clocktower at Brügge when we were on holiday.

Just as we got into the clock room the clock struck twelve and we had to cover our ears. Unfortunately the clock plays a tune when it strikes twelve. The whole tower was vibrating and the bells were just missing us by a quarter of an meter. ~~the~~ Once we got down I could still hear the bells ringing even though it had stopped. Even though it was three hours after we had been up the tower.

Ap. 2-3 Extended use of conjunctive markers.

The Clock Tower at Bruges:

10.9.90

My dad and I climbed the clock tower at Bruges when we were on holiday in Belgium. We went up a lot of windy steps into the clockroom. Just as we got into the clockroom the clock struck twelve and it nearly deafened us. Unfortunately the clock plays a long tune when it strikes twelve. The whole tower was vibrating. Once we got down I could still hear the bells ringing in my head.

THE END.

2-3 Extended use of conjunctive markers.

Journal

The Day I Found
Some Cassettes

Walking in the park
Taking a short cut
near the pond. See a
parcel under the tree
- Go over and have
a look at it. See
some boxes of unreel
-reel cassettes. Pick
them up to look
at them - Put them
in my school bag
and take them home
After tea, check what
will be the
palaeontology.

First draft.

Listing the relevant
ideas.

In a feedback session with his fellow writers the audience was a focal point of the discussion:

Thomas: When you're writing real stories or science fiction stories, are you the person in the story, or is it completely apart?

James: I write - it's sort of a video camera filming it. . . . erm. . . I'm telling the story. . . its not really me in the story, I'm just telling it. .

Thomas: Then when you're writing, do you . . . d'you think about the person who's reading it. . . or. . .

James: No . . . I think about my story . . . I mean.

Thomas: So you're not writing this for anyone in particular . . .

James: Well no . . .

Thomas: If you were writing for younger children, and you wrote an older children's book. . . well erm. . wouldn't you have to write it differently. . .

Angela: Course you would. . . you'd have different language. . .

James: Yeah . . . but this isn't for children.

Thomas: You'd have to use simple language and short words. . .

James: Yeah. . . I know. . . but this is for older people . . .

Angela: How d'you know that. . .

James: Well it's got long words in it . . . and its erm. . like its more complicated. . . little children couldn't read it. . .

Thomas: Well even for grown ups. . . you have to make it easy for them to understand. . . I mean . . . if you make it too complicated. . . no one's going to understand it anyway. . .

In the second draft James begins to take account of the reader's needs by including more details. In the final draft we can observe just how aware he is of the needs of the reader. This draft includes extra details and an extended use of conjunctive markers:

Temporal sequence: Then I knew. . . Then I put them. .

Contrastive sequence: But. . .

Experimental use of framemaker: Now. . .

These samples of first and second drafts seem to illustrate the concerns of the writer: firstly for content organisation, and secondly for reader organisation. For teachers this has important implications. It suggests that:

* It is important for a writers development to have the opportunity to edit and redraft writing.

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

James

The Day I found
Ernie Caselle
by James.

One night when I was
in my home from
school I decided
to go to the
store to see
if I could find
any more of the
same kind of
things. I went
to the store and
found a lot of
things that I
liked. I bought
a few of them
and took them
home. I was
very happy when
I found them.

Second draft
Taking the reader
into account by giving
more details and
explanations.

** It is important for a writer's development to receive adequate and detailed feedback about her/his writing between the drafts.*

For teachers, these demands may cause considerable difficulties, because it may not always be possible for the teacher to individually provide feedback on every piece of writing that a writer produces. However, it is important that at regular intervals writers receive detailed feedback from the teacher on at least some of their writing.

Another solution to the difficulties may be to encourage peer group feedback. However, peer feedback is only as helpful as the peers themselves. If children have guidance about the kinds of comments that are helpful and those that are not, then peer group comments can be very useful. But without guidance, peer group feedback may deteriorate into nothing less than a waste of time. For peer group feedback to be successful, it needs careful organisation and guidance from the teacher.

Teachers may guide their pupils towards commenting constructively upon writing by giving directions about the kinds of comments that are to be expected:

This conference will look at the organisation of ideas
or,

This conference will comment upon the effect this writing has upon those who read it.

In this way the children will gain some ideas about what is expected of them when they present their writing for comment, or are expected to comment upon the writing of another.

4.

Summary

The main points arising from this examination of the writing of ten year olds have been that:

- * The process of writing may require several stages of development:*
 - an initial stage of selecting and organising ideas: content organisation.*
 - a second stage of including strategies for helping*

Writing at Key Stage Two/5.

the reader: reader organisation.
- a final stage of proof reading.

* Young writers can be supported and encouraged through the stages of writing by being given the time and opportunity to draft; edit and proof-read their writing.

* Young writers need to further develop their understanding of the communicative function of markers in text.

* Young writers need to develop their understanding of the importance of:

- a. chronological sequences.
- b. additive sequences.
- c. causal sequences.
- d. adversative sequences.

Chapter six

***A change in the
relationship: literary
writing.***

Chapter Six.

So far we have examined the ways in which writers fulfil the expectations of a reader, by satisfying certain expectations between the reader and the writer. But we have not so far considered literary writing. How can a teacher tell whether or not a child's writing is 'literary'?

The National Curriculum Attainment target three level six requires that pupils should be able to:

** demonstrate the ability to use literary and non-stylistic features and those which characterise an impersonal style, when appropriate using standard English (except in contexts where non-standard forms are needed for literary purposes)*

But what do we mean by 'the ability to use literary and non-stylistic features'?

There are many views about literary writing, but no general agreement. There are those who (Fowler 1977) who consider that literary writing is 'the expression of feeling in grammar'. There are those (Tambling 1988) who claim that there is no difference between literary writing and any other kind of writing. There are those (Talbot 1980) who claim that literary writing is quite different from any other kind of writing, because it is determined by the response of the reader.

However, if we consider that writing is a shared process of meaning negotiation between a reader and a writer, that it is a shared relationship in which the writer assists the reader and takes his needs into account, then we have to conclude that there are some differences between literary writing other kinds of writing. It is not simply a case of saying that one piece of writing is a piece of literary writing and another is not, rather that a piece of writing has more or fewer literary characteristics.

When we look at what happens to the relationship between the reader and the writer in literary writing, several important differences emerge. We begin to see:

** In ordinary writing the writer seeks to make his*

Writing at Key Stage Two/6.

meaning as clear as possible to the reader. He attempts to 'reduce the uncertainty' (Smith 1978) of the reader by making clear his/her assumptions about the reader in the choice of language.

* In literary writing the writer exposes several possible meanings, and by careful manipulation of the expectations of the reader, obliges the reader to interpret a possible meaning for himself.

What can the writing of eleven year olds tell us about their ability to cope with literary English? The following samples of writing have been again divided into three groups for ease of discussion.

Group 1: Emergent literary writing.

Shelley wrote about the happiest day in her life in verse form, although the language she uses could not be described as 'poetical'. She writes of her own feelings:

*Its a day when joy
comes into my
heart and then
floods out and
makes everyone happy.*

Shelley builds up the great joy she feels, and at the climax of her description makes the important point:

*. . .dad means
so much to me hes
the best thing seems
slies bread.*

Shelley shares a very powerful emotion with her reader. In this writing we see very little of a discourse structure, only a situation. From the discourse structure we can see that the purpose of this writing is clearly very different from any other kinds of writing that we have examined. In other kinds of writing there has been at least a situation and a problem, which enabled the reader to work out what kind of action was required. When a writer simply produces a situation, the reader is left in some confusion about the kind of action that is anticipated.

John decided to write a story about a boy called John, who was unhappy and decided to run away from home. Interestingly he set out his story in verse form.

Writing at Key Stage Two/6.

Shelley (11)

The happiness day in my whole lifeDads Birthday

Dads birthday is a
 time when I feel happy
 for him it feels a
 bit like its my
 birthday. I am happy
 because I would
 feel I was not loved
 at dad's special day.
 Its a day when joy
 comes into my
 heart and then
 flows out and
 makes every one
 happy its a day
 when I feel like
 shouting to the
 world and saying
 its dad's birthday
 I feel this way because
 to me dad's ~~it~~ means
 so much to ~~me~~ ^{my} he's
 the best thing some
 slice of bread.

gp. 1 Emergent Literary Writing.
 (Uses only the genre form)

Boy Run Away From Family

11 year old
John willis

run away
from family
Coby sister

sally maw and
daddy of toa
pappy they take
sally bill they love

John to take
car of house
John is so

angry he takes
of and leave home
he stays

in a sad condition
Place none to love
or care for him

gp. 1 Emergent Literary Writing.
(uses only the genre form)

Adopting this genre is an instruction to the reader to treat this piece of writing as a poem. However, apart from the layout, there is again no language in the poem which might be described as 'poetical'. However, at the end of his writing John writes:

he stays in a sad and dark place none to love or care for him.

Here reader might have expected different grammar, something like:

he stays in a sad and dark place (with no one) to love or care for him.

Is it possible that the word 'none' was deliberately chosen to disrupt the expectations of the reader, bringing him/her to a sudden halt. It seems unlikely that this word was chosen to bring clarity of meaning to the reader, and was more likely chosen for the effect it will have upon the reader. Here John seems to be demonstrating an emerging awareness of how to draw on the language to create special effects in the reader.

Group 2: Established literary writing.

Samantha has developed her literary style further than Shelley and John. She chooses to write in verse form, thus instructing the reader to treat her writing as a poem. The content of the writing is overtly imaginative:

*I hate to go up the stairs
Because of the were wolf
At the top of the stairs . . .*

and

*When I come to the door
I usually slam it right back
To squash the man
Who dresses in black . . .*

Samantha explores her own fears and imaginings in the darkness. But she does not simply write 'I get scared when I go upstairs in the dark. . .', she chooses her vocabulary very carefully. Notice the repetition of the 'ss' sounds and the rhyming 'a' sounds in:

Going up to Bed.

When I go up to bed
 I hate to go up the stairs
 Because of the were wolf
 At the top of the stairs,
 When I come to the door
 I usually slam it right back
 To squash the man
 Who dresses in black.
 Then I jump in bed
 And hide under the covers.

When I go up to bed
 I hate to go up the stairs
 Because of the were wolf
 At the top of the stairs,
 When I come to the door
 I usually slam it right back
 To squash the man
 Who dresses in black
 Then I jump in bed
 And hide under the covers.

gp. 2 Established Literary Language.
 (Definite awareness of reader empathy).

*I usually slam it right back
To squash the man
Who dresses in black . . .*

The sound of the language here creates a hissing sound. Could this be a sound effect to invoke Samantha's hate of '*man in black*'? Could she be using the language to create an extra meaning which was not contained in the text? We cannot ask her, and we will never know, but what we do know is, that her poem leaves the reader asking many questions. Did this happen because she did not understand the needs of her reader or could it have been deliberate?

The next three samples of writing, in their final draft do not display any particularly literary intention, until we examine how they have changed between the first and second draft. The children who produced these poems had been asked to write about the most precious things in their lives, which they would like to keep in a chest if everything else was destroyed.

In her first draft Lisa lists the ideas she will communicate, and begins to select those that will appear in the final draft. The first draft contains no attempt to explain the writing or help the reader in any way, and it is written in prose form. It is simply a content organisation. In her second draft we can see considerable development. Lisa has made certain decisions about her writing. She has reorganised the ideas into a different order. They have changed from:

*The smell of fresh lit matches
The sound of a playing flute
The sound of the early birds
The smell of bacon in the morning
The memories of my mum singing
The comfort of my pet rabbit*

To:

*The sound of the early birds
The sound of a playing flute
The memories of my mum singing
The smell of fresh lit matches
The comfort of my pet rabbit*

She has omitted *The smell of bacon in the morning*. This reorganisation does not especially change the

Lisa (11)

'The contents of my chest' (First Draft.)

~~The Smell of fresh lit matches~~
~~The sound of a playing flute~~
~~The sound of the early birds~~
~~The smell of bacon in morning~~
~~The memrys of my mum singing~~
 Above all I would put into my chest
~~my rabbit~~

comfort

The Comfort of my pet Rabbit

Second Draft:

The Precious Belongings of my chest

Among the special things in my chest would be

The sound of the early birds.

The sound of a playing flute.

The memrys of my mum singing.

The Smell of fresh lit matches

Above all I Would Put into my chest is

The comfort of my pet Rabbit.



gp. 2. Established Literary Language.
 (Definite awareness of the effect on the reader)

Nick (11)

'Belongings in my chest' (First draft)

13 The tractor going ^{through} the fields

2 The ^{heat} hats of my old house

21 The ^{nic}est small of the egg

6 I would miss the tractor, engine revving in the fields

4 I would miss the ^{snow} falling

~~The heat of the old house~~

~~The wass of my bed room~~

Second
Draft:

22.11.83
The Precious Belongings of My Chest.

Among the special things in my Chest would be.

The nice small of the egg

The heat of the old house

The tractor going through the fields

The snow falling in the gardens

Above all I would put into this Chest

The tractor engine revving in the fields.

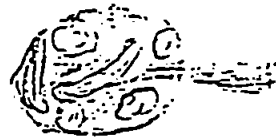


The precious belongings of my chest

Sandra (11)

Among the special things in my chest
would be

The smell of bacon and eggs.
The smell of fresh ground coffee.
The sound of Luvia flowing water.
The sound of birds singing.
I would miss the sound of people
talking



Sandra

by

Sandra organises her ideas in a sequence of 'smells' then 'sounds'. She helps the reader by providing a title, so that the reader knows what the text is about. She provides extra details in her illustrations and she uses metalanguage 'Among the special things in my chest...'

Established Literary Writing.
(Definite awareness of the effect on the reader).

meaning of her writing, so why did she change it?

Nick's attempt at the same task is quite similar. In the first draft he decides which ideas he will communicate, and the numbers at the beginning of each line indicates the final order of the ideas. In his second draft Nick reorganises the ideas and the details which he gives his reader. Again this does not change the meaning of the writing, but it does provide the reader with a smell, a feel, a sound and a sight. Could it be that this reorganisation is intended to appeal to the senses of the reader? Was Nick's intention to achieve a particular effect upon his reader?

Although the language of Sandra's poem could not be described as 'poetic', her attempts at the poem are overtly literary in their organisation. She provides the reader with two 'smells' and two 'sounds'. It is unlikely that this organisation is intended to clarify the meaning, as might have been expected in other forms of writing. This deliberate organisation of sensual experiences can only be intended to achieve an effect upon the reader.

Group 3: Extended Literary Language.

A group of eleven year olds had been reading the story of Beowulf, and planned an evening entertainment to which their parents were invited. They produced some poems about their work. The first poem by Wayne is an interesting example of literary writing. At first glance we can observe some of the features of reader/writer relationship which might have been anticipated. For example there is an illustration to communicate meaning beyond the text. However, as soon as we look at the text itself we can see some interesting and so far, unexplored differences in the relationship between the reader and the writer. In the first line we read:

A wave cutter full of sword brothers.

Immediately we can see how the writer has chosen his words very carefully. They have not been chosen for their clarity of meaning. In fact they are quite ambiguous. These are exophoric references and reader wonders:

Writing at Key Stage Two/6.

What is a wave cutter?

What or who are sword brothers?

Is the wave cutter related to the sword, or the illustration of the ship, which might also be a 'cutter'?

In all of the examples of writing we have so far considered, the skills of the writer have been to organise and make clear the state of play in the relationship between the reader and the writer, but this is not the case with this piece of writing. In this poem the writer is deliberately 'playing' with the expectations of the reader. This writer is inviting the reader to construct his or her own meaning out of several meanings that may be available in the text.

In the second line the 'playing' continues:

Like a bird soaring through the sky . . .

The reader again wonders about the 'bird in the sky' image, wasn't the first line about a boat? But, if we look at the picture of the boat, it sits on the horizon, more visibly in the sky than in the water. Could it be that the 'bird in the sky' image carries with it the symbols of freedom, power and speed, appropriate to this proud craft gliding along in the water? Could the writer be using a single phrase to imply several layers of meaning? Could it be that in this very economical way this writer is inviting the reader to create these 'suggested' meanings which are implicit rather than explicit in the text?

The writing continues with further implicit links between:

the night moon, and the midnight blue

The poem has an implied movement from dark to light, as it moves from:

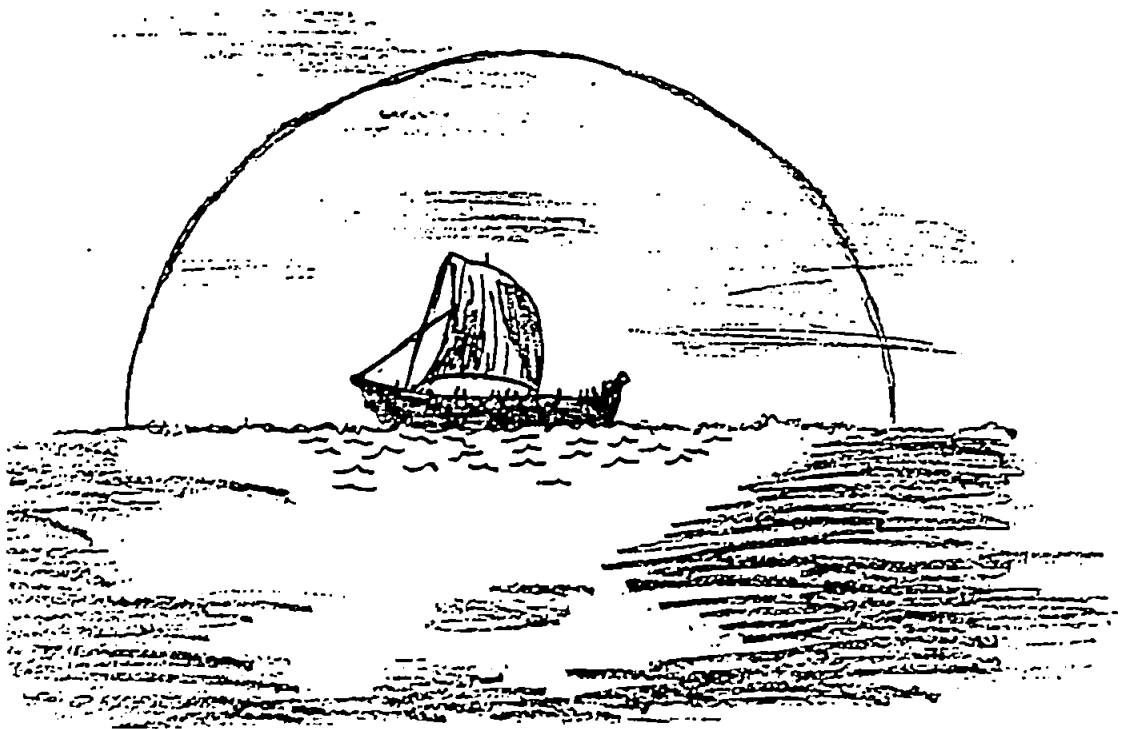
a glimmer on the waves from the night moon,

to:

the sharp sword of illumination.

The Pride of Beowulf

A wave cutter full of sword brothers
like a bird soaring through the sky
ice cold seas hung with frost
a glimmer on the waves from the night moon
the wave cutter silhouetted against
the midnight blue
A figure stands holding the sharp
sword of illumination.
The boat soars, slices through the
Swans way
The pride of Beowulf!



In a symbolic way, the writer also provides a summary for the reader:

*The boat soars, slices through the swan's way
The pride of Beowulf!*

This is a very economical summary relying upon the meanings implicit in the writing. It refers the reader back to the implied connection with the bird in the use of the word 'soars', and back to the implied connection with the sword in 'slices'. The reference to 'the swan's way' invokes the pride and grace of the swan as it glides through the water, and all its associations with white, purity, light. It captures the virtue of the figure standing holding the sharp sword of illumination.'

In this poem we begin to see just how much this eleven year old not only understands about the reader/writer relationship, but how well he understands how to manipulate the expectations of the reader. He understands how to make the reader make inferences, how to invoke feelings and attitudes, how to oblige the reader to create his/her own symbolic interpretation of several possible meanings available in the writing. Here we can begin to see something of the difference between ordinary writing and literary writing. We see:

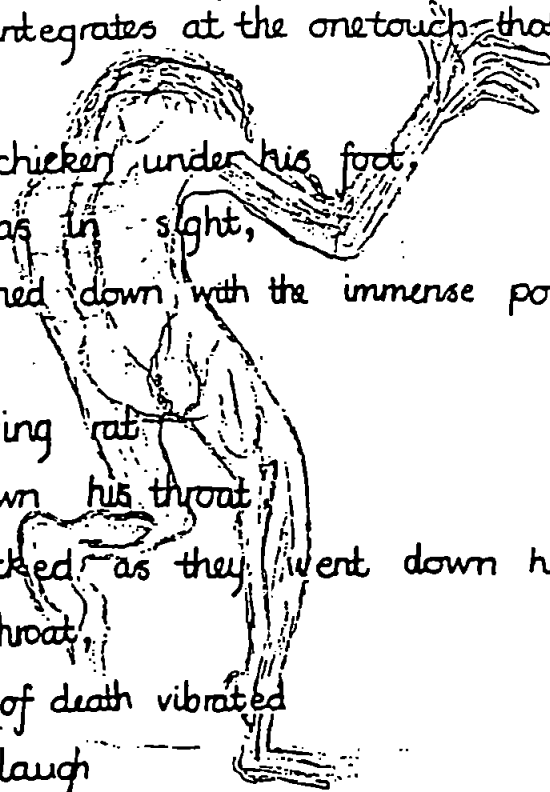
- * Deliberate organisation to achieve a sensual experience.
- * The creation of ambiguity of meaning, rather than clarity of meaning.
- * Deliberate playing of the expectations of the reader.
- * Implied meaning rather than explicit meaning.
- * Using the sound rather than the meaning of the words to invoke meanings.

In the next poem 'Grendel', by Joshua and Wayne we can see how much care the writers have taken with the visual presentation of the writing. The writing is neatly produced, carefully spelled and punctuated. The visual appearance of the verse form leads the reader to expect a piece of literary rather than any other kind of writing. The illustration of the

Joshua and Wayne
(11)

Grendel

The death shadow hits the gates
 The gates disintegrate at the one touch that
 he makes,
 He crushes a chicken under his foot,
 Howot Hall was in sight,
 The door crashed down with the immense power
 behind it,
 He grabbed a living rat
 Rammed it down his throat
 The Danes cracked as they went down his
 dingy, gastly throat,
 Horrific cries of death vibrated
 Then a fearful laugh
 Echoed through out the Danish lands!



gfp 3. Extended use of literary language

monster is superimposed on the writing. Could the present tense of the first line of the poem:

The death shadow hits the gates

suggest that this is a narration? The 'voice' that we are hearing in this poem is uncertain. We cannot be sure whether it is the voice of the writer, or the voice of the narrator. Could it be that this is a deliberate superimposing of another voice upon the text, which is reflected in the way the image of the monster is superimposed on the text itself? Was it deliberate? We cannot answer these questions without asking the writers about their intentions at the point of writing. But we can begin to see that there are possibilities for substantial differences between writing that has literary characteristics and writing that does not. It is possible that these writers have deliberately:

* Created uncertainty about roles within the communication.

* Manipulated the readers expectations about communication roles.

The reader might have expected the roles of the initiator and the respondent, but here we have something which may neither of these roles. It may be a third role, that of the Narrator. Here we have what Bahktin (1981) calls 'the plurality of voices' in literary writing.

Throughout the poem there is an implied powerful image of the monster. It is invoked by a powerful alliterative theme of 'cr' and 'sh' sounds:

*crushes a chicken
The door crashed down
The Danes cracked
Horrific cries*

Here the writers are clearly not choosing their words carefully because the words themselves communicate a specific meaning. It seems more likely that they are choosing their words for the effects that the repeated sounds invoke. Later in the poem we see some more careful choice of vocabulary in:

. . . as they went down his dingy, gastly throat,

Writing at Key Stage Two/6.

The repetition of the 'd' sounds in 'down his dingy' combined with the 'g' sounds in 'dingy gastly. . .' have not been chosen for their lexical meaning. It is more likely that they have been chosen to express the contempt and horror invoked by the sound of the words.

This horror is reinforced two lines later in the repeated 'f' sounds of:

Then a fearful laugh . . .

In other kinds of writing, writers would be unlikely to repeat words or sounds in this way. However, here we see in a literary form how repetition in sound is used to invoke a meaning. This is yet another example of the writer playing with the reader's expectations.

The third poem 'Grendel the Monster' by Simon and Wayne seems to exploit the expectations of the reader in the same ways. These writers are particularly skilful at playing with the sounds of the language to imply special effects. Could it be that the repetition of the 'o' in the opening line requires the reader aloud to physically recreate the gaping 'gross demonic eye' in the shape of the mouth.

Could it be that the writers are using repetitions of sound to invoke attitudes and emotions. For example we see repetition of the 'g' sounds in:

great fangs gleam

Is there contempt echoed in the repetition of 'b', 'd' and 'p' sounds in:

Blood drips to the floor . . .

In the repetition of the i's' and 'sh' sounds of:

The shadow of darkness on the glittering jaws. . .

could it be that the writers were creating a preparation for action? In the following lines could the writers have intended to the writers communicate the rapid fury of the monster's attack in the repeated 'p' and 't' sounds?

*The fierce beast attacks
Tail swiping up through the tables . . .*

Writing at Key Stage Two/6.

Grendel the Monster

One gross demonic eye stares into the
darkness

The great fangs gleam in the midnight
black

Blood drips to the floor

The shadow of darkness on the glittering
Jaws

The fierce beast attacks

Tail swiping up through the tables

In the hall of the dunes

The vicious shadow fades into the
dim, sunless night.

This is followed by a much slower contrast of sibilant 'ss':

*In the hall of the danes
The vicious shadow fades into the dim, sunless night.*

Could it be that the writers of this poem have played with the slow, 'ss' sounds, and the sharp contrasting 't' sounds, followed again by the long, smooth 'ss' to create a movement in the poem? It seems to move from slow to very fast, and back to slow again. Could it be that the writers are playing with the sound to create a very special effect. Could it be that they are attempting to orchestrate the different speeds at which the poem moves? We shall never know.

However, the fact that the reader is left asking these questions must indicate that there is a substantial difference between writing with literary characteristics and any other kind of writing. The relationship between the writers of this poem, and the reader is far from a 'shared negotiation of meaning'. It is more of a challenge to the reader to derive some kind of meaning.

In the next poem, 'A Mother Weeps', Karen uses similar devices to play with the expectations of the reader and create new layers of meaning beyond the writing itself. Could it be that the repetition of the 'c' sound in:

*Creeping quietly up the mountain
Into the demon cave. . .*

suggests a caution and silent movement which is not explicit in the actual meaning of the words. Is the silence reinforced by:

*No sound was made
No noise was spoken*

Could the writer be playing upon the expectations of the reader, who might have more properly expected the text to read:

*No noise was made
No scund was spoken*

Could it be that the writer intended this inversion of the vocabulary to draw the reader's attention to the

... Karen (u)

A Mother weeps

Creeping quietly up the mountain
 into the demon cave
 No sound was made
 No noise was spoken
 In the cave the mother cried
 for grendel her son was dead
 Weeping with sadness in her
 eyes

The arm was on the floor
 beside her.

blood and veins, flesh and skin.
 Not only crying with sadness
 and unhappiness
 crying with hatred and anger!



g3 Extended Use of Literary Language

contrasts between the silence and the noise images, which reinforce each other? At this point there is a stark contrast between the three short lines:

*Into the demon cave
No sound was made
No noise was spoken*

and

in the cave the mother cried

Here the repetition of the word 'cave' and the repetition of the 'c' sounds imply a link between 'the demon cave' and 'the mother crying'. Could the writer be inviting the reader to wonder why and how the son had been killed? Could the writer be suggesting that it was 'the demon'. In this one line alone, by using exophoric references, the writer has encouraged the reader to provide all of the contextual detail necessary to understand the poem. In other forms of writing the writer might have used devices such as pictures, diagrams, graphs and labels to provide this background information as concisely as possible. Could it be that the writer is deliberately not supplying the reader's information needs? Could it be that the writer is obliging the reader to speculate about the information required?

In this poem the writer never really explains why the mother was weeping for her dead son, but as we have seen, she seems to encourage the reader with the use of symbolically suggestive vocabulary to work this out for him/herself. We see this encouragement developed a stage further at the climactic end to the poem. The theme moves from the mother:

Weeping with sadness in her eyes

to

*Not only crying with sadness and unhappiness
Crying with hatred and anger!*

Could this be an open invitation to the reader to work out why the mother was crying with 'hatred and anger'? Since the writer does not supply any contextual information, this can only be an invitation to the reader to go back over the text and work out the context for him/herself from the symbolic clues in the poem. It is almost like riddle to tease the reader,

and for the reader to solve. So here again we see the writer manipulating the expectations of the reader in creative and innovative ways.

The final poem by Nicola 'Beowulf: Murderer! Beast!' seems to present a similar enigma. Again there is very little contextual detail, but this time the mystery revolves around 'the man she saw as the beast'. Two lines later could there be an implied connection between 'the man she saw as the beast' and 'Love burnt dead'? Could the writer be implying that the man who had committed murder was either a husband or a lover? This raises interesting moral issues, and the end of the poem seems to raise the question of whether killing someone might be both 'good' and 'bad', and also that love itself might also be at the same time 'a good thing' and 'a bad thing'. Could the writer have intended the questions at the end of the poem:

*Killed by good?
Was her love bad then?*

to simultaneously invoke the bewilderment of the weeping mother? Could this be an invitation to the reader to reflect on these matters? Here we have a poem which is economical, generates different layers of meaning, and leaves the reader with an enigma on which to ponder.

The fact that this writer leaves the reader something to ponder over reminds us that in a sense she has adopted a recognisable discourse structure. She has presented a situation and a problem. She leaves her reader to decide upon a solution and an evaluation. In this sense this poem is quite different from the others, which do not have much recognisable discourse structure. In the earlier poems, the poem was an end in itself and the writers have manipulated, or completely left out the discourse structure to create a sense of the poem being self contained, written for its own ends. This poem has an implied purpose, but the purpose is only implied in the way the discourse structure is used, and is not made explicit in any other way.

2.

What kind of writing situations might encourage writers to develop their knowledge of literary writing?

It would be a mistake to suggest that writers can be

Beowulf: Murderer/Beast!

In she came,
To see the murderer
Hate and sadness in her eyes.
There he stood the man she
saw as a beast.
Staring eye to eye.
Love burnt dead
Killed by good?
Was her love bad then?



gp. 3 Extended use of literary language

encouraged to write in literary manner, but they should be encouraged to think about the different effects that they might achieve on their reader. Writers may begin to think about their own literary writing if they have opportunities to:

1. Use the sound of language to invoke meaning.
2. Create sensual experiences: sights, sounds, smells, feelings.
3. Describe powerful feelings and emotions.
4. Experiment with the different ways in which words may be linked together.
5. Experiment with different communication roles following a role play: e.g. the narrator.
6. Experiment with different parts of the discourse structure e.g. presenting a situation only.
7. Experiment with chronological sequences e.g. creating a 'flashback'.

Opportunities of this kind will help writers to understand some of the creative possibilities of language.

3.

Summary.

From these samples of eleven year olds writing we have seen how:

** The reader's expectation that there will be contextual detail is manipulated for literary ends.*

** The expectation that the meaning of the interaction will be relevant, explicit and unambiguous is manipulated for literary ends.*

** The expectation that the writer will attend to the reader's information needs is deliberately manipulated to create original and creative effects.*

** The reader's expectation that the writing will be organised in anticipated ways is also manipulated for literary ends.*

** The role of the narrator deliberately contradicts the readers expectations about the roles of the reader and the writer in the communication.*

Chapter seven

The teacher's role.

Chapter Seven.

The role of the teacher.

The introduction to this book suggested that teachers have three major responsibilities to children who are becoming writers. These were:

** That teachers understand the different linguistic strategies which operate to assist the negotiation of meaning between the reader and the writer in different social situations.*

** That teachers can look at the writing of a child and assess the exact state of knowledge in a specific writing situation.*

** That teachers know which social situations will make different kinds of demands upon, and will extend the children's knowledge about the meaning-making process.*

We are now in a position to consider these responsibilities in detail.

1.

What do teachers need to know about language?

This book, and many others, have suggested that in order to be an effective writer, children must become literate. Literacy is a word that teachers use frequently, but what exactly does it mean? Our examination of a teacher conducting a literacy lesson suggested that:

** Literacy is a shared process of negotiating meaning which takes place in a specific social situation.*

and because writing is a literacy process, it was further suggested that:

** Writing is a negotiation of meaning between the writer and the reader within a specific social situation.*

and

** Writing and writers are concerned not only with expressing meaning, but also with facilitating the negotiation of meaning between the reader and the writer.*

The introduction of this book concluded that:

'For teachers writing as a literacy process, a shared meaning-making process in a specific social situation, has important implications. . . teachers do have a responsibility to teach children about language. . . It is important that teachers teach children how to negotiate meaning in writing. It is important that teachers teach children about the reader/ writer relationship.'

In order to fulfil these responsibilities it is important that teachers themselves understand the process of negotiating meaning in a writing situation.

It is important that teachers understand the expectations set up by the reader writer relationship.

The second chapter of this book explored two different writing situations, picking out some of the important characteristics of a 'writing situation'.

We saw that some important characteristics of the writing situation are:

- * The writer's role.*
- * The assumed status of the reader and the writer.*
- * The purpose of the writing.*
- * The discourse structure.*
- * The information needs of the reader.*
- * The content organisation, and the reader organisation.*

In succeeding chapters different aspects of the writing situation were examined in children's writing. Chapter two looked at the discourse structure. Chapter three examined chronological sequencing. Chapter four examined the ways in which the writer takes account of the reader's information needs. Chapter five looked at the non-chronological sequences with which a writer guides the reader through longer texts. Chapter seven turned its attention to literary writing. It illustrated the point that literary writing has characteristics which are quite different from the characteristics of other kinds of writing.

This is some of the language knowledge which teachers

Key Stage Two/7.

need to possess in order to encourage and extend their pupils.

2.

How can a teacher assess a child's state of knowledge about a particular writing situation?

In the past this assessment has always been a subjective one, and there always will remain a place for subjective assessment of originality and creativity in writing. However, with the arrival of the National Curriculum and Attainment Targets teachers need to be able to justify value judgements about the effectiveness of a pupil's writing. Children themselves need objective and formative evaluations in order to extend their knowledge of writing situations. But what form might a more objective appraisal of a child's writing take? In this book I have argued that it is possible to be objective about the effectiveness of children's writing in terms of the reader/writer relationship.

To give formative feedback to writers, teachers need to be asking :

About the content organisation:

1. Has the writer communicated the message adequately?

- a. Has the writer written in sentences?
- b. Is the grammar correct?
- c. Is the punctuation appropriate?
- d. Are the ideas well organised?

About the reader organisation:

2. How far has the writer thought about the effect of this writing upon the reader?

- a. Has the writer helped the reader by writing neatly?
- b. Has the writer taken account of the reader's information needs?

c. Has the writer adequately "set the scene" for the reader, portrayed characters and provided concise and relevant details?

d. Has the writer helped the reader by making clear the discourse structure?

e. Has the writer helped the reader with chronological and non-chronological sequences?

In practice it would be inappropriate to assess every piece of writing a child produced in this way. Firstly, a single piece of writing is unlikely to provide adequate information on which to base answers to all of the questions and secondly, it would be far too time consuming for teachers to carry out this kind of in-depth assessment on every piece of writing that a child produced. Therefore for assessment purposes it is more realistic to think terms of a *Writer Profile* which will give detailed information about the effectiveness of the writing over a longer period of time.

For a *Writer Profile* several samples of writing from each writer would be necessary. From this folio of writing there should be enough first hand evidence to make in depth judgements about the writer's progress. However, because it would take some time to collect a sufficiently wide variety of writing samples, writer profiles could only be produced at infrequent intervals of possibly once each term, or half way through the year and at the year end. Nevertheless it is important that in depth assessments are made from time to time in order to help young writers to develop their skills.

From an administrative point of view, in order not to make the *Writer Profile* too cumbersome or time consuming to produce, it would be useful to have a box ticking system which could be quickly filled in. But box ticking systems are not always helpful in telling the person who reads the assessment *how well*, or *how badly* the task was performed, so here there would need to be indicators of how well the writer had performed. In my own assessments I found the following categories useful:

Very Good.	//
Good.	/
Needs practice.	=
Needs help.	-

WRITER PROFILE

	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Can the writer produce sentences independently?	Some capital letters/full stops/question marks <input type="checkbox"/>	Mainly capital letters/full stops/question marks <input type="checkbox"/>	Accurate punctuation <input type="checkbox"/>	
How well are the ideas organised?	One or more linked ideas. Has a beginning. <input type="checkbox"/>	Has a beginning, middle and end. <input type="checkbox"/> Has detail beyond simple events. <input type="checkbox"/> Uses metalanguage. <input type="checkbox"/>	Shows evidence of discourse structure <input type="checkbox"/>	
Can the writer produce chronological and non-chronological sequences?	Has one or more event. <input type="checkbox"/> Has characters. <input type="checkbox"/> Uses only chronological sequences. <input type="checkbox"/>			

	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Is the writer aware of the reader's information needs?	Situation dependent references. <input data-bbox="733 566 777 610" type="checkbox"/>	Text dependent references. <input data-bbox="921 566 966 610" type="checkbox"/> Uses plans and diagrams. <input data-bbox="926 754 970 798" type="checkbox"/>	Engages the interest of the reader. <input data-bbox="1121 566 1166 610" type="checkbox"/>	Varies the vocabulary according to purpose and topic. <input data-bbox="1322 566 1366 610" type="checkbox"/> Attempts to engage the interest of the reader <input data-bbox="1322 754 1366 798" type="checkbox"/>
Is the writer aware of the need for reader organisation and content organisation?		Beginning to redraft and revise writing. <input data-bbox="921 1141 966 1185" type="checkbox"/>	Discuss, revise and redraft writing <input data-bbox="1121 1141 1166 1185" type="checkbox"/>	Ability to assemble ideas on paper or VDU, then <input data-bbox="1322 1141 1366 1185" type="checkbox"/>
Does the writer show any evidence of trying to achieve particular effects upon the reader?				Evidence of literary writing <input data-bbox="1322 1384 1366 1428" type="checkbox"/>
Areas of assessment which are good (/) or very good(//)				
Areas of assessment which need attention (-) or (=)				

These four categories were good indicators about how much more work or attention was needed in specific areas.

To make the recording process more efficient and less laborious for teachers it is helpful to use a symbol to represent each category (shown above). These symbols were particularly chosen because they are available on a computer keyboard and could be typed into a word processor or desktop publishing programme very easily.

From an administrative point of view it is very convenient to record writer profiles on a computer. Firstly, there is also no reason why the children themselves cannot record their writing achievements on to a computer. Multiple copies of writer profiles means that the children, teacher and parents can all have a copy of the assessment.

Secondly, information about a whole class or whole school is a very useful database for asking crucial questions about the general learning trends in year groups and the progressive development of writers throughout the school. At the level of policy making it is an invaluable source of information for evaluating the effectiveness of the language policy in the school. Although the assessment process may require more time than it may have done in the past, the end result will be worthwhile. It provides valuable information that can be used in many different ways. For example whole class information recorded on the computer is important because:

- a. it provides direct and specific feedback to the learner.
- b. it provides a more objective framework for teachers to assess the quality of pupils' writing.
- c. it provides information in the form of a database for answering crucial questions, such as identifying the numbers of writers who need more help.
- d. it is an instrument for helping to pinpoint future learning targets.
- e. it provides information about the general learning trends in a class or whole school.
- f. it provides information for assessing the effectiveness of school language policies.

g. It provides information for the future development of language work throughout the school.

Seen from this point of view, although writer profiles may take time to record, the information they provide is invaluable, and essential to the development of individuals and for the professional decision-making process.

3.

How can the teacher help the writer?

There are three important ways in which teachers can help children to become more effective writers. Firstly, they must be able to assess the child's knowledge of a particular writing situation. Secondly, they must be able to give accurate and detailed feedback to the child. Finally, they must know what kind of writing situations will help the child to extend his/her writing knowledge in the future. But how might this work?

a. Assessing the child's knowledge of a writing situation:

Assessing the state of knowledge of the writer involves picking out the strengths which need extending, and the weaknesses which may need direct teaching. I always found it helpful to carry out *Writer Profiles* with the writer sitting next to me. In the first instance, in order to make accurate assessments it is helpful to have the writer's point of view. Writers will tell the teacher things which teachers cannot be expected to know or remember. For example they can tell the teacher if they found a piece of work particularly uninteresting, or if that was the day they were in agony with toothache.

Secondly, it is useful from the teachers point of view to discuss the assessments being made with the writer. It gives the writer specific oral feedback about how well s/he is doing, and which areas of his work need to be developed. This activity in itself helps to develop a child's awareness of the reader/writer. But how does it work in practice?

5th May Mr. Martin
 I am a tramp. I have a paper
 to keep me warm. ~~so I can~~ ^{now} sleep
 on pavement. I have a padlock key
 that I once found on the road. Last
 week I went to Exmoor to see
 my mother. Luckily she gave me some
 more money. Now I have that train
 ticket in my pocket to keep, to
 remind me of my mother. I also ~~have~~
 a picture of Big Ben that my
 brother took when he came
 to London on holiday. He sent it
 to me in the post with
 a letter. Now I only have half of
 letter, because the other half I
 use as a pillow. All I have to eat
 is a piece of stale bread
 I find in the bins. I also
 have a peg that I found in
 a bin and I have a piece
 of string that I once
 thought might come in useful.
 I also have an old glove
 I got out of a bin to keep
 my hands warm in winter.
 (good)

Vicki's Writing
 (Fig. 10)

If we were to assess Vicki's writing in this way there is a great deal both the teacher and the child can learn from this kind of assessment. In Vicki's writing here are some good ideas, but there is very little evidence of reader awareness. Her content organisation needs attention. It is not that she lacks ideas, they are simply disorganised and disjointed.

There is even less evidence of reader organisation. Her writing is full of exophoric references, and she seems unaware that her reader may need more information to understand what she has written. There is little indication of a discourse structure, perhaps only a situation, but this is very muddled. There is no evidence of chronological or non-chronological sequencing. There is only evidence of drafting and re-thinking in isolated places in the writing.

In discussion with the child, the teacher will explain how well she thinks Vicki has performed in each of the categories, recording each assessment with the appropriate symbol in the box provided. When this is done it remains only for the teacher to summarise the good points that received / or // symbols, and in the bottom box to summarise all or some of the points needing further attention, which received - or = symbols.

b. Giving accurate and detailed feedback:

From this example a teacher could see clearly that Vicki is centrally placed at Key stage two, and even at this level there are some areas where Vicki needs further help and practice. The teacher can choose to comment on those areas where Vicki needs to focus her attention and ignore those that are, as yet, beyond her grasp. Of her strengths this teacher chose to write:

Vicki writes well in sentences, and uses punctuation appropriately. Her writing has a definite beginning and a character. Vicki needs to think about the kind of information that her reader needs, but there are some good signs that she is beginning to think about this.

Of her weaknesses the teacher wrote:

Vicki needs more practice in linking her ideas together more carefully. She needs to give her story a definite ending, and include more details of the events and places in which the story is set. She needs help

WRITER PROFILE

	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Can the writer produce sentences independently?	Some capital letters/full stops/question marks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mainly capital letters/full stops/question marks <input type="checkbox"/>	Accurate punctuation <input type="checkbox"/>	
How well are the ideas organised?	One or more linked ideas. Has a beginning. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Has a beginning, middle and end. <input type="checkbox"/> Has detail beyond simple events. <input type="checkbox"/>	Shows evidence of discourse structure <input type="checkbox"/>	
Can the writer produce chronological and non-chronological sequences?	Has one or more event. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has characters. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uses only chronological sequences. <input type="checkbox"/>			

	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Is the writer aware of the reader's information needs?	Situation dependent references. /	Text dependent references. Uses plans and diagrams. =	Engages the interest of the reader. =	Varies the vocabulary according to purpose and topic. Attempts to engage the interest of the reader =
Is the writer aware of the need for reader organisation and content organisation?		Beginning to redraft and revise writing. -	Discuss, revise and redraft writing =	Ability to assemble ideas on paper or VDU, then to redraft and revise. =
Does the writer show any evidence of trying to achieve particular effects upon the reader?				Evidence of literary writing =

Areas of assessment which are good (/) or very good(//)

Vicki writes well in sentences, and uses punctuation appropriately. Her writing has a definite beginning and has a character. Her details are situation dependent, but there are good signs that she is aware of text dependent writing.

Areas of assessment which need attention (-) or (=)

Vicki needs practice in linking her ideas together more carefully. She needs to give her story a definite ending, and include details about events and places in which her story is set. She needs help in selecting the most appropriate details for her reader.

to understand the kind of details which her readers need.

The quality of feedback produced by the two summary boxes is far superior to the kind of comments that most teachers are able to make upon children's writing. The feedback is both specific and constructive. It praises the writer for those parts of the writing which have been carried out successfully, and also points out in a constructive way those aspects of the writing which need further attention.

For writers who do not find writing easy, the *Writer Profile* helps pinpoint the aspects of writing which the writer can do well, and this can be used as a source of praise and encouragement. Similarly the *Writer Profile* will also help the teacher and the learner focus on areas which need to be attention. Thus setting a small target for a struggling writer to achieve. As long as targets are set within the ability of the writer they will act as an incentive to further achievement, thus enabling even struggling writers to experience success. In this way, the process of assessing writing becomes as part of the teaching and learning process, rather than laborious and cumbersome ritual which takes place separately from the learning.

c. How can the teacher help Vicki to extend her knowledge of writing?

One of the most important weaknesses to emerge on Vicki's writer profile was her lack of content organisation. Therefore, she can be helped before writing begins by:

Some guidance during the planning stages of the writing would be beneficial here. In order to help Vicki understand the information needs of the reader, blindfold games and role play might give her some insight into the problems faced by readers who are not present at the time of writing. They would help her to learn which kinds of details are helpful to readers and which are not. Some reader research might also sharpen her awareness of the differences between readers.

After the writing is in its first draft she could be further helped by:

Conferencing with the teacher or peers who have read

her writing, so that she learns about the effect that it has had upon the reader. She can use a computer to draft and redraft her work in the light of feedback from other readers. She can be led to evaluate her own writing by being encouraged to ask herself : *How far will it help my reader?*

4.

Conclusions.

At the present time there is a great deal of uncertainty amongst teachers about the effects of continually assessing the work of children. Many teachers see the National Curriculum Attainment Targets as a clear guide to classroom practice, but others find them restricting. Assessment is seen as yet another irritating, paper shuffling, administrative task.

My own view is of a much more optimistic future. The best model for encouraging children to write must closely resemble the process by which they learn to speak and listen, that is, a process of detailed and constructive feedback in a meaningful social situation. Here in writing terms is that process. It is my belief that the accurate assessment of children's writing is probably the most important part of the teaching and learning process. In my own experience I have found that it is the key to developing children's knowledge about writing.

These examples of writing offer teachers a window into what it means in practical terms to be literate. As Newman (1985) points out, literacy is complex process:

"As more pieces of the puzzle have fallen into place we have come to appreciate the extent to which learners themselves create meaning out of their experiences with language, both oral and written. We've learned to recognize the importance of the social nature of learning, the role which language plays in creating the learning environment, and the extent to which language is itself determined by the social situation . . . We've learned that readers need to supply knowledge about how language works, knowledge about the world, knowledge about what strategies to try in order to create meaning as they read." (Page 7)

Perhaps these examples of writing will take us a little further on that journey of understanding.

Appendix 1

***Suggested Activities for Teachers and
Students***

20

Suggested activities for teachers and students.

If you are planning to lead a staff discussion about the nature of writing, or simply wish to explore the relationship of the reader and the writer for yourself, the following activities may be helpful:

Chapter One: The role of the writer.

You may like to look for your own examples of the status of the participants being made manifest in the way in which people address each other, and in the formality and informality of their language. Try observing next time you are in the staffroom:

How do colleagues of equal status address each other? Can you observe any differences in the ways in which the children address their teachers? What are the differences in the ways in which the children address their teachers, the head, and the lunchtime helper? Do children understand the differences in status between the adults who care for them during the day?

You may like to look for examples of how the purpose of an interaction is expressed. Try observing next time you are in the staffroom:

What do you talk about with your colleagues?
What is the purpose of this talk?

Try observing when you are in assembly. What is the purpose of this interaction? How is it expressed?

Try observing the children when they are in the playground. What do they talk about? What is the purpose of their talk?
How far do children make clear the purpose of their interactions?

Chapter Two: The discourse structure

You may like to look for your own examples of discourse structure in an interaction. Next time you send a letter out to parents, look at it carefully. Which parts of the structure does it supply? What kinds of response (if any) is expected from the parents?

Next time you receive an internal memo, look at it carefully. Which parts of the interaction have been supplied? Which parts (if any) are you expected to supply?

Chapters Three and Five: Chronological and non-chronological sequences.

You may like to look for your own examples of how relevant meanings are tied together in interactions. Next time you have a staff meeting, or attend an external meeting, and a colleague makes a long contribution, or a speech, watch out for the ways in which the meanings are strung together. Can you pick out any marker such as 'and', 'so', 'but' and 'then' which tell the listener how the longer stretches of the speech are linked?

Try listening to an adult or a child reading a story aloud. Can you pick out the markers? Does the reader read them in any special way?

Teachers use their own special markers at the beginning of a classroom interaction. Try observing your own, or a colleague's language with the children. Can you work out what some of these special markers are?

You may like to look at the educational magazines in the staffroom. Look at one which tells you how to carry out a project or a specific activity. What kinds of sequences can you find? How far does the writer attempt to help the reader?

Try looking at any of the latest reports about schools in the newspaper. What kinds of sequences can you find here?

Chapter Four: Using references.

Try looking at the staffroom notice board. First look at the internal memos. How would you describe them, are they full of endophoric or exophoric references? Do they contain a great deal of explicit detail? Are they very tightly structured?

Now look at the external notices, for example, notices about in-service courses. How would you describe them?

Look at the notices in your own classroom, or notices in the school generally, for example, the fire instructions. How would you describe them?

Try observing next time you are in the classroom: How far do you have to 'spell out' new ideas to the children? On which occasions can you afford to take 'short cuts' because the children already know what you are going to say?

Try observing the children's conversations whilst they are working. Do they use more exophoric or more endophoric references?

Try observing the teachers' writing on the wall displays about the school. Do teachers use more exophoric or more endophoric references? Now look at the children's writing in the wall displays. Do the children use more exophoric or more endophoric references? You may like to look for examples of strategies for presenting details in writing. Try looking at the information books in the classroom or school library. How do writers prioritise first, second and third order details? What strategies have the writers of these books used for presenting details as economically as possible?

Try looking at the computer manual for your classroom computer. How does the writer of this manual present details which may be difficult for a reader to understand? Can you suggest ways in which the manual can be improved?

Try looking at your school prospectus? Have the details been presented in the most helpful way for parents? Can you suggest any improvements?

Chapter Six: Literary writing.

Try looking at the school equipment catalogues, or advertisements in the

educational columns of newspapers. What kind of effect are they trying to achieve on the reader? Do they try to manipulate the expectations of the reader? Do they have any literary characteristics? How would you describe them?

You may like to look for your own examples of literary writing.

Next time you are choosing a story or a poem to read to the children, look at it carefully. In what ways could it be described as literary language?

How has the writer manipulated the expectations of the reader/listener?

Next time you are listening to a bible reading in assembly, ask yourself: 'In what ways is this literary language?' 'How does it manipulate the expectations of the reader/listener?'

Suggested Reading:

Books about Language and Literacy in the Primary School:

1. Dougill, P and Knott, R. "The Primary Language Book" Open University Press, Milton Keynes 1988.
2. Meek, M and Mills, C. (Eds.) "Language and Literacy in the Primary School" Falmer Press, London 1988.
3. Mills, C and Timson, L. "Looking at Language in the Primary School" The National Association for the Teaching of English, Exeter 1988.
4. Newman, J. "Whole Language Theory in Use" Heinemann 1985.
5. Roberts, G. "Teaching Children to Read and Write" Blackwell, Oxford 1989.

Special areas of interest:

If you are interested in concepts of Literacy an easy to read critique can be found in:

1. Hall, N. "The Emergence of Literacy" UKRA Teaching of Reading Monographs. Hodder and Staughton in association with the United Kingdom Reading Association. 1986.
2. McLaren, P. "Culture or Canon? Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Literacy" Harvard Educational Review Vol.58, No.2 May 1988. pp 213-234

A more demanding but very worthwhile read can be found in:

3. Tuman, Myron, C "A Preface to Literacy: An Enquiry into Pedagogy, Practice and Progress." University of Alabama Press. Alabama. 1987
4. Friere, P and Macedo, D "Literacy: Reading the Word and the World" Bergin and Garvey, South Hadley MA, 1987.

Writing at key stage two: Selected Reading.

If you are interested in the relationship between social knowledge, cultural knowledge and linguistic knowledge, an easy but informing read is:

5. Ferdman, B. "Literacy and Cultural identity" Harvard Educational Review Vol.60 No.2 May 1990.

A more demanding read is:

6.Gumperz,J. "Language and Social Identity" Cambridge University Press, London 1982.

7. Cook-Gumperz,J."The Social Construction of Literacy" Cambridge University Press,Cambridge 1986.

If you are interested in the roles of the participants in an interaction an easy but informing read is:

8.Sola,M and Bennett, A.T "The Struggle for Voice: Narrative Literacy and Consciousness in an East Harlem School, Journal of Education 167 pp88-110 1985

9.Brown R.W. and Ford,M, "Address in American English" in Hymes, D, (Ed.) "Language in Culture and Society" Harper International, New York, 1964.

10.Joos, M, "The Five Clocks", Mouton, The Hague 1962.

11.Wilkinson,A, "The Foundations of Language", Oxford University Press 1971.

If you are interested in the purposes of an interaction expressed through speech acts, a good introduction can be found in:

12.Coulthard, M. "Introduction to Discourse Analysis",Longman. London 1977.

A more demanding read can be found in:

13.Austin, J. "How to do things with Words" Oxford Clarendon Press 1962.

14.Searle,J.R. "Speech Acts: An Essay in the

Writing at key stage two:Selected Reading.

Philosophy of Language," Cambridge University Press. 1969.

If you are interested in discourse structure a good introductory read is:

15. Coulthard, M. "Introduction to Discourse Analysis", Longman. London 1977.

16. Brazil, D, Coulthard, M. and Johns, C. "Discourse Intonation and Language Teaching." Longman. London 1980.

For a more advanced read try:

17. Sacks, H Schegloff, E.A. and Jefferson, G "Simplest Systematics for the Organisation of Turn Taking in Conversation", Language 50/4, pp696-735, 1974.

18. Hoey, M, "Signalling in Discourse" Discourse Analysis Monographs, English Language Research, Birmingham University 1979.

If you are interested in institutional writing a good read can be found in:

19. Davies, A. and Widdowson, H.G. "Reading and Writing" in "Techniques in Applied Linguistics" Vol. 3 (Eds. Allen, J.P.B. and Pit Corder, S.) Oxford University Press. 1974.

If you are interested in the reference systems of language a good read can be found in:

20. Halliday, M.A.K. and Hasan, R. "Cohesion in English." Longman. London. 1976.

21. Stubbs, M. "Language and Literacy: The Sociolinguistics of Reading and Writing" Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. London 1980.

For a very demanding read try:

Writing at key stage two: Selected Reading.

22.Frow,J. "Discourse and Power", Economy and Society Vol. 14 No.2 May 1985 pp193-214.

23.Bennett,A.T. "Discourses of Power,The Dialectics of Understanding, the Power of Literacy" Journal of Education 165,pp53-74 1983.

If you are interested in teachers encouraging young writers try:

24.Perl,S and Wilson, N."Through Teachers Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work" Heinemann, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 1986

25. Graves,D "Writing: Teachers and Children at Work" Heinemann, London.1983

If you are interested in markers in longer stretches of language try:

26.Halliday,M.A.K. and Hasan, R."Cohesion in English."Longman. London. 1976.

27.Coulthard,M. and Brazil,D."Exchange Structure." Discourse Analysis Monograph No.5 . English Language Research, Birmingham 1979.

If you are interested in literary language a good introduction and overview can be found in:

28.Tamblin, J. "What is Literary Language?" Open University Press, Milton Keynes 1988.

29.Page,N. "The Language of Literature", Macmillan 1984

For a more demanding read try:

30. Bakhtin,M, "The Dialogic Imagination", University of Texas Press 1981.

Writing at key stage two:Selected Reading.

2F. Warham, S.M. (1993c)

Reflections on Hegemony: Towards a Model of
Teacher Competence,

Educational Studies 19, 2, pp205-217

Reflections on Hegemony: towards a model of teacher competence

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SUMMARY *This article considers the gap between teaching theory and teaching practice in the context of recent calls for reform in teacher education. It argues that leaping into radical reforms without any apparent understanding of present difficulties is a mistake. It considers current models of teaching, highlighting some of their strengths and weaknesses, and asks what kind of model of teaching competency might narrow the gap between theory and practice. The second section concludes that a competency model which situates teaching in its social context, which takes account of the political nature of teaching and its professional power structures might more appropriately describe the activities of teachers. The third section considers a model of hegemony which provides insights into teaching which do not exist in present models.*

In teaching circles it is almost a platitude to state that teaching is a two-way process which involves both the teacher and the taught. What is really interesting when one looks at the literature on the nature of teaching is that it is concerned with models of the teacher and rarely makes reference to the pupils, or to what the teacher and pupils do together in the classroom. Here there is a real gap between theory and practice, a gap between what teachers believe that they do in the classroom and the way that teaching is described in theory.

The notion of a gap between theory and practice was noted by Carr (1980) and Kyriacou (1986) and raised issues of teacher competence (Shulman, 1987; Silver, 1988; Ashworth & Saxton, 1990), leading to calls for reform in teacher education (Furlong *et al.*, 1988; Ball, 1990; Tomic, 1991; Department of Education and Science [DES] 1992; McNamara, 1992). Recent political debate has focused on a change in emphasis from educating teachers in institutions of higher education to training teachers in schools. This proposal has met with disapproval both from schools and students (Hannan & Newby, 1992; Crequer, 1993), both claiming that school-based training would place schools and teachers under far too much pressure and in the end may not adequately meet the professional needs of new recruits to the profession.

This dissatisfaction must cause us to think again about the proposed reforms. It would be a mistake to think that change for the sake of change would automatically solve the problem. Before endorsing any kind of change it is

important to ask: what exactly is the problem? Why is it that current teaching models are unable to describe what teachers do in their classrooms?

Existing Teaching Models

Zeichner (1990) claims that in spite of the variety of teacher models one might consider, most models conform to two basic ideologies, and consequently two basic models of a teacher. He claims that teaching can be considered as an applied science requiring the training of skills, or teaching might be considered as a reflective practice requiring the education of the whole teacher.

The concept of teaching as an applied science is based on the belief that educational research conducted in the traditional sense by academics in universities should provide the basis for teacher education and for practice in schools. Berliner (1984) believes that there is now such a strong scientific foundation for the study of teaching that students training to be teachers should have systematic training in knowledge skills and strategies that have been identified by research. Berliner (1985) proposed the creation of laboratories in which student teachers could experiment with professional behaviour to be learnt.

Feiman-Nemser (1990) points out that there are several views of the applied science approach to teaching. The narrow view sees the acquisition of knowledge as a training of students to develop patterns of thought and behaviour that research has found to be appropriate. The general principle of those who subscribe to this view, Turney *et al.* (1982), McIntyre (1983), Stones (1984), Taggart (1988), Tobin (1988) and Guyton & McIntyre (1990), is that only knowledge derived specifically from research is important for teacher competence.

Zeichner (1990) decries this approach, arguing for a more open and eclectic understanding of teaching and learning. However, this comment is also important because it raises a crucial issue about the knowledge base for teaching. This comment would seem to indicate that there is discussion and uncertainty about the body of knowledge upon which professional competence is based. This uncertainty about the knowledge base which underpins the activities of teachers is also a major discrepancy in the alternative model of teacher competence, that of the reflective teacher.

Pollard & Tann (1987) suggest that the most appropriate model of professional competence for teachers may be described as 'reflective teaching'. The model of the reflective teacher attempts to overcome the difficulty of an appropriate knowledge base for teachers by advocating a hermeneutic approach, claiming that the only knowledge relevant to teachers is that which is generated from classroom practice. Pollard & Tann (1987) describe one of several models of the reflective teacher in this way:

According to Dewey, routine action is guided by factors such as tradition, habit and authority and by institutional definitions and expectations. By implication it is relatively static and is thus unrespon-

sive to changing priorities and circumstances. Reflective action, on the other hand, involves a willingness to engage in constant self-appraisal and development. Among other things, it implies flexibility, rigorous analysis and social awareness. (p. 4)

According to the Pollard & Tann model, reflective teaching is based on four main tenets:

1. Reflective teaching implies an active concern with aims and consequences, as well as with means and technical efficiency.
2. Reflective teaching combines enquiry and implementation skills with attitudes of open-mindedness, responsibility and whole-heartedness.
3. Reflective teaching is applied in a cyclical or spiralling process in which teachers continually monitor, evaluate and revise their own practice.
4. Reflective teaching is based on teacher judgement, informed partly by self-reflection and partly by insights from educational disciplines.

A reflective teacher, therefore, is one who constantly questions his or her own aims and actions, monitors practice and outcomes, and considers the short-term and long-term effects upon each child. (p. 3)

In this model we see an enormous leap forward in professional thinking. Teaching has now become an activity which draws on a wide variety of informing sources, teaching is a dynamic process which takes account of shifting priorities, but more importantly, the focus has shifted to include the fact that teaching has an effect upon children which must also be taken into account. However, in many respects it does not go far enough. However, in many respects it does not go far enough. Children are seen as passive receptors who are influenced by what their teacher does to them, whereas in reality, most teachers would be the first to protest that children in the classroom are far from passive.

Furthermore, in practice this model of teacher competence has been heavily criticised. Zeichner criticised the model of the reflective teacher for its encouragement of narrow introspection, claiming that it served to encourage "a kind of navel gazing" (1990, p. 116). This approach to teacher competence is an advance on the scientific teacher approach in that it attempts to define a knowledge base, since the knowledge is generated from classroom practice. Nevertheless, Carr & Kemmis (1986) and Zeichner (1990) criticise the knowledge base because it is too narrow and introspective. However, this model of reflective teaching does have clear aims, and a specialised knowledge base from which the aims are drawn, and therefore should not be easily dismissed. For these reasons Pollard (1985) defends this interpretation of the reflective teacher.

Attempts to produce a model of the reflective teacher which is less hermeneutic have led to variations in the term 'reflective teacher'. Schon (1987) argues that whilst many situations in the classroom can be explained with

reference to theories derived from academic research, there are many situations which cannot be explained as easily and models of the reflective teacher should take this into account.

Schon's view of the reflective teacher is one in which the teacher reflects-on-action. It is a form of experimentation and research which is denied in the applied science view of the teacher, yet to some extent, it avoids the self-interpretive difficulties of the Pollard & Tann model. Schon's interpretation is similar to versions of the 'critical teacher' model advocated by Stenhouse (1975), Boud *et al.* (1985) Carr & Kemmis (1986) and Kemmis & Taggart (1988). The concept of the 'critical teacher' evolved from the work of Jurgen Habermas (1971), whose main concern was that the theory derived from research rarely matched exactly what happened in practice.

Habermas proposed three different kinds of interest-constitutive research as a unified whole. He called his theory a theory of "knowledge constitutive interests", because it rejected any idea that knowledge is a purely intellectual act. Habermas claimed that any knowledge is constituted on the basis of interests which grow out of human needs, and human needs are defined by historical and social conditions. Habermas (1972) claimed that self-reflection was important as a liberating agent in the lives of men. He argued that freedom from cultural constraints can only be brought about by the development of "critical consciousness" through self-reflection, but Habermas's self-reflection differed from that of Pollard & Tann.

In order to overcome the criticism of introspective reflection Habermas claimed that reflection should be undertaken in groups, in order to widen the social context of the thinking, in order to arrive at the 'truth' of the situation. Habermas (1979) argued that the 'truth' of a situation could only be arrived at through spoken discourse in the form of speech acts. Consequently he proposed the "ideal speech act" which would allow speakers to "... *conceive the ideas of truth, freedom and justice ...*" (p. 271). Habermas claimed that in the ideal speech act individuals could free themselves from the cultural constraints which bound their thinking. Nevertheless, in his critique of Habermas, McCarthy (1984) questions the dependency on the ideal speech act to bring freedom from cultural constraint.

Based on these concepts the notion of 'becoming critical' or developing 'critical consciousness' was advocated by Carr & Kemmis (1986), who suggested that freedom from cultural constraint or 'habitual thinking' could be brought about through action research. Ashcroft & Griffiths (1990) proposed a model of reflection based on the idea of a teacher or student being a critical problem-solver, which aims at:

The development of classroom skills, e.g. voice control, lettering, questioning, are necessary but not the only requirements for becoming a reflective teacher. It is essential to develop other skills, including: in particular, the ability to work as a team; to communicate and exchange ideas; to observe using a variety of methods; to analyse and evaluate

data collected; to engage in self-assessment; and to develop the ability to criticise existing states of affairs from a moral-social-political point of view. (p. 36)

These views had been expressed earlier by Brook (1981) who claimed that Carr's analysis of the problem of the gap between theory and practice was incorrect. His own interpretation differed in that he claimed that some theories were of benefit to teachers and should be taught in education courses. Brook goes on to suggest that the reasons why practitioners find that theory is so irrelevant to practice are because: it is badly taught; it is poorly chosen; it is not sufficiently related to practical experience; the implications are not fully worked out in practice; and some worthwhile theory is difficult to understand.

In addition, subsequent attempts to educate new recruits to teaching in the critically conscious model of reflective teaching have highlighted further difficulties in practice. Ashcroft & Griffiths (1990) describe an attempt to train students to become critically conscious, claiming that there are some drawbacks:

However, putting the model into action modifies the cycle ... Becoming reflective demonstrates immediately that the classic spiral action of research needs to be re-thought ... The spiral method assumes that one part of the spiral is complete before the next one begins ... More usually, several levels of evaluation and several kinds of activities are happening at once ... so there will be overlaps. These overlaps lead to interaction between different points of the cycle. (p. 48)

This raises the question that perhaps the operation of the teacher in the classroom is neither cyclical nor a spiral. In practice the course experienced difficulties in developing an 'ideal speech situation'. There were difficulties in achieving equal status of members of the group in an institutional context, so that there could be an open and frank discussion. But by far the greatest problem was simply holding a diverse group of students, teachers and tutors together for sufficiently long periods for critical group reflection to take place.

One cannot help thinking that conceived in this way, the difficulties were surely predictable. Yet, this is a particularly valuable comment, because whilst Ashcroft & Griffiths seem very much to support the idea of an 'ideal speech act' they found that institutional power rendered the situation unworkable. Interestingly, this has not created problems for academics working in other fields. For example, Searle (1969) and Coulthard (1977) working on speech acts in the field of linguistics did not encounter difficulties with institutional power issues. This raises important questions for teacher competency. Could the difficulty experienced by Ashcroft & Griffiths reside not so much in institutional power, but in the perception of power itself? Could this difficulty be overcome by taking a different view of the concept of power?

Ashcroft & Griffiths raise further questions about the social context. They particularly draw attention to "the increasingly tight central government control placed on institutions of teacher education in Britain" and conclude that

"questions of access, accountability and control ... remain political in the widest sense of the word" (p. 50). This is a very important argument in the advancement of thinking on teacher competency. Ashcroft & Griffiths here highlight the point that no matter how hard teachers or researchers try to escape from the fact, the very nature of teaching is political. It is political both within the classroom and influenced by political factors outside the classroom. Any theory which attempts to describe teacher behaviour cannot fail to take this into account.

To conclude, an overview of the different models of teaching put forward in the last decade might suggest that teaching and teachers are in a state of disarray. Current models of teaching seem to have deficiencies to which there are no obvious solutions, and yet, within the models themselves there is a great deal of positive and valuable thinking. None of these models on their own can describe for us exactly what it is that teachers do, yet they cannot be dismissed out of hand. There is a great deal to be learnt from them.

What Can We Learn from these Models of Teaching?

From this discussion of the professional ideologies underlying notions of teacher competence several points emerge. Firstly there is a difficulty over what constitutes the knowledge base for teacher competence. The positivist view of the scientific teacher suggests that only research generated from academic sources is relevant to teacher competence. The hermeneutic view suggests that only knowledge generated within the classroom is relevant to teacher competence.

The middle view of the critically reflective teacher attempts to overcome these difficulties by accepting that knowledge generated from both inside and outside the classroom is important for teacher competence. However, this model of teaching founders on its adherence to the 'ideal speech situation' proposed by Habermas, which is difficult, if not impossible to achieve in practice. Thus the critically reflective teacher model, whilst attempting to overcome the problems associated with the knowledge base for competence, is theoretically weak and seems to have no practically effective means of achieving its theoretical aims.

Furthermore, advocates of the critical teacher model seem to have overlooked the fact that in order to be 'critical' one needs a set of standards or values against which critical judgements can be made. Perhaps the main failure of the critical teacher model seems to be that it lacks clarity about what and why teachers need to be critically conscious. It has not addressed the more deeply embedded issue of 'critical to what end?'

However, perhaps the most important issue raised by Ashcroft & Griffiths (1990) is the political nature of teaching, which is totally absent from any of these models of teacher competence. They do not take account of the fact that teachers have a dual role as a *professional* and as a *worker for the state* (Hoyle, 1983). Whilst there has always been an emphasis on the development of professional skills and knowledge, the power function of teachers has received little attention.

Current models of teaching seem to encourage the development of teachers as technicians. What the teaching profession seems to lack and urgently needs to develop is a model which recognises the primary professional functions of teachers both within the classroom and in the wider social context. This point was made by Giroux & McLaren (1987) who argue that teaching and teacher training institutions need to take account of the social context in which teachers practise their professional activities.

This is important because it highlights the main issues in the question of teacher competency. It jolts us into asking: what kind of competence model might be most suitable for teachers? For example, would it be possible to develop a model of teacher competence which took account of some of the factors we have already encountered? Could such a model take account of knowledge and influences which were generated both from within and outside the classroom? Could it take account of the political nature of teaching? Could a modified version of the Habermas '*ideal speech act*' have important implications for teachers? Would a different power perspective from the notion of institutional power offer fewer difficulties and greater insights. What might that perspective entail? Would it be possible for a teacher competency model to take into account the intuitive knowledge of all teachers that teaching and learning is a two-way process, which has as much to do with what the pupil does as with the effects of teacher actions?

What Kind of Competence Model Might Be Suitable for Teachers?

Possible solutions to these questions have been suggested by many researchers. Popkewitz (1987) Giroux & McLaren (1987) and Gitlin & Smyth (1989) have all written about models of teacher competency which take account of professional power structures. However, as early as 1979 researchers such as Apple (1979, 1982), Apple & Weis (1985), and Bourdieu (1986) were stressing the importance of the *social process* in the struggle for *cultural hegemony*.

Hegemony is defined in the Oxford English dictionary as "*Leadership of state especially of confederacy*". Williams (1976) describes it in much greater detail.

Hegemony pre-supposes the existence of something which is truly total ... which is lived in depth, which saturates the society to such an extent, and which, ... even constitutes the limit of commonsense for most people under its sway ... This notion of hegemony as deeply saturating the consciousness of a society seems to be fundamental ... (p. 205).

Williams goes on to explain some of the attributes of hegemony:

(It) emphasizes domination ... [Hegemony] is a whole body of practices and expectations; our assignments of energy, our ordinary understanding of man and his world. It is a set of meanings and values which as they are experienced as practices appear reciprocally

confirming. It constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society ... But this is not a static system. On the contrary we can only understand an effective and dominant culture if we understand the real social process on which it depends: I mean the process of incorporation. The modes of incorporation are of great significance ... (p. 205)

Apple (1979) describes hegemony in much the same way.

... Hegemony acts to saturate our very consciousness, so that the educational, economic and social world we see and interact with, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it becomes the world ... the only world. Hence, hegemony refers not to the congeries of meanings that reside at an abstract level ... it refers to an organised assemblage of meanings and practices, the central, effective and dominant system of meanings, values and actions which are lived. (p. 5)

At once we can begin to see that a model of teacher competence based on hegemony might take account not only of what happens in the classroom, but also how those events are linked to influences outside the classroom. It seems that it is possible to have a model of teacher competency which takes into account the social context in which teachers perform their professional activities, a model which takes into account the dual roles of the *worker* and the *professional*.

On the other hand, Williams (1976) suggests that hegemony "*emphasises domination*" and many teachers might find it distasteful to conceive of their work as that of dominating or indoctrinating their pupils, and might rightly claim that this would be far too simplistic an explanation of the sophisticated interactions which take place in the classroom. However, Frow (1985) claims that dominance in a hegemony is rather different from dominance in the Marxist sense of a powerful group dominating a less powerful group. Frow insists that in reality the power in a hegemony is far more complex:

This means that power isn't simply on one 'side', and hence the 'sides' in any situation may be mobile and tactically constituted; they are not necessarily pre-given ... and can't necessarily be specified in advance, since ideology is both constituted by and is involved in the constitution of social contradictions. But it also means that power is never monolithic, stable or uniform in its effects. Every use of discourse is at once a judgement about its relation to dominant forms of power and either an assent or resistance to this relation. (p. 204)

Frow describes a very different kind of power from the Marxist use of the term, or even the perception of institutional power which created difficulties for Ashcroft & Griffiths (1990). According to Frow, the kind of power existing in a hegemony is not a power that resides in a single group. Interestingly he claims that power is communicated in discourse i.e. the language we use. He further claims that it is not stable and it consists of actions of assent or resistance.

These claims are very important for a model of teacher competency. They tell us that power operates in the language that teachers use and if we examine the language of teachers carefully we shall see the operation of power in the classroom. They tell us that the key to a hegemony in the classroom rests in the interaction between the teacher and the pupils, that the operation of power is contained in the teacher–pupil interaction, the speech acts between the teacher and the pupils. But what is this power?

Cousins & Hussain (1984) in their critique of Foucault suggest that power is created in terms of relationships between individuals. Foucault (1982) describes such interpersonal power relationships as *bottom to top* in the context of the individual in society. Power, he claims, begins with the individual:

To sum up, the main objective of these struggles is to attack not so much ... an institution of power, a group or élite, or class but rather a technique, a form of power.

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. (p. 781)

Fine (1979), Minson (1980) and Wickham (1983) criticise the meanings that Foucault attaches to individual identity, but support the view that power is derived from the relationship between one individual and another. Interestingly, we can see from this comment that Foucault is not writing about hierarchical or institutional power structures. The power that Foucault writes about is power as a '*technique*'. Naturally this raises further questions. For example, if, as Foucault claims, power is a technique, what is the technique and how is it exercised?

On the question of how and why power is exercised Foucault (1982) suggests that:

... what characterises the power we are analysing is that it brings into play relations between individuals (or between groups) ... what defines the relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly or immediately on others. Instead it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future. (pp. 785–789)

and He continues:

The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome. Basically power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or the linking of one to the other, than a question of government ... To govern in this sense, is to *structure the possible field of action for others*. (pp. 789–790, emphasis added)

From these comments we might infer that the technique of power is exercised in order to "*structure the possible field of action for others*". As we explore the

notions of power put forward by Foucault, and realise that he is writing about interpersonal relationships, exercising power on the actions of others, exercising power on future actions that may occur by structuring the possibilities of actions for others, suddenly his notion of power seems especially pertinent to the classroom. After all, interpersonal relationships and managing the complex actions that take place in the classroom by "*structuring the possible field of action for others*" are prime concerns of all teachers.

Frow (1985) further points out that there is a delicate balance of continuous hegemony and counter-hegemony. He claims that hegemony is a process of containment in which all parties are accepting or resisting. It describes for us a model of teacher competency in which we can pick out the dominant and less dominant strategies which teachers use in the classroom. When teachers are operating dominant strategies we see them (Warham, 1993):

- using ritual language;
- using routines to control large groups;
- using contrasts in the loudness and softness of their voices;
- using dominant rising tones;
- using non-verbal communication to control attempts at contesting the power outcome;
- using strategies of disengagement; and
- manipulating the structure of the discourse to inhibit interruptions.

Some of the less dominant strategies used by teachers to facilitate learning in their classrooms are:

- drawing on peer group pressure;
- encouraging;
- establishing long eye contact;
- manipulating the discourse to support the children;
- encouraging positive thinking;
- asking favours;
- establishing group coherence;
- restating the children's position when they lost track of the discourse;
- keeping quiet and allowing the children to take responsibility for a discussion;
- acts of politeness;
- making suggestions;
- praising and being complimentary; and
- enjoying humour.

In a hegemony model we have a basis for not only explaining some of the more complex decisions made by teachers in the classroom, but also a firm framework for looking at teaching styles, classroom management and the professional choices open to teachers.

Furthermore, Giroux (1981), Foucault (1982), Hargreaves (1982), and Walker (1986) all agree that the nature of resistance is dialectic. Here hegemony can account for the intuitive knowledge of all teachers that teaching and learning

is a two-way process. If we examine the dominant power strategies operated by the children upon their teacher we discover that they:

- do not pay attention;
- yawn and show disinterest;
- demand attention;
- do not listen to their teacher;
- fiddle and distract other children;
- shuffle and become restless; and
- disobey the teacher's instructions.

If we examine the less dominant power strategies operated by the children upon their teacher we discover that they:

- establish long eye contact;
- smile;
- enjoy humour;
- co-operate;
- listen carefully; and
- obey instructions.

Very quickly we begin to see the negotiation of power between the teacher and pupils which either constrains or facilitates learning. We begin to gain new insights into questions of *quality of learning*. *We learn that it is a two-way process*. Far from being a result of what a teacher enables the children to do, we begin to understand that *quality of learning* is as much a question of what the children will allow the teacher to do. Hegemony enables us to explore the higher level skills of the teacher as she:

- assesses the power relationships;
- works within the existing power relationships; and
- restructures the power outcome.

(All further explained in Warham, [1993].)

Hegemony enables us to explore the professional relationships of the teacher and parent, teacher and headteacher, teacher and other educational bodies. It enables us to gain insights into the management of the school and its relationships with the wider community. It enables us to see professional competence which must be understood in relation to the professional activities of teachers against the wider power tapestry of legislation and central control.

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