

CONCENTRATED LANGUAGE ENCOUNTERS: THE TRAEGER PARK LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

PART 2: THE THEORETICAL RATIONALE

Brian Gray

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THE NATURE OF THE ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

The program that was emerging from my observations at Traeger Park School needed to make explicit an organisational and content structure from which day to day curriculum activities could be planned. My role at the school was specifically to determine the nature of the English language program. Initially, the proposal to me had been to design an 'oral language' program to replace the direct instruction program that was focussed on the drilling of syntax. Even before my observations at the school, the majority of the staff had judged that program to be ineffectual.

However, as the discussion of needs to date has indicated, to have any hope of producing successful outcomes for the children at Traeger Park, the alternative program had to be far more ambitious in its scope. The teaching in the language unit had to link directly and explicitly into ongoing classroom teaching. It had to provide language resources that supported the children's ability to negotiate learning in the classroom and provide a strategy methodology and framework that allowed the teachers to respond to the children's attempts to negotiate learning. It also had to provide language resources that allowed the children to see the relevance of the goals and activities with which they were expected to engage.

In order to achieve an approach to teaching that met the needs discussed in the previous three sections, it was necessary to develop three key aspects of the proposed teaching program. I saw these as;

1. Appropriate goals at which to target teaching.
2. A lesson framework for developing the goals.
3. A teaching/learning negotiation process.

Initially, I thought of these three aspects of the program as separate entities. However, as I began to work on program development, I very soon came to realise that these three aspects were inseparable. The nature of the goals needed to be interpreted in terms of the learning process that was required. Together, goals and learning processes defined the appropriateness of the teaching process and its associated lesson framework. For example, to set a text as a goal for teaching meant not just teaching 'about' the text, it meant teaching what was required to put that text into use. This formulation of text as goal derived from my interpretation of the children's needs and the perspective on the learning process that arose from those observations.

The unifying concept that underlay the approach to learning and teaching I was developing was a notion that I termed 'role' and the process that drove the operation of role was what I called 'role perceptions'. The more marginalised the Aboriginal children were in terms of their ability to engage in the kind of learning that was required for success in schooling, the more critical it was to maintain the integrity and visibility of the connection between these three aspects by centering their operation around the development of role perceptions. Each of these aspects of the Traeger Park program is discussed briefly below. However, the importance of role perception in determining the interrelationships between goals,

processes and lesson sequences should always be kept in mind.

Role and role perceptions

I settled on the notion of role perception as a point of departure for exploring a psychological interpretation of the learning needs I was encountering at Traeger Park because I saw it as an avenue through which it might be possible to address the acquisition of what is sometimes called social or cultural capital, - the ability to function to one's advantage in contexts that are located within a particular cultural or social frame of experience. In my undergraduate and graduate training in psychology I had come to realise that both behavioural and cognitive paradigms possessed severe restrictions on their ability to contribute solutions to the problems posed around such issues. Above all, I required a perspective that addressed learning from an interactional perspective because the problems being encountered by the children were not simply caused by lack of knowledge per se. Their difficulties had primarily to do with the dynamics involved in negotiating the use of language to achieve certain communication ends that were both culturally embedded and rendered invisible in the interactions they were encountering.

The notion of role perception as goal allowed for the teaching of the mental processes and understandings that lay behind successful performance of social roles. It also begged the questions of how the teaching of such goals was to be integrated as components of the school program and ultimately, how they were to be taught.

I decided to embed as much of the curriculum activity as possible within an overarching structure focused on the progressive development of what I termed 'role perception' (Gray 1980) as its all-embracing principle. As I put it at the time in defining 'role',

In this we are concerned with the parameters that define which language interaction events are appropriate. In short with the context which defines what you are going to say.....We are interested in developing in the words of Flavell et al. (1975)

"The general ability and disposition to,

- *1. take the role of another person in the cognitive sense, that is, to assess his response capacities and tendencies in a given situation, and,*
- *2. the more specific ability to use this understanding of the other person's role as a tool in communicating effectively with him. (Flavell et al. 1975:1)"*

(Gray 1980:29)

By role perception, I meant the development of the children's capacity to understand, direct and respond to the perceptions required by **all** participants in **any** interaction. By **any** interaction I was including especially the interactions that took place between teachers and children in the teaching process itself. However, the discussion entered into in this paper will concentrate on the development of this capacity in the **children** at Traeger Park. At Traeger Park, because of the level of marginalisation that was occurring, the development of this capacity held a special importance.

The notion of role perceptions referred to the understandings that allowed participants within an interaction to project intentions onto the other party in order to be able to interpret the meanings in their speech. Both parties do this and then set their response in respect to those projections. Thus, when my boss says, "Would you like to produce a report about this?" I recognise that he is really telling me that he expects a report. He is not really expecting me to say, "No". I recognise that the illusionary freedom being assigned is part of his management style. Likewise, when the teacher says to a student, "What do you think Rosie the Hen is going to do next?" she expects that the student is engaging with the story from a perspective that seeks a story 'resolution' and its personal effects on Rosie.

The ability to tune into the role perceptions of others and to use that to position ones self in relation to others places a person in a position from which he/she can control his/her circumstances. When you cannot do this your interactions become puzzling and vicarious. Communication breaks down and you have no idea what is happening.

Developing role perceptions around literate and wider contexts

The central educational goal, as I saw it, was to establish a generalised and increasingly sophisticated disposition in the children to tune into, work from, and position themselves in relation to, the perceptions and perspectives of others in interactions both in relation to the negotiation of learning roles and the negotiation of social roles in the broader community generally. To achieve this level of role perception, a learner/actor has to decenter from their own preconceived orientations and to see their thinking as an object that exists in relation to the thinking of others. It was this insight that was embodied in much of the literature on literacy and language development that has been discussed previously concerning success in schooling.

The role perceptions associated with learning in school and especially the development of literacy were given a central focus in my perspective essentially because of their direct link to educational success. However, experience with a large and wide range of roles was also seen as a powerful means of increasing the flexibility and awareness of the children in their future engagements within mainstream society in general.

An additional factor was that the majority of the children attending Traeger Park were living in poverty. As such these children were limited in the extent to which they had access to some roles in the wider community. For much of their life, they were being cast into 'consumer' rather than 'active' controlling engagement within the economic and professional domains of the economy. The families of Traeger Park children typically dealt with the wider community (e.g. Police, Public Servants etc) as receivers of services.

The children's parents were not generally business owners and they did not hold positions of power that allowed them to actively manipulate economic and professional environments in which they found themselves. This is not to say that their parents did not provide role understandings that were highly positive and constructive in their children's development. It is just that the children had limited access to certain kinds of roles that for the most part were aligned with academic and financial success in the wider community.

Schools with Aboriginal students, as Traeger Park did often, try to broaden engagement with the wider community beyond the school, for example, by taking students on excursions. I was determined that the children would engage in such activities from a position of active control.

Aboriginal children, especially those from the more remote regions, are frequently taken on visits to cities and other 'wider world' contexts. However, on these visits they are usually cast as spectators of that wider world. For example, many Aboriginal schools visit the national parliament in Canberra. However, it is interesting to note that is invariably the more advantaged private and affluent students from other schools who make use of the visit to conduct their own youth parliament and take on an active role as 'parliamentarians' in any meaningful way.

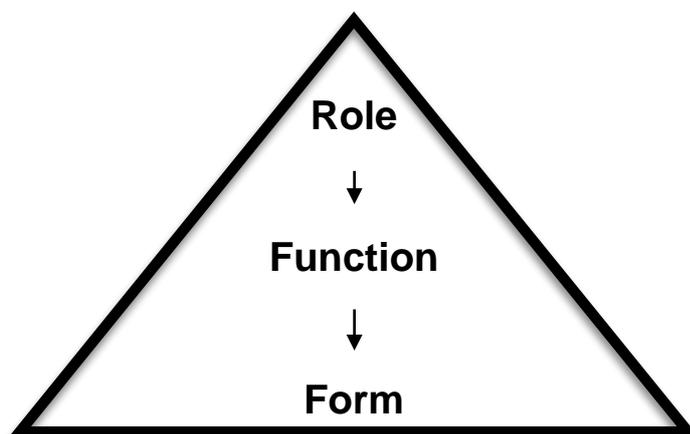
Additionally, it is the parents of these more affluent children who own businesses and shops, who hold professional status as doctors, vets, dentists, teachers, accountants, police, media journalists of various types and so on. In a variety of ways, these children, through the contacts of their family life come to see engagement with the 'commercial and professional world from the viewpoint of actors who control and influence the contexts in which they find themselves.

Consequently, as well as teaching the understandings that created the mindsets required for taking an active role in school learning, I decided that the program had to concentrate on building role perceptions that situated the content that was being taught in the school. By extending our exploration of 'role perceptions' to actual roles and contexts that occurred in the wider community that context could be made relevant for the students.

Integrating role perceptions with a goal structure

However, despite my concern to develop role perceptions as the focus and point of departure for any teaching, I could see that attempting to develop programming around role perceptions would lead to a rather vaguely defined and eventually confused program of teaching. What I needed was a model for developmental teaching that explicitly linked the notion of role perceptions to the form of the language. In order to specify clearly what had to be taught and learned. Therefore, I expressed the central focus on role perceptions using the following figure 1.

**Figure 1.
A Language Model for Programming (Gray 1980)**



This model implies a different view of language acquisition needs to that which is assumed when elements of syntax are taught through drill and practice. The highest level, 'role' indicates that the fundamental element required for learning language is an understanding of the mindset behind the social roles that the word choices are used to perform. Once learners understand this, they are in a position to understand the uses (functions) that the words achieve to help satisfy the requirements of social roles. Then, only when learners have understood these two previous levels, are they in a position to learn syntax (form) in any meaningful and useful way. To attempt to drill and practice syntax in the manner of programs such as the previous program at Traeger Park was to assume that the learners already had access to the social roles and purposes for which the syntax was to be used. And, further, that the learners themselves were able to make the necessary connections between the syntax being taught and appropriate social roles and purposes - something that I had concluded was not possible for the children, given the context and content of the original syntax drill program at Traeger Park.

If we turn this role>function>form directional relationship around to form>function>role as a teaching model, we can express the problems the Traeger Park students experienced when they attempted to develop an understanding of how to use language and how to situate a particular element of form within their personal language system. If we take, for example, a sentence form that has been discussed earlier in part one, "I have a pen", we have to establish a rationale for "Why am I saying this? If we fail to do so we are left with our question and the form is learned (if it is learned!!!) as a meaningless element. If we can answer in terms of a function (e.g. "It could be identifying something or part of the process of explaining and elaborating properties of something?") we are satisfying a functional explanation.

However, the children at Traeger Park found it difficult to think this way about language. Thinking in this way requires an orientation to position language as an object for reflection and analysis. Ultimately, the child is still left with the question of, "Why am I saying this?", for example, suppose we select, "I'm explaining something" as an answer to our why question. We are still left with the question of relevance (i.e. "Why and for what purpose am I explaining?"). The answer lies in an understanding of the role in which explaining achieves a legitimate social purpose. This understanding is acquired as children learn to

achieve their purposes as they engage in culturally situated roles.

Focused by my observations of the children's communication needs, I was seeing that literate parents were inducting their children into various participant roles (especially the role of reader) that gave them a head start in terms of their ability access to the learning negotiation processes that took place around academic learning. And, I could see that by following and translating the strategies literate parents were using to the classroom, there was a possible avenue through which the role>form sequence could be achieved.

I could also see that if I could situate children within a role, that is, get them to to engage with appropriate role perceptions, I would have legitimate grounds to ask for functional responses. For example, to say, "*You have to explain this very clearly otherwise she won't understand*".

The notion of educational goals expressed as role and especially in terms of role perceptions sat directly against prevailing educational practice. Educators were used to language goals that were expressed in terms of language form (especially with Aboriginal students). The educational relevance of the notion I held for role perceptions was difficult to communicate to others at the time.

A good indication of the confusion that occurred can be found in a review of the program in its early stages by Kaldor, Eagleson & Malcolm (1982). While they generously categorised the Traeger Park project as a 'significant' project, they found it difficult to come to terms with the notion of role perception as the fundamental driving force in language teaching. They recognised that the role>form sequence as reflecting,

...the way language is used by speakers in spontaneous speech and should ideally provide also the model for classroom language development work.
(Kaldor et al. 1982:205)

However, in the very same paragraph, Kaldor et al. point out that such an ideal is essentially impractical in their view.

It is only at more advanced levels that it is possible to start off from 'the top', viz. a given communication situation and investigate the functions for which language is likely to be employed in that situation and, in turn, the language exponents required to carry out those functions.
(Kaldor et al. 1982:205)

In my margin notes at the time I wrote, "*Rubbish Shows a lack of understanding of Scaffolding*". On reflection, the response was somewhat rash. The view they expressed was the prevalent viewpoint adopted in education at the time and their misconstrual of the notion of role indicated just how far off the conventional centre my orientation was leading. Working back from my observations of the children's learning needs was forcing me to locate my notion of role perception in relation to notions of the language 'content' I needed to teach as well as the understandings about the developmental learning processes that I was gleaning from the psychological and psychiatric literature.

Text as a focus for teaching role perceptions

First of all, I needed an expression of language form that could correspond with the processes that I was identifying around role. My reading of Cazden (1972) led me to the realisation that the form concept I needed to express role was 'text'. However, this reading did not provide me with an understanding of the components that had to be taught and acquired in order to create a 'text'.

Fortunately, at the time of the project, a detailed language model that was largely compatible with the notional relationship I was proposing between role perception, function and syntax was becoming available from the work of Michael Halliday (e.g. 1975, 1985) and Jim Martin (1985). Richard Walker, then deputy director at the Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education introduced me to the network of researchers who were clustered around Halliday.

Engaging with this network of researchers allowed me early access to the concepts and writings that were emerging from this work. Halliday was developing a description of language function that posited a linguistically sophisticated hierarchical connection between grammar and meaning. I realised that my notion of role, while compatible, was a psychological rather than a linguistic one. In both conceptualisations, the primary driver of language development was the search for social meaning. Halliday clearly provided a home for the concept of role perception that I was exploring.

Learning is, above all, a social process; and the environment in which educational learning takes place is that of a social institution, whether we think of this in concrete terms of the classroom and the school, with their clearly defined social structures, or in the more abstract sense of the school system, or even the educational process as it is conceived of in our society. (Halliday 1985:5)

As well, this perspective coincided with my emphasis on the importance of understanding and applying in the classroom the process (or adaptation) that was occurring in homes that were strongly literacy oriented.

Knowledge is transmitted in social contexts, through relationships, like those of parent and child, or teacher and pupil, or classmates, that are defined in the value systems and ideology of the culture. And the words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meaning from activities in which they are embedded, which again are social activities with social agencies and goals. (Halliday 1985:5)

Unsworth (1993) provides a useful graphic representation of Halliday's model which concentrates specifically on representing the role of semantics in providing what he terms the 'interface' between the social system and the grammatical system. That is, semantics which is realised by reference to meaning constructed in text makes the connection between cultural meanings and the grammar and orthographic choices that constitute the form of the language. This model is described and illustrated below.

Semantics ... is the interface between the social system and the grammatical system. It 'faces both ways' - it points 'upward' realising the meanings associated with each of the contextual variables Field, Tenor and Mode, which are construed as three very generalised functions or metafunctions:

1. *the ideational metafunction which enables us to make sense of our world;*
2. *the interpersonal metafunction which enables us to participate in the world through interaction with others;*
3. *the textual metafunction which enables language to form into texts.*

At the same time this metafunctionally organised semantic system points downward to, and is realised by, corresponding systems at the lexicogrammatical level. (Unsworth 1993:336)

In this representation, semantic meaning was depicted as being generated by the operation of the three metafunctions (Textual, Ideational & Interpersonal). These metafunctions were realised in the form of the 'text' that was the product of a 'context'. Because of the configuration of Halliday's grammar text could be inferred from the nature of the language choices that occurred.

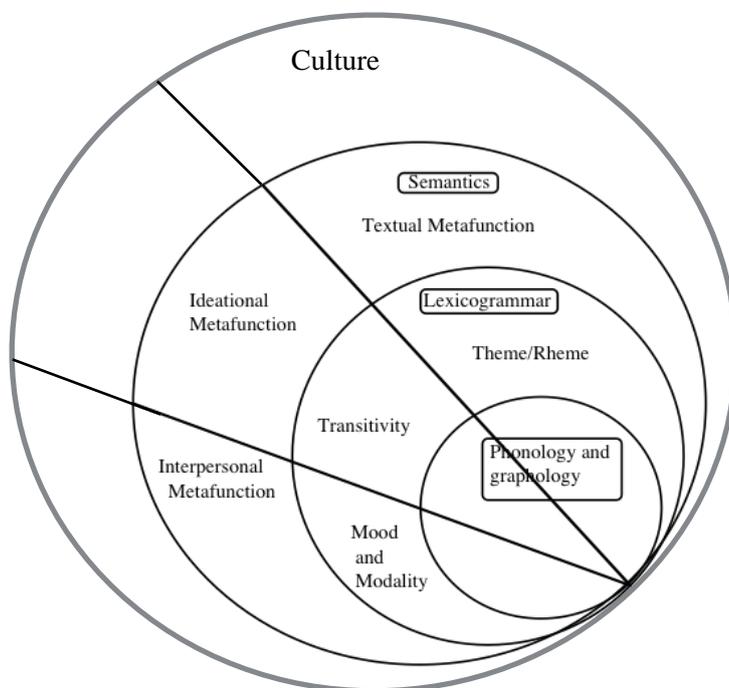
*.....the way to understanding about language lies in the study of texts. The terms, **CONTEXT** and **TEXT**, put together like this, serve as a reminder that these are aspects of the same process. (Halliday 1985:5)*

Halliday proposed that semantics could only be realised appropriately in the form of text. The semantic meaning of a text was fundamentally the meaning of the context and any meaning assigned at a lower level of realisation (e.g. a particular sentence or sentence element) could only be determined by reference to the context of the text. The notion of what constituted context went well beyond the boundaries defined by the form of the text itself and represented "The total environment in which the text unfolds". This model stood

in contrast to most other approaches to the analysis of language that tended to concentrate on either grammatical structure (form) or meaning (semantics).

Figure 2

Halliday's tri-stratal model of language: semantics as the interface between the social system and the grammatical system (adapted from Unsworth 1993)

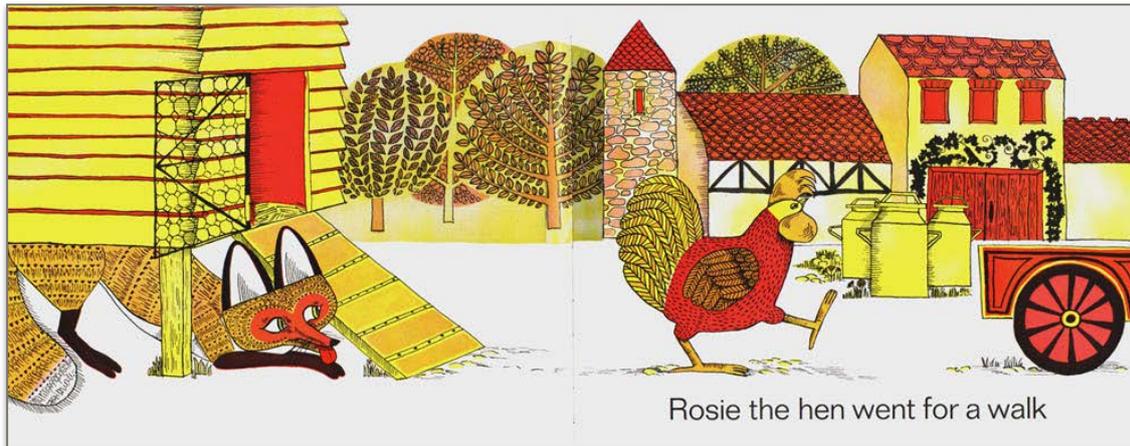


Halliday's grammar was also very different from the Transformational Generative Grammar (e.g. Lyons 1978) that I had been exposed to in undergraduate study. In this approach to grammar, the understanding of meaning had no place. Context for its part was expressed through rather vague notions of 'performance' which sat in an uneasy relationship with 'competence' with very little information concerning what performance might entail. In fact, performance (and therefore meaning) was not really seen as the concern of linguistic analysis.

Halliday's grammar as tool to discover role perceptions

The understandings that Halliday's grammar brought to my conviction that I needed to develop role perceptions were immense. I applied the grammar to interpret the texts that I was working with quite freely. I suspect to an extent that would cause a scholar in linguistics to pause. However, I saw the grammar as a means through which I could develop a deep understanding of what was happening in the process of creating the meaning that was conveyed by a text. The model I took for the teacher in the teaching/learning equation around the presentation of a text was the parent/child interaction process that was happening around books in highly literate homes. These highly literate parents were able to carry on conversations about the happenings in the texts that allowed their children to develop role orientations that turned them into learners who could engage with concepts that were presented in written language far better than parents who were not so literate.

I reasoned that the first step in the process was to make sure that I possessed as much insight into the texts as the most literate of parents. Well, at least to move as far as I could along that scale. To illustrate what I mean it is useful to consider one of the first books that I considered as an introductory reader for the new program. The book was *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins (Bodley Head 1972).



The first page of this book contains the words, "Rosie the Hen went for a walk" and the second and subsequent pages each provide a locational phrase to let us know where Rosie walked e.g. "across the yard/ around the pond" and so on with the only variation being the ending which adds another clause "and got back in time for dinner."

Identifying the literate information that was available from the text was initially a significant issue for me. And, in fact I was seeing that the other teachers in the school were also having difficulty with not just this book but most of the books they were attempting to read to the children. Rosie's Walk clearly had something special about it but I couldn't quite put my finger on what it was exactly. When challenged to read and discuss it with the children, what I could see and talk about was not really representative of the magic I felt was there. The text was one simple extended sentence about which not much could be said. Obviously I would talk about the pictures. I could draw attention to Rosie and the fact that she was a hen. I could draw the children's attention to the fox that was trying to catch Rosie. And, as the book went on, how the fox always came to grief and how, finally, after a number of close calls, Rosie made it home. I could talk about the items on the farm. That was about all. I couldn't really see how to develop an engagement with role perceptions from just providing this level of information in the classroom to Aboriginal children.

Normally, the teachers tried to do talk about these things with the Aboriginal children and it usually ended in disaster. To make things worse, the normal approach that was adopted by the teachers was not to tell at all. Teachers usually introduced a book such as this by asking "What's happening here?" or "What do you think this is about?" and the situation became very quickly worse as the children either gave irrelevant answers or guessed wildly. Clearly, the obvious first step was that we had to be able to start by telling. In fact, we had to be able to tell the children things they would find interesting. This observation flew in the face of a fundamental tenet of conventional teaching, - if the children don't work something out for themselves they won't learn it.

The resolution to these problems came in part from attention to the nature of the teaching process that was required but it also had to do with the quality of the information that **could** be provided. I will first concentrate on the quality of information. To obtain a deeper literate reading of the text that I could pass on to the children, I looked to Halliday's grammar for assistance. Unfortunately, I was forced to begin the exploration of this literate potential without the comprehensive outline of Halliday's systemic Functional Grammar which did not become available until 1985. However, there was a considerable amount of material available that dealt with the theoretical orientation to language in publications like *Learning to Mean* (1975) and in other publications (e.g. Halliday 1967, 1970, 1973; Danes 1974; Kress 1976) that I managed to accumulate as I attended conferences and met others who were working from Halliday's perspective on language. There was also *Cohesion in English* (1976) that he had written in collaboration with Ruqaiya Hasan.

Accordingly my approach to using the grammar involved a considerable amount of intuitive

extrapolation. I used as much of the available information I could find to isolate the components of the textual structure and lexico-grammatical elements as well as the semantic meanings they typically realised. I then used this information to begin a speculative deconstruction of the manner in which meaning was created within the text in question.

I took my inspiration for this strategy from the manner in which Halliday emphasised the need to interpret the relationship that existed between text and context of situation. Something that I have outlined previously and specifically from a point that was made explicit in the concluding pages of *Cohesion in English*.

This point can be generalised to the study of texts as a whole. The analysis of cohesion, together with other aspects of texture, will not in general add anything new to the interpretation of a text. What it will do is to show why a text is interpreted in a certain way; including why it is ambiguous in interpretation wherever it is so. It will explain the nature of conversational inferences, the meanings that the hearer gets out of the text without the speaker having apparently put them in - presuppositions from the culture, from the shared experience of the participants, and from situation to the surrounding text. It is the text-forming or 'textual' component of the semantic system that specifically provides the linguistic means through which such suppositions are made. Similarly the analysis of cohesion will not tell you that this or that is a good text or a bad text or an effective or ineffective one in the context. But it will tell you something of WHY YOU THINK it is a good text or a bad text, no matter what you do think about it.
(Halliday & Hasan 1976:328)

To me this promised that I might be able to identify something of the role perceptions that I was seeking in my commitment to the notion of role as a driving concept for the program. For this reason, Halliday's model made the kind of relational connection I was seeking. It was expressly concerned to articulate the relationship between form and meaning. Because of this, it provided a strong analytic base from which to address issues concerned with relating language choices within grammar to the systems of meaning that are constructed within both classroom interaction and in the use of language to achieve culturally located goals generally. Consequently, Halliday's interpretation of text structures as semantic concepts was taken as the vehicle for organising the outcome goals for the program.

However, before setting out the framework of text structures that I adopted, it is important to outline the kinds of understandings about language interaction that were presumed within the notion of text as a semantic construct. For this I found Halliday's grammar helpful, not in the sense that it laid out a world of new meaning at my feet without effort on my part but because it started to suggest where that new world of meaning that I wanted might be found. For a start, Halliday pointed to the need to look beyond the text and into the context of situation.

The broadest level of text we can see in 'Rosie's Walk' is in the textual frame of the generic structure of the text. On one level the words present the text as a recount, a list of events that follow one after the other. However, when we look into the context of situation that is filled out by the illustrations accompanying the text we find that these are constructing a very complicated narrative. There is an orientation in which the main character and the other protagonist are introduced. We find out that not only is it a farm but one that harbours something that is generally unwanted in such places - a fox. Clearly Rosie belongs for she lives in a little hen house. Then we meet a series of complications that start out looking like they are resolved by pure luck and and the miscalculations of a very clumsy fox. However, we soon begin to get hints in the later stages that the failures of the fox and the subsequent resolutions might be the due to the intentional actions of Rosie. Eventually Rosie engineers a conclusive resolution, all without acknowledging the existence of the fox. There are tensions evident here between the intentions of the fox and the seeming lack of awareness shown by Rosie. A plot situation that has sustained many horror movies. There is also tension surrounding the issue of the extent to which Rosie might in fact be in control of her fate.

However, before we turn to a discussion of context and text let us return briefly to consider the part of the clause complex that we encounter on page one.

<i>Rosie the hen</i>	<i>/went/</i>	<i>for a walk</i>
actor	process	circumstance.
	material	purpose
	past tense	
	middle voice	

The first item we encounter in the clause is what would normally be described as a proper noun. In a traditional approach to grammar that would be the end of the matter. However, the tradition in Halliday's grammar is to view this item as a nominal group and to explore its potential from a variety of perspectives – particularly in terms of the extent to which meanings built around the experiential, interpersonal and textual metafunctions are embedded within it. When we begin to do this, even with the patchy command of Halliday's grammar that I held (and still hold) much that is potentially useful to a teacher begins to emerge. We find, for instance, that the whole group rather than just the proper noun 'Rosie' is used to identify Rosie (ie. Rosie the hen) much like Elizabeth the Second represents the formal name or title of a queen. Rosie the hen, however, is a structure in which 'Rosie' is qualified by 'the hen'. This allows us to start thinking about why this set of words might be chosen by the author and not others. When we do this we are starting to bring an awareness of role perceptions back into our conscious mind.

Halliday points out that the interpersonal meanings involved in a nominal group are expressed in the connotative meanings that are assigned within a context of situation. Two connotative meanings immediately come to mind here. The first is through analogy to the earlier question of a formal title as a nominal group. In such a connotation the person is accorded a very high level of social status. However, when we look at Rosie, we don't find such a grand qualification 'Rosie' is qualified by 'the hen'.

What does the author mean here, by such a choice? Maybe we have a connotation of gentle satire in play. Is the author implying that Rosie is a hen who sees herself as important? Certainly, one of the most salient features in the accompanying illustrations is that Rosie is always depicted with her beak 'in the air'. She never engages with her environment. Clearly this is a strange thing to do with the possibility of a fox lurking in the bushes. Another inference that we can possibly draw is that the tension between 'Rosie' and her qualifier 'the hen' constitutes a form of endearment.

Either way, there are many interpretations that we can draw about 'Rosie the hen'. These exist in a kind of tension with each other. This is a microcosm of the manner in which characters are drawn in narrative. Just in the first words of the text, we begin to encounter indications of why this book is a classic and especially why it should be sought after and separated out from the dross that often pass for 'books' in commercial reading programs.

If we view the noun phrase 'Rosie the hen' from the perspective of the textual metafunction we note that 'Rosie' is placed in first position. As such, 'Rosie' is in Theme position. Theme position tells us the point of focus. That 'Rosie' is in Theme means that the story is about 'Rosie' rather than 'the hen' which is just a qualifying attribute accompanying the name 'Rosie'. It is the personal anthropomorphic quality of Rosie rather than her 'hennes' that is primary and accepted as 'given' here. When we place Rosie in the context of the illustrations we see that Rosie lives on a farm. It is rare to name farm animals when they are in an impersonal farming context. That Rosie is named and that name is thematised means she is loved and valued. We, as readers, pick up on that connotation. When we reflect on a different clause without 'Rosie', it is easy to see this – "The hen went for a walk."

If we go from this kind of thinking about Rosie and seek out the other protagonist in the story we are confronted by a stark contrast. The fox only exists in the illustrations. He/she has no name. He/she unlike 'Rosie' even has no sex. The fox has no attributes that indicate he/she is or should be valued or loved. We are not induced to think about the context in which the

fox is functioning. That, for example, she might have four little starving cubs to feed and so on.

When we continue on into the clause we see that 'went' is a material (action) process (verb) that is qualified by the circumstantial phrase for a walk. In Halliday's grammar, the relationship is expressed as one that exists between a material action and a purpose (Circumstance of purpose). Reflection on the interpersonal meaning reveals that the relationship here is carrying the banality or unremarkable nature of the action that is occurring. 'Going for a walk' is something we do in an entirely casual manner. It implies a stroll without a particular focus and it is usually done as a relaxation.

When we refer such an interpretation to a consideration of the context in which the text is located, we encounter a major tension that, in fact, forms the fundamental inter-psychological (or essence) of the narrative. At each new unfolding of the text, Rosie is being stalked by the fox. Yet Rosie seems to be either oblivious to this or to be pretending not to notice. How does she maintain her composure? Is she just absolutely stupid or extremely cunning and capable? It taps directly into what it is that the author is communicating through the text.

Being able to create tensions on multiple levels is fundamental to the writing and reading of effective narrative. The illustrations create what is essentially a direct counterpoint to the manner in which Rosie's walk is presented as a casual stroll.

What I have been talking about in this discussion of the relationship that exists between language choices and the various meanings that are promoted by those choices is essentially the substance that makes up what I have been referring to as role perceptions.

Now, the question here is what do we have in this more extensive reading of the text? The perspective I took was that it needs to exist as a 'potential' in the mind of the teacher. It is a potential because it provides the teacher with a resource bank from which she can draw to both extend and broaden the role perceptions of the children. Will she tell all this at once? Almost certainly she will not especially with children who are just beginning to engage with literacy. However, with this level of understanding the teacher can continually add to the children's understandings as she leads them further over time and she now has the raw materials from which she can fashion their development of role perceptions around both reading and writing. To explore this point we need to consider the range of role perceptions that are embedded around a text such as this.

Identifying roles to fit role perceptions

Halliday (1975) tells us that a storybook text such as Rosie's Walk often operates in two contexts simultaneously. One context of situation is the context that exists between the affectively attached child and the affective responsive adult. The second context of situation is the one that surrounds the interactions of the characters in the text itself.

Consider a traditional story as it is told by a mother to her child at bedtime. Here the context of situation is on two levels. On the one hand there is the immediate environment, the interaction of mother and child under particular circumstances that are associated with intimacy and relaxation. On the other hand there is the fictive environment conjured by the text itself, the imagery world of wolves and woodcutters in which the events described take place. (Halliday 1975:125)

To my mind, in a classroom there were three levels to consider. Interaction between teachers and children around texts has a specific level of focus that is projected through the interaction between teacher and students. The teacher is trying to teach the children so the first pair is student/teacher. This role pair is projecting another role pair that the children need to master from the perspective of both roles. Even when teachers read a story for enjoyment, the ultimate point of the activity is that the enjoyment will lead and prepare the children to engage in reading and writing. Engagement in reading and writing presumes the children will take on two roles, that of reader and writer and that they will become proficient in both. The third set of roles has to do with what Halliday refers to as the world of the text. In all, the three sets of roles that needed to be considered when we

were working with the children at Traeger Park were, therefore, author/reader; teacher/student and text world roles of the characters (i.e. Rosie/Fox). It is possible for non-animate participants to occupy roles also but this aspect will not be pursued here.

Now, the early childhood research was showing that children from literate environments were arriving at school with at least a starting orientation into all of these roles and my observations were indicating that conventional pedagogy was finding it difficult to identify and bridge the gap needed to engage Aboriginal children within these roles. I concluded that the teaching of the children at Traeger Park had to provide entry. This meant that the induction into role participation could make no assumptions about 'readiness' and that as part of the induction process the children had to come to view the orientations and strategies for participation as the obvious and natural way to engage (as children from literate homes obviously did).

The manner in which the two components of role perception and knowledge about language were brought together to build the Traeger Park teaching program requires an understanding of the learning and teaching model that was developed to support their integration. This will be outlined below.

An alternative teaching/learning negotiation process

Setting Halliday's notion of texts as outcome goals for embedding understandings about role perceptions (language in use) implied the need for explicit and directive teacher input into the learning process. However, it was clear from my experience observing the disconnect between teacher strategies and the Aboriginal children at Traeger Park that attempting to teach within the traditional conception of 'explicit' teacher directed pedagogy was doomed to fail.

The genre/process debate

In fact, even the notion of teaching about text and the application of language resources identified using the analytic tools provided by Halliday's grammar was highly controversial at the time. The controversy was initiated as the results of a study of the writing outcomes in primary schools by Martin and Rothery (1981, 1982) became available to educators. It reached a peak when Martin (1984, 1985) began to lay out the grammar of text genres and continued well into the 1990's. Some of the most vehement critics were whole language educators who ascribed to a strongly child directed model of teaching that initially allowed no teacher direction in the negotiation of learning and especially in the area of writing development. A major problem in this debate was that the whole language educators could only conceive of direct teaching as something that occurred in opposition to child directed learning. For the purpose of clarifying this and later discussion, it is useful to visualise the conflict between opposing teaching perspectives in this debate along a continuum which sets teacher directed teaching on one pole and pure child directed teaching on the other.

Figure 3
Teaching approaches as polar extremes



Within such a conception of the two teaching perspectives, there is room for a compromise position that is often called 'eclectic'. An eclectic approach includes some direct teaching and some child directed learning. This position is not generally considered to be a different kind of teaching but rather ascribes to the notion that some things should be taught explicitly by the teacher and that at other times learning is best when children are left to their own resources to 'discover' or to respond to the kind of 'open' non-directive teacher questioning that is favoured in child directed teaching. In short, 'teaching' involves selecting a mix of strategies from both ends of the continuum.

For the most part, the debate between 'genre' and 'process', as it was sometimes

characterised, took place around characterisations of the opposing position in terms of direct polar extremes that were ascribed to the other group. Certainly, at the beginning of the debate the position of the whole language educators hovered extremely close, if not at the child directed pole. The leaders of the debate from the 'genre' perspective saw themselves essentially as providing evidence of the need for 'explicit' teaching about language but because they could not offer a different approach to teaching from the traditional teacher directed approach they were easily characterised at that pole of the continuum.

In the face of considerable evidence, the need for absolute adherence to child control in the learning process was conceded partially by the whole language educators. A compromise solution was adopted by these educators that allowed for the presentation of models by the teacher but which to this day is still highly ambivalent about what role the teacher should take in assisting the children to gain control of the resources required to internalise those models especially with respect to the extent that the teacher should attempt to focus or direct the responses of learners. This essentially eclectic compromise solution was **not** to be the basis for teaching interaction process that was developed at Traeger Park.

While much of the debate between whole language and the so called 'genre' theorists took place around quite simplistic and polarised notions of language teaching, Halliday, for his part, clearly recognised that much more was involved in the process of learning language than teaching children a template 'text' to be copied. As he pointed out in *Learning How to Mean* (Halliday 1975),

A child who is learning his mother tongue is learning how to mean. As he builds up his own meaning potential in language, he is constructing for himself a social semiotic.....
Halliday (1975:60)

In the process of building up a social semiotic, the network of meanings that constitutes the culture, the child is becoming a member of the species 'social man'.....The child builds up a potential for exchanging the meanings that are engendered by the system (and, so, in the long run, for modifying the system — since the social system is a system of meanings, it is constituted out of innumerable acts of meaning which shape and determine the system. We can watch this process taking shape at all stages in the child's development of language. Halliday (1975:121)

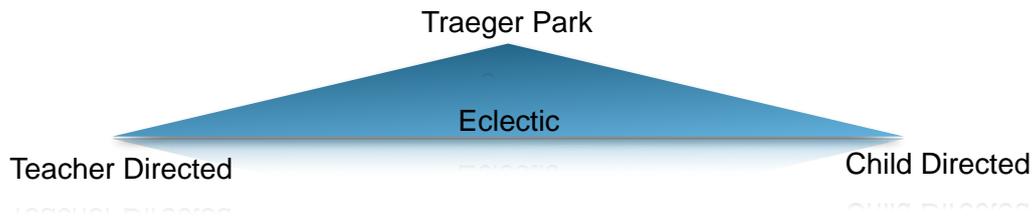
These were hardly the words of a theorist who considered that language competence should be taught by teaching children to write or speak using text structures that were merely patterns to be reproduced as the whole language educators often claimed.

Moving onto a new plane in the debate

The approach I adopted at Traeger Park was one that occupied a different plane to that which was, and still is, conventionally adopted when we talk in terms of teacher directed and child directed learning as polar opposites spaced at either end of a continuum. Nor can the approach be located somewhere along the continuum as some kind of eclectic approach that accepts some of both approaches.

The teaching model that arose at Traeger Park needs to be viewed from a transformational perspective. On the surface, an activity or a strategy may resemble either child directed or teacher directed learning at a particular step in the teaching process. However, when it is interpreted in terms of the whole context and purpose of the teaching model, it is something completely different. If, for example, we draw a continuum with child directed and teacher directed on polar extremes, we could represent the Traeger Park Program not along that continuum but as a model that took in both perspectives in an approach that was a transformation of the learning assumptions that were embedded within the pedagogy. That is, the strategies now had different assumptions and purposes to what they held in their separated polemic states. These strategies were also applied in different ways and success at any stage in the process was defined by different criteria.

Figure 4
The relationship between strategies adopted at Traeger Park and the traditional teacher/child directed dichotomy



The shift to a different position on the nature of pedagogic discourse was driven primarily by my conclusions from observations at Traeger Park that communication breakdown seemed inevitable whenever teachers sought to elicit an academic learning focus from the children. Such breakdowns occurred despite teacher attempts at different approaches and various emphases on one or the other pole of the conventional dichotomy.

Looking for a teaching/learning process: relating context of situation to role

I recognised that just attempting to teach the understandings that were being pointed to within Halliday’s work through the application of the conventional pedagogies located along this traditional dichotomy would have very limited success if any at all. Consequently, I was just as concerned to understand more clearly the factors and processes that drove language development both between and within individuals. There were tantalising insights to be found in Halliday’s writings but nowhere was there the kind of comprehensive psychological language learning process model that I required. While the insights of Halliday and other related researchers were extremely useful to my task, the kind of descriptive research understandings that were provided drew boundaries on the extent to which they penetrated into areas that were traditionally the concern of psychologists. My orientation to the problems and the solutions that were necessary adopted a different, although compatible, perspective.

I would describe the perspective needed to extend Halliday’s insights as an intra-psychological one. In contrast, Halliday’s model is largely descriptive. To take a simple example, if we were to study memory we could take a number of perspectives on the phenomenon. One might be to study a series of developmental stages that might be involved in short term memory. Another might be to describe the variability in short term memory across various subjects or to measure the extent to which short term memory is related to educational success. It may be possible to glean some insight into the actual operation of memory function from such studies. However, such studies do not focus directly on the **processes** and **strategies** that were drawn on to make short term memory function in the first place. It is this latter approach that I am calling intra-psychological (i.e. “What does a person **do** when they are using short term memory?”) If for example, we know that memory works more efficiently when a person groups the input according to a notional pattern and that such strategies are employed in successful performance then we have access to potential teaching strategies through which students can be assisted to learn.

It was this kind of distinction between description and process that set Halliday’s notions of context of culture and context of situation in a relationship with the notion of role that I was pursuing at Traeger Park. ‘role’, as I conceived it, was concerned with the perception of ‘self’ and the perception of ‘self’ in relation to others that an effective learner or reader takes into the production and understanding of a text. At the same time, it also determined the manner in which an individual related to the context of situation in which the text was produced or encountered. It represented the force that determined how the text was ‘mapped’ (fitted and distributed over time) onto the context of situation. It determined what elements of the situation were seen as relevant, how they were interpreted and how they were responded to.

The nature of role perceptions

An interesting and relevant understanding about role perceptions is that they are **not simply shared knowledge**. The development of shared knowledge is part of the process through which role perceptions are developed. However, the whole process involves much more than this. The development of the ability to assign appropriate role perceptions requires the transformation of shared knowledge and its subsequent location within the individual in a different form.

To illustrate, we can take the following example of a text provided by Garfinkel (1967). This text illustrates the layers of meaning that exist beyond the wording of a text, even a simple conversation between a married couple following an excursion to the shops. Garfinkel had his students collect familiar texts of this kind and then asked the students to expand on the meanings contained strictly within the text. What the students provided was largely confined to the shared meanings they contained. Even this, he reported was a stressful and exhausting task for the students who had actually been one of the participants in the interaction. The text produced is on the left and the interpretation is given on the right.

Husband	Dana succeeded in putting a penny in the parking meter today without being picked up.	This afternoon as I was bringing Dana, our four year old son, home from nursery school, he succeeded in reaching high enough to put a penny in a parking meter when we parked in a meter zone, whereas before he had always had to be picked up to reach that high.
Wife	Did you take him to the record store?	Since he put a penny in a meter that means you stopped while he was with you. I know that you stopped at the record store either on the way to get him or on the way back, so that he was with you or did you stop there on the way to get him and somewhere else on the way back?
Husband	No, to the shoe repair shop.	No, I stopped at the record store on the way to get him and stopped at the shoe repair shop on the way home when he was with me.
Wife	What for?	I know one reason why you might have stopped at the shoe repair shop. Why did you in fact?
Husband	I got some new shoe laces for my shoes.	As you will remember I broke a shoe lace on one of my brown oxfords the other day so I stopped to get some new laces
Wife	Your loafers need new heels badly.	Something else you could have gotten that I was thinking of. You could have taken in your black loafers which need heels badly. You'd better get them taken care of pretty soon.

In the production of the above text, each participant is projecting intentions onto the other party. It is this process of projecting (putting oneself into the role of the other) that allows the communication to unfold. The reason why the participants are doing this is because the process of assigning and responding to the intentions of others is hard wired into our nature as social beings. The fact that we want to mirror and connect with the experiences of others is also part of our fundamental makeup. To enable communication to take place successfully, the participants have to be able to project into the minds of the other participants in the production of any text.

If we want to teach students how to produce a text of a certain kind we have to ensure they can access the resources they need to project into the minds of other participants in the unfolding of the interaction. An important part of the equation here is the provision of understandings of the appropriate language forms and the meanings that are applicable to a particular context of situation.

However, in order for someone to interact successfully in the production of a text, more is required. Texts consist of a flow of decisions that take place as the interaction process unfolds over time, for example, the decision to engage in the text in the first instance, the decision about what to say at a particular point of the text, the decision to elaborate a point and so on. These decisions are made as a result of the role perceptions (i.e. the expectations that we have of the other party and the intentions) that we project onto them.

The question I had was, "How does one know how to do these things? How does one go about participating in the 'flow' of the interaction." Most fundamentally, from my perspective as someone who was concerned about teaching children to use language effectively the question was, "How does one learn to do this?"

To understand this process, first we have to look into the nature of the relationships that exist in the right hand column beyond the visible text in the left hand column of Garfinkel's example text above. When we do so, we see that the right hand column contains much knowledge that links the conversation back to past shared experiences. (*You remember I broke a shoe lace, I know you had to go to the record store*). However, there is also a deeper level of shared knowledge that is present and which is the fundamental driver of the interaction. This fundamental driver is not just shared understandings but shared **principled** understandings. These principled understandings tap into culturally embedded systems of rules for operating in the roles that each party is performing (in this instance - the roles of marital partners and parents). These assumptions are deeply implicit in the interaction, for example, that each parent has responsibilities - sending children to school (why?), picking children up after school (why?), interest in and monitoring growth and achievement (why?) encouraging children to extend their capacities and to develop their independence (why?), the nature of sharing and information exchange that is appropriate between partners (why?) etc.

An important factor behind understanding **why** we behave as we do within various social roles is that the kinds of role understandings we develop as we move from interaction to interaction are not merely invisible within the surface form of the language that is produced. They are, to a significant extent, also invisible within the conscious awareness of the interlocutors. As a consequence, interaction proceeds on a largely intuitive and presumptive basis (Garfinkel refers to this as 'tacit' knowledge) through which intentions are assigned and responded to within an assumed interpretive framework that exists below the surface of explicit conscious awareness. This framework motivates our understanding of what constitutes 'appropriate' or 'relevant' goals and points of focus. It creates the extent to which the text is relevant to the context of situation in the minds of the participants.

It is significant that the aspects of the tacit discourse that are held at the deepest level of consciousness are those that have been encoded as principled understandings. In fact, it is these culturally embedded principles that we refer to as 'common sense'. When challenged in interaction about things that we consider to be common sense we are often at a loss to think of any other premise from which to act. Garfinkel (1967) illustrated the kinds of behaviour that occurred when tacit knowledge of this kind was 'breached' (challenged).

CASE 2

- (S) Hi, Ray. How is your girlfriend feeling?**
- (E) What do you mean, "How is she feeling?" Do you mean physical or mental?**
- (S) I mean how is she feeling? What's the matter with you?**
(He looked peeved.)
- (C) Nothing. Just explain a little clearer what do you mean?**
- (S) Skip it. How are your Med School applications coming?**
- (E) What do you mean, "How are they?"**
- (S) You know what I mean.**
- (E) I really don't.**
- (S) What's the matter with you? Are you sick. (Garfinkel 1967:42)**

Here (S) became so frustrated and emotionally aroused at the refusal of (E) to engage around what he saw as common sense that he terminated the conversation. In effect, (E)'s failure to engage the role perceptions he (S) had projected onto (E) drew both an emotional and an avoidance reaction from (S). It was hard to escape the analogy between this response and the kind of refusal responses that occurred when teachers attempted to engage Traeger Park students in learning interactions.

There are obvious points in the previous discussion between husband and wife where such breaching responses could provide a similar reaction especially when those breaches concern shared principled understandings. Principled role perceptions were not breached when the wife responded to the husband's statement about going to the shoe shop with "What for?" The husband treated her question as a genuine request for information. However, if she had responded to his first statement "Dana succeeded in putting a penny...etc." with a challenge to the principles understandings involved, for example,

"Why would you let him do it without helping him?" or,

"Why did you let him put a penny in the meter?"

She most likely would receive the kind of response that occurred in Garfinkel's Case 2 above.

The affective encoding of principled role perceptions

Garfinkel's illustrations of breaching principled and culturally embedded role perceptions indicated more than the fact that such perceptions were held below the level of conscious awareness in individuals. They also indicated that such perceptions were encoded and retrieved mainly through the operation of emotional processes. Much later, this link would be drawn even more strongly in psycho-neurological research and this research would highlight the fact that somatic factors were also intimately involved in the encoding and retrieving process (e.g. Damasio 1994, 1995).

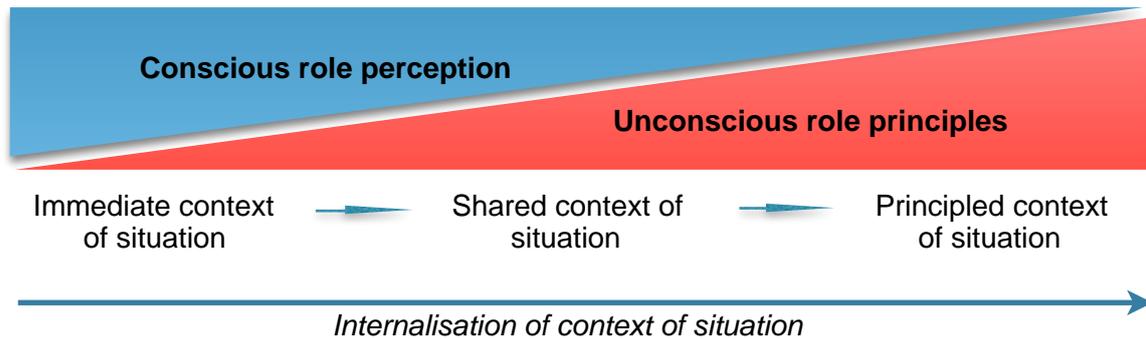
What I wanted to understand was the process through which such role principles were generated within an individual. How did the principles become so embedded that they could function as this invisible guiding hand? This question clearly struck at the heart of the problem I was observing with the children at Traeger Park.

The relationship between role perceptions and context of situation

A start can be made if we return our consideration to the husband and wife interaction we have been discussing. Halliday would consider the unravelling of the right-hand side of the table as an unpacking of the context of situation. If we consider the dimensions of that context of situation that might be involved here we can speculate on three different levels. The first level can be found in the immediate ongoing aspects of the context of situation. That is, what is happening in real time as the text unfolds. We could call this the immediate awareness of the individuals. A second level links back to knowledge and understanding that represents shared experience, things that the couple had done before. Much of this was invisible in the text production and was clearly below the level of immediate consciousness of the individuals. However, most of this is accessible to recall if a participant seeks to do so as Garfinkel's student did when the right-hand side of the table expanded on the form of the utterances. The third level and the one that plays the most powerful force in the operation of role perception within the determination of the interaction was the one that we referred to as principled.

We can represent the relationships involved here along a cline (graduated progression) that goes from conscious awareness to deeply integrated motivation that exists and operates well below the level of conscious awareness, the kind of consciousness that I have been calling principled role awareness. This relationship is shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5
Levels of awareness through which experience is transformed into culturally embedded principles for action



Although this model was employing a different perspective on the context of situation, I saw it as one that was compatible with the nature of the context of situation as Halliday expressed it. Halliday had made it clear that context of situation was to be seen,

....not as an aggregate of concrete spatio-temporal goings on, a sort of ornamental backdrop of sights and sounds, but as an abstract representation of the relevant environment of the text.
 Halliday (1975:125)

Halliday then went on to point out in the same section that,

It is a characteristic of the adult language system that the text it engenders is not tied to the immediate scenario as its relevant environment. The context of situation of a text may be entirely remote from what is happening around the act of speaking or writing.
 Halliday (1975:125)

The model in Figure 4 above proposes that the development of principled role awareness develops over time as speakers engage in repeated interactions that they come to realise are patterned in various ways. The model also entertains the notion that in moving from immediate perceptions to shared and then on to principled understanding involves a transformation of the understandings involved. This transformation occurs not just in terms of the level of consciousness at which the understandings are stored. The actual nature of the understandings themselves is transformed in the process. This transformation is particularly powerful when we are considering the development of principled role perceptions. As we said earlier, role principles represent a kind of ‘common sense’ and their encoding involves emotional and somatic as well as purely cognitive judgements.

The tagging of principled understandings via emotions and somatic responses makes considerable practical sense in evolution. These processes derive from areas of our brain that operate in an instinctual, reactive and largely unconscious manner. Feelings and emotions actually provide for a fast level of access and encoding during the flow of events in which an individual is operating. Such an observation serves to underline the strength and intrinsic nature of the relationship that exists between affect and what we like to think of as rational cognitive thinking. It also clarifies the importance of **not** simply trying to respond to the learning problems of vulnerable children such as those attending Traeger Park as if they were purely cognitive in nature. For myself, it meant that the children at Traeger Park needed, as part of the teaching interaction, to be placed in circumstances where they succeeded rather than failed.

The model presented in Figure 4 above also helps us refine somewhat our broader question about how principled knowledge forms. However, it is also important to note that the model above is a simplification and that it represents only part of the process through which the development of ‘self’ occurs. The notion of role perception from which the teaching model employed at Traeger Park arose was one that came initially from early research on self awareness. This research showed that the importance of the ability to

reflect on experience and language as objects for discrimination and analysis is critical to academic thinking. Consequently, the ultimate goal in terms of role development was to develop the ability to reflect upon principled role perceptions.

There is a constraint on learning how to reflect in this way. You cannot learn to reflect upon something of which you have no experience. The question therefore becomes, "What is the process through which this transformation from incidental engagement into shared knowledge occurs and what is the process through which shared knowledge is transformed into principled understanding. Further, we might ask "What can we do as teachers to maximise and shape the development of these understandings and, in particular, the ability of students to reflect consciously upon them?"

What parents do as a basis for school pedagogy

As I have previously discussed, I initially found a lead into a pedagogy for doing this in the early childhood literature on language and literacy development. In particular, the work on bedtime story reading was particularly definite concerning the processes involved, possibly because it had concentrated on the one clearly defined event. However, the findings from this area of research accorded with the research findings that were emerging from language development studies in general. There was also a strong accord with developmental studies that were looking from a social perspective at the emergence of self awareness and the development of self image along with intersubjectivity and attachment theory in psychology.

I came to the conclusion that all of this research was in some way or other tapping into a fundamental interactive process that was involved in social learning and the development of consciousness. In the development of early literacy, for example, the processes involved are quite simple and basic. The adult works with the child to share attentional focus and through this process the child begins the journey into an understanding of what is a relevant focus and what is not. As the child identifies something as relevant, the adult expands the perspective that is shared between herself and the child. As engagement recurs in a particular interactional context over time the expansion and development becomes progressively more refined and nuanced. In particular, the actual **nature of the process** through which this expansion happened appeared to be the critical factor in determining the outcome for the development of the child as was the **nature of the information** provided by the adult.

What was most exciting at the time was that I could see, especially in research into bedtime story reading interaction between parents and children that the process the parent was working the child through was the process through which experience came to be transformed from immediate knowledge to shared knowledge to principled knowledge. It was also clear to me that the most critical part of the process was the **transformation** that occurred when the level of understanding was moved from shared knowledge to principled knowledge and that this transformation could only occur when the child could conceive of this 'principle' as part of an operating function within a social role with which they were familiar. This factor held direct relevance for the nature of the learning interaction that had to be engaged. Teaching within the model I was exploring could **not** be concerned with just building shared knowledge.

The teaching process had to be designed to develop the necessary role perceptions. These constituted the principles upon which knowledge and experience was translated into action in the future. In order to put learning into effect in future encounters and challenges, it stands to reason that principles must be abstracted from experience in encounters (transformed) and stored in such a way that the principle can be called into play in the future making a distinction between teaching shared knowledge and the need to assist the children to move that knowledge into principled role perceptions that has serious importance for teaching. If the teaching process that is carried out in the classroom leaves the children at the stage of shared knowledge but is not carried through to principled role perception then children have two possibilities, either they can leave the information they receive as an entity that is disconnected from use or attempt to connect

and interpret the new information by referencing other role perception principles with which they are familiar.

When the new information is relatively compatible with role perceptions the child has already internalised, there is a reasonable chance that the resultant accommodation may be a constructive one (at least to some degree). However, when the new information does not sit compatibly with the role perceptions, the attempts by the child to accommodate are likely to either cause stress or failure or lead the child off on what is essentially a sidetracking of the actual goals that the teacher is attempting to achieve. (The propensity of marginalised learners to construct and process tasks in counterproductive and unintended ways is a well-known folk education phenomenon – refer to our earlier discussion on learning breakdown with Aboriginal children in Part 1).

The directional flow of the development of the Traeger Park program was essentially an inevitable one once I decided to ‘start where the children were’. The conceptualisation of the program began with my attempt to understand the nature of the learning problems that confronted the Aboriginal children at the school. I set out to do this without tying myself to interpretations that existed within the educational folklore and the pedagogic theories and traditions that embedded (still embed?) the education of Indigenous and many other educationally marginalised children in our schools. The formulations of these observations led to a further formative interaction with the research literature in a number of areas. These were principally the language development literature around literacy and language in general; Halliday’s linguistics which addressed questions of development; and, the more broadly oriented psychological literature that was beginning to engage with the development of self awareness, the positioning of ‘self’ and consciousness. Much of this psychological literature engaged with clinical interactive concerns and not the traditional educational concerns identified with behaviourism which regarded the goings on in the mind to be beyond the scope of psychology. This clinical literature differed significantly also from cognitivist psychology which viewed mental processes as phenomena that took place in the mind of the individual and that gave scant regard to the nature and effects of interactions with others.

Moving on to the zone of proximal development

The early childhood literature and the clinically oriented psychological research to do with the perception of self, in turn, pushed me toward engagement with the theoretical perspective of Vygotsky (e.g. 1978, 1967) whose work I was reading with a strong awareness of its relevance and importance and whose constructs, especially that of zone of proximal development, was distinctly relevant as a means for framing the program at Traeger Park. Eventually, I also adopted the term ‘scaffolding’ that has come to be associated intrinsically with the teaching process Vygotsky (1978) posited within the zone of proximal development. Briefly, the concept behind the zone of proximal development was that a potential developmental space existed for a child that extended beyond the child’s ‘actual’ developmental level. That is, the level of performance at which a child could show testable mastery of a concept or skill. In this field of partial or tentative development there existed an intensified potential to learn provided that suitable support was provided.

The zone of proximal development at first appeared to be some kind of magical ‘zone’ that had just been discovered; something that I had never known about before. However, one way to conceptualise it is to think of it as a range of partially formed concepts that have not been converted into principled representations of knowledge. One aspect of the development of role perception that revealed itself to me early in the Traeger Park program was that the development of role principles that underlie the ability to ‘take on’ the role intentions of others is a process of gradual concept development. That is, children do not move directly to a highly abstract notion of role principles. At the start, children develop principles that are grounded around their experience of, for example, ‘What people do’. They build on these principles as they actually perform and engage in the role/s in question. It is from this point that they can be moved into abstracted notions of what the role entails. The following interaction with a child in Grade one who was working within a theme on insects and as part of that class program which was engaging her in the role of entomologist.

I asked her, “What is an entomologist?” The class had already worked on the notion of what it meant to be ‘an entomologist’. As part of that process, they had been involved in a considerable amount of practical activity built around the lesson sequence framework we will later explain and discuss as ‘Concentrated Encounters’. They had also visited an entomology lab to see what an entomologist did. During that process they had frequently encountered the information that an entomologist was a person who studied insects. So I expected an answer phrased in this manner.

B: Can you tell me, what’s an entomologist?

(Her reply was delivered in a highly confident and fluent manner)

P: He gets some insects and then he puts them in a killing jar and after that he puts them in a relaxing jar and then its finished, it’s nice and soft and then he sets them in the cardboard.

(as she said this she mimed each of the stages of the activity with her hands as if the physical actions were the stimulus for remembering and producing each step in her explanation)

This was not what she had been told but what she had experienced personally as she and the rest of the class had carried out the classroom tasks involved in becoming an entomologist.

At the time of the Traeger Park project, the notion of the young child as an ‘emergent’ reader of this kind of was just taking hold in schools across Australia, although the concept had been gathering momentum in the research literature since the 1960’s. What was not understood or acknowledged at the time was that ‘emergent’ behaviour is not just confined to the reading process, it was merely a feature of the conceptual development of children’s learning generally and it should be recognised and dealt with as part of all of the pedagogy that is applied to the education of young children.

When we are talking about the conceptual development of young children we are, of course, talking about the development of role perceptions that provide relevance for what is often conceived as a purely rational and unemotional bank of knowledge and strategies. However, as I have been attempting to point out such notions are abstractions that are made for the convenience of researchers and others. They do not represent an adequate explanation of how the mind actually works in the ‘real’ world.

Consequently, the point about the zone of proximal development that drew my attention strongly was that it clearly did not refer to the conventional behaviourist (direct instruction) or individual cognitivist (child centered) models of pedagogy that were commonly applied to the education of Aboriginal children. I saw in Vygotsky’s theoretical formulation of development a way of defining a pedagogic position that sat outside the conventional teacher/child directed continuum in the manner outlined in Figure 4 previously.

Properties of the zone of proximal development

Two properties of the zone were particularly powerful in their ability to support an alternative position outside the continuum. First, Vygotsky was very clear in the extent to which supportive teaching could move beyond children’s ‘actual’ developmental level. That teaching could actually achieve this corresponded with my reading of the child development literature. In addition, in my first attempts at changing the context of the teaching activity in the language unit, I had observed the children performing at dramatically higher levels and I could also see that these performance changes could be achieved quite quickly.

Vygotsky linked the zone of proximal development to the research of Dorothea McCarthy (1930). When he discussed her work, he did not talk in terms of the zone extending ‘just beyond’ the level of ‘actual’ development as both direct instruction and child directed pedagogies would require in order to maintain their theoretical integrity. He talked in terms of years in performance difference with a potential difference of four years.

McCarthy showed that among children between the ages of three and five there are two groups of functions; those the children already possess, and those they can perform under guidance, in groups, and in collaboration with one another but which they have not yet mastered independently. McCarthy's study demonstrated that this second group of function is at the actual developmental level of five to seven years.
(Vygotsky 1978:87)

Earlier, when he referred to his own research and defined what he meant by the zone of proximal development he talked clearly again in terms of a potential of four years.

This difference between twelve and eight or between nine and eight, is what we call the zone of proximal development. It is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky 1978:86)

The 'gap' is elastic

At Traeger Park I was also starting to see that there existed a potential for the extent of the zone of proximal development to respond to the nature of the support process that was provided by the teacher. The extent could be changed by varying factors such as the following;

- The information that was provided.
- The manner of that provision.
- The extent to which the activities of the teacher was systematic and explicit, especially in the early stages of the teaching.
- The extent to which the support was seen as an ongoing cumulative series of lesson events rather than a one off interaction,
- The extent to which the appropriate role perceptions were provided and the extent to which they could be practiced within roles the children could see as relevant to communicative use.
- The extent to which the adult was prepared to embrace imitation as a legitimate process for learning and to evoke it in teaching.
- The extent to which the children could see the activities as positive and affirming experiences (i.e. where they were confident of success),
- The extent to which the teacher could accept and expand on responses in an attuned manner.

I saw that an educational approach that could harmonise factors such as these could also maximise the extent of the developmental potential that was available in the zone of proximal development. It is important to note the use of harmonise in relation to these factors. Effective use depends on understanding how these factors interact.

This was an important understanding in determining the nature of the teaching and learning model that was adopted at Traeger Park. What I had realised was that the zone of proximal development was a relatively elastic concept. Within certain limits, the quality of the interaction strategies employed made a difference. There may be limits because of the intrinsic cognitive make up of different children but the zone of proximal development could not be assigned as an immutable property of a child. This was particularly important for the children at Traeger Park and it underlines the careful systematic nature of the teaching model that was put in place.

Teaching strategies that provide support in the zone of proximal development

Vygotsky did talk about the kind of teaching that should occur in order to provide "the only 'good learning'" which is "that which is in advance of development" (Vygotsky 1978:89). However, he did not use the term 'scaffolding' to refer to the support process that should operate in the zone of proximal development. That term first appeared in Ninio & Bruner (1978) in reference to the manner in which a mother developed her child's ability to assign labels in interaction around a picture book. The mother first drew attention then, when the child was attending, she supplied a label and encouraged the child to take it over and when this happened she provided more information. This expansion process became what

they termed a scaffold that allowed her to continue to expand the child's understanding. From there, more complex interaction patterns could and did arise as the mother 'upped the anti'. A key factor was that the process depended on the establishment of shared knowledge for its point of departure and development. This kind of pattern was illustrated over and over in the child development literature that I was reading at the time. Other researchers such as David Wood (e.g. 1980) discussed similar processes in terms of contingent teaching but he also identified that process with 'scaffolding'. It wasn't until Bruner produced *Child's Talk* (1983) that the term really started to gain broad educational currency.

Imitation is 'legitimate'

The manner in which Vygotsky talked about teaching in the zone of proximal development refers to a specific kind of interaction between adult and child/ren. He paid particular attention to the role of imitation in the human learning process. He raised the issue in a number of places and it is worth reflecting on his explicit emphasis on its position in the teaching process he was indicating.

A full understanding of the zone of proximal development must result in reevaluation of the role of imitation in learning. An unshakable tenet of classical psychology is that only the independent activity of children, not their imitative activity, indicates their level of mental development. This view is expressed in all current testing systems. In evaluating mental development, consideration is given only to those solutions to test problems which the child reaches without the assistance of others, without demonstrations and without leading questions. Imitation and learning are thought of as purely mechanical processes. But recently psychologists have shown that a person can imitate only that which is within their developmental level.
(Vygotsky 1978:87-88)

In his following example, it was made clear that the developmental level he was referring to here was the child's potential level not the 'actual' level. This quotation like most of Vygotsky's writing was loaded in the sense that more than one implication was raised in a short space. One has to do with the actual strategies that operate in scaffolding and again Vygotsky picks this point up in other places. The examples he gave involved the use of explicit teaching strategies that were excluded from consideration in progressive, child directed learning approaches.

Suppose that I show them various ways of dealing with a problem. Different experimenters might employ different models of demonstration in different cases: some might run through an entire demonstration and ask the children to repeat it, others might initiate the solution and ask the child to finish it, or offer leading questions. In short, in some way or other I propose that the children solve the problem with my assistance.
(Vygotsky 1978:86)

What needs to be remembered is that, at this point, Vygotsky was talking about testing. His discussion moved between testing and teaching sometimes rather abruptly. However, it is clear here that he considered explicit adult intervention of this kind is required to take the child's performance out into the zone of proximal development. In short, the adult had to do one or more of the following, show the child how to do something, work with him/her in the doing of the task or provide leading questions which could assist the child as he/she worked on the task.

Without going into too much detail here we can state a simple principle. This is that we are talking about imitation as an active rather than the passive state that is usually represented when we rail against the futility of excessive 'rote' learning. Vygotsky points out that for learners to internalise 'rote' content, that content must be able to be accommodated within the learner's zone of proximal development. A sufficient level of role perception must exist or be created for the content to be transformed and internalised in the learner as principled knowledge. This process requires the existence of or the creation of role principles within the learner as part of the support provided. It is awareness of a social purpose for content that allows the transformation to be acted upon.

One way of looking at the issue of whether imitation works or not is to consider what happens when understandings about social purpose are not available in the learner or made visible in the scaffolding support provided. What it means for the education of children such as those at Traeger Park is that what we are offering is mere mechanical imitation that makes it impossible for role perceptions to be systematically transformed into principled role perceptions over time. Indeed, this is the case with all learning throughout our lives even when the activity looks on the surface to be imitative and rote in character. The 'rote' learning of, for example, 'tables' in primary school is useful only if we can see a social role beyond the learning. The children who don't see this do not learn. The whole point Vygotsky is making is that imitation per se is not bad and it needs to be seen as a legitimate and, in fact, essential component of learning.

Positioning role perception in relation to Vygotsky

In taking on the understandings that were presented in Vygotsky's work, I also held onto the necessity of not abandoning the notion of role perception that had arisen to conceptualise the learning needs of the children at Traeger Park. I saw the notions of role perception and role as fundamental building blocks that allowed me to bring the process understandings of Vygotsky into alignment with the work of Halliday whose work I was drawing on to specify teaching content goals for the program. Role, as I saw it, did not represent a passive taking on of a set of social rules and orientations. It represented an active process in which an individual positioned themselves in relation to others. In taking on a role, one takes on role perceptions that allow for the projection of intentions onto others and for positioning oneself in relation to those projections. That some of those perceptions come to reside within the individual as tacit and implicit understandings is part of our human makeup. It does not mean that every individual must or even does take on exactly the same instinctual response patterns nor does it mean that deeply held emotions and other orientations cannot be brought into conscious awareness. It just explains why once these are set, it is difficult to do so.

This view of development as an active process was also supported by my reading of Vygotsky (1978).

These individual examples illustrate a general developmental law for the higher mental functions that we feel can be applied in its entirety to children's learning processes. We propose that an essential feature of learning is that it creates a zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement
(Vygotsky 1978:90)

Learning in the zone of proximal development is a social process

Contained within this statement of Vygotsky's are two notions that resonate strongly with role perception and the development of principled role knowledge. These notions have already been outlined in previous discussion. However, such is their importance that nothing is lost in summarising them here.

The first of these is that the transformation that takes place within an individual is not something that makes the learner into a direct clone of the tutor. The learner becomes as Bruner (1986) later put it, "*an individual in society*".

Second, Vygotsky makes the point that the learning that occurs in the zone of proximal development takes place primarily because it is a human phenomenon that depends on interaction processes that are an essential component of our intrinsic make up as social beings. I have been referring to these as role perceptions. Later in deference to the clinical psychological research that became prominent in the 1990's, I sometimes used the term intentionality/intentionalities to refer to role perceptions. On reflection a better term would retain the notion of role as role intentionality/intentionalities. What I mean by that is the

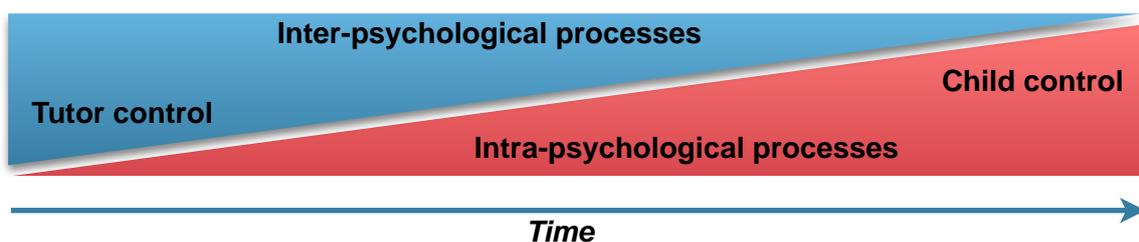
development of our fundamental ability to mirror and identify with the intentions and feelings of others and to project and respond to those perceived perceptions. While these capabilities are intrinsic to our nature as humans, in social and cultural role environments (contexts of culture) their operation results in the construction of diverse realities and consciousness which underlie our perception of 'self'. Both of these, as discussion has indicated, have implications for the education of all children but especially those who were attending Traeger Park School.

Consequently, when I approached Vygotsky's socio-historical perspective on development and learning, I did so from an interactive position on the development of role perception rather than from one that carried with it the baggage of either behaviourist or cognitivist perspectives on learning. This orientation had been further reinforced by the observations and conclusions I had drawn from observations at Traeger Park. Consequently the model presented earlier in Figure 4 that mapped the movement from conscious to principled role perception onto the internalisation of the context of situation also provided an obvious correlation with Vygotsky's notion of development as a process that requires a transformation within the individual of concepts, first on an interactive (inter-personal) plane and then to an internalised (intra-personal) state of development as the learner engaged in interaction with a more knowing other. It was quite clear from Vygotsky's writing (and also Halliday) that the shift into development (intra-personal) requires an internal transformation of the events encountered on the inter-personal level along the lines I proposed in Figure 5.

Our hypothesis establishes the unity but not the identity of learning processes. It presupposes that the one is converted into the other. Therefore, it becomes an important concern of psychological research to show how external knowledge and abilities in children become internalised. (Vygotsky 1978:90-91)

Today, the movement from inter-psychological to intra-psychological functioning is often represented as a movement from tutor control of the interaction to child control. Again, Vygotsky did not produce such a model. However, it represents an obvious interpretation of his discussion of the teaching process that should take place when the tutor and child are engaging within the zone of proximal development. In fact, I was using a similar cline relationship model to Figure 5 informally to conceptualise the process before I discovered that Campione & Brown (1983) had used an alike presentation of the transfer of active control from adult to child in scaffolding. This model has become widely adopted.

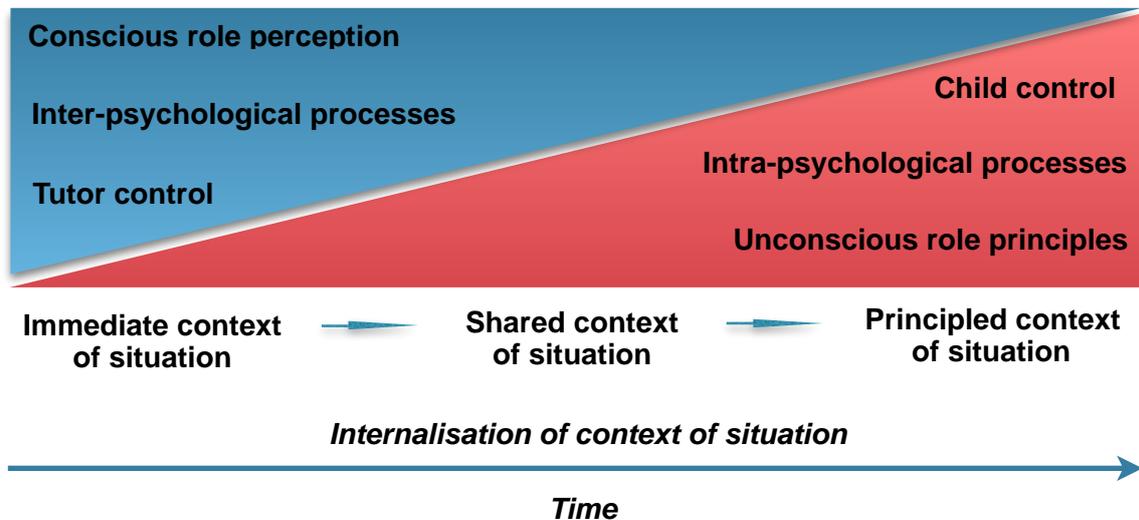
Figure 7
The transfer of interactional control from tutor to child in scaffolding



Putting Vygotsky, Halliday and role perception together

When Figure 7 is superimposed over Figure 5 we are presented with a multilayered interpretation of what actually constitutes the process of scaffolding. This was the context from which I approached the interpretation of Vygotsky's work at the time and it is an approach that holds a specific interpretation of what the process of scaffolding might entail. Figure 8 shows the superimposed multilayered model

Figure 8
The interaction of the development of role principles, intra-psychological functioning over time in scaffolding



Scaffolding is a process

This model outlines the nature of the psychological processes that underlie the transfer of control from the tutor to the child in the process of scaffolding. Following on from the preceding discussion, the model underlines the need to consider scaffolding as a process. Moreover, it is a process in which learning is not simply storing and giving back shared knowledge between teacher and children. It is about the transformation of shared knowledge into principles that establish the intra-personal validity of the orientation and the mental tools that individuals bring to the performance of social roles. In order to engage and be engaged with this transformational process, children have to engage and be engaged with the underlying role perceptions that are required to make decisions about the use of those mental tools.

When we set out to engage educationally marginalised children such as those at Traeger Park, it pointed directly to the need to avoid what could be referred to as a serendipitous approach to both the notion of zone of proximal development and the teaching process that has been associated with the work of Vygotsky as scaffolding. To reach the children at Traeger Park and to address their learning needs required a **systematic process approach** that was build around the concepts and relationships that are embodied within this model

What can we say about ‘scaffolding’ and the ‘zone of proximal development’

One issue to address here that has relevance for current practices that attempt to support Aboriginal learners is to refer back to an earlier quote from Vygotsky and clarify what the term ‘leading question’ actually means. Leading questions are questions that prompt the learner to respond in a certain way. In education, they are designed to help the learner to adopt a particular orientation in a learning task by directing or guiding their orientation to a particular educational problem. Leading questions can vary in the extent to which they ‘lead’ or show the learner how to respond to a problem. Leading questions can also require a ‘closed’ or an ‘open’ response from the learner.

Open questions, in the strict definition of the term, are simply questions that invite an extended response rather than a closed *yes* or *no*. However, child directed learning practitioners tend to set open questions in opposition to leading questions, closed questions and any other kind of practice that could be considered to be leading in their nature such as telling, showing, directing, explaining and so on.

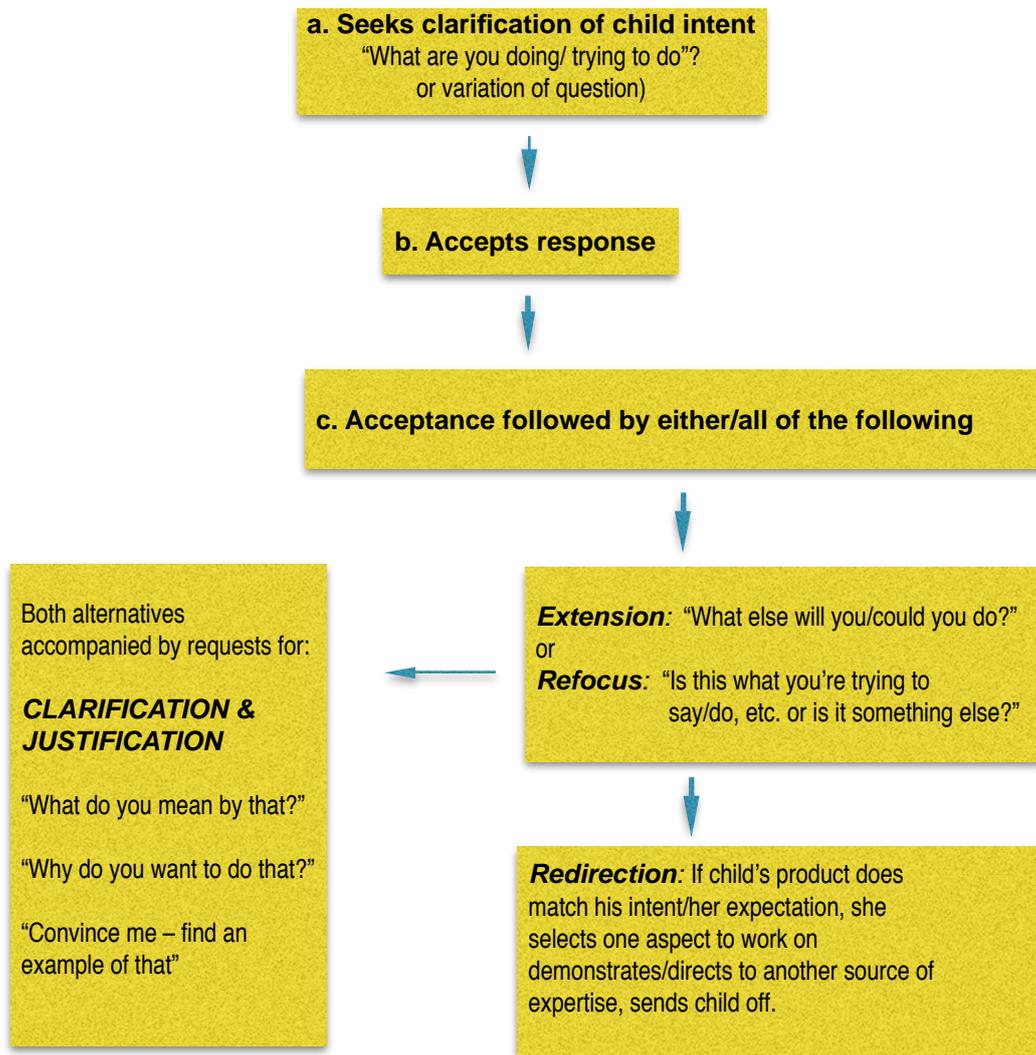
Especially since the latter stages of the industrial revolution in the last half of the 19th century, there has been an intense ongoing debate between proponents of child and teacher directed learning pedagogies with one or the other given more or less attention in general curriculum practice at any particular time. One of the undesirable outcomes of the confusion caused by the debates that perennially occur between advocates of teacher direction and child direction is that teaching practices to do with directly helping students and allowing students to work things out for themselves often end up existing side by side in a somewhat random configuration that has little coherence in terms of the support provided to meet the learning needs of the children.

Additionally, in conventional curriculum guidelines, it is very rare for any kind of leading question to constitute exemplar models provided. The questioning framework below was given as such an exemplar for teachers assisting in 'activity work' where children are set to work on problems and tasks and the teacher attempts to support their performance and understanding. This is precisely the kind of situation to which Vygotsky was referring in his above quotes.

The example chosen for discussion here was taken from Cambourne (1988). This example appeared some time after the project at Traeger Park but its tenor was very much current at that time as it is still in many classrooms today. Cambourne's elaboration is interesting in the context of the above discussion because it moves beyond the abstract categories defined in the IRF (Initiation >Response >Feedback) questioning pattern that has been identified as a generic component of classroom discourse in the work of researchers such as Sinclair and Coulthard (1979); Sinclair and Brazil (1982) and Mehan (1975, 1979). Cambourne provides a series of more specific teacher questions and directions that seek to develop the thinking of the student who is the focus of the teacher's attention. This is a recipe for what the teacher should do to develop this kind of thinking.

Consideration of the manner in which the questions in the above interaction model are framed leads to an inescapable conclusion that they are framed as 'idealised' open questions that do not provide a lead to the students. In short, in this questioning framework the teacher has refrained from providing any assistance or direction. This is not surprising because the book from which it was drawn was written from a whole-language perspective. It is useful in our discussion here because it represents a highly influential model of the kind of 'eclectic' compromise approach that arose in the aftermath of genre/process debate that was discussed earlier concerning the polemic continuum between teacher directed and child directed learning represented in Figures 3 and 4. However, the twist from pure child directed learning that was presented in this 'eclectic' compromise was that this questioning sequence was now to follow what was called a demonstration in which the teacher demonstrated how to write a text by writing one herself and modelling her thinking process for the children. This activity brought together in one event, a borrowing of the teacher directing and explicit teaching that was seemingly demanded by the 'genre' theorists but kept as much as possible of the interactional purity of child directed learning in which the teacher did not lead for the interpersonal questioning practice.

Figure 6
The pattern of teacher/pupil interactions during activity time
(Cambourne 1988:121)



Now let us say that a teacher has attempted to provide some scaffolding assistance, for example, by providing a demonstration. The teacher has maybe composed a piece of writing aloud in front of the class, inviting the children to discuss the problems she faces. She then turns to the children and says. “*Well, that’s my story – Now I want you to write your story.*”

As the children engage with the task, the teacher moves for child to child discussing their task with them. She uses the pattern of teacher interaction that has been outlined from Cambourne (1988) above. The examples provided by Cambourne unfailingly present a seamless interaction process that takes place between teacher and student. The text presentation format below has been modified from a transcript supplied by Cambourne (1988: pp.147-149). The only modification has been to assign the interaction moves to each of the statements made by the participants. This has been done to clarify the relationship between Cambourne’s interaction categories and the actual words spoken. The interaction moves are given in the left hand column and the words spoken in the centre. The right hand column contains comments inserted by Cambourne to clarify interpretation.

INTERACTION MOVES	WHAT WAS SAID	EXPLANATION/COMMENT
clarification of child intent	What are you working on, Jenny?	Variations of this opening gambit are many e.g. "What are you supposed to be doing" "What are you trying to do?" "What part of your contract are you working on?" The purpose appears to be to make the child clarify his or her intent as specifically as possible.
Child replies	I'm trying to do my special author project. I've written a draft of what I want to go on my Roald Dahl poster.	
clarification of child intent	Read it to me.	It's obvious that Jenny has a long way to go. There are any number of areas of her draft that still need work and possibly she needs help in coping with some of them.
Child replies	Jenny responds and reads her draft to Mrs Brown	
clarification of child intent	What do you want the people who read your poster to know about Roald Dahl, Jenny?	Jenny looks thoughtful for a few seconds and then replies.
Child replies	I want them to know what some of the books are that he's written and that he writes about funny events and describes people like Mrs Pratchett and that he's funny and makes you laugh.	
refocus	Well, you've got the list okay but have you told your reader about the events and characters he writes about?	
Child replies	Haven't I done it right? What should I do?	with some hint of concern in her voice
refocus	What do you want to do?	
Child responds	What I said before.	

refocus	You said that you'd like to tell your reader about some of the funny situations Roald Dahl writes about and some of the characters in his books, didn't you?	
Child Responds	Yes	
refocus	Well, tell me about some of them.	
Child responds	Jenny begins to recount some of the events from some of the books she's read, giving detailed accounts of what she means.	Mrs Brown listens and nods at the appropriate moments.
redirection	Go and write some of those details down on your draft before you forget them and then ask Melissa to listen to what you have written. See if she thinks it is clear. Ask her to help you think of a heading you might use on that section of the poster, a heading that summarises what you're telling your reader.	
Child responds	You mean like 'Why I like Roald Dahl's books?'	
accepts response	Yes	

In this transcript, we encounter a child who clearly is in tune with the basic nature of the role perceptions for engaging in classroom interaction of this kind. The problem for teachers who were working with the children at Traeger Park was that the children did not bring such perceptions to the interaction process. Because these orientations were not there from the start of their schooling, they continually failed to achieve the kind of interaction pattern that is illustrated above. For the children at Traeger Park failure after failure to engage with the role perceptions demanded by the school taught both the children and their teachers that they could not succeed.

My observation on the above teaching process would be that for some children in a mainstream classroom such an approach would likely push them beyond their current or 'actual' level of development. However, I would qualify this by adding but not very far. This is because the teacher is essentially working the students very close to their 'actual' level even though the process involved is considered to represent 'scaffolding'. This, statement begs the question of what is meant by the term scaffolding. This is a topic we will approach

shortly. However, before we do so I would like to pursue our discussion about the nature of the children who would be likely to progress in the teaching context that Cambourne describes.

I would like to continue that in the class Cambourne describes, there would also be a proportion of the children for whom the scaffolding was inadequate to push them out beyond their 'actual' level of writing development. For these children, the provision of a one off demonstration was not enough. Consequently, for these children there was no scaffolding despite the best intentions of the teacher. For these children, the process failed because 'scaffolding' was essentially a one off event with which they could not engage.

These children could not engage with the initial demonstration because they did not have the role perceptions to interact successfully with the demonstration required. Nor did they have the role perceptions required to engage with the idealised open questioning model that essentially required those perceptions before they began to engage.

Foremost amongst these latter hypothetical children would be, in effect, the real Aboriginal children I was observing daily in the classroom at Traeger Park. These children can be hidden away and escape notice in classrooms that contain a majority of children from mainstream literate homes. However, in schools like Traeger Park where they constitute a significant part of the school population, they create difficulties for teachers that are far more insistent and problematic. They cannot be 'averaged out' in a pedagogy that supports most of the children. When it is possible to 'average out' Aboriginal students, it becomes possible for teachers to maintain the coherence of conventional teaching practice.

However, because the 'average' at Traeger Park, in fact, was made up by the performance of Aboriginal children this could not happen. In such circumstances, a chain reaction of failure is set in motion. This severely damages the development of children as learners as well as setting in motion a compounding cycle that results from interaction between learning failure and the children's development of their sense of 'self'. Similar effects are unavoidable for the teachers who are involved with this process. As a result, the nature of the pedagogy cannot stay the same and, in particular, it starts to lose its coherence and relevance. This was the kind of situation I was confronted with at Traeger Park and which was outlined in part one of this paper.

To explore what I mean by this process, it is helpful to draw upon an interaction between a teacher and child at Traeger Park that can be presented within the framework that Cambourne describes above.

In an early childhood class the teacher had introduced the children to patterns as part of her maths program and the children had been set to make patterns out of sets of multicoloured pegs by clipping them onto a cord stretched down one side of the room. One little girl, Raylene had made a pattern by putting all of one colour pegs together followed by all of another colour. Another infants teacher (helping out in the class) had been observing her. Raylene called out for the main class to look at what she had done so the observing teacher stepped in and asked "What have you done?" She wanted Raylene to say that she had made a pattern and then to describe the nature of the pattern. Unfortunately, that was a component of the task definition that was completely unknown to Raylene who had interpreted the problem set as using up all of the pegs. When the pegs were used up, the task was finished and the teacher would approve. Making 'patterns' held no particular relevance for her although she was happy to comply with all of the directions the teacher had given for the task.

INTERACTION MOVES	WHAT WAS SAID	EXPLANATION/COMMENT
Child seeks teacher attention	Hey look...look here Mrs Edwards...Mrs Edwards	Wants to show other teacher what she has done
Teacher seeks clarification of child intent	What have you done?	Called teacher is busy so helping teacher comes over. She wants Raylene to explain about her pattern
Child replies	Colours.....all of them	Raylene means she has used up all the pegs
Teacher seeks clarification of child intent (second time)	How did you put them up?	The teacher is still trying to pursue her agenda to have Raylene explain what she has done (i.e. grouped the colours) She thinks Raylene's response indicates she has something to say about a pattern. Raylene has put similar colours together.
Child replies	All of them, all of them	So Raylene has to tell her again that she used up all the colours
Accepts response	You put all of them up?	Teacher finally catches on and accepts the response
Child replies	Yeah	Raylene's response is flat and muted indicating her confused frustration. She is starting to withdraw
Teacher attempts to refocus Raylene onto the pattern task (third time)	How did you put all the colours Raylene?	The teacher doggedly pursues her original (invisible to Raylene) agenda - If we look at this from Raylene's point of view, what do we see? A quite reasonable reaction would be increasing frustration - Raylene is a very perceptive child but how do you respond when you give a perfectly good answer not once but twice and the teacher still doesn't seem to catch on?
Child replies	This, this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this....	Each time she says this Raylene points emphatically time after time at the pegs
Teacher attempts to refocus Raylene onto the pattern task (fourth time)	Yeah you didn't mix them up did you?	The teacher sees that Raylene possibly has the concept because she does have the colours in groups but the teacher still pursues her agenda for Raylene to spontaneously describe the nature of the pattern. Her concession is to give a clue about not mixing the colours presumably in the hope that Raylene will talk about sorting into patterns. She has now been forced in desperation to phrase a closed question. This was a common result in interaction at Traeger Park.

Child does not respond		Raylene is totally confused - How can she be expected to engage here? The teacher has asked her the same thing over and over and essentially refused to value her responses each time
Teacher attempts to refocus Raylene onto the pattern task (fifth time)	Was that very hard to do?	The teacher is still pursuing her agenda but her questioning is becoming even more tangential. She is running out of things to say. She wants Raylene to talk about the process of arranging the sets of similar colours together i.e Was it hard to make her pattern? Again she has been forced to phrase it as a closed question.
Child Responds	They're almost fall down	In her attempt to refocus, the teacher has created the possibility for Raylene to add her own interpretation on the teacher's question. Raylene had been having difficulty getting the pegs to stay on the line.
Teacher follows child's lead and continues with closed questioning	Fall down do they?	The teacher abandons her attempt at getting Raylene to describe the patterns and follows Raylene's lead.
Child responds	These...this one... These stupid thing fall down	This was Raylene's focus as she was putting the pegs up. She becomes more animated
Teacher attempts to refocus Raylene onto the pattern task (sixth time)	These yellow ones?	Cheered by Raylene's animation. The teacher hasn't given up on the colours. However, she has been forced to dumb down the task. It has moved from pattern analysis to naming colours. Also she has been forced into phrasing closed questions.
Child responds	Yeah	Said with falling tone as Raylene starts to become wary again and signals possible resistance
Teacher follows child's lead and continues with closed questioning	What about this one? Is that nearly falling down	Teacher picks up the mounting resistance and tries to hold on. Again she has been forced to abandon the idea of open questioning. Again the educational agenda has been dumbed down.
Child responds	Yeah	Raylene says this as she moves to adjust a purple peg. She seems to be more interested in the discussion which is now back on her agenda

Teacher attempts to refocus Raylene onto the pattern task (seventh time)	Did it take you a long time?	Encouraged, the teacher tries to resurrect her agenda. Again she feels she has to use a closed question.
Child does not respond		Raylene has had enough of this
Teacher redirects Raylene onto the other teacher	We'll see if Mrs Edwards is ready to look at it	Teacher has taken Raylene's hint. This is not the kind of redirection Cambourne had in mind when he drew up his questioning model.
Child accepts redirection	Miss Edwards... Miss Edwards... Miss Edwards	Raylene calls out to the teacher who is busy with other children and doesn't respond.

At the end of the experience, Raylene wandered off quite despondently because it has not been the greatest of experiences for her. She completed something she wanted to show the teacher but instead she was subjected to repeated questioning that she couldn't seem to satisfy. She had perceived, like all children do at an early age, that if someone in authority keeps asking you the same question over and over, they are telling you that you are wrong. What should have been a triumph ended up as a confusing and generally negative experience.

In fact, Raylene's story did not end at that point. She wandered off in a grumpy mood to the other side of the room and immediately attempted to boss another child who was doing the same task. This effort ended in a scuffle and Raylene was taken over to sit in a corner and calm down by the teacher.

For Raylene, the shame and injustice she experienced over the whole experience was keenly felt. So much so that when she was allowed to join the class again, she came over to me. She was aware that I was observing in the classroom and started the following conversation.

R: You think she's nice, don't you?

G: Yes, I guess so

R: Well, she's not. She grabs you like this.

(Raylene pinches my arm between her fingers and palm)

And her teeth go like this.

(Raylene grinds her teeth together)

And her mouth goes like this.

(Raylene makes a hissing sound)

G: Sometimes things aren't fair.

R: No *(Raylene walks away)*

Both the teachers in the above transcript would have been horrified to think that they had affected Raylene in this way. Both were committed and caring teachers who allowed a lot of latitude beyond what was common in most mainstream schools. For example, before the helping teacher began her questioning sequence with Raylene, she had witnessed a heated and physical argument between Raylene and her friend Sonia but had chosen not to intervene as it had settled relatively quickly.

However, that Raylene had felt the need to open discussion with me in justification of the injustice she felt was visited upon her through the episode highlights just how deeply she

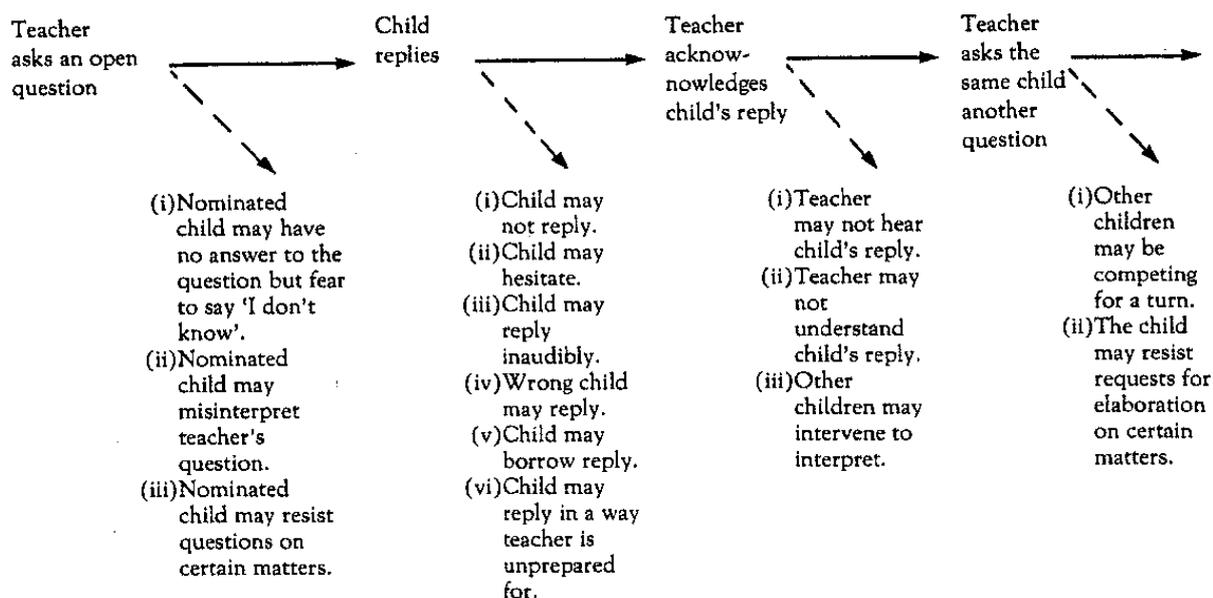
was affected by the whole incident. It also demonstrated the deep inter-relationship that exists between the negotiation of behaviour and the negotiation of learning - a point that was made in discussion earlier.

The whole transcript does illustrate that what often seems benign or self evident to teachers is not often seen that way by the children affected. And, I was left to reflect on how rarely in classroom interaction we really perceive the full picture of the children's side of the issue and how Raylene who came to Alice Springs from a remote community and was living in a camp on the town outskirts needed more support to negotiate her schooling effectively.

In fact, a number of reflections were being drawn from the continual communication breakdowns that were occurring at Traeger Park. Underlying an interpretation of all of these breakdowns was a deepening awareness of what it means to make the statement that communication is an active two way process. Simply to make such a statement seems unproblematical and obvious to most teachers. However, the observations at Traeger Park indicated that acceptance of this premise at a notional level was not the same thing as the practical application of the notion in everyday teaching/learning interaction with children - especially with children such as those attending Traeger Park.

For example, asking children 'open' questions at Traeger Park (i.e. What do you think could be happening in this picture?) commonly elicited a series of guesses many of which were tangential to what the teacher was seeking to achieve. As the teacher struggled to respond and redirect the discussion (something that is virtually impossible to do when little common knowledge exists - that's why the children guessed), many children would withdraw in confusion. Likewise, questions that were directed to elicit a pre-determined answer (Those referred to as 'closed' questions) often drew similar responses. While failure in these areas confused teachers, they had an even more dramatic effect on the student self-esteem and ability to participate.

It is important to note that my observations at Traeger Park did not represent an isolated picture that was representative of just one school. Harris (1978) and Christie (1984) who were contemporaries in the Northern Territory Department at the time both published in depth concerning the issue of teacher questioning with Aboriginal children. Malcolm (1982) also flags the kind of interactional trouble that occurs when 'open' questions are used with Aboriginal children. The partial extract below is taken from Malcolm (1982:179)



To reach children such as these, scaffolding had to be perceived by teachers as an extended and transformative process. Cambourne's interaction model is also useful because it allows us to reflect on the difference I was alluding to when I positioned the pedagogy adopted in the Traeger Park project on a different plane altogether rather than locating it somewhere along the continuum between teacher directed and child directed learning. It is important to realise exactly what such a distinction means for teaching practice. The compromise 'eclectic' position adopted by Cambourne and others constructed its eventual approach by borrowing and combining strategies e.g. like demonstrating, open questioning etc. from each of the ends of the continuum. The pedagogy adopted at Traeger Park also borrowed individual strategies from both ends of the continuum. It is important to note this because it is often thought that a move to a new teaching model involves completely discarding everything that was held before. This is not strictly true and it is a counterproductive way of thinking about the changes that are required.

It is not so much about, for example, 'Now we can't use open questions anymore we have to model and lead.' It is not, for example, about whether we teach phonics in or out of context. In fact, we can and should do both. To think in this way about the issue of what is required to move to a different plane to that represented on the continuum between teacher directed and child directed learning means we are still embedded in our thinking within the same polar plane.

What changes between the compromise eclectic and Traeger Park pedagogies is essentially the manner in which the strategies are modified and configured to form a coherent teaching process that is capable of supporting children with the kind of interactional problems experienced by the Aboriginal children at Traeger Park.

Moving away from this continuum presents us with a series of challenges that are both easy and hard. Easy because we are drawing on the basic elements of strategies that have at one stage or the other been used by teachers since the beginning of mass education. The hard part is that to make the decisions we need to create a new perspective on teaching and learning we have to change fundamental perceptions about how these strategies are shaped and organised as part of a process of teaching and learning. The most fundamental decisions have to do with **when** we direct and tell and **when** we ask and in **what manner** do we ask and so on. We have to come to see notions like scaffolding and the zone of proximal development as integral components of what is a developmental progression for both learning and teaching practice.

The discussion in this paper of the interrelations that exist across the work of Halliday and Vygotsky along with the notions of role perception that were drawn predominantly from psychological research and theory on the development of an individual as a social being, allows me to propose a set of laws.

- These 'laws' characterise the successful operation of both teaching and learning within the social and cognitive space that exists beyond the 'actual' development of the learner.
- These 'laws' identify the circumstances in which learners can function effectively when we seek to exploit Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development for educational purposes.

The laws derive from contingent interactions that exist simultaneously on two planes within the model outlined in Figure 8. The first 'plane' is the one that exists on a vertical axis within the model. The first level along this axis specifies that learning within the 'zone' must be 'situated' in a context of situation. The second horizontal axis tells us the nature of the context of situation that is required for successful teaching and learning to occur.

Thus, if a learner is to operate effectively at the maximal extent of his/her zone of proximal development then the situating must begin as concretely as possible as an 'immediate' context of situation. That is, if the gap between the learner's actual development and his/

her potential development is expected to be large then the context of situation must be made tangible and able to be experienced as directly as possible. If the zone of proximal development gap is not far beyond the learner's actual level, then the teacher and the learner can rely on the understandings that the learner is in possession of an internalised and principled context of situation and the degree of explicit practical experience required for situating the learning and teaching can be relaxed.

The next plane along the vertical axis we encounter is the one that specifies the nature of the engagement that is necessary to realise the development of role and its principles for operation. Role perception is contingent on the existence of a context of situation for its operation. The nature of understandings that are needed for the learner to project into the minds of others and position themselves in interaction (i.e. make decisions in use) depend upon the existence of an appropriate degree of development of the context of situation from which the role is drawn.

The greater the zone of proximal development the more context dependent the perception of role and role principles becomes. When the gap between the zone of proximal development and the child's actual developmental level is large, the context of situation must be established concretely and the role principles must be identified and specified explicitly in use. The smaller the developmental gap implied by the zone of proximal development, the more this condition can be relaxed.

The next plane we encounter is the extent to which the learning and teaching can operate on an inter-personal or intra-personal basis. Whether or not teaching and learning occurs on this axis depends upon the nature of the role perceptions that the learner brings to the task. The extent to which role perceptions are internalised as 'principled' within the learner, the less the learner is dependent on social interactional support in the actual task they are attempting. And, by derivation, the less the level of teacher direction and modelling is required.

It must be remembered that teacher direction of learning is not the only dimension of social interaction that is required for successful teaching and learning. For successful teaching and learning to occur, alignment must be achieved on both a technical and an affective level. There must be both alignment and attunement. The extent to which these need to be explicitly pursued with learners depends upon the nature of the role perceptions and the nature of their awareness and familiarity with the appropriate context of situation.

We can summarise our discussion here in the following set of principles.

Vertical plane principles

- Where children have a high level of internalisation of context of culture the less the context of situation has to be rendered explicitly and concretely.
- Where children have a high level of internalisation of context of situation and by association the context of culture, the less this has to be rendered explicitly and concretely.
- Where children have a high level of role perception the less the context of situation and the necessary role perceptions have to be rendered explicitly.
- Where children have a high level of engagement with the task the less dependent they are on the operation of social interaction for their learning. The less explicit direction and social alignment and attunement is required the less the necessary role perceptions and the context of situation have to be rendered explicitly and concretely.

Horizontal plane principles

The horizontal plane must also be developed as a contingent process over time. That is, learning and teaching must be viewed as a process in which each educational encounter proceeds contingently from the previous one.

At each stage on this horizontal plane, it is necessary for all of the contingencies on the vertical plane to be in alignment for learning and teaching to be effective.

This, we can add an overriding 'horizontal' plane law to our 'vertical' plane laws that have been summarised above.

Where there is a large gap between the child's level of 'actual' development and the potential level of development targeted for engagement in the zone of proximal development, contingency on a horizontal plane (i.e. over time) must be highly developed and explicit. That is, there should exist no conceptual gaps between and within lessons. That is, each lesson or lesson stage should prepare the child to move seamlessly from one stage to the next.

Finally, what can we say about scaffolding?

Today, it seems that almost everything is called 'scaffolding' and almost all teaching artifacts such as worksheets, genre checklists and so on are 'scaffolds'.

The first question I think we need to ask of scaffolding is, "Does anyone learn from it?" This rules out the interaction between the teacher and Raylene that was taken from the old dysfunctional program at Traeger Park. That is, of course, unless the curriculum aim is to scaffold a rejection of schooling.

When we approach the transcript provided by Cambourne, the decision is a little more complex. The support provided is social and some children (at least those in the transcript) are clearly benefiting although it is difficult to see how a child like Raylene or even many others more attuned to the role orientations demanded for successful engagement in schooling would be supported by the process outlined.

For one thing, there is very little contingency on the horizontal plane between the demonstration provided and the idealised 'open' question model employed in the learning negotiation between teacher and children. It is assumed that the children will make the connection between the 'demonstration' and the task of writing. However, consideration of the interaction that took place has no reference to the fact that the child concerned, Jenny, might be working from a model demonstration in the writing of her poster. There is no referencing back to past shared experience of any kind. The teacher just pushes the child onto her own resources at all stages of the interaction.

In fact, Cambourne does not tell us that there was any antecedent 'demonstration' on poster writing for this child to refer back to. If there was no 'demonstration' model, it is difficult to see how the idealised 'open' questioning interaction reported could, in any way, be categorised as scaffolding that could relate to Vygotsky's concept of teaching in the zone of proximal development. It is, in fact, more easily identifiable with targeting teaching at the child's 'actual' level of development.

Cambourne would probably argue in defence that this teacher was giving demonstrations about writing all the time in class. This, however, brings us back to the contingency law stated above. The question is how much did the children connect with the demonstrations that were provided?

For children who bring appropriate alignment of the kinds of resources outlined on the vertical plane to the task, it is conceivable that engagement occurred. However, the assumption in an argument that lots of demonstrations ensure engagement and learning is false. If a child does not bring the necessary resources for engagement then lots of demonstrations simply mean lots of disengagement. And, the greater the contingency disjunction, the greater the potential for failure to engage.

Without continuing on in this vein, I would offer one basic observation here. If one wishes the notion of scaffolding to become synonymous with 'any teaching', then, why not call the transcript we are discussing 'scaffolding'. However, if we wish 'scaffolding' to apply to the kind of teaching that lifts learners out into the zone of proximal development and which supports the transformation of knowledge from inter-personal to intra-personal functioning, we need to address the notion of scaffolding as a contingent transformation process through which learning takes place over time.