ACCESSING THE DISCOURSES OF SCHOOLING

English Language and Literacy Development with Aboriginal Children in Mainstream Schools

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ABSTRACT

ACCESSING THE DISCOURSES OF SCHOOLING: English Language and Literacy Development with Aboriginal Children in Mainstream Schools

This thesis reports on aspects of an intervention program in literacy and language development implemented for Aboriginal children at Traeger Park School in Alice Springs. The study proposes that the provision of access to academic/literate discourses for Aboriginal children is an issue that has been either avoided or devalued generally in Australian linguistic research. This negative orientation has been particularly prevalent in mainstream linguistic studies which have followed Labovian (i.e. Labov 1969) perspectives on notions of difference/deficit since the 1970's.

Other language research which has focused on the negotiation of learning with Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms requires careful interpretation as researchers have tended to explore different dimensions of the negotiation context. This research, while it offers useful information to educators seeking to provide access to mainstream schooling also ultimately fails to deal adequately with the provision of access and control over academic/literate discourses.

This study argues that there is clear evidence that many Aboriginal parents are seeking such access for their children and that it is imperative that educators develop an appropriate pedagogy capable of addressing the issue. Moreover, it proposes that fundamental to the provision of access and control over academic/literate discourses is a need to realise that Aboriginal learners must to be given access and control over culturally embedded knowledge and understandings that are necessary for mainstream educational success.


The analysis in this study explores the development and application of teacher strategies over the course of a concentrated encounter macrogenre (Frances Christie 1994) leading to the production of a scientific explanation text. The teacher in the study was found to change dramatically the level of explicit orchestration and support she employed over the course of the macrogenre. These changes occurred as she both built and responded to the development of
inter-subjectivity (D’Andrade 1987) to do with academic task focus between herself and the children. The study raises fundamental questions with respect to the present conduct of mainstream schooling for Aboriginal children in general and the negotiation of learning in particular. The study proposes a rational alternative to current practice.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is dedicated to the memory of the late Graeme Cooper who was principal of Traeger Park School at the time this study was carried out. Without Graeme’s enthusiasm and complete conviction that there was no acceptable reason why Aboriginal children should not achieve in mainstream schooling, and, without his ability to challenge bureaucracy when it interfered with his primary role of educating children, the project at Traeger Park would have never been commenced.

Second, it is important to recognise the role of my colleague Julia Price who is the teacher featured in the concentrated encounter lesson sequence analysed in this study. This study, if nothing else, is a tribute to her qualities as a teacher of immense sensitivity who loves and delights in the development of the children with whom she works. At the same time it is important to mention others at Traeger Park School who joined in unselfishly in the development of an uncertain and emerging perspective on pedagogy. In making a list of these people I am conscious that there will be some unjustified omissions and I apologise for these. However, the following list gives some of the teachers and other school personnel who taught in or in other ways assisted with the project: Fiona McLoughlin, Paul McLoughlin, Peggy Webb, Eril Jamison, Heather Agg, Julie Heller, Kerry Espie, Margaret Cooper, Theresa McFarlane, Fern Norhouse, Jeannie Liddle, Liz Richter-Cross, Horrie Mills and Sue Calligan.

Significant recognition is also due to my supervisor, Frances Christie whose own work has provided much of the inspiration for the methodology employed in this study. Her patient support and critical comment have been invaluable.

Recognition is also due to my wife Pam without whose comments on drafts and support as our life was placed ‘on hold’ at various stages have made this study possible. I would like to thank also my colleagues and the Schools and Community Centre at the University of Canberra, in particular, Wendy Cowey who has provided valuable feedback and other kinds of support. Finally, I wish to thank Richard Walker for generously providing access to the some of the transcripts discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis.
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1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM: SCHOOL LITERACY AS CULTURAL LEARNING

1.1 THE FOCUS OF THIS STUDY

Aboriginal children entering Australian schools represent a significant minority group with whom the Australian school system has struggled to cope. In fact, Aboriginal children are generally acknowledged to constitute the minority group with whom Australian schools are the least effective. For example, in documentation accompanying The Australian Language and Literacy Policy, (AGPS 1991:89), Aboriginal people are described as, “the most disadvantaged in Australia with respect to access to and participation in education”. In 1994 the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (AGPS 1994:56) stated that 45% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary students had literacy and numeracy levels significantly below expectations for their age. The 1996 National Literacy Survey (DEETYA 1997:20) found that Indigenous children in years three and five had levels of literacy achievement three to four years below those of non-Indigenous students. While the National Literacy Survey results include children from both urban and rural settings, results from schools situated in Aboriginal communities are even worse. A recent survey of literacy levels for children attending school in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands in the north of South Australia (Gray, Rose & Cowey- in progress) found that the majority of children were leaving school with literacy skills no greater than that obtained at grade one and two levels by the majority of their mainstream non-Aboriginal peers. Those few children who progressed beyond these levels (approx 7%) entered special secondary bridging programs with literacy competence mainly at or below grade three performance levels with the very best, who constituted less than 1% of the overall population, achieving at a low grade four level. At the time of the survey, only two children were enrolled in year 10 classes (junior secondary) and none had progressed to years 11 and 12 (senior secondary). These results are consistent with those obtained by a major Northern Territory survey which reported that “students in remote Aboriginal schools are, at best, three (3) years behind their urban counterparts and, at worst, seven (7) years behind.” (Public Accounts Committee, NT, 1996:13).

Thus, despite ongoing concern and efforts by both educators and governments, the question of how to provide effective “access to and participation in education” for Aboriginal children, particularly in relation to English literacy, remains an urgent need that is far from resolution.
As the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody tabled in Federal Parliament in May 1991 found:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and achievement in education, as defined by the wider Australian society, has been limited and this in turn has limited the real choices available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australian society. (AGPS, 1992:40)

It should be added also that many Aboriginal people, especially those in remote areas, exist in conditions of extreme financial poverty rarely experienced or even comprehended by any other group in the Australian community. And, as earlier discussion has indicated, this poverty and dispossession is exacerbated by disastrously low literacy levels.

This study will propose that one of the major obstacles to the provision of effective education to Aboriginal children has been the inability of the education system to develop appropriate teaching goals together with an appropriate methodology for providing access to discourses important for academic success. It is this issue that will constitute the major research question to be addressed.

It will be proposed that achieving success in mainstream education requires access to what is essentially cultural knowledge. It will be further proposed that this cultural knowledge must be made explicit and accessible to Aboriginal children before they can be expected to succeed in controlling the academic discourses that are the province of mainstream schooling. In addressing this issue, the study will focus directly on the nature of learning negotiation which occurs between Aboriginal children and teachers in mainstream schooling. In particular, it will seek to identify and exemplify appropriate patterns of interaction through which Aboriginal children can be helped to gain control of the literacy agenda in mainstream schooling. It will also seek to identify principles for creating suitable contexts within which such interaction patterns can be initiated and maintained.

In order to address the above issues, implications for curriculum development and teacher/child interaction with Aboriginal children will be drawn from investigation of strategies for the social construction of literacy developed by the author in co-operation with teachers from Traeger Park School in Alice Springs, Australia.

This first chapter will be organised around issues to do with the setting of English language and literacy goals for Aboriginal children. The following section (section 1.2) will locate Traeger Park School within the range of contexts for English language and literacy development which exist across Australian schools. The next section (section 1.3) will discuss the relevance of the teaching strategies developed at Traeger Park School which is the subject of this study for Aboriginal education generally. The third and fourth sections will discuss the perspective on appropriate literacy and language development goals that was adopted at the school. To do this, the discussion will examine briefly varying views on appropriate goals for English language and literacy development (section 1.4). The discussion
will then introduce at greater length the notion of providing access to culturally situated discourses as a means of conceptualising educational goals for Aboriginal children (section 1.5).

1.2 CONTEXTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

Schools attended by Aboriginal children vary greatly in terms of the circumstances in which they function. Some schools serve children from remote communities within which traditional culture and lifestyle are strongly maintained. A number of these communities have gained land rights and have a significant degree of autonomy over their affairs. Other schools serve communities on what were previously government controlled forced settlement reserves, mission or ex-mission settlements or excisions on pastoral properties. Some schools are attended by children living in ‘fringe camps' on the edge of country towns such as Alice Springs in the Northern Territory. In some contexts, as is the case with Yipirinya school in Alice Springs, Aboriginal children have the choice of attending either the Aboriginal-controlled school or one of the public or denominational schools within the town.

Many Aboriginal communities live in remote areas and are to varying extents 'separate' from full scale involvement in the mainstream cultural processes. This separation, in the case of a few communities such as Yirrkala in North East Arnhem Land is through community choice to maintain a traditional lifestyle and to control the intrusion of mainstream cultural pressures. However, because of Government policies of forced migration in the past, the ability of many Aboriginal communities to control such choices concerning their lifestyles is in reality extremely limited.

Other Aboriginal people live within regional and urban centres of all kinds and across all states. On the whole, these people are more closely in contact with and involved in mainstream Australian society. Generally, the children of these parents attend mainstream public and denominational schools in the urban centres in which they live.

Another variable for consideration in discussing the education of Aboriginal children is that schools attended by Aboriginal children represent a wide range of pedagogic models and goals. This is particularly so in the extent to which schools attempt to provide access to bicultural education. Curriculum models range from bilingual programs of various kinds which place differing emphasis on mainstream and Aboriginal languages to English-only programs which offer varying levels of recognition to the ‘Aboriginality’ of children they serve.

Traeger Park School which is the focus of this study was an urban school in the sense that it was situated close to the centre of Alice Springs (approx. pop: 25000) which is the second largest population centre in the Northern Territory. However, although it was an ‘urban’ school in this sense, it was attended by Aboriginal children from a wide range of backgrounds. In
1980 approximately 75% of the children attending the school were Aboriginal. These children came mostly from a low socioeconomic area called 'The Gap' and from 'fringe camps' scattered around the edges of the town. Many children maintained strong links with what would be considered 'traditionally oriented' Aboriginal communities near Alice Springs. English and Aboriginal language competence varied across children - from children for whom English was not a first language and who frequently possessed limited communication skills in English, to others who spoke only English as a first language (often as a dialect - Aboriginal English). Most of the non-Aboriginal children also came from low socioeconomic backgrounds although an extremely small percentage of these children did come from lower middle income homes. By 1990, the proportion of Aboriginal children in the school had increased to over 99%. The school taught in English and sought to achieve mainstream curriculum goals. The parents supported this orientation and chose to send their children to Traeger Park although a bilingual program was an option for the parents and was available at Yipirinya, an Aboriginal community-controlled school, also in Alice Springs.

Because the mix of children attending Traeger Park School provided a link between both 'traditional' and more conventionally 'urban' settings for the education of Aboriginal children, it provided a useful base from which to explore the learning needs of Aboriginal children as they sought access to mainstream academic discourse. The following discussion will consider specific areas of relevance to current issues in Aboriginal education.

1.3 THE RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH TO ABORIGINAL EDUCATION GENERALLY

One issue that needs to be addressed from the point of relevance and generalisability is the fact that the data here represents an intervention program that was developed between 1980 and 1990. However, although the data analysed in this study was collected over this period, there are significant reasons why a project carried out in the early eighties should be deemed relevant in the nineties.

First, the project at Traeger Park has become widely recognised as offering a positive contribution to the field of Aboriginal education. Some principles and strategies from the Traeger Park program have been incorporated to varying degrees in curriculum documents of Education Departments in Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia. The project was also drawn upon as a basis for developing first and second language teaching programs in Thailand (Walker, Rattanovich & Oller, 1992) and was also the subject of a plenary address to TESOL 92 in Vancouver (Gray & Cazden 1992). More recently, the project has formed the basis of a substantial project funded by the Commonwealth Government with Anangu primary and secondary schools in South Australia (Gray, Rose & Cowey, in progress; Rose, Gray & Cowey 1998). However, while the program developed at Traeger Park School has been reported upon to some degree, (eg. Gray 1980, 1980a, 1985, 1990) there has never been an
analysis of the teaching strategies employed in the detailed micro-process sense (eg. Goldfield & Snow 1984) nor has any of the analysis employed a paradigm that could be considered ‘linguistic' in any formal sense of the term.

The lack of information at this level has, perhaps, contributed to a general tendency for the teaching approach developed at Traeger Park to be misconstrued loosely as ‘language experience' in a number of curriculum documents. In particular, the program’s specific emphasis on providing access to literate discourse and the interpretation of ‘common or shared knowledge' as something to be developed actively by the teacher in ongoing negotiation with children has for the most part been dissipated because it does not fit neatly with prevailing ‘progressive/child centred' pedagogies. For example, in a publication of the South Australian Aboriginal Education Unit (DECS 1994), ‘shared knowledge' is presented as something that must arise out of children’s pre-existing experience and not something to be built around the joint exploration of fields of knowledge which will be, for the most part, unfamiliar to the children. Moreover, teachers are also advised to focus upon oral discourse while the work at Traeger Park distinguished distinctly between oral and written texts (eg. Halliday 1985a; Hammond 1990) and placed its central emphasis on the production of literate/written discourse. These kinds of misappropriation of Traeger Park principles to serve other (often conflicting) models of intervention represent critical departures from the pedagogy and are likely to cause considerable confusion amongst teachers. Consequently, because of the continuing professional interest in the Traeger Park program, there is a strong need to document as clearly as possible the nature of the teaching/learning processes that occurred.

A second reason why the Traeger Park experience is still relevant dates from the decision by the Northern Territory Government at the end of 1991 to close Traeger Park School in the face of a strong protest by the parents of the children attending the school. The parents of the children challenged the Minister of Education before the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission alleging institutional racism over the decision to close the school. Commissioner Carter ruled that the decision to close the school was not unlawful under the Racial Discrimination Act (1975) and the school was closed although it was argued by the parents that other mainstream schools in the town were either reluctant or inadequately prepared to take Aboriginal children from Traeger Park. Walton (1992) provides a summary of major issues involved. In handing down his judgement, Commissioner Carter made the following comment,

The Traeger Park School ought to have presented to the Department and the Minister a very special concern. Whilst the decision was not in my view unlawful, its implementation will call for a compassionate and informed approach which involves more than merely appealing to the broad based objectives of the Department of Education in the Northern Territory. The special needs of a special group of Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory will need to be addressed with all of the professionalism, concern, dedication and expertise which the Department professes that it is able to muster, if the enjoyment and exercise by these children of their right to education and training is not to be impaired to the extent that it is not enjoyed on an equal footing with others (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1992:42)
The extent to which the Aboriginal parents of the children at Traeger Park were prepared to go in order to preserve a context which sought to provide access to the goals of mainstream schooling in a culturally sympathetic manner indicates the extent to which access to mainstream literacy proficiency is valued by Aboriginal parents. The current lack of progress in the field indicates that the work at Traeger Park has not been replaced by other more successful programs and there is no evidence to indicate that other primary schools in Alice Springs, either government or independent, are achieving any degree of success with the children displaced by the closure of the school.

The third reason why the Traeger Park experience holds a substantial degree of relevance for Aboriginal education generally is that the teaching initiatives developed at Traeger Park were, in many ways, unique. Even today, the full implications deriving from this work are far from being realised for Aboriginal children in Australian schools. For these reasons, it is important that understandings gained from the program at Traeger Park should not be lost.

The approach developed at the school was one which sought to 'open up' mainstream classrooms by making educational processes explicit and accessible in a manner that could accommodate to Aboriginal children. The strategies developed in order to facilitate task focused engagement by Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms will be developed in detail as the main focus of this study. However, some general considerations are discussed briefly below.

The teaching process employed focused on establishing interaction between teachers and children in the first instance as a social activity that maximised the opportunity for the children to respond to learning activities in a natural and spontaneous manner. From a base of socially oriented participation and interaction, teachers sought to negotiate more educationally focused interaction patterns and perceptions. These perceptions were jointly constructed as common knowledge between teachers and children. The methodology employed can be described through recourse to Bruner's (1983, 1986) notions of 'scaffolding' and Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) notion of the 'zone of proximal development'. There have been no other initiatives in Australian Indigenous education that have pursued these insights in the manner or to the extent developed at Traeger Park.

A further significant way in which the teaching program developed at Traeger Park can be considered unique among other approaches to the education of Aboriginal children had to do with the notion of language goals which placed a strong emphasis upon teaching children how to negotiate learning. The development of the children's ability to negotiate learning constituted a key pedagogic goal from the very beginning of the program at Traeger Park (eg. Gray 1980) because it was considered important to develop access to cognitive styles necessary for effective and purposeful engagement in mainstream schooling. Gray (1980) pointed out that teachers and children need to possess a common understanding of both,
(a) the content to be discussed, and,
(b) the role relationships inherent in the content and in the discussion of that content in the classroom

(Gray 1980a:229)

Most importantly, the construction of teaching focus within the program in terms of both ‘content’ and ‘role relationships to do with the negotiation and representation of that content’ provides a direct link to the scope and sensitivity inherent in Bernstein’s interpretation of pedagogic discourse as a recontextualising principle (eg. Bernstein 1996:46-53) through which other discourses from contexts outside the school are ‘recontextualised’ in a form that is different from their original manifestation. The ‘recontextualised’ discourse of the classroom (eg. science, mathematics etc.) is a realisation of the workings of two component discourses which Bernstein terms respectively, ‘regulative’ and ‘instructional’. It is in terms of these two component discourses (ie. ‘regulative’ and ‘instructional’) that the dual focus set out above for the Traeger Park program can be most effectively interpreted. With respect to the goals for the Traeger Park program, the generalisation ‘content’ can be reframed more technically in terms of Bernstein’s notion of instructional discourse, while ‘role relationships’ to do with negotiation and representation can be interpreted as analogous to regulative discourse. How Bernstein’s regulative and instructional discourses work to realise pedagogic discourse will be further developed later in this study (chapter 2). In the program at Traeger Park, this view of language goals as consisting of both the content or product as well as the negotiation process through which the product is constructed was also linked to Halliday’s notion of text (eg. Halliday 1985) as both product and process embedded within a context of situation which is, moreover, embedded within a context of culture.

Because of the nature of the educational goals that were set at Traeger Park, it is important to spend some time developing a discussion around the issue of providing access to academic discourses valued in schools. In order to set a frame for further discussion of educational goals in chapter 2, this chapter will first outline briefly some views commonly taken on appropriate English teaching goals for Aboriginal children (section 1.4). Following this discussion, Section 1.5 will then turn to elaborate upon the notion of access to English language and literacy development as access to culturally situated discourses. In doing so it will explore the compatibility of Halliday’s language model with notions of learning as the acquisition of culturally situated discourses proposed by writers such as Fairclough (1989) and Gee (1991) as well as Wood (1988) and Wertsch (1985, 1985a, 1990). This compatibility provides a link across the disciplines of linguistics, sociology and psychology that allows for discussion of the needs of Aboriginal children in terms of the range of research that typically confronts teachers. It will be proposed that access and control over discourses that are described variously in this study as academic, literate or decontextualised should constitute an important goal in the education of Aboriginal children.
1.4 VIEWS ON APPROPRIATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY GOALS FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

The writers of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (AGPS 1991) make their position on this point clearly.

Aboriginal people have made it clear to the Government that English literacy proficiency to a level commensurate with the rest of the community is a desirable goal in itself and a prerequisite for full participation in Australian social, economic and cultural life and for access to employment, education and training opportunities. (AGPS 1991:89)

Furthermore, the importance of English language and literacy goals to the parents who sent their children to Traeger Park School was expressed strongly by spokespersons who testified before a Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission hearing in Alice Springs in 1991 (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1991) on the provision of education to Aboriginal children in Alice Springs. One parent from Ilpapa camp in Alice Springs made the following observations about the goals she considered appropriate for her children. In the following text the parent (A) is being questioned by Counsel (C) at the hearing.

C: Have your children expressed an interest that they want to go to secondary school?
A: A bit young; one's 5 and one's 7
C: Right, but you'd like them to go there?
A: Yes, I would
C: And to have as many educational opportunities as they possibly can?
A: Yes

(Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1991:114)

Moreover, the following comments were taken from testimony given by other parents before the same hearing of the Commission. The first is in response to a question about why the parent chose to send his children to a particular mainstream school in Alice Springs instead of an Aboriginal community school which placed more emphasis on vernacular literacy,

Because I thought my kids - for me to take them out of Traeger Park and enrol them in - Yipirinya school at this stage is a waste of time for them because one of them's going into high school next year and the other one will be in grade 6, so they have gained the basics from Traeger Park to get them up to where they are now, and to put them in Yipirinya would be a step backwards for my kids because I feel they've already gained the confidence and that from the basic schooling. (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1991:97)

The second quote is from another parent in response to a request to elaborate on why Aboriginal children need to learn what had previously referred to in the hearing as ‘hard core skills’.

Well, you know, if you're talking about whether it's Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, I think just the circumstances of, you know, the environment that we live in, that basically you've got to have fairly high educational standards to acquire jobs these days. If not, further, you know you need, in fact, high tertiary type - depending on the level of work that you know, people want to do, but I think just generally for people to be able to cope on a day to day basis they must, you know, understand the basis of reading, writing, numeracy literacy. They've got to have those skills just to survive and to be able to cope in the broader sense of the community. (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1991:97)

It is important not to read any of these statements as an assertion applicable to Aboriginal people in some general sense. Any defined Aboriginal 'group' or 'community' will hold a range
of viewpoints. In this regard, Aboriginal parents are no different from their counterparts in any other sector of the Australian community. The willingness and ability to articulate particular educational goals depends on a number of factors including the nature of the social circumstances in which they perceive themselves, their understanding of the pedagogy required and their perception of the knowledge and understandings required to achieve various educational and life goals. It is clear, however, that a significant proportion of Aboriginal parents do not see that access to mainstream language and literacy competence should necessarily negate the development of their children's Aboriginal identity.

Amongst the goals Aboriginal parents articulate as important for the education of their children two objectives in particular permeate their concerns. These objectives are briefly,

1. To preserve and enhance their children's understanding and appreciation of their Aboriginal heritage and identity.
2. To attain access to the mainstream language and educational agenda in order to enhance the life choices and personal control available to their children.

These two objectives are basic to the current movement amongst Aboriginal people towards 'Both Ways' education. As Harris (1990) points out, 'both ways' education is not an entirely novel concept amongst Aboriginal people. He traces its presence in written educational literature to Yunupingu and Djuwandayngu (1978) or Ngurruwuthun (1980). Another reference can be found in Mirritji (1976).

It is not easy at all to live in two ways, the Aboriginal way and the balanda way...

For dealing with the balanda society we need assistance to learn to read and write and to fight for our rights and to be able to explain our ways ourselves. We are waiting for younger people, who have had school for a long time and know how to read and write. We need our own educated people, to explain our way to the balanda, but also to explain the European way to our older people This is my mind and thoughts.

(Miritji 1976:72)

Yunupingu (1990) in his role as principal of Yirrkala school has however brought the concept forcefully to the attention of Australian educators. In discussing the bilingual program at Yirrkala school he made the following points,

We need lots of yolngu who have experience in both worlds. We want people who will help us to keep our Aboriginal culture and cope with the balanda culture around us. We believe that the school is part of the community's future. (Yunupingu 1990:5)

In advocating 'both ways' education he argues that,

* if you have control of both languages, you have double power
* emphasis should be put on yolngu language and culture so they can be transmitted to the children
* both cultures should be respected equally. (Yunupingu 1990:5)

[Note: yolngu refers to Aboriginal people and balanda refers to White people]

Similar sentiments are reported in the Lajamanu School's Statement of Policy 1984.

AIMS

THAT Yapa Way be strong and Kardiya way be strong
School Literacy as Cultural Learning

* the community decide exactly what Yapa things and Kardiya things they want the children to learn
* Yapa teach the children proper strong Warlpiri and after that Kardiya make it strong and teach the children English properly so that the children can really understand and speak both
* there is continued support for the Bi-lingual Programme of the school whoever controls the school.

[Note: Yapa refers to Aboriginal people and Kardiya refers to White people]

Both of these schools are from traditionally oriented communities in relatively remote areas of the Northern Territory. Both communities while emphasising the need for in depth development of English literacy competence for their children, support bilingual literacy programs which emphasise vernacular literacy in the early years of schooling. Other communities seek a different emphasis. Rose (1992/3) points out that the Anangu people in the north of South Australia are moving away from such a model and now see no role for teaching their own language in schools. He claims these people see the teaching of their own language to their children as the responsibility of “the families and social systems, not the schools” (Rose 1992/3:52). He quotes from a statement by the Pitjantjatjara /Yankunytjatjara Education Committee who were clearly in favour of,

...pushing the importance of English with our school students. Our committee has a policy which asks all non-Anangu staff in schools and people working in our communities, to only speak English to the school students. We want this to happen both inside and outside of school. ...we ask you only to speak English to any child who is school age so we can help them learn. (Rose 1992/3:52)

However, despite statements such as the one from the Australian Language and Literacy Policy as well as the others above, the setting of English literacy goals for Aboriginal children provides a minefield of contradiction and controversy. Rose (1992/3), for example, reviews documents from two different arms of Government that attach very different levels of importance to English literacy teaching with Aboriginal people.

Faced with the apparent complexity of the pedagogic context outlined in the previous section, as well as with other considerations drawn from the literature concerning the complexity of issues such as minority language maintenance and language shift (eg. McConvell 1991), Aboriginal ‘learning style’ (eg. Harris 1980; 1984, 1990; Baarda 1990; Hughes 1984; M.Christie 1984, 1985) and language difference/deficit arguments in relation to Aboriginal English (eg. Harkins 1994), some educators have even backed away from support for programs which seek to give full access to English language competence for Aboriginal children. For example, Baarda (1990) acknowledges that mainstream education is important to Aboriginal communities.

What these communities need is more earning power which is mainly dependent on more education. (Baarda 1990:171)

However, for Baarda, the accommodation of schooling to fit the needs of Aboriginal children means rejecting engagement in mainstream academic discourse. Baarda, in effect, equates
successful participation in mainstream schooling with ‘assimilation’ and automatic loss of Aboriginal identity.

It is a pity that apartheid in South Africa and the negative discrimination that characterised negro schools in USA have set Australians against the idea of separate schools for Aboriginals. The situations are completely different. I really don’t see much hope of improvement in Aboriginal education achievement without them having their own schools. ........

Where feasible children should be instructed in their first language throughout their whole school career. It should be recognised by the education Departments that Aboriginal students have different needs, priorities, and aspirations. They want to retain their Aboriginal identity and lifestyle. I know some people argue that this is impossible. I believe assimilation is impossible. It hasn’t worked for Aborigines anywhere. Despite enormous pressure to conform to the white culture, most hang on to their co-operative lifestyle long after language, colour and most other recognisable features of Aboriginality have disappeared. (Baarda 1990:17)

In a somewhat similar manner, Harkins (1994), at the beginning of her book, Bridging Two Worlds makes the following claim concerning the aspirations of the Alice Springs Aboriginal residents among whom she conducted her research.

They want to be able to talk about anything in their experience, from either cultural domain, in any of their languages. They want to be able to explain in English such Aboriginal concepts as their claim to land, and to teach European science or to discuss non-Aboriginal laws in their own languages. (Harkins 1994:27)

Yet, in her conclusions to the same text she proposes the following modified English language needs for Aboriginal fringe camp children living in Alice Springs,

Their aim is not ‘native speaker competence’ if that means speaking like a non-Aboriginal person. They want communicative competence in English for a variety of purposes, but not at the cost of their identity. Fortunately there are good role models of Aboriginal people who are highly competent users of English, but in a culturally appropriate Aboriginal way, and the expertise of these people should be drawn upon. (Harkins 1994:194)

They will probably want to develop a passive but quite deep understanding of English constructions, styles and registers that they may never choose to use themselves; they want to be able to understand what non-Aboriginal people mean. They may also want to work with other, appropriate, Aboriginal people to develop strategies for using English effectively in culturally acceptable Aboriginal ways, and strategies for cross-cultural interpreting and for dealing capably with sticky situations. (Harkins 1994:195-196)

On one hand, therefore, Harkins concedes that English is highly valued by the Aboriginal fringe camp dwellers she studied in Alice Springs. However, from her perspective, English has what is essentially a limited translation role that allows for what is essentially ‘cross cultural interpreting’.

English also has its place; it can be used in distinctively Aboriginal ways, and it is an important link with non-Aboriginal society -- a two way link, by which Aboriginal people can get information from, and communicate their knowledge and ideas to, non-Aboriginal people. (Harkins 1994:186)

Here, English language development is focused on rather vague notions of ‘culturally acceptable Aboriginal ways’ for using English. These ‘ways’ involve the need for partial and mostly ‘passive’ competence only. This, in itself, raises the issue of how it is that one develops ‘a passive but quite deep understanding of English’. However, there is also an over riding issue to do with provision of access and control. It is difficult to see with respect to the
solutions proposed by both of the above writers just how it is that Aboriginal learners are to gain the kind of access that their initial statements proposed. Neither Harkins nor Baarda specifies just how it is that Aboriginal learners are to gain the necessary discourse control for example ‘to teach European science’ or to gain access to education dependent ‘earning power’ within the frameworks they propose as solutions.

It will be proposed (section 1.5) that perspectives such as those proposed by Harkins and Baarda above ignore the issue that language cannot be taught meaningfully apart from the consideration of the social and cultural circumstances within which its use is embedded. In addition, it is important to note that while Harkins’ view of appropriate literacy goals for Aboriginal children may reflect the viewpoint of various members of the communities in which she worked, they do not hold for all. In fact, the testimony of parents to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission discussed earlier, demonstrates that Harkins’ views run counter to the expressed educational goals for literacy in English held by other residents of some of the very same fringe dwelling communities Harkins (1994) included in her study. Nakata (1996) speaking as a Torres Straits Islander also makes strong claims for the need to provide access to academic schooling for Indigenous children generally in Australian schools. It is imperative, therefore, that the limitations in terms of providing access to the institutions of mainstream Australian society consequential upon setting such limited goals is pointed out clearly to the Aboriginal people concerned.

The issue of how access to the culture of mainstream educational discourses will influence and change ‘Aboriginal Culture’ and individual Aboriginal learners is problematic. Yet it must be faced if Aboriginal children are to be given successful control over English language and literacy development important for the kind of education that provides access to mainstream institutions. However, discussion around the issue has not been helped by naive and frequently romantic notions held about the nature of culture.

Culture is often seen as a homogeneous commodity, held inside a containing person. If that person is exposed to or taught any part of another culture, there must be a corresponding loss of the original ‘culture’. Harris (1990) points out the absurdity of such perspectives when he provides the following quotation.

This vision of a bicultural person who does not necessarily become less of a person in terms of the first culture is expressed in graphic terms by McFee (1975:21) when writing about Blackfoot Indians:

’a man (or woman) is more than a culture container. If, by one measure, he scores 75% on an Indian scale we should not expect him to be limited to a 25% measure on another scale. Contemplation of this ‘container’ metaphor led me to call these bicultural cases the 150% men.’ (Harris 1990:1)

Much of the difficulty educators face when they consider the question of giving Aboriginal children access to mainstream schooling is brought about by the inadequacy of the terminology and concepts about the nature of ‘cultural knowledge’ that educators themselves
apply to the analysis of the question. Very often discussion does not proceed beyond crude and vaguely conceived notions of the enculturation of Aboriginal children into some ‘culture of mainstream schooling’ that is again assumed as a homogeneous entity. In this view, ‘protecting the culture’ comes to be seen in terms of the limitation of access to the mainstream.

This is a presumption that has been strongly challenged by writers such as Delpit (1986, 1988) and Cazden (1995). Hymes (1995), moreover, writing on the issue of ideology and equality refers pointedly to the naivety inherent in this perspective.

The ethnolinguistic tradition, as it developed before the World War II, thought in terms of a “language” and a “culture”. The world was implicitly taken to be a horizontal map: here a people, language and culture; there a people, language and culture. Difference was difference between separate, autonomous groups. (Hymes 1995:3-4)

Such a monolithic construction of culture which does not allow for control of multiple discourses brings with it, buried amongst the overall concern for peoples whose rights have been trampled upon, an underlying Rousseauian perspective that frequently sets up an idealised ‘natural’ culture as inviolate. It begs the question of why an Aboriginal person who becomes a lawyer or judge or a doctor or a writer and as such gains control over academic or literate discourses should become any less Aboriginal.

A debate defined by such narrow perspectives on culture is of little assistance to Aboriginal people who seek access to mainstream literacy. When Aboriginal parents, for example, ask that their children are given access to the ‘secret English’ referred to in the often quoted statement reported by Bain (1979) they are expressing a need to engage in cultural learning.

We want them to learn English. Not the kind of English you teach them in class, but your secret English. We don’t understand that English but you do. To us you seem to say one thing and then do another. That’s the English we want our children to learn. (Quoted in Bain 1979:113)

The perspective embodied in the above quotation is clearly one that seeks access to more than superficial language form or limited ‘culturally appropriate Aboriginal ways’ of using English. It is concerned with access to cultural ways of knowing and ways of doing that are embedded in the folk notion of ‘secret English’. What is needed in setting educational goals for Aboriginal children is a means of looking beyond the crude notion that providing access to mainstream culture for Aboriginal children can only be interpreted as assimilation. Hymes (1995) points out that it was the inability of the critics of Bernstein’s elaborated and restricted codes to see beyond their own narrowly conceived ideology and notions of culture that prevented them from appreciating the potential of the model Bernstein was proposing.

Bernstein, a sociologist working in a complex society, recognised both linguistic form and social relations, but necessarily in terms of a plurality of styles and social positions. Styles and social positions are only sometimes side by side. More often, they are superimposed, stratified. Some control others.

I write in this almost childlike way because this simple idea did not enter into the thinking of most critics of Bernstein’s work. (Hymes 1995:3-4)
It is proposed here that the controversy that has surrounded the work of Bernstein has had a profound effect upon the nature and scope of the linguistic research that has attempted to influence English literacy programs for Aboriginal children. The outcome has been that formal linguistic research now has very little to say about how teachers might provide access to academic and literate language resources necessary for promoting mainstream educational success with Aboriginal children. This issue will be taken up further in chapter 2 of this study. In all of this, the point that seems to be lost is that, at present, Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people only seem to have no choice with regard to access to literacy skills necessary to promote academic success. There is, therefore, an urgent need to find a means of framing mainstream educational goals and approaches to teaching in a manner that is productive for providing access to Aboriginal children.

1.5 DISCOURSE AND THE DETERMINATION OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The following discussion will expand upon the notion expressed earlier (section 1.3) to do with the development of control over the role of learning negotiation as a goal in the educational process. It will propose that coming to understand the nature of the goals and processes important for success in mainstream education requires that learners are given control over what can be referred to as 'culturally-situated discourses'. Such 'discourses' embody not only the 'content' that is the focus of teaching but also the cognitive styles associated with effective negotiation between participants in the discourse.

1.5.1 DISCOURSE AS A CULTURALLY-SITUATED PHENOMENON

Gee's (1991) notion of cultures as comprised of multiple discourses provides a useful alternative to metaphors such as that expressed in the container example discussed in the previous section. Gee (1991) distinguishes his interpretation of the word 'discourse' from the more commonplace perception of discourse simply as extended text by using a capital 'D'. He characterises 'Discourses' in the following manner,

A Discourse is a socio-culturally distinctive and integrated way of thinking, acting, interacting, talking, and valuing connected with a particular social identity or role, with its own unique history, and often with its own distinctive "props" (buildings, objects, spaces, schedules, books, etc)......A Discourse is a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognise. The following are some examples of other Discourses (enacted within a given cultural context: being an American or a Russian; a man or a woman; a member of a certain socioeconomic class; a factory worker or a boardroom executive; a doctor or a hospital patient; a teacher; an administrator, or a student of literature; a member of a specific classroom or classroom practice (eg., writing conferences). (Gee 1991:33)

Gee’s concept of discourse as a socio-cultural entity draws heavily upon the work of Foucault (1974). Foucault also sees discourses as composed of more than the text itself.

...discourses are composed of signs, but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this move that renders them irreducible to language and to speech. (Foucault 1974: 48)
This notion of discourse is also employed by others such as Kress (1993), Olson (1994) and Lemke (1995). Because this perspective on the nature of discourse is well established in the literature, this study will not employ Gee's strategy of marking this broader perspective with a capital 'D'. If the term is used to refer simply to extended text, such instances will be clearly marked within the discussion.

Gee (1990) sees one's individuality as something that is defined through interaction and tension between discourses into which the person has been inducted.

The various Discourses which constitute each of us as persons (or subjects) are changing and often are not fully consistent with each other; there is often conflict and tension between the values, beliefs, attitudes, interactional styles, uses of language and ways of being in the world which two or more discourses represent. There is no real sense in which we humans are consistent or well integrated creatures from a cognitive or social viewpoint, though most Discourses assume that we are (and thus we do too while we are in them). The only problem with this view of Discourses is that we should not let it obscure the equally important point that human beings can (to a certain extent) choose which Discourses to be in at which times (though there is, of course, a price for these, like all other choices). (Gee 1990:145)

In a similar vein, psychological research on cultural models of thinking and language (e.g. Holland & Quinn 1987) proposes that seemingly incompatible discourses typically exist side by side even in highly educated individuals. Moreover, they argue that highly educated individuals also frequently choose ways of thinking and solving problems that are based on common sense or 'folk' systems of knowing in many everyday contexts. In fact, they often do this even when it would seem 'literate' syllogistic approaches normally associated with formal academic training would be expected. As Keesing (1987) puts it:

A third question...is the degree to which scientific discourse builds on and with such common-sense models. The physical sciences have progressively penetrated through and beyond everyday, common-sense models of experienced 'reality'. Yet the physicist leaves subatomic particles and relativity behind, the mathematician non-Euclidean geometry, as they enter the parking lot and drive home through a world of seemingly solid objects, flat surfaces and straight lines. Moreover conventional metaphors and common sense cannot be expunged from the natural languages to which the most precise scientists must have recourse (Kuhn 1979). Disengaging what passes for behavioural science from 'folk' models and conventional metaphors is hopeless: most psychology (and, we could add, much of sociology and anthropology) reflects common-sense cultural models of the mind and reified metaphors. (Keesing 1987:374-5)

The principle that individuals develop capacities to act and communicate in the normal course of events within discourses which may even appear incompatible indicates the complexity at stake when one relates discourse participation to personality and individuality. This consideration also draws attention to the close interrelation that must exist between particular discourses and the contexts of situation in which they are ordinarily employed by individuals.

Gee (1990) makes the following comments on the legitimacy of the discourses that should be focused upon in schooling.

If we choose to have our language class or literacy class apprentice students to a Discourse (that is, if we choose to have the behaviours that teachers and students engage in to be meaningful and relevant), then we have to acknowledge that it cannot apprentice them to all (or even several) Discourses at the same time. This would mean we would have to justify the content of our language and literacy classes, justify the Discourse they are apprenticing students to. The justification would have to be that
we had picked a Discourse that was substantive, important in its own right, or we had picked one that these particular students (whom we are faced with here and now) need for their futures. (Gee 1990:173)

He adds, moreover, that one important area to target is those discourses that have been referred to here as ‘literate’.

Much good teaching in elementary school and in high school also apprentices students, at an appropriate level, to academic Discourses (this is especially true of much good science teaching). (Gee 1990:173)

While the above formulation of pedagogic goals in terms of discourse access appears fairly straightforward, it leaves outstanding a number of issues which must be addressed in the construction of pedagogic discourse. Not the least of these has to do with what one actually teaches in order to produce ‘fluency’ in discourses. Gee argues that there is no such thing as ‘effective’ partial fluency in a particular discourse - it is a case of learning all or nothing.

Discourses (and therefore literacies) are not like languages in one very important regard. Someone can speak English, but not fluently. However, someone cannot engage in a Discourse in a less than fully fluent manner. You are either in it or you’re not. Discourses are connected with displays of an identity - failing to display an identity fully is tantamount to announcing you do not have that identity - at best you are a pretender or a beginner. (Gee 1990:155)

In one important sense Gee is correct here. Many discourses perform a gate-keeping role in society and even seemingly trivial aspects of performance irregularity can and often are invoked to isolate prospective participants. However, the view of discourse presented in the quote above is highly conforming and allows participants little room for individuality in displaying identity. Some writers take issue with aspects of Gee’s interpretation. For example, Cazden (1995) and Delpit (1993) question the implied need to be socialised so completely into a discourse. Cazden (1995) provides the following quote from Delpit (1993).

There are two aspects of Gee’s arguments which I find problematic. First is Gee’s notion that people who have not been born into dominant Discourses will find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to acquire such a discourse. He argues strongly that Discourses cannot be ‘overtly’ taught, particularly in a classroom, but can only be acquired by by enculturation in the home or by ‘apprenticeship’ into social practices.

The second aspect of Gee’s work that I find troubling suggests that an individual who is born into one Discourse with one set of values may experience major conflicts when attempting to acquire another Discourse with another set of values...

Despite the difficulty entailed in the process, almost any African American or other disenfranchised individual who has become ‘successful’ has done so by acquiring a Discourse other than the one into which he or she was born. And almost all can attribute that acquisition to what happened as a result of the work of one or more committed teachers (pp. 286, 290), (Cazden 1995:161-162)

In fact, most of us operate quite effectively in life with only partial knowledge about various discourses. One knows generally certain things about medicine, education, or law and about academic discourses in general, for example, without being fully fluent in any of these discourses. This is not to say, however, that such knowledge is not a powerful resource for negotiating life experience. Nor is it to say that such knowledge cannot be the point of departure for further development of control over a particular discourse.
In his writing, Gee (eg. 1990) ranges widely with respect to just what it is that he calls a discourse. He refers to ‘academic’ and ‘literate or essayist’ discourses but he also talks of discourses as encapsulating different cultural identities such as “Afro-American’, ‘Chicano’ and ‘Yuppie’ or innumerable others’ (Gee 1990:145). There are ‘mainstream’, ‘middle class’, ‘discourses of men or women’, the ‘discourse of managers’ and likewise the ‘discourse of workers’. There are multiple ‘middle class mainstream status giving discourses’ (Gee 1990:145) - presumably those of law, politics, medicine even perhaps teaching? The concept ‘discourse’, therefore, is not a unitary and homogeneous concept. In fact, there is clearly considerable overlap and various levels of generality involved in accepting different ‘discourses’ as separate entities. It would seem that any particular discourse is something of a meeting point of attitudes, values and competencies that cross boundaries such that a doctor, for example, can enter a courtroom and successfully negotiate a cross examination without ever having passed through any explicit socialisation into the discourse of law. Thus, there do exist circumstances where one does not necessarily have to know everything about a discourse in order to engage productively within it. In fact, it is proposed here that rather than a simple one way process in which an individual is subsumed within a discourse, the reality is more complex. It is proposed that, in addition to assuming conforming behaviour within a discourse, individuals possess the potential to position themselves in relation to a discourse such that the identity they assume may involve only partial acceptance of the discourse and may even provide a challenge to the discourse. There are, however, key aspects of the discourse that would be important to control and these may even be embodied in other formulations of ‘discourse’. For example, it would be difficult for someone who did not possess a reasonable control over certain aspects of academic/literate discourses to even begin to acquire the necessary competence to engage in specific discourses of law or science. And it would seem that there are certain aspects of academic/literate discourses that are prominent in their ability to provide both access and the potential for individuals to position themselves in relation to particular discourses in a manner that is empowering to them. In raising the issue of how an ‘outsider’ might gain access to a discourse Cazden (1995) in fact raises two issues. One issue has to do with the process through which access is to be achieved for Gee claims that movement into a discourse must occur through a process of acquisition and not overt teaching.

Any Discourse (primary or secondary) is for most people most of the time only mastered through acquisition, not learning. Thus literacy (fluent control or mastery of a secondary Discourse) is a product of acquisition, not learning; that is, it requires exposure to models in natural, meaningful and functional settings, and (overt) teaching is not liable to be very successful it may even initially get in the way. Time spent on learning and not acquisition is time not well spent if the goal is mastery in performance. (Gee 1990:154)

Cazden discusses this issue in terms of Bernstein’s analysis of visible and invisible pedagogies (Bernstein 1975:ch6 & 1990:ch2) and proposes that the introductory process
which provides access to the ‘flexibility and openness’ necessary to operate constructively in school learning should embody a mix of both visible and invisible pedagogy.

I believe that achieving such “flexibility and openness” by students not already socialized at home with the cultural capital that enables them to infer the required underlying principles and strategies will only happen in environments with some yet to be theorized mix of invisible and visible pedagogy. (Cazden 1995:162)

The pedagogic discourse outlined later in chapters 4 and 5 of this study is offered as a contribution to the development of a pedagogy of this kind.

Another related issue to do with providing access to ‘outsiders’ concerns the question of what aspects of a discourse should be targeted as the primary focus for teaching. Is acquiring effective access the type of ‘all or nothing’ process that Gee appears to imply? Gee, in effect, proposes three scenarios in this respect. First, there is fluent initiated control of the discourse. Second, there exists the possibility of what Gee calls ‘mushfake Discourse’. By this term Gee refers to a combination of partial acquisition supplemented by a set of ‘spoiling’ strategies or ‘make do’ strategies which are taught explicitly and which allow the ‘outsider’ to fake participation or assert their rights by challenging performance requests within the discourse. Third, Gee allows for what he calls partial acquisition. Partial acquisition is equated by Gee to notions of ‘functional’ or ‘competency-based’ literacy which are classified as colonised and powerless discourses.

...notions like ‘functional literacy’ and ‘competency-based literacy’ are simply incoherent. They imply that one has a literacy but not all of it, so to speak (however, they never specify which Discourse is being mastered), but just enough to function. As far as literacy goes, there are only fluent speakers (metaphorically, because Discourses are not just ways of talking, but ways of talking, acting, thinking, valuing etc) and apprentices. Functional literacy is another term for the literacy of the colonized. (Gee 1990:155)

However, there is another possibility through which an ‘outsider’ can enter into discourses which opens the way for effective participation without necessarily leaving the new entrant stranded at a level of ‘semi-literacy’. The notion of partial literacy in these terms means that the entrant is left at a performance level that is low and inadequate across all of the text types and associated contexts they are required to operate within. ‘Functional literacy’ is here equated with the ability to uncritically interpret and respond to low order texts such as procedural instructions, forms etc. An alternative approach is to ask, “What are the key text types or genres which facilitate operation within a discourse?” And to develop competence to a high level with respect to ways of thinking, acting and valuing etc in the production and interpretation of those particular texts. This approach was the one adopted in the program at Traeger Park. It is proposed that such an approach does allow for a frame of reference to be established at an initially effective level of partial competence that can allow an individual to develop his/her own individual position in respect to a particular discourse.

From such a perspective, Fairclough’s (1989) definition of discourse is a useful one to consider here because through it he provides a graphic illustration of discourse which sets
'text' as the central focus of discourse. Text can be either spoken or written (after Halliday 1985a) and is represented as the product of the discourse. That is, specific kinds of texts are the products of particular discourses which are characterised by Fairclough in a dynamic manner as culturally-constructed processes. That is, ’...the whole process of social interaction of which the text is just a part’ (Fairclough 1989:24).

Fairclough illustrates his notion of discourse by means of a series of nested 'boxes' representing the embedded nature of the relationship between texts and the discourses within which they are constructed.

Figure 1.1
Discourse as text, interaction and context (Fairclough 1989:25)

Within this model, text is represented as the product of the cultural interaction processes through which it is generated. Moreover, the nature of the text itself is inextricably interwoven with the nature of the generating processes. Halliday (1985) employs a similar interpretation when he refers to the linguistic shape of a text as the 'realisation' of its particular context of situation. Consequently, there is also a parallel between the interpretation both Halliday and Fairclough place on the need for text to be considered simultaneously as both process and product. Halliday points this out in the following terms.

A text, then, is both an object in its own right (it may be a highly valued object, for example something that is recognised as a great poem) and an instance - an instance of social meaning in a particular context of situation. It is a product of its environment, a product of a continuous process of choices in meaning that we can represent as multiple paths or passes through the networks that constitute the linguistic system. (Halliday 1985:11)

Both Halliday and Fairclough assert strongly that in order to learn to control the production of a text, a learner must acquire access to both the language elements from which the text is constructed and the interaction or negotiation process through which it is produced and comprehended within the discourse in which it constitutes a product. As Fairclough puts it,

The formal properties of a text can be regarded...on one hand as traces of the productive process and on the other hand as cues in the process of interpretation. (Fairclough 1989:24)
In unpacking the level of his model that he identifies as 'interaction', Fairclough refers to the cultural knowledge underlying the process of production and interpretation of a text as 'members' resources'. That is, the sum total of knowledge and understandings which initiated members of a particular discourse have at their disposal in order to produce and interpret texts in a manner appropriate to that discourse.

Fairclough further adds that the levels of 'text' and 'interaction' are themselves embedded within a wider set of circumstances that he terms 'context'. Context refers to the process through which culturally established processes of production and interpretation are generated within a culture.

The MR (members' resources) which people draw upon to produce and interpret texts are cognitive in the sense that they are in people's heads, but they are social in the sense that they have social origins - they are socially generated, and their nature is dependent on the social relations and struggles out of which they were generated - as well as being socially transmitted. (Fairclough 1989: 24)

The effect of viewing school learning as discourse through the operation of 'text', 'interaction' and 'context' is to move the perspective clearly towards the explicit realisation that schooling of any kind involves a process of culturally situated learning. In order for schooling to function effectively, 'members' resources' which operate within the discourse cannot be assumed but must be made explicit and actively taught along with the necessary 'content' knowledge that is usually included within the notion of educational goal. It is necessary, therefore, to consider just what the significant texts and members' resources for successful participation in mainstream educational discourse might entail. This topic will be explored in the next section (section 1.5.2) of this study.

1.5.2 MEMBERS' RESOURCES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF TEXT IN LITERATE DISCOURSES: REALISING LITERATE DISCOURSES AS LANGUAGE

The most significant theme in the investigation of what it is that children learn when they are most effectively prepared for participation in educational discourse has been the role that is generally assigned to written language within the enterprise. The link between written text and the negotiation of learning in schools has been elaborated on by a number of authors, for example, Michaels (1981), Scollon & Scollon (1981), Scribner & Cole (1981), Heath (1982), Wells (1982), Painter (1986, 1992), Halliday (1985a) Halliday & Martin (1993). This research makes it clear that, in any culture, relationships exist between the ways people use language to talk about and teach knowledge and the ways in which that knowledge is written down.

From this perspective, it can be argued that many of the learning difficulties Aboriginal children experience in schools occur primarily because schools are deeply embedded within a literacy-oriented culture of a particular type (eg. Scollon & Scollon 1981). That is, this literacy-oriented discourse pervades both what is taught in schools and how it is taught.
In general, the perspective associated with this notion of literacy-oriented discourse has been one which has attempted to identify an associated mode of thinking as significant for educational success. It is proposed that this mode of thinking differs from that employed by those who are 'non-literate' (e.g. Luria 1976; Olson 1977; Scribner 1977; Tough 1977; Donaldson 1978; Vygotsky 1978; Rometveit 1979; Goodnow 1981; Scollon and Scollon 1981; Scribner and Cole 1981; Heath 1982, 1983; Olson & Torrance 1983; Romaine 1984; Wertsch 1985, 1990; Light 1986; Wood 1988). Because of the range of terms used by various researchers to describe this literate discourse, the following study will mostly employ the terms ‘decontextualised’, or ‘literate’ discourses. These terms can be taken as synonymous in the discussion here. Another term employed in this study is ‘academic/literate’ discourses. This term simply includes the ‘literate’ or ‘decontextualised’ nature of discourses to do with providing access to participation in fields which privilege academic learning such as science, history, social sciences, medicine, law, literature, management, government and so on. The following discussion will explore the concept of decontextualised or literate discourses further.

Wertsch (1990) and Olson (1994), for example, claim that ‘decontextualised’ thinking has a socio-historical basis in the development of modes of thinking and using language within cultures that have become organised around certain kinds of literacy practices. In particular, decontextualised discourses represent specific ways of thinking and using language that draw on the ability of written text to be constructed as an object for study in its own right without recourse to the context in which it occurs. This point can be illustrated through reference to the manner in which Wertsch (1990) defines ‘decontextualised rationality’. Wertsch describes this concept in terms of Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) notions of 'voice' and 'social speech type'.

The defining characteristic of the voice of decontextualised rationality is that it represents objects and events (i.e. the referentially semantic content) in terms of formal, logical, and, if possible, quantifiable categories. The categories used in this form of representation are decontextualised in the sense that meaning can be derived from their position in abstract theories or systems that exist independently of particular speech contexts...

In general, contextualised forms of representation foreground issues of perspective that derive from the interlocutors’ identity and the concrete communicative context, whereas the voice of decontextualised rationality strives to represent phenomena in terms of their referentially semantic content such that information from the communicative context is backgrounded or even made to seem irrelevant. (Wertsch 1990:120-1)

In this statement, Wertsch proposes that decontextualised rationality is represented through language as a particular kind of semiotic system, one that focuses on the meanings as they are constructed explicitly within the discourse itself. Such language is ‘decontextualised’ in the sense that the context for interpretation is constructed as part of the texts which are products of the discourse. This process requires access to specific ways of categorising and organising knowledge. As Wertsch puts it in the previous quotation, “The categories used in this form of representation are decontextualised in the sense that meaning can be derived from their position in abstract theories or systems that exist independently of particular speech contexts...
contexts”. He contrasts this mode of discourse with those employing contextualised forms of representation which rely on the interaction between the language and the physical and social contexts for their interpretation.

In the above statement, Wertsch’s use of the term ‘decontextualised’ involves more than a speaker simply having to provide more detail because concrete referents for the discussion may not be present. Wertsch is referring to the mechanisms of a discourse that is capable of creating different realities to that of ‘contextualised’ discourse. In particular, he is concerned with the potentiality of a discourse to reflect upon a reality that is contained within it - a reality premised upon different sets of assumptions to those contained within the physical circumstances in which it is produced.

This perspective has particular relevance for schooling for it is sometimes assumed that all talk in schools is in some sense abstract and removed from the influence of the immediate context. However, within the perspective proposed by Wertsch (1990), whether or not ongoing actions or ‘concrete’ objects are present is not really the central issue. Thus, it is possible to have lessons where physical ‘props’ (eg. blocks, apparatus, and even ‘role play’) are employed but which still focus upon a ‘decontextualised’ discourse. The difference can be seen if we take a hypothetical scenario which proposes two imaginary contexts both of which entail physical ‘props’.

In the first context imagine that an adult is standing in front of a group of children sitting around a table. Some glasses are on the table in front of the children. The adult is holding a jug of liquid ready to pour and is speaking to the children. The children are attending to the adult and are watching the jug of liquid. The context is a birthday party. The question for consideration is, "What is the adult saying?” This is an easy question for persons familiar with such contexts. Most will agree that the adult is probably saying something like, “Look what I have here, some lovely orange juice. Who would like some?”

The second scenario is in almost all respects the same. The adult is in front of a group of children sitting at a table. There are glasses in front of the children and the adult is again holding a jug of liquid ready to pour. The only thing that is different is the location of the activity. This second scenario is taking place in a classroom during a maths lesson. The question is still, “What is the adult saying?” Most people familiar with schooling will agree that the adult is most likely saying something completely different. Something like, “Look what I have here! If this one litre jug contains enough liquid to fill eight 200ml glasses, how many 200ml glasses could be filled if the jug was three quarters full?”

Now, in both of these contexts for language use, language is accompanying action. However, the significant difference from the perspective of decontextualised language use is that in each of these contexts language is playing a different role in the discourse. In the first interaction, discussion focuses on the jug as part of the ongoing social activity in which it is embedded.
The jug does not have a separate role away from this social purpose. In the second interaction discussion again focuses on the jug. However, the jug is constructed as an object that is taking part in another discourse, the discourse of mathematics. Language, in effect, becomes a 'tool' for mediating and constructing and reflecting upon a particular cultural reality in the Vygotskian sense (eg. Vygotsky 1978).

What exists in the latter 'decontextualised' example of classroom discourse is the need for the participants to employ a different set of premises (assumptions and presumed goals) away from everyday common sense if the interaction is to succeed. Thus what happens even in the very early stages of learning focused upon such discourses is a shift towards a different way of thinking and doing.

Where language comes into the equation is as a means of building what Halliday and Martin (1993) refer to as a language of reflection for building meanings within the realm of 'uncommon sense' discourses of the kind that has been labelled as decontextualised. The above example concerning the jug represents merely a starting point in the building of the language resources necessary for constructing decontextualised discourses. That is because, rather than being places where 'decontextualised' language is simply employed in some generalised sense, schools are institutions which ideally facilitate the movement of discourse from contextualised to decontextualised perspectives. Bernstein (1996), in fact, proposes that the primary role of classroom (or pedagogic) discourse is the 'recontextualisation' of other discourses from the wider cultural context in classroom settings (this will be developed further in later discussion, see chapter 2 section 2.2). Edwards and Mercer (1987), for example, provide an extended text from Walkerdine (1982) as an example of how children are moved towards a decontextualised perspective. They comment on this process in the following manner.

The sequence that Walkerdine captures in a single classroom lesson is one that represents a long term and fundamental development of thought. Mathematics begins as a relationship between discourse and practical actions: the teacher counts the number of objects aloud as she physically groups the objects together. She then moves on to the use of numbers without naming the objects, effectively disembedding the arithmetic in the discourse, while the physical objects and actions have now become its unspoken context. (Edwards and Mercer 1987:22)

They then summarise this process as the movement from one discourse into another.

The point to note here is that the acquisition of mathematical concepts is presented not simply as the translation of action into numbers, but as a process of being guided by an adult into a particular discourse which has a developmental sequence of its own, moving from an embeddedness in practical actions towards an abstract and apparently self-contained disembeddedness. (Edwards and Mercer 1987:22)

In an educational context, children are simultaneously learning particular curriculum discourses and learning how to learn within them. Edwards and Mercer also note that a critical step in the development of academic/literate discourses involves an extension of the mode shift from oral to written discourse.
Finally, Walkerdine notes how the process is taken further, into written representation: the teacher goes on to write out the sum. (Edwards and Mercer 1987:22)

It is in this shift from the oral to written modality that language as reflection takes on its most powerful form within academic/literate discourses. However, understanding how the linguistic features of written text relate to decontextualised thinking as it has been described above is a complex and somewhat controversial issue in linguistics.

Much of the mainstream research into written and oral text differences has difficulty in explaining why such differences exist. For example, Brown and Yule (1987) in reviewing the difference between oral and written language acknowledge Goody's (1977) analysis of the role written language plays in the development of thinking and reasoning.

Thus Goody & Watt (1963) and Goody (1977) suggest that analytic thinking followed the acquisition of written language 'since it was the setting down of speech that enabled man clearly to separate words, to manipulate their order and to develop syllogistic forms of reasoning' (Goody 1977:11 cited in Brown & Yule 1987:13)

However, in discussing how the difference between oral and written text is reflected in the linguistic 'form' of the discourse, Brown and Yule are content to provide lists of lexical and structural differences with no attempt to account for how the use of these different structures 'realises' or brings into effect the kinds of thinking and reasoning that Goody claims are a feature of written text. To take one example,

In written language, rather heavily premodified noun phrases (like that one) are quite common - it is rare in spoken language to find more than two premodifying adjectives and there is a strong tendency to structure the short chunks of speech so that only one predicate is attached to a given referent at a time (simple case-frame or one place predicate) as in: it's a biggish cat + tabby + with torn ears, or in: old man McArthur + he was a wee chap + oh very small + and eh a beard + and he was pretty stooped.

The packaging of information related to a particular referent can, in the written language, be very concentrated, as in the following news item:

A man who turned into a human torch ten days ago after snoozing in his locked car while smoking his pipe has died in hospital. (Evening News {Edinburgh}, 22 April 1982) (Brown & Yule 1987:16)

In discussing these kinds of differences later, Brown and Yule clearly treat them as essentially stylistic differences occasioned in response to the demands of particular communication situations and of convenience in information processing.

We must assume that the density of information packing in spoken language is appropriate for the listener to process comfortably. Most people have experienced expository prose read aloud which they have found difficult to follow in the spoken mode. Few people can extract a great deal from a lecture which is read aloud with no visual support. Goody points out that the written form of language releases us from the linear experiential mode: 'the fact that it takes a visual form means that one can escape from the problem of the succession of events in time, by backtracking, looking to see who-done-it before we know what it is they did. Who, except the most obsessive academic, reads a book as he hears speech? Who, except the most avant-garde of modern dramatists, attempts to write as they speak?'(1977:124). (Brown & Yule 1987:18-19)

While this level of analysis may be true in so far as it goes, it serves to trivialise the difference between oral and written text by limiting the difference to one concerned largely with style.
For differences in language choice across oral and written text are presented as a reflection of the different communication channels employed. This perspective completely avoids dealing with the central issue raised by Goody (1977) and in fact by Brown and Yule themselves at the beginning of their discussion. That is, it avoids dealing with the claim that written language has permitted the development of cognitive structures which are not available to the non-literate (Brown & Yule 1987:13).

Halliday (eg. Halliday 1985a, 1994; Halliday & Martin 1993) does address this issue directly. Halliday's approach to the distinction between oral and written language is that while there is in a simplistic sense a certain degree of overlap between oral and written language, when language is conceptualised in terms of its role as a cultural resource for constructing meaning within discourses the differences between oral and written text are functional and highly significant. Halliday (1985a) argues that an important feature of form differences between the two is that speech and writing impose,

...different grids on experience. There is a sense in which they create different realities. Writing creates a world of things; talking creates a world of happening. (Halliday 1985a:33)

If we ask how language is like reality, however, then we find that spoken and written language resemble reality in two different ways. Each is a metaphor for a different dimension of experience. Spoken language happens; it is like the working of the machine, the performance of stones in air and water, the behaviour of fathers and aunts. Written language exists; it is like the machine itself, the stone and the surface of the water, the male and female persons in the environment. And as we noted, the forms of spoken and written language proclaim the metaphor: spoken language favours the clause, where processes take place, whereas written language favours the nominal group, the locus of the constitution of things. (Halliday 1985a:98-99)

These differences influence greatly how language functions as a resource for creating meaning in cultural contexts that privilege literacy. It is through this perspective on language that it is possible to build a bridge between the notion of 'decontextualisation' outlined earlier as a 'literate' way of understanding the world and the deployment of language resources that are necessary to construct reality in such 'literate' ways.

Halliday (eg. Halliday 1985a, 1985b, 1994, Halliday & Martin 1993) proposes that a major linguistic resource in the construction of discourse such as that proposed by Wertsch (1990) as decontextualised is the concept of grammatical metaphor. Halliday sees grammatical metaphor as a major contributing factor to the building of complex meaning in written text. And, while grammatical metaphor also occurs in oral text, the amount and kind of grammatical metaphor that can be found in written text provides for a significant difference in the construction of meaning within written and oral discourses.

Halliday (1985a, 1994) identifies grammatical metaphor as a mode of metaphorical meaning that exists within the grammar itself and distinguishes it from the more common interpretation of metaphor which depends upon lexical (word) choice.
Grammatical metaphor provides a powerful resource through which language can be employed to construct experiences, events and phenomena within written texts in special ways. Halliday and Martin (1993) propose that it is in scientific discourse that the link between language and the ways of thinking of the kind that Wertsch (1990) refers to as decontextualised achieves what is perhaps its most powerful realisation. In scientific discourse it is possible to trace explicitly in the development of a text the shift through which an expression of action is restructured as an object. Halliday and Martin illustrate the emergence of this device in early scientific writing, for example drawing from Newton's *Opticks*.

> If the humours of the Eye by old Age decay, so as by shrinking to make the Cornea and Coat of the Chrystalline Humour grow flatter than before, the Light will not be refracted enough, and for want of a sufficient Refraction will not converge to the bottom. (Newton 1704:15-16)

They point out that as well as the existing technical lexis employed here (eg. Chrystalline Humour) there is also a grammatical process under way which results in the construction of a technical term, ie. *refraction*

Here the action verb *refracted* is reconstituted as a noun *refraction* - a technical term which can consequently function as such (ie. a thing) within the discourse. Halliday and Martin (1993) point out that when one learns the language of science for example one learns to use the language as a tool for constructing the discourse itself.

> The language of science is, by its very nature, a language in which theories are constructed; its special features are exactly those which make theoretical discourse possible. (Halliday & Martin 1993:8)

When language is considered from this perspective it becomes clear that language, particularly language to do with the formal construction of knowledge in schools cannot be considered in terms of developing familiarity with different choices in form alone. Nor can language be considered as a means of simply conveying knowledge that exists in some independent sense.

> the language is not passively reflecting some pre-existing conceptual structure; on the contrary, it is actively engaged in bringing such structures into being......

> .......We have to abandon the naive ‘correspondence’ notion of language, and adopt a more constructivist approach to it. (Halliday & Martin 1993:8)

Martin's (eg. 1985, 1990) research on the nature of texts within discourses such as biology, geography, physical science and history demonstrates how grammatical metaphor realises the construction of technical/scientific meanings that are not possible when language is used in more 'common-sense' oral ways.

Martin in Halliday and Martin (1993) illustrates that while some academic/literate discourses (eg. ‘history’) might not be ‘technical’ in the manner of scientific discourse these discourses still employ devices such as grammatical metaphor to build the level of ‘abstraction’ within
texts. Martin concludes that grammatical metaphor is fundamental to thinking and the construction of reality expressed in these discourses.

Without grammatical metaphor then, technicality and abstraction would not be possible. And this underlines the significance of writing in the development of discipline-specific discourses - grammatical metaphor is primarily a resource for writing, not speaking. A different kind of consciousness is involved (Halliday 1985c). Without the technology of writing, science and history as we practice them would not exist. (Halliday & Martin 1993:228)

It is not only in science and in social science that resources such as grammatical metaphor contribute to the construction of reality within a discourse. Martin (1985), for example, contrasts two texts written by children about a war veterans’ parade (ANZAC day) which is accorded special significance in Australia.

**Text 1 - written by an 8 year old child**

Today I watched the Anzac parade and I saw lots of brave men and women. Most of them had medals and wore uniforms. Some drove in cars because they were too sick to walk. There were lots of countries marching apart from Australia. There were bands and thousands of people watching and clapping.

**Text 2 - written by a 16 year old child**

The atmosphere at the dawn service was of solemnity, as those who had first-hand experience of the devastation associated with war reflected on the past and remembered their friends and relatives who had lost their lives in the battle. The gloomy atmosphere was emphasised by the dreary drizzle, drab attire and the long silence.

These two children had constructed very different realities surrounding the Anzac day march. The first child set the point of departure for his reality around the people. And the text simply details their actions on that day. The second child set his point of departure around the atmosphere and it is the reality of the atmosphere that is conveyed to the reader as image. This child also employed grammatical resources to do with especially the building of nominal groups (eg. *The atmosphere at the dawn service* - *solemnity* - *those who had first-hand experience of the devastation associated with war* - *their friends and relatives who had lost their lives in the battle* - *The gloomy atmosphere, the dreary drizzle, drab attire and the long silence*). These literate resources included nominalisation (eg. construing verbs as nouns) as a means of building grammatical metaphor, eg *solemnity, first-hand experience, the devastation associated with war, the dreary drizzle, drab attire and the long silence*.

It is important to realise that to say the two children constructed different realities does not deny the validity of either text. What it does mean, however, is the language facility demonstrated by the second writer allowed him access to the explicit expression of a reality that was denied to the younger and less experienced writer of the first text. And, through this access, the older child was able to construct explicitly a different perspective on his
experience. In this sense the older child simply possessed access to language choices for constructing reality that the first did not.

A further point for consideration in addressing notions of ‘validity’ or ‘functionality’ to do with ‘literate’ discourses is that the presence of language resources such as ‘nominalisation’ within texts does not automatically mean that the text is instrumentally functional in some pure academic sense. For, while it has been argued that resources to do with technicality and abstraction play a legitimate role in building functional academic concepts in some discourses, these same resources can be harnessed largely to construct exclusivity for exclusivity’s sake. Halliday and Martin (1993), for example, give the following text.

Key responsibilities will be the investment of all domestic equity portfolios for the division and contribution to the development of investment strategy. *(Sydney Morning Herald, February 1992, p.32. (Halliday & Martin 1993:15)*

In this particular text they argue that nominalising is not playing the same kind of role in building technical terminology and reasoned argument as it does in other texts considered by them in their analysis. They comment that, used in this way, nominalisation....

...is largely a ritual feature, engendering only prestige and bureaucratic power. It becomes a language of hierarchy, privileging the expert and limiting access to specialised domains of cultural experience. *(Halliday & Martin 1993:15)*

Thus, it is possible for what have been referred to in this discussion as literate resources to be co-opted in the service of many discourses including those of exclusion and the maintenance of majority power. However, while the injustice of these practices can be argued, it does not change the fact that such discourses exist and that, just as is the case with more legitimately academic/literate discourses, they do materially affect the lives of Aboriginal people.

It might be asked how Aboriginal people can be protected from such purely discriminating discourses. However, while actions can be taken on a variety of levels against discriminatory practice, it is proposed here that the most effective response will occur when Aboriginal people can themselves control literate discourses. Thus, the existence of texts such as that given above and the barriers they present to Aboriginal people becomes another argument for providing Aboriginal learners with a level of control in the discourse itself that allows them to both employ and deconstruct texts within the discourse at will. If not, they will always be dependent upon others to fight their battles with these domains of privilege.

In fact, discourses (simply because they are culturally situated phenomena) are never ‘unbiased’ and free of the judgements and perspectives of their cultural context. In talking about providing access to ‘literate’ discourse one is indeed talking about a ‘privileged’ discourse. However, because it brings with it access to ways of thinking and doing that Goody (1977) points out are not available to the non-literate, it cannot be dismissed as a mere stylistic move of little consequence for education.
It can be proposed as Frances Christie (1991, 1991a) does that Halliday's (1985b, 1994) notion of 'grammatical metaphor' provides a level of analysis from which the relationship between linguistic form and cultural meaning embedded in 'literate ways' can be made explicit for both teachers and children.

A grasp of the linguistic differences between speech and writing, in particular the resource that is grammatical metaphor, has important consequences for an educational linguistics....................................

.....it would seem true that one important factor (in school failure) is the increased demands made upon students' literacy capacities in the secondary situation. Here a sense of the grammatical features of 'true' written language, of the kind used to construct the knowledge of the secondary school subjects, is critically important. (Christie 1991a:16-17)

In fact, Christie (1991a) along with other educators working from Halliday's systemic model (eg. Derewianka 1990, 1992; Hammond 1990; Martin 1985, 1990; Rothery 1985, 1992; Gray 1985, 1990) argue that such a perspective is essential from the very beginning of children's contact with formal schooling.

This point is given further relevance, for example, by Gray (1986) who discusses the limited range of personal recount writing that is most typically the output of Aboriginal children in Australian schools. It is also important to realise the extent to which the lack of access to language resources of the kind associated with literate discourse affects and limits the reading comprehension of learners when they are presented with written texts which venture beyond the topics and structure of early basals and sentence readers. Halliday (1985a), for example, argues that the fundamental role that grammatical metaphor plays in written text is a major cause of difficulty for children learning to read and comprehend the texts they encounter in schools.

The issue of language choice and the construction of different realities extends beyond the notion of grammatical metaphor although this sits at the apex of many decontextualised discourses. However, the notions of grammatical metaphor discussed above represent, in a sense, the goal of a process towards decontextualised thinking that started with the kind of orientation towards language and thinking that children already initiated into literate discourses bring with them to school. These ways of thinking and using language bring, inextricably intertwined with them, ways of behaving as learners that some educators (eg. Michael Christie 1984, Harris 1990) refer to as 'academically purposeful' or 'task focused'. The following section (section 1.5.3) will discuss some key behaviours of this kind that greatly affect the propensity of children to engage successfully in mainstream education.
1.5.3 MEMBERS’ RESOURCES FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF LEARNING IN LITERATE DISCOURSES: REALISING WHAT COUNTS AS PURPOSEFUL LEARNING BEHAVIOUR

Research on the relationship between decontextualised or literate discourses and the promotion of different ways of thinking identifies at least three main areas of functioning that appear significant to decontextualised ways of learning through language. These areas are:

- learning to produce certain kinds of topic-centred texts
- learning to pose and respond to certain kinds of questions as a means of exploring and interpreting literate discourses
- learning to focus on what the words mean as a way of reflecting on the literate discourses.

All of these ways of functioning within literate discourses are closely interrelated and difficult to isolate. However, they will be discussed under separate headings below simply as a means of presentation.

1.5.3.1 Learning to produce certain kinds of topic-centred texts

Scollon and Scollon (1981) describe some of the developing manifestations of this orientation towards the text itself as a focus for learning in a culture dominated by literacy. They discuss the learning of their own child, Rachel, and describe her growing control of the prosody and ways of reacting in negotiating literacy that they construe as ‘fictionalisation of self’. As they comment on her exploration of oral reading prosody, it is clear that she is relating to the stories she is attempting to ‘read’ as closed, internally consistent systems of meaning which are separate entities from the general flow of interaction in which they occur.

Rachel had a good understanding of the nature of the relationship between oral reading prosody and the explicit intonation structure of written text. She felt for her performance to count as reading it had to move inexorably forward without hesitation, recyclings, or ungrammaticalities. Since a two year old could not meet all of the requirements it is important that she chose to keep the prosodic markings of the information structure inviolate and let other components such as the grammaticality of her performance falter (Scollon and Scollon 1981:69).

As they comment on her growing control over the ‘fictionalisation of self’ in which she separates author, audience and text, it is possible to see the text assuming an existence as an entity from which author and audience stand apart,

In this story about a girl who went out to get snow, cried to get an apple, and then returned to her task Rachel is author, character, and audience. This event happened to her on one of the preceding days. She was the girl who regularly collected snow for water and yet in her telling she takes the distance of the third person. It is “a girl”, “she”, “her Mom” and so on with one exception. Rachel begins to say “she went back to tell Mommy.” At “mommy” she hesitates, corrects to “her Mom” and continues. She is doing this carefully as part of her creation of the read text. As author she is Rachel. As character she is “a girl”. (Scollon and Scollon 1981:69-70).

Even at this early age, Rachel is well on the way to developing control over language use that allows acceptance of text as a closed system. In discussing Rachel’s writing attempts at the age of two, Scollon and Scollon (1981) point out that even in this early stage of her writing
development, Rachel sees a written text as requiring her to employ language in different ways than she would in everyday conversation. She clearly marks the 'story' as separate from the rest of the conversation in which she is engaged. She marks the beginning by announcing 'story' and the end with 'and that's all'. Scollon and Scollon (1981) report that she changes to a special 'story telling prosody' as she 'reads' it to her father. She uses opening devices such as 'Once upon a time'. And she uses language devices which move the text out of the here and now by 'decontextualising' the event. Participants, for example, the father move from being 'you' to 'Daddy'. Rachel is not referred to as 'I' but 'Rachel'. While her story is actually a description of events occurring around her as she speaks she pointedly employs the past tense. In the beginning she is careful to set an orientation for the text, using structures such as 'There was a girl named Rachel'.

In this sense, the kinds of topic oriented texts she is learning to produce provide the context for an orientation to language use through which she learns how to relate to the text as an object of meaning in its own right. Understanding how texts are structured as well as the manner in which participants and events are constructed as having a separate existence within literate texts are important aspects of learning how to relate to texts as objects for inquiry.

Scollon and Scollon (1981) point out that although Rachel at this stage is not yet three years of age and cannot either read or write she is already literate in a very important sense of the term. She is learning to structure meaning and negotiate the choices concerning language use that constitute 'members' resources' for engaging in decontextualised or literate discourse. When Rachel encounters learning tasks which draw on these assumptions about the nature of texts, she will have little difficulty responding in a culturally appropriate manner.

The development of the kinds of 'members' resources' Scollon and Scollon (1981) demonstrate in the learning of Rachel as an outcome of the process of socialisation into literate discourses has been illustrated by a number of researchers. For example, Holdaway 1979; Doake 1985 and Thomas 1987 point out that precociously literate children actively reconstruct the texts they encounter in their early reading experiences. Unsworth and O'Toole (1993) discuss how parents reading books with young children, as part of the routine frequently probe children into recalling and reconstructing stories that have been read on a number of occasions. Painter (1986) demonstrates how parents in literacy-oriented homes employ questions in scaffolding interactions to assist children to produce cohesive and topic-centred recounts of experience. The interactive processes underlying this learning will be discussed in chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1.

1.5.3.2 Learning to respond to questions as a means of interrogating text

In the education of Aboriginal children, the importance of concern with what counts as negotiation within educational discourse can be found in research which focuses on classroom interaction. For example, there is a long history of research which demonstrates that the
asking of questions which require children to display skills, information, knowledge, reasons or speculation often results in a total communication breakdown between teachers and children eg. Drinkwater (1981), Malcolm (1982), Michael Christie (1984).

Thus, when Harris (1980) makes observations such as the following, he is talking about culturally transmitted ways of learning through language:

None of the above discussion should be taken to indicate that Yolngu themselves do not ask questions to seek information. They often do, but the information has to be of personal interest to them.

A Balanda teacher on a ‘nature walk’ with Yolngu children noted how they took pleasure in naming things for him voluntarily. But once he tried to provoke a questioning attitude from the children, they refused to co-operate. They named dozens of plants and insects, etc., and said such things as ‘If you touch that worm it will give you boils’. But when the teacher said, ‘What does this do?’ referring to a cocoon, or, ‘Why do you think this caterpillar goes into this cocoon?’ he simply got shrugs of boredom in response. (Harris 1980:152)

In contrast, children socialised into literate discourses have no difficulty acting ‘purposefully’ in such contexts because they come to school with extensive preparation in ‘decontextualised’ ways of using language. Because of the culturally situated ‘members’ resources’ they have acquired, they are already oriented towards acquiring many of the ‘secrets’ of language behaviour required for success at school. At the same time, they already know many of the ‘secrets’ required for learning from books. Heath (1982) describes it in this way,

Close analyses of how mainstream school-oriented children come to learn to take from books at home suggest that such children learn not only how to take meaning from books, but also how to talk about it. In doing the latter, they repeatedly practice routines which parallel those of classroom interaction. By the time they enter school, they have had continuous experience as information-givers; they have learned how to perform in those interactions which surround literate sources throughout school. They have had years of practice in interaction situations that are the heart of reading - both learning to read and reading to learn in school. They have developed habits of performing which enable them to run through the hierarchy of preferred knowledge about a literate source and the appropriate sequence of skills to be displayed in showing knowledge of a subject. They have developed ways of decontextualizing and surrounding with explanatory prose the knowledge gained from selective attention to objects. (Heath 1982:56)

Unsworth and O'Toole (1993) review research evidence about the development of questioning skills that children initiated into literate discourses learn in the encounters with adults as they share in reading activities before they go to school. Unsworth and O'Toole (1993) point out that the nature of the interaction process between children and their parents leads the children into the learning of specific ways of interrogating the texts they encounter. As children attempt to take an initiating role in the interaction, they are challenged to assume an active role in interrogating the text that is the focus of the activity. Unsworth and O'Toole (1993) provide the following quote from Domby (1983) to illustrate this process.

Precisely because her (the child's) experience of narrative is embedded in a conversation in which she is frequently allowed to take the initiating role, she is learning the active role in the discourse which she must take if an ideational or interpersonal meaning is to be constructed which has any significance for her and for the already existing network of meanings she has in her head. She is learning to interrogate the text, learning for a story to be created in her mind, the listener (or the reader) cannot rely on passive receptivity, but must play an active part in the asking of
questions, the drawing of inferences and the constructing and testing of hypotheses. (Domby 1983:41 cited in Unsworth & O'Toole 1993:100)

Heath (1982) provides a similar interpretation when she points out how the kind of literacy interaction Domby refers to, prepares children to comprehend successfully and to learn from written texts in schools:

> Reading for comprehension involves an internal replaying of the same types of questions adults ask children of bedtime stories. We seek what explanations, asking what the topic is, establishing it as predictable and recognising it in new situational contexts by classifying and categorizing it in our mind with other phenomena. (Heath 1982:54)

A significant feature of the kinds of questions that children learn as they are socialised into literacy is that the questions are learned as 'display questions'. That is, children see them as legitimate vehicles for the sharing and display of knowledge. They are accepted on an intersubjective level by both adults and children as a means of thinking aloud in order to engage in a process of joint problem solving within literate discourses. Coming to understand how questions function as a resource for ‘displaying and sharing knowledge’ requires the learner to build commonality of purpose with an adult as part of a socialisation process. This issue will be discussed further in section (2.3) of this chapter which explores the manner in which precociously literate children are scaffolded into literate ways of functioning.

### 1.5.3.3 Learning to focus on what the words mean as a way of reflecting on literate discourses

In gaining control over decontextualised language use, a crucial step seems to be to learn to pay strict attention to the meaning carried in the words themselves and to realise that such meanings can be held separate from the immediate social context in which they occur (eg. Tannen 1985; Wood 1988; Wertsch 1990; Scollon & Scollon 1981; Olson & Torrence 1983). This understanding grows simultaneously with understandings about the production of explicit literate or topic-centred texts and the manner in which those texts are to be interrogated through questioning. This focus on 'what the words mean' is what Harris (1984) is referring to when he describes westernised education as 'formal'. Olson and Torrence (1983) propose that this focus plays a fundamental role in educational success.

Our hypothesis is that an important conceptual transformation occurs during the early school years for children in a literate bureaucratic society such as ours which is related, either directly or indirectly to literacy. This conceptual transformation depends upon the development of a new orientation to language, specifically, an attention to and a competence with the structure of language per se as opposed to an attention to competence with the contents, intentions or messages expressed by the language. As we shall argue, it has to do with learning to differentiate form from content, what is said from what is meant. (Olson & Torrence 1983:145)

Our suggestion is that there is a shift from attention to the beliefs and intentions of persons towards the meanings and structures of sentences. (Olson & Torrence 1983:148)

Scollon and Scollon (1981) develop the concept of decontextualisation further and demonstrate that this shift of focus towards strict attention to what the words say as opposed to an
orientation which gives primary attention to the context in which the words occur as the major mediator of meaning is an emergent process that is already well developed for many children from strong literacy-oriented homes before they begin schooling.

In an oral tradition, meaning is interpreted in terms of the situation in which it is used. One certainly does not interpret meaning by relying on the words alone away from an understanding of the speaker's intention and the social context in which they are uttered. Heath (1982) makes the following observation about learning how to talk in 'Trackton' a community with a strong oral tradition,

“Flexibility and adaptability are the most important characteristics of learning to be and learning to talk in Trackton. Children learn to shift roles, to adapt their language, and to interpret different meanings of language according to varying situations (Heath 1982:111).”

Scollon and Scollon (1981) point out that the embeddedness of texts within performance contexts is a significant feature even when important knowledge is being conveyed in an oral tradition. When such texts are removed from their performance contexts their full meaning potential is greatly reduced.

Ten years ago Toelken pointed out the importance of viewing Navajo Coyote narratives in the contexts of their performance. Others such as Hymes (1971, 1975a, 1975b, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979), Tedlock (1972a, 1972b, 1973, 1975, 1976), Daenhauer (1975, 1976), and Foster (1974) have shown the importance of treating the style and form of the original text in performance as a significant carrier of meaning. It is now clear that narrative texts in these traditions are carefully structured. Words that were once treated as repetitious and tiresome such as might be translated with "and" or "and then" are now known to be crucial to the narrative organisation (Scollon and Scollon 1981:106).

In contrast to the ways of language use that are important in predominantly oral cultures, educational discourse seems to require and promote the development of other ways of using language: -Ways that have been referred to here as ‘decontextualised’. Children who understand and control these ‘ways with words’ (Heath, 1983) find it easy to succeed in school.

What has been called decontextualised language use represents a further dimension of a way of using and learning through language. Children learn to use language in this manner through their involvement with a particular kind of literacy and within cultural contexts which are oriented towards that kind of literacy. It is these different expectations for language use that lead Aboriginal and Anglo Australian children to respond in different ways to the kind of problem that Harris (1980) posed to both remote area Aboriginal and urban non-Aboriginal children,

“All Wallabies on Groote Eylandt are Yellow
I went to Groote Eylandt and saw a Wallaby,
What colour was it?  (Harris 1980:184)

Harris found that Aboriginal children tended to answer brown while non-Aboriginal children were more likely to say yellow because they were prepared to accept the pretend world of meaning created by the words. This work replicated findings reported by Luria (1934, 1976) among non-
schooled peoples in Central Asia. It has also been replicated in a number of other cultural contexts and shown to be developed through exposure to schooling (refer Wood 1988). This second answer indicates a privileging of the 'logic' that is internal to the text rather giving priority to contextual reality. As Wood (1988) points out,

...this lack of 'sense' does not detract from the 'logic' of the argument. 'Logic', then, is not synonymous with making 'sense' and cannot be reduced to it. (Wood 1988:156)

This point is further developed by Romaine (1984) when she discusses similar findings in the work of Luria (1976) and Scribner and Cole (1981) with people from predominantly oral cultures. She contends,

The use of syllogistic reasoning is often assessed on intelligence tests and is often assumed to be a universal mode of thought. But this kind of schema is evidently acquired primarily through schooling in particular kinds of literacy. We can see how this might happen if we examine the structure of the syllogism more carefully. The first statement is one which establishes general premises; the second states a specific fact and the third requires a conclusion to be drawn about a specific case from the general premises. Great importance has been attached to this deductive mode of inference by western philosophers and logicians, and by philosophers of science in the discussion of scientific method. (Romaine 1984:198)

As Romaine points out, the key to obtaining the culturally appropriate answer lies in the extent to which the listener is prepared to accept the syllogism as a closed system. That is one must construe the syllogism as containing all necessary information for interpretation so that conclusions can be derived only through reference to the premise and not by reference to anything outside it. Such an approach requires a willingness to explore a premise on the authority of the text alone and a preparedness to suspend immediate demands for a direct link with reality as the listener or reader knows it.

The intrusion of the terms 'logic' and 'syllogistic' logic into this discussion requires further consideration in order to clarify exactly what is meant when different discourses are considered to be logical. The following section (section 1.5.4) will propose that the notion of 'logic' being discussed here is often confounded in commonsense 'folk' notions of logic which constructs the term in a generalised, undifferentiated manner such that something is either logical or illogical.

1.5.4 THE 'LOGIC' OF LITERATE OR DECONTEXTUALISED DISCOURSE

'Logic' and 'logicality' are terms that have a broad currency at the level of common sense interpretation within the community at large. In some instances 'logical' can simply mean that speakers are correct in their statements. That is, what they say makes sense. In such circumstances, to say that one might find a yellow kangaroo on Groote Eylandt as Harris (1980) proposed in his questioning could be considered nonsensical and therefore illogical. Sometimes in common usage 'logical' is equated with 'analytical'. Frequently in common usage 'logical' is equated with 'syllogistic' logic or 'formal' logic. Often these kinds of logic are considered to represent superior ways of thinking.
It is important to note that the different answers (discussed in the previous section 1.5.3) to the kinds of question posed by Harris (1980) do not necessarily reflect any particular ‘intelligence’ level. The relevant issue here is how language carries different kinds of logic and thinking that are adapted to different contexts and social purposes for language use.

To avoid confusion between common sense interpretations of ‘logic’ and the kinds of thinking promoted by different discourses, some researchers employ the notion of ‘rationality’ which allows for different kinds of thinking to co-exist (e.g. Wood 1988; Wertsch 1990; Halliday 1993). As previous discussion has pointed out, the term ‘logic’ tends to cause confusion because the common sense interpretation of ‘logic’ in western culture generally constructs it as a higher order form of thinking. Moreover, the term ‘logic’ also lacks precision as a means of representing the differences in thinking and reasoning that accompany different discourses. Halliday (1993) clearly points to the distinctions that have been discussed above.

...different kinds of rationality are functional in different social contexts. Moving into the discourse of education is not a matter of transcending some opposition between non-rational and rational; it means recognising the contexts in which different forms of rationality are deployed. (Halliday 1993:56)

The adoption of such a perspective means that judgements about the rationality of particular texts must be made in relation to a specified context of situation within a particular context of culture. This is because languages are in fact cultural resources; social semiotic systems (Halliday 1985) through which contexts of culture are realised. A language or dialect is functional and rational in the sense that it is able to realise the meanings of a culture. As Cole (1990) points out, the rationality that is being referred to here is a kind of ‘culturally situated logic’ and not a notion of logic that exists in a generalised abstract sense.

Following D’Andrade, it seems best to conclude that cultural variations in the outcome of logical thinking are primarily the result of differences in the supply of well formed content-based schemata that are brought to the task, for example, differences in cognitive content, not the presence of generalised thinking skills that are present in one group that are absent in the other. (Cole 1990:100)

Wood (1988) also argues that it is not use of ‘logic’ per se by members of oral cultures who respond in the manner of Aboriginal children to problems such as Harris (1980) posed about the colour of kangaroos on Groote Eylandt. He claims, as Cole (1990) also does, that the nature of their response has more to do with the way respondents from predominantly oral cultures construct the problem in the first instance.

They do not see the problem in ‘formal’ terms, to be tested against some rules of logic, but as a description of an (implausible) event or situation whose plausibility is to be assessed. The conclusions reached reflect the rationality of what is said measured against what is likely to happen in Kpelle experience. Looked at in this way the Kpelle way of reasoning is not totally dissimilar from our own. (Wood 1988:158)
To the extent, then, that different discourses promote different schemata for representing reality, so the rationality associated with the construction of that particular interpretation of reality differs from discourse to discourse. In the final comment in the above quotation, Wood proposes that there is a strong degree of commonality between reasoning in predominantly oral contexts and everyday contexts in more literacy-oriented cultures. The differences in the responses can be attributed more to the framework of expectations and assumptions (i.e. the 'ground rules') within which the problem is contextualised by the respondent. The issue, therefore, is not whether 'logic' exists in some absolute sense. Rather, it is the question of determining the nature of the culturally situated ground rules that are appropriate and most effective for the application of 'logic' to achieve particular goals.

It is also useful here to note a point made briefly in an earlier section (section 1.5). This point is that research into the employment of decontextualised 'logic' in what have been called 'everyday contexts' provides a complex picture (e.g. Rogoff & Lave 1984; Holland & Quinn 1987) in which even people who have control over decontextualised rationality make many real life decisions which do not draw on this kind of thinking. It is clear that the particular kind of formal 'logic' being discussed here is not necessarily employed in all contexts by those who acquire it. Moreover, not all members of a literate culture possess the same level of capacity with this 'logic' or employ it to the same degree.

In building decontextualised frames for thinking (rationalities) a significant factor is the acquisition of language resources associated with the acquisition of literacy. Vygotsky (1978) proposed that formal education involved learning new ways of thinking and that these new ways of thinking arose out of the process of learning how to exploit new functions of language which are associated with 'decontextualised' literacy. He proposed that these new ways of thinking could be characterised as 'analytical'. Wood (1988) summarises this position.

Vygotsky argued that schooling and instruction involve the transmission of scientific ways of thinking, and inculcate in children the development of 'self-regulation'. He also argued that learning to read leads to important and far reaching changes in the nature of children's knowledge and the use of language. In becoming literate, children do not simply learn another way of communicating or a new 'code' for representing speech. Rather, writing and reading make novel demands on children and involve them in learning how to exploit new functions of language. Text is not simply speech written down, nor is writing merely the substitution of visible symbols for acoustic ones. Both reading and writing involve ways of communicating that transform the nature of children's knowledge of language and lead to more analytical ways of thinking. (Wood 1988:162)

In order to interpret how the term 'analytical' as it is used here refers to language functioning through the concept of rationality outlined above, it is important to view it as representing a particular kind of orientation to reality. This orientation to language and thinking reflects the way western culture creates certain kinds of theoretical worlds of meaning and stores them in books. This particular orientation to meaning can be expressed through Vygotsky's (1978) notion of a cultural 'tool' that is available for constructing particular kinds of cultural reality. Luria (1928) refers to the concept of cultural tool as a mechanism or 'frame' for reorganising
the nature of a task in order for it to be completed. In the process of doing the task, the nature of the task itself is reconstructed according to the cultural 'frame' imposed upon it.

Instead of applying directly its natural function to the solution of a particular task, the child puts between that function and the task a certain auxiliary means...by the medium of which the child manages to perform the task. (Luria 1928:495)

Decontextualised or literate discourse, then, is a 'tool or resource' that provides a 'frame or perspective' through which one interprets the world. It is a 'frame' that is highly functional in the context of schooling and in academic/literate discourse generally. When considered from the perspective of Vygotsky's (1978) notion of 'tool', decontextualised or literate discourses involve more than just a superficially different way of using language to that employed in more contextualised discourses. They represent fundamentally different ways of viewing and processing the world - of constructing and representing experience and knowledge.

An interesting feature of such cultural 'tools' is the level of 'inter-subjective sharing' or 'common knowledge' (D'Andrade, 1987; Edwards & Mercer, 1987) that is involved in their use by members of a particular cultural group. For the Aboriginal child, responding to the syllogism with 'brown' is axiomatic. What else would you say? Only a fool would say a kangaroo was yellow. For literacy-oriented questioners, however, the response is likely to be an assumption that Aboriginal children are poor at listening. As Edwards & Mercer (1987) comment, the assumption occurs because the children do not frame and respond to the question according to the same culturally situated ground rules assumed by the teacher. From the perspective of the discourse employed by the teacher, the question did not ask the colour of kangaroos in the real world. It asked the colour of kangaroos in a hypothetical world constructed within the text itself.

The difficulty is that they are not answers to the questions. The respondents do not accept a ground rule that is virtually axiomatic with us: 'Base your answer on the terms defined by the questioner'. (Edwards & Mercer 1987:56)

As D'Andrade (1987) points out, it is a characteristic of cultural discourses that participants should act in this manner. The prerequisite understandings are assumed to be inter-subjectively shared, and observations and interpretations made about the world proceed as if they are obvious. Understanding how to facilitate access to an unfamiliar discourse requires educators to recognise this tendency on the part of knowledgable participants to make such assumptions. Consequently, building classroom discourse that is functional requires both the teacher and the children to build knowledge of the discourse from an inter-subjective perspective. The building of knowledge about the discourse at the level of 'inter-subjective sharing' or 'common knowledge' is therefore an important prerequisite for participating in learning in schools. It is important that educational goals are framed with this in mind.

The notion of 'inter-subjective sharing' as a basis for knowing and doing in culturally situated discourses brings with it an explanation of why it is that the ground rules for functioning within culturally situated discourses are typically rendered 'invisible'. By invisible it is meant that
participants engage with a high level of tacit understanding about the ground rules for behaving and focusing in particular ways. The ground rules themselves are rarely made explicit. In fact, the participants operate without a comprehensive meta-awareness of the ground rules such that alternative perspectives are not considered. What is in fact a specific culturally regulated way of behaving is seen merely as ‘common sense’ and obvious - the only way to proceed effectively. This, of course, frequently makes participation difficult if not impossible for the non-initiated who do not possess the necessary members’ resources which provide access to the necessary ground rules. This fact that cultural learning is often held in an inter-subjective sense raises a question concerning the nature of the members’ resources Aboriginal children have already developed when they enter schools and attempt to participate in discourses which might require different learning behaviours to those they already possess.

1.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has introduced the focus of this study which has to do with the manner in which access to mainstream education for Aboriginal children might be constructed around the provision of access to certain kinds of academic/literate discourses which have been characterised as ‘decontextualised’. In the previous discussion, certain parallels have been drawn between the notion of ‘decontextualised’ discourses (e.g. Wertsch 1990) and that of ‘literate’ discourse proposed by Halliday (e.g. Halliday 1985a). It has been proposed here that access to discourses of this kind has been requested by a significant number of Aboriginal people. However, although the need to provide such access has been acknowledged officially in curriculum statements, delivery of access to academic/literate discourses for Aboriginal learners has generally not been achieved in Australian schools.

Research in curriculum development carried out by the author in conjunction with teachers at Traeger Park School in Alice Springs has been proposed as having the potential to contribute to issues of how access to education expressed in discourse terms might be achieved with Aboriginal children. In accord with principles adopted in the development of teaching strategies at Traeger Park School, decontextualised discourses important for schooling have been defined as culturally situated phenomena. However, because of the central role language plays in the operation of discourses it is reasonable, to review formal linguistic research into language development needs and strategies for teaching Aboriginal children.

Specifically, the next chapter (chapter 2) will consider the inheritance provided by formal linguistic research for teachers seeking to provide access for Aboriginal learners to academic/literate discourses and will review the overall development of Australian approaches to the present time. This review will provide a broad context in which the approach adopted to the development of the teaching program at Traeger Park School can be set. It will be proposed that the bulk of the research in this area, particularly that which has adopted a formal ‘linguistic’ approach to the investigation of needs, has provided limited and often confusing
information for teachers attempting to support Aboriginal children in learning how to access academic/literate discourses successfully.
2 LINGUISTIC RESEARCH AND THE PROVISION OF DISCOURSE ACCESS FOR MAINSTREAM SCHOOLING

2.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter will review major linguistic research that has influenced recommendations for the development of mainstream language/literacy competence for Aboriginal children in Australian schools. It will be proposed that these studies have generally provided limited information of practical benefit to teachers. In particular, very little useful information has been provided which addresses the needs of Aboriginal children in acquiring control over literate/academic discourses.

The review will focus on research studies from the late sixties through to the present mainly because the middle to late sixties marked the beginning of a re-examination of the role of Aboriginal people within Australian society. In 1967, a national referendum in Australia voted for full citizenship rights for Aboriginal people. This political change coincided with the Operation Head Start programs in America and brought with it a renewed interest in the rights of Aboriginal children to effective and equal educational opportunity and choice.

2.1.1 THE DEMISE OF DEFICIT APPROACHES AND THE RISE OF FORMAL LINGUISTICS
The first Australian research initiatives in the sixties and early seventies drew heavily on notions of 'deficit' which saw the locus of school failure in assumed cognitive deficiencies. The causes of these cognitive deficiencies were located primarily within an Aboriginal home environment that was assumed inadequate or deficient in various ways. The nature of schooling itself was not questioned and, although this was sometimes denied, notions of 'deficit' underpinned the two classic intervention programs of the late sixties and throughout the seventies, ie. the Queensland Van Leer Program (Dept of Ed. Qld 1970) and the Bourke Early Childhood Program (Moffitt, Nurcombe, Passmore, & McNeilly 1973) (refer appendix 1 for further discussion of this issue).

These two programs were designed by psychologists who saw themselves to be engaging in 'psycholinguistic' research (eg. refer Kearney, De Lacey & Davidson 1973:147-194). These early 'psycholinguists' were concerned with the relationship between language and thinking and the consequent effect on education. However, a major mistake of these psycholinguists was to assume that aspects of syntactic difference between 'Aboriginal English' and 'standard
English’ could be linked simplistically to cognitive ‘deficit’. And, as the seventies progressed, an alternative perspective began to emerge in Australian linguistic research and associated curriculum studies. This alternative movement was influenced primarily by the work of William Labov, particularly, Labov (1969), which was held to have established the legitimacy of ‘Negro non-standard English’ (NNE) in the face of ‘deficit’ assumptions promoted through the educational methodology of the time. In the Australian context, the work of the psycholinguists came to be seen as directly representing an instance of the ‘deficit’ perspective that was the target of Labov’s critique.

Labov (1969) took issue with the assumptions made by ‘deficit’ theorists, especially in relation to the supposed inadequacy of non-standard English as a vehicle for expressing logical thought. He argued that ‘deficit’ programs were predicated on a series of erroneous steps in reasoning.

1. The lower-class child’s verbal response to a formal and threatening situation is used to demonstrate his lack of verbal capacity, or verbal deficit.
2. This verbal deficit is declared to be a major cause of the lower-class-child’s poor performance in school.
3. Since middle class children do better in school, middle-class speech habits are seen to be necessary for learning.
4. Class and ethnic differences in grammatical form are equated with differences in the capacity for logical analysis.
5. Teaching the child to mimic certain formal speech patterns used by middle-class teachers is seen as teaching him to think logically.
6. Children who learn these formal speech patterns are then said to be thinking logically and it is predicted that they will do much better in reading and arithmetic in the years to come. (Labov 1969:350)

Labov’s (1969) paper generated in Australia, as elsewhere, an alternative ‘difference’ perspective which took as its basic working premise the assumption of logical equivalence between non-standard Aboriginal English (AE) and standard English (SE). Labov's 1969 paper affirmed this logical validity through the comparison of texts from Larry, a ‘non-standard Negro English speaker’ and Charles M. identified as ‘an upper middle class, college educated Negro man’ (Labov 1969:344). In fact, Labov (1969) carried his analysis to the point of implying strongly that that ‘non-standard Negro English’ was not merely of equal status, but was more efficient and effective than ‘educated, middle-class English’. Labov argued that ‘educated’ texts from speakers such as Charles M. may on first impression appear to be more logical than texts produced by non-standard English speakers such as Larry. However, he proposed that such a perception was merely a response to social conditioning on the part of the observer (refer appendix 1 for further discussion of this issue).

The difference in perspective underpinning Labov’s notion of ‘logic’ and the language/thinking interrelationship outlined with respect to academic/literate discourses in the first two chapters of this study is extensive and holds considerable relevance for the education of Aboriginal children in mainstream schools. If, for example, ‘logical equivalence’ holds between discourses in the kind of absolute sense that Labov proposes, why should children be given
access to the ‘ways with words’ which characterise academic discourse? Labov’s perspective
glosses this issue in terms of whether non-standard English speakers should be taught
standard English. He proposes that the issue is essentially one of accommodating to a
stylistic convention.

why not write in NNE, then, or in your own nonstandard dialect? The fundamental
reason is, of course, one of firmly fixed social conventions. All communities agree that
SE is the ‘proper’ medium for formal writing and public communication. (Labov
1969:343)

However, Labov does add enigmatically (for he never explains why or how it might be so) that:

Furthermore, it seems likely that SE has an advantage over NNE in explicit analysis of
surface forms. (Labov 1969:343)

The issue of potential ‘advantage over NNE’ is, however, not pursued seriously by Labov. He
promises to return to the issue in a later discussion of ‘grammaticality’, although in this later
discussion, he considers the notion of explicitness and logical equivalence only with respect to
superficial syntactic differences between NNE and SE. For example, he takes issue with
Bereiter, Engelmann, Osborn & Reidford’s (1966:113 ff.) contention that the use of ‘they mine’
by some non-standard English speakers instead of ‘they are mine’ represents some kind of
logical impairment. From this discussion he concludes that NNE forms are clearly as ‘logical’
as their SE ‘equivalents’. And, while this argument by Labov does serve to refute the
simplistic interpretations of deficit in teaching approaches based on Bereiter and Engelmann’s
(1966) interpretation of NNE, it does not consider possible differences in language choice that
might exist at the level of discourse.

Instead of such a discussion, Labov shifts focus and proposes that it would be ‘useful’ to
consider an analysis of ‘middle class informal speech’. In making the distinction inherent in
this formulation, Labov presumably differentiates between middle class informal speech and
other non-specified speech and written variants (presumably including academic/technical
speech/writing). However, once again, he does not carry this differentiation through his
following discussion. Instead, over the course of his paper, he manages to achieve a rather
dubious rhetorical slide from the criticism of ‘middle class informal speech’ to academic and
technical discourse in general.

It is true that technical and scientific books are written in a style which is markedly
‘middle-class’. But unfortunately, we often fail to achieve the explicitness and
precision which we look for in such writing; and the speech of many middle-class
people departs maximally from this target. (Labov 1969:347)

In every learned journal one can find examples of jargon and empty elaboration - and
complaints about it. (Labov 1969:340)

The explicitness and precision which we hope to gain from copying middle-class forms
are often the product of the test situation, and limited to it. (Labov 1969:347)

Within this critique which essentially mistargets the inappropriate use of academic/literate
discourses rather than academic/literate discourses per se, Labov’s only attempt to specify
what exists within ‘standard English’ that might be academically advantageous to non-
standard English speakers is dismissive and perfunctory:

…precision in spelling, practice at handling abstract symbols, the ability to state
explicitly the meaning of words, and a richer knowledge of the latinate vocabulary,
may all be useful acquisitions. (Labov 1969:339)

Given Labov’s dismissive attitude to academic/literate discourses and his construction of
language difference as little more than stylistic variation, his model of ‘logical equivalence’ has
never been easy to translate into mainstream classroom practice. Moreover, in the field of
Aboriginal education research in Australia, Labov’s influence has provided a mixed blessing.
On one hand, it has provided for a greater awareness of the complexity and validity of
Aboriginal English by educators. However, on the other hand, it has resulted in a profound
ambivalence towards the issue of providing access to academic/literate discourses that is
evident in the writings of Baarda (1990) and Harkins (1994) presented in chapter 1 (section
1.4).

A fundamental difficulty for educators in Labov’s analysis is that his analysis is confined to
comparison of linguistic systems at the level of dialect which sets language difference in
terms of opposition between Aboriginal English and standard English as undifferentiated
systems which are the ‘property’ of two different community groups. Within such a model,
differences in the way literate resources are employed are not seen to have any role in
constructing special kinds of meaning that may, for example, play a significant role in
educational success. Thinking and reasoning, therefore, become processes that are assumed
to occur in complete isolation from the process of mustering specific language resources in
the construction of particular discourses in the manner proposed in chapter 1 of this study
(section 1.5).

In this respect, Hasan (1973) distinguishes clearly the constructs ‘dialect’ and ‘register’.

The difference between registers and dialects lies in the fact that, but for a few
immaterial exceptions, the distinctive formal patterns characterizing a dialect cannot
be shown to be motivated by the circumstance of the speech community correlating
with it; by contrast, but for a few immaterial exceptions, the distinctive formal patterns
characterizing a particular register can be shown to be motivated by the factors which
correlate with register distinction.… (Hasan 1973:271)

Hasan (1973) lists these factors which correlate with register distinction as follows,

(1) Subject-matter of discourse
(2) Situation-type for discourse
(3) Participant roles within discourse
(4) Mode of discourse
(5) Medium of discourse … (Hasan 1973:272)

Ultimately, Labov’s analysis lacks a sense of register that explains how texts are to be drawn
from the linguistic resources available within the dialect to create specific texts pertinent to
various contexts of situation appropriate to different discourses.
The result of constructing difference at the level of dialect for educators is that any attempt to promote change or development can only be seen in terms of ‘trading off’ one dialect for another. For this reason it is proposed that framing questions to do with the provision of access to mainstream education in terms of contrast between the linguistic constructs of Aboriginal English and standard English is inadequate. Similarly, Labov’s (1969) construction of logic and logical equivalence at the generalised level of dialect such that different dialects can be said to be all coherent and rational is also limited. As discussion in chapter 1 (section 1.5.4) has pointed out, access to academic/literate discourses has to do not with broad issues of logic per se. (ie. in the sense that something is either logical or not). Rather, the issue is one of providing access to different ‘rationalities’ or kinds of logic appropriate to different discourses.

In research with Aboriginal children, the failure to distinguish these issues has led to the considerable ambivalence and confusion of purpose that has come to characterise the field. In early research following Labov’s (1969) paper, a major disjuncture existed between the need to recognise and affirm the logical equivalence of Aboriginal English and the specification of teaching goals and strategies for providing access to standard English. For example, Sharpe (1976, 1977a, 1977b) studied the Aboriginal English of 84 children attending Traeger Park School but could offer very little that might influence the provision of access to academic/literate discourses. Her reports however reaffirmed strongly the logical equivalence of Aboriginal English, for example:

As I see it, all forms of AbE. in Alice Springs appear reasonably adequate for school and for living in modern society... (Sharpe 1977a:2)

There is little doubt that some AbE. lacks some of the grammatical complexity of standard English. But nonetheless, the well-used AbE forms can be used efficiently to convey more complex thoughts, even though the SE speaker tends to use more complex constructions or rarer words for the same thoughts... (Sharpe 1977a:2)

And, as she struggled to provide explanations for the learning difficulties the children were experiencing at school, her speculations and recommendations were somewhat contradictory to this position.

It is possible, that even if a SE structure is also a possible AE structure, long or complicated uses may ‘overload the computer’ and cause lack of comprehension in Aboriginal children. (Sharpe 1977a:3)

Moreover, she quoted approvingly the following strategies already employed at the school.

One of the grade 6 teachers found a number of children in her class did not appear to comprehend some prepositions and locatives, suggesting that no-one should assume that by grade 2 all children had a command of basic English. (Sharpe 1977a:3)

...allowing plenty of drill in prepositions and imperatives (eg. Pick up that book. Take it over to the cupboard. Lift up that magazine. Put the book under the magazine. etc). The lower prep teacher used a similar technique, and while there was evidence that some children in her group came to school with a high level of grammatical sophistication for their age, the simple instructions and constant repetitions appeared to help the whole class, which included a number with very little exposure to SE or white culture. For example, she did not tell children: 'Line up at the door behind Peter,
but 'Peter you go to the door and stand there. Logan, you go and stand behind Peter. Helen, you go and stand behind Logan. Now Hilary, go and stand beside Peter, etc. etc.' (Sharpe 1977a:3)

Although, at the same time, she concluded her recommendations as if there had been no issues to do with language at all.

In the ultimate, the main problem for AbE speakers in Alice Springs may not be a language one, but a combination of cultural and motivational problems. (Sharpe 1977a:3)

In response to Sharpe’s (1976, 1977a, 1977b) research, the Traeger Park School implemented a teaching model for the drilling of syntax which was in operation prior to the commencement of the teaching intervention reported in this chapter (section 2.4.1). As the discussion in section 2.4.1 proposes, this teaching model was, in reality, little different from that employed by earlier psycholinguistic ‘deficit’ programs.

Another influential study of Aboriginal English was carried out by Kaldor and Malcolm (1982). These researchers collected and analysed data from children in 38 schools across Western Australia. Following Labov (1969) they saw their study an one which affirmed the logical equivalence of Aboriginal English.

Far from being ‘impoverished,’ non-standard dialects are rich stores of communication resources. In a famous paper, Labov (1970) demonstrated convincingly that speakers of non-standard dialects can and do express the same fundamental logical relationships in their speech as do speakers of standard dialects. In chapters III and IV we have produced evidence from Aboriginal children’s speech to support Labov’s conclusions. (Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:195)

Yet the recommendations these researchers made for educational practice was to return to the teaching of standard English syntax of a very basic kind.

Teachers should gently lead the children to the use of SAE forms where appropriate by encouragement, positive attitudes and by modelling SAE forms through their own speech. Teachers would thus mostly use SAE forms, those being their natural means of expression in the enactment of their role as teacher. As the occasions arise, they may expand and elaborate on children's utterances as a parent would in everyday conversation. Thus when a child says ‘e got tree dere’, the teacher may say That's right, there are a lot of trees in this picture. There are also a lot of birds in the trees. Can you see them? (cf Dwyer 1976:19). (Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:209)

What is apparent in this research from the perspective of teachers working with Aboriginal children is the lack of clarity which exists as to the exact nature of the goals to be pursued in order to achieve access to mainstream education. In both the work of Sharpe (1976, 1977a, 1977b) as well as that of Kaldor and Malcolm (1982) the goals appear to be fundamentally the same as those which existed pre-Labov (1969), (ie. the teaching of syntax of a quite elementary kind). However, now such goals were more loosely specified and approached to some degree in a more indirect manner by teachers. The purpose of the enterprise was not seen as having anything to do with improving the children’s ability to construct discourse-specific meanings. Rather, it was seen as necessary to help Aboriginal children conform to somewhat arbitrary and stylistic standard English conventions in order to negate potential discrimination.
Harkins 1994, who has produced the most recent work on Aboriginal English to claim relevance to the education of Aboriginal children in mainstream schooling, has set her research focus even more strongly towards the articulation of Aboriginal English as dialect logically equivalent to standard English within the Labovian perspective. The tenor of the advice for teachers deriving from Harkins’ research is one which largely rejects the possibility that Aboriginal children might need to acquire new language resources from academic/literate discourses in order to succeed in school.

It would seem more logical, then, for educators to concentrate not on trying to change the range of English constructions used by the children, but rather on using the linguistic resources already available for dealing with the desired educational content. (Harkins 1994:143)

This kind of formulation of the issue directly rejects the perspectives underlying the notion of academic/literate discourses as well as the need for teachers to provide access which were developed in chapter 1 of this study. This formulation is carried through in Harkins' ultimate assessment of the language needs of Aboriginal learners discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.4). Other current research into Aboriginal English (e.g. Eades 1984, 1985, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1995) also concentrates mainly on describing Aboriginal English as a dialect and affirming its richness and validity as a system at the level of dialect. Moreover, when Eades, for example, does address issues to do with access to academic/literate discourses it is from the perspective of interpreting and facilitating communication between Aboriginal English speakers and those persons working within discourses such as law. She does not address the issue of assisting Aboriginal learners to take over and control the discourse in the manner intended in chapter 1 (section 1.5) of this study.

The one study that did attempt to break this trend is that of Walker (1982). Walker compared the language of Aboriginal school entrants at Traeger Park with a corpus of language from non-Aboriginal children of a similar age. Walker's analysis was ambitious for its time and he attempted to produce what he termed a functional analysis. However, his analytic technique which involved the aggregation of large amounts of data to calculate relevant frequencies of functional elements and grammatical choices lost contact with issues of register in a similar way to the dialect comparisons which followed Labov (1969). As a result, Walker's (1982) pronouncements on the competencies of Aboriginal children were confused and seemingly contradictory. For example, this confusion is evident in the contrast between the following two statements.

it seems likely that these children are not accustomed to referring to degrees of certainty concerning an event or state. It seems that, to them, things are so or they are not so: teachers would need to be highly cautious in assuming that they have the concept of certainty or degrees of certainty, or can interpret that in language. (Walker 1982:107)

we have no reason to believe that the English system of these children is what it is because they lack the capacity to think or learn to speak in certain ways, or because they have certain characteristic predispositions for learning and thinking. To make unjustified assumptions of that kind leads only too readily to convenient excuses for the failure of teaching programs. (Walker 1983:73)
These kinds of contradictions along with the manner in which he defined and interpreted some of his ‘functional’ categories for analysis purposes have attracted criticism from Harkins (1994). However, like Walker’s (1982) research, Harkins’ research also lacks a sense of register necessary for dealing with issues of access and control over academic/literate discourses. Consequently, in the absence of a perspective on register, Walker’s (1982) study has primarily provided an easy target from which the debate over access can be reframed in terms of the need to both demonstrate the ‘logic’ of Aboriginal English and refute the presumed ‘deficit’ notions of those who argue that Aboriginal children need to be taught to control language resources other than those which exist in Aboriginal English. Thus, the cycle of debate introduced by Labov (1969) can continue to be recycled for the nineties and beyond. At the same time, the issue of access and control over academic/literate discourses that is central to this study continues to be ignored by Australian linguists.

Ultimately, the net consequence of the rise of formal linguistics within Aboriginal education has been a devaluing and avoidance of issues to do with the provision of access to academic discourses in the sense outlined in chapter 1 of this study. Consequently, further discussion of issues surrounding this area is both beyond the direct focus and space limitations of this study. However, to ignore a more careful discussion of major issues in this area is to ignore what is essentially the predominant position encountered when one sets out to construct teaching programs aimed at providing access to mainstream educational success for Aboriginal children. Therefore, a more detailed discussion of the deficit/difference debate and its effect on linguistic research with Aboriginal children has been set out in appendix 1 (refer: volume 2).

Instead, the rest of this chapter will concentrate upon the limited range of studies that have attempted to explore the negotiation of control over academic/literate discourses for Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms. For the most part, this research is only peripherally linguistic in the sense that there is any concern with the analysis of particular language choices. The research can be more properly categorised as descriptive or ethnographic.

2.1.2 RESEARCH INTO THE NEGOTIATION OF LEARNING WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM CLASSROOMS

The negotiation of learning with Aboriginal children in Australian schools, as is the case with the more formal linguistic research discussed above, offers meagre pickings for educators. However, it is necessary to consider this research in some depth in order to locate the development of the teaching initiatives employed at Traeger Park School. In general, the picture from research identifies a somewhat depressing pattern of classroom miscommunication that appears to have changed little since early ground breaking research by Malcolm (eg. 1979, 1982). For example, Malcolm (1987) points to comments by teachers recorded in his original (1979) study as relevant in 1987.
The problems, they told me, were not so much with language (though many Aboriginal children spoke a non-standard variety of English) as with overall communicative behaviours. It was reported that Aboriginal children in the classroom were shy, reluctant to initiate communication with the teacher, very hesitant in answering, embarrassed at being singled out either for praise or reproof, prone to excessive peer communication and calling out when not nominated. I was told they were low in concentration, and incapable of keeping still or remaining in their seats for any length of time (see Malcolm, 1979). (Malcolm 1987:39)

He goes on in a later study (Malcolm 1991) to address further issues to do with the same kinds of teacher concerns. Michael Christie (1984), has argued strongly that teachers commonly fail to engage Aboriginal children in 'purposeful' learning. Moreover, he proposes that the typical outcome is that pedagogy, instead, becomes fixated upon supporting and perpetuating 'ritual' learning (note: Michael Christie needs to be identified separately from Frances Christie whose work also features prominently in this study). Folds (1987) in the Central Australian classrooms he studied also points out a similar discourse outcome to that illustrated by Michael Christie. Harris (1990) draws upon Christie's interpretation of 'ritual' classroom practice as a fundamental issue of concern at the time of his writing. Malin (1989) also describes how differences in expectations between teachers and children concerning procedural behaviour in learning contexts marginalise Aboriginal children and exclude them from participation in productive learning interaction. Moreover, literacy outcomes of the kind discussed earlier in chapter 1 (section 1.1) indicate that there is still much to be done at the present time.

The need for a research effort that focuses specifically upon the negotiation of pedagogic discourse in schools is endorsed by writers with widely different positions on issues to do with cultural difference. Harris (1985) who is prominent for his work on defining notions of cultural learning styles (eg. Harris 1980) points directly to the limitations inherent in appealing to simplistic notions of cultural difference and cultural 'world view' as a mechanism for 'explaining' the learning behaviour of Aboriginal children in mainstream schooling.

...research into Aboriginal competencies (such as cognitive abilities, mathematical concepts, scientific concepts, grammatical or semantic systems etc.), which is important and positive because it helps increase our understanding of Aboriginal people, has contributed surprisingly little towards the design of an effective school system. This is because it has not in general enabled teachers to increase Aboriginal students' understanding of the essential nature or process of school learning...

...Descriptions of Aboriginal competencies do not show the way to the root of school learning difficulties; they do not identify the points of school learning breakdown. (Harris 1985:2)

Keeffe (1992) is critical of the manner in which cultural processes are characterised along a single dimension, a perspective he categorises as 'cultural dualism' which is realised in the 'culture list' as a marker of difference.

For effective curriculum and political practice, we do need to look beyond the ‘culture list’; we need to go behind the totalising form of the cultural difference explanation in order to examine whether other factors may also be significant but ignored; to critically analyse the notion of culture that is used; to examine some of the unintended consequences of an emphasis on overwhelming cultural difference. (Keeffe 1992:101)
Keeffe proposes that ‘cultural dualism’ ultimately stereotypes Aboriginal learners and substantially denies the possibility of differences between individuals as members of the same culture. He further states that ‘cultural dualism’ seriously undervalues the potential for flexibility and adjustment to dynamic circumstances which Aboriginal learners are capable.

Malcolm (1987) goes on to highlight the restricted view of culture which operates when ‘cultural difference’ is seen to be the fundamental cause of communicative failure.

We are underestimating teachers where we consider them to be captives to the "invisible culture" of the classroom, and we are underestimating pupils where we consider them to be captives to their own cultural patterns which contradict it. Every multicultural classroom is a laboratory of cultural adaptation, and teachers and pupils alike are the investigators who experiment with means of changing what they find there. (Malcolm 1987:57)

Malcolm proposes that the implications which arise for educators of Aboriginal children are clear.

To begin with, it implies stopping looking for single-basis explanations of minority children's classroom behaviour, like linguistic, cultural or any other kind of determinism and looking more closely at what is going on inside classrooms. (Malcolm 1987:57)

Unfortunately, given the limited progress that has been made towards understanding the dynamics of productive classroom interaction with Aboriginal children, it is not surprising to find that there is a very limited amount of classroom interaction research available to inform teachers. Furthermore, it will be proposed in discussion throughout this chapter that the difficulty for teachers is not just to do with the limited amount of available research. Teachers also face significant difficulties in attempting to translate the available research into pedagogic practice of a kind that provides access to academic/literate discourses. In order to build an analytic frame for considering why this might be so, it is useful at this point to refer to Bernstein's model of pedagogic discourse through reference to his ‘recontextualising’ principle.

2.2 Bernstein's Model of Pedagogic Discourse as a 'Recontextualising' Principle

The following discussion will outline two areas of concern in the analysis of pedagogic discourse which arise from Bernstein's ‘recontextualising’ principle. These areas of concern have to do with (1) the ultimate form of the pedagogic discourse as a valid means of access to academic/literate discourses, and (2) the process of negotiation through which a particular pedagogic discourse is realised. It will be proposed in later discussion (section 2.4) that different research studies on classroom discourse with Aboriginal children have focused on different aspects of these concerns. However, no studies have provided the kind of comprehensive analysis necessary to provide clear directions for teachers working to build access to academic/literate discourses with Aboriginal children. It will also be proposed that identification of the different focuses of research studies in this respect facilitates a clearer interpretation of the findings they report.
2.2.1 THE RECONTEXTUALISING PRINCIPLE AND THE FORM OF PEDAGOGIC DISCOURSE

Discussion in this study to date has proposed the importance of providing access to academic/literate discourses for Aboriginal children. However, organising a suitable pedagogy that will promote access and control over the kinds of academic/literate discourses that have relevance to the world outside the school is not unproblematic. It is not simply showing the children how to do what is asked of them in school. To set the problem at that level assumes that anything teachers pursue in the name of mainstream schooling is relevant to Aboriginal children. To do so runs the risk of leaving the children immersed in directionless pedagogy of the most trivial kind. It is with respect to resolving this issue that the work of Bernstein (eg. 1986, 1996) concerning the nature of pedagogic discourse is relevant.

Bernstein (1996) views pedagogic discourse as a means through which other discourses from realms outside schooling are relocated and recontextualised in a form different from their original manifestation in the culture outside the classroom. Thus, pedagogic discourse operates such that discourses located in cultural contexts outside schooling (ie. ‘unmediated’ discourses - Bernstein 1996:47) are appropriated and transformed (ie. ‘mediated’) via the operation of pedagogic discourse.

Pedagogic discourse is constructed by a recontextualizing principle which selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order. In this sense pedagogic discourse can never be identified with any of the discourses it has recontextualized. (Bernstein 1996:47)

To give an example from Bernstein (1996:47), the technical discourses of scientists conducting research or industrial chemistry etc. or builders, carpenters or furniture makers engaged constructing with wood, becomes, through the operation of the pedagogic discourse, the subjects ‘science, chemistry, woodwork, etc.’. The pedagogic discourses of the school (mediated) differ from their manifestation outside the school (unmediated) because, during the appropriation and transformation of an unmediated discourse into pedagogic discourse, selectivity comes into play such that values, attitudes, understandings and skills become open to interference and the influence of ideology.

As the discourse moves from its original site to its new positioning as pedagogic discourse, a transformation takes place. The transformation takes place because every time a discourse moves from one position to another, there is space in which ideology can play. No discourse ever moves without ideology at play. As this discourse moves, it is ideologically transformed; it is not the same discourse any longer. (Bernstein 1996:47)

A corollary of Bernstein’s notion of classroom discourse as recontextualisation is that it is not sufficient to simply equate the provision of access to unmediated (ie. outside schooling) discourses with just any discourse which may be promoted in the name of mainstream schooling. Consequently, if we are concerned ultimately with the provision of access to an unmediated discourse (eg. the technical discourses of scientists) it becomes important to ask about the relevance of the school discourse, ‘science’ for providing the appropriate access, for the two discourses are not necessarily the same or even similar. In fact, Bernstein’s notion of
pedagogic discourse as a recontextualising principle allows for the possibility of a whole range of pedagogic discourse modes which might be considered to distort, truncate or ignore the provision of access to academic/literate discourses. And, it is proposed here that many texts commonly promoted as ‘educational’ in the classroom possess a rather dubious status as a means through which members’ resources for participation in ‘literate’ discourses should be, or are capable of being, promoted.

In pursuing issues to do with the evaluation of the relevance of pedagogic discourse to learners it is useful to draw a distinction between the form of pedagogic discourse as outcome and the process of negotiation through which the outcome discourse is realised. The following diagram illustrates this distinction.

![Diagram](image-url)

**Figure 2.1:** The relation between pedagogic discourse as outcome and pedagogic discourse as process

The form of the pedagogic discourse (pedagogic discourse as outcome) Negotiation within the pedagogic discourse (pedagogic discourse as process)

if goal is access to academic/literate discourses beyond the school then negotiation must facilitate that access

The figure above presents the distinction between pedagogic discourse as outcome and pedagogic discourse as process as essentially two perspectives on the same entity. Both process and outcome are intrinsically related. Furthermore, it is not a simple matter to draw a precise differentiation between notions of pedagogic discourse as process and pedagogic discourse as outcome. As Harris (1985) puts the issue bluntly,

In successful formal verbal learning, the medium is the message. How teachers teach is really what students are learning. (Harris 1985:2)

It is possible, however, to adopt a perspective on classroom discourse that asks, ‘What is the outcome with respect to the ultimate provision of access to academic/literate discourses?’ Moreover, it is a critical question in any analysis of classroom discourse.

**2.2.2 THE RECONTEXTUALISING PRINCIPLE AND THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS IN PEDAGOGIC DISCOURSE**

Bernstein (1996) further proposes that the ‘recontextualised’ discourse of the classroom is a realisation of the workings of two component discourses that he terms respectively,
‘regulative’ and ‘instructional’. The regulative discourse has to do with the creation of ‘social order’ in the classroom.

In school it tells the children what to do, where to go, and so on. It is quite clear that regulative discourse creates the rules of social order. (Bernstein 1996:48)

The second discourse proposed by Bernstein (ie. ‘instructional discourse’) is a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relationship to each other. This discourse approximates roughly to what are typically referred to as ‘content’ understandings and knowledge in the field of education.

The relationship between the two discourses is such that it is the regulative discourse which is dominant. The regulative discourse constitutes the process through which the instructional discourse is operationalised (ie. recontextualised as a specific example of pedagogic discourse). In this sense, Bernstein proposes that the regulative discourse ‘embeds’ the instructional discourse and he represents the relation in the following manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUCTIONAL DISCOURSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REGULATIVE DISCOURSE</td>
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</table>

This is to show that the instructional discourse is embedded in the regulative discourse, and that the regulative discourse is the dominant discourse. Pedagogic discourse is the rule which leads to the embedding of one discourse in another, to create one text, to create one discourse. (Bernstein 1996:46)

It is critically important for the purposes of this discussion to elaborate further upon the nature of the regulative discourse. It is easily assumed that the role of the regulative discourse involves little more than orchestrating classroom procedure and achieving behavioural control. However, Bernstein’s notion of the role of the regulative register in building pedagogic discourse is that it contributes far more than narrow interpretations of social order in terms of establishing behavioural control might suppose.

I also want to argue that regulative discourse produces the order in the instructional discourse. There is no instructional discourse which is not regulated by the regulative discourse. If this is so, the whole order within pedagogic discourse is constituted by the regulative discourse. (Bernstein 1996:48)

In effect, the regulative discourse can be proposed as the means through which the whole manner of working of the instructional discourse is constituted in negotiation between teacher and children. Thus, there exists a potential within the regulative discourse for the teacher to direct different emphases and strategies toward orchestrating what might be termed behavioural/procedural control on one hand and towards negotiating and shaping the actual thinking and reasoning processes through which children engage with the content presented. This latter process to do with shaping thinking and reasoning about the instructional field will be referred to as ‘mental engagement’ in the following discussion. Mental engagement includes cognition but it also involves affective thought and judgements to do with the instructional field. It is important to note also that the distinction made between explicit orchestration of procedural control and mental engagement represents a gradation rather than a discrete categorisation. However, it is seeing how the teacher and children negotiate to
balance relationships between these areas that allows for insight into the nature of the pedagogy.

Because of the potential variation in focus within the regulative discourse, it is necessary to consider the nature of the ‘order’ within the instructional discourse that is being constructed in any particular instance. For example, how much and what is the nature of the emphasis that is, for example, being directed towards merely operationalising procedural behaviour (eg. directing attention, organising and controlling behaviour, settling children and staging shifts from one activity to another etc.). Similarly, how much emphasis and what is the nature of the emphasis that is directed towards identifying specific instructional content as well as clarifying and supporting ways of thinking around that instructional content? The above kinds of relationships between the regulative and instructional discourses can be interpreted in terms of the following Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 locates the regulative discourse as the primary discourse through which the ‘order in the instructional discourse’ is shaped and brought into existence (ie. operationalised). This is indicated by the arrows that project from the base of the cone to determine the instructional discourse which is represented as a layer at the apex of the cone. Thus the regulative discourse is seen to ‘embed’ or, as Frances Christie (1989a) puts it, ‘project’ the instructional discourse. Frances Christie chooses the term ‘project’ to draw upon the metaphor of projection employed by Halliday (1985b, 1994). Halliday develops projection as a process whereby thoughts, verbalisations and feelings are recontextualised as reported instances (see chapter 3, section 3.3.2). Christies’ use of the term ‘project’ draws a parallel between the
metaphor constructed grammatically in reported speech and the process through which the operation of the regulative register actively relocates the instructional discourse as something fundamentally different to the unmediated discourse from which it is drawn. Thus, Christie chooses the term 'project' to highlight the active nature of the process through which the regulative register brings into being the instructional register.

Notable within Figure 2.2 is the fact that the regulative discourse is itself seen to be composed of levels, one of which can be said to project the other. The first level of the regulative discourse has to do with the negotiation of procedural behaviour between the teacher and children (e.g. organising groups, settling children, orchestrating attention in a general non-specific sense – e.g. ‘watch here Billy!’). This level of regulative discourse projects the next layer which while still ‘regulative’ concentrates more upon the manner in which the teacher explicitly orchestrates mental engagement around the instructional topic (e.g. ‘If you do it like this...then...’ or ‘say it like this...’ or ‘what do you think about...’). There is, of course, no clear cut division between regulation of procedure and mental engagement - for example, teachers direct children into learning activity and ask questions about the instructional field as a means of instituting behavioural control. However, the distinction is a useful one provided it is drawn sensitively for it represents a progressive increase in the ‘delicacy’ of the role the teacher is prepared to take in the explicit shaping of the instructional discourse. Chapter 3 of this study will explore in more detail how relationships between regulative and instructional registers might be identified to analyse classroom learning negotiation (sections 4.3.5 & 4.3.6). The following discussion here will examine the findings of research on learning negotiation in pursuit of mainstream literacy goals with Aboriginal children.

2.3 THE FINDINGS OF RESEARCH ON CLASSROOM DISCOURSE WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

Given the above Figure 2.2 it becomes possible to consider research into classroom discourse in terms of the extent to which it explores issues to do with:

1. negotiation of behavioural control
2. negotiation of mental engagement around the instructional field
3. negotiation of the actual content choices promoted within the instructional discourse.

In order to represent pedagogic discourse effectively, it is necessary to consider the relation between each of these areas. Thus, teachers need to bear in mind that an analysis of classroom interaction which considers only the manipulation of behavioural control within the pedagogic discourse merely touches upon one of the areas necessary for understanding the negotiation of access to academic/literate discourses. Furthermore, behavioural control must be considered in terms of its role in facilitating productive cognitive engagement. The following discussion will now consider the implications for Australian classroom interaction research for issues to do with both the form of pedagogic discourse as outcome and the various levels of negotiation identified in figures 2.1 and 2.2 above.
2.3.1 INSTRUCTIONAL DISCOURSE AS ‘BUSYWORK’

It is with respect to the consideration of the nature of the recontextualised discourse common in classrooms that Michael Christie’s contribution to the study of classroom discourse with Aboriginal children arises. Michael Christie (1984) provides extensive discussion concerning the failure of teachers to achieve communication around mainstream educational goals with Aboriginal children as well as the cumulative distorting effect of this failure upon the form of pedagogic discourse over time.

Michael Christie proposes that Aboriginal children typically enter schools with very little orientation towards what would be considered an educational or ‘task-oriented’ agenda and that teachers find it exceedingly difficult to focus the children onto what Christie characterises as ‘purposeful behaviour’. Harris (1990), uses the term ‘academically purposeful behaviour’ in relation to this concept to underscore the point that such a statement does not assume that Aboriginal children are incapable of purposeful behaviour away from the context of school learning. In place of ‘purposeful’ learning engagement. Michael Christie (1984) points to the 'ritual' nature of the participation of many Aboriginal children in education.

The goals these children have in the classroom consist largely of the fulfilment of ritualized academic performance behaviours. They therefore prefer an achievement setting which does not depend upon purposefulness, and tend, when working independently, to modify classroom routines to exclude the skill component. When asked to set their own goals, they aim low, especially in a large mixed-sex group. (Michael Christie 1984:350)

Michael Christie (1984) adds that the coping behaviour of the kind he notes in the quotation above actively works to push teachers away from pursuing any kind of focused educational agenda.

Because Yolngu children become refractory and frustrated when encouraged to learn purposefully, discipline problems arise. When discipline problems arise teachers choose activities which will maintain peace in the classroom. Through a process of survival of the fittest, the teacher subculture has become dependent on a range of activities which, while ostensibly academic, require little purposeful behaviour. These……

…….. keep the children happy and maintain teachers in the hope that their pupils are occasionally learning something. (Michael Christie 1984:374)

Michael Christie then goes on to point out how pedagogic discourse in Aboriginal classrooms eventually comes to focus upon markedly lower goals which constitute a parody of the kinds of goals that are important for achieving control over academic discourse. Thus, not only does the behaviour of the children become ritualised, the behaviour of the teachers themselves also becomes ritualised. Eventually, even the theoretical rationale upon which teaching activity rests becomes distorted in order to accommodate and legitimise this ritualised pedagogical discourse.

The teachers, especially those more mystified by Yolngu children's behaviour, develop an activity orientation and these specially developed activities become an end in themselves. A primary effect of the activity orientation is to render the teacher uncritical of the progress the pupils are making. Anthropological, psychological and educational research findings and theory are selectively appropriated for the legitimation process. A notable recent example is the valuable research by Harris (1977, 1980) on traditional Aboriginal learning styles. This work has been quoted extensively in an effort to
legitimate a wide range of ritualised classroom behaviour. (Michael Christie 1984:380-1)

The ultimate outcome of schooling with Aboriginal children then is a ‘ritualised’ pedagogic discourse which emulates to some degree the superficial form of productive pedagogy but which is incapable of providing access to purposeful engagement with academic/literate discourses.

Ultimately a process of legitimation makes these strategies accepted practice. (Michael Christie 1984:380)

Furthermore, this accepted practice at the classroom and school level eventually comes to be seen as legitimate process across the education system in general.

Curriculum development at the school and departmental level begin to incorporate these. (Michael Christie 1984:380)

Harris (1985) makes similar claims about the outcomes of pedagogic discourse in Aboriginal classrooms. He claims that for much of the time Aboriginal children are typically engaged in what is commonly referred to as unproductive ‘busywork’.

There is considerable evidence at the present time that Aboriginal students are socialising teachers into allowing them to do useless work - 'classroom busy time' (see Christie 1984). The Aboriginal students at Milingimbi, for example, get tired of supposedly popular activities such as sport and watching films: they want 'hard work', which means lots of copying writing from the blackboard and pages of sums with lots of ticks. So while teachers are seen as authority figures to some extent, they are expected to exercise their authority within very powerful parameters. (Harris 1985:17)

The construction of pedagogic discourse with Aboriginal children as comprising primarily of ‘busywork’ is also presented strongly in the writing of others. For example, Folds (1987) devotes considerable attention to this issue.

The most effective and pervasive teacher coping strategy is busywork based on worksheet activities. Busywork activities in the settlement schools use copying, colouring and drawing which are capable of holding the attention of the Pitjantjatjara children, and this makes them highly attractive to teachers. Engaged in colouring or drawing on worksheets, the children often work away quite happily for half an hour or so at a time. (Folds 1987:49)

Folds (1987) claims that teachers in the classes he studied typically minimised verbal interaction around curriculum activity and describes, as an example, a commonly employed word recognition game with the following comments.

This game individualises learning and has the advantage of requiring no verbal interaction whatsoever between teacher and students. It also epitomises much of classroom activity in schools. (Folds 1987:48-9)

If the above discussion is considered with respect to the diagram presented in Figure 2.1 it is possible to propose that the research is certainly concerned to comment upon the validity of the mediated discourses which arise via the recontextualising principle of pedagogic discourse. Furthermore, it illustrates a practical understanding that many Australian teachers and researchers possess concerning much pedagogic discourse with Aboriginal children. This is that for much of the time and over a wide range of contexts the prevailing pedagogic discourse negotiated is fundamentally distorted and truncated. It is a pedagogic discourse that is in no way capable of providing meaningful access to the kinds of academic/literate discourses
alluded to earlier in chapters one and two of this study. And, while this knowledge can be considered useful in a somewhat negative sense, it begs the need to understand more clearly the negotiation processes through which the outcome arises. Moreover, it offers little concrete support for teachers who accept the message that the role of ‘busywork’ needs to be reconsidered in the teaching program. How are they to reframe a replacement discourse for example?

Interpretation of the kind of discourse identified by Michael Christie and Folds in terms of the model of pedagogic discourse proposed in Figure 2.2 provides for a deeper interpretation of the negotiation process. The kind of ritualised/busywork discourse they describe is one in which the regulative register is focused entirely upon organising activity and controlling behaviour. In this mode of pedagogic discourse the focus of the regulative register is on behavioural/procedural control and consequently there is no support for the development of thinking around a meaningful instructional goal. As a result, the field of the instructional register (eg. illustrations of animals, worksheets etc.) is not one which possesses any substantial value in terms of promoting access to academic/literate discourses. In fact, even when the goal is one that might be accepted as appropriate in mainstream classrooms, the texts reported by Folds show virtually no focus upon developing mental engagement in the sense identified in section 2.2.2 of this chapter. The following text is illustrative. The teacher sets out to promote the writing of a recount yet there is no negotiation surrounding the thinking (strategies, concepts, language choices etc.) necessary to compose such a text.

(The children are in a Pitjanjatjara language lesson being conducted by a white teacher. They are looking at some picture books.)

Teacher. Now. Who has finished the story we were working on last time? (The children ignore the question and continue looking through the books)

Teacher. (loudly) Who has finished the story?

Students. Me, me.

Teacher. Nyinakati (sit down) now. (At once the children start calling out ‘me me me’ and laughing)

Teacher. (pointing) Yes you have finished Sandy and Phillip and Chris and Cathy. You stay here, the rest go over and finish the story called ‘what you did on the weekend’. (Most children continue to read the books; others begin to wander around the classroom)

Teacher. (to those who are to write their stories) What did you do on the weekend? (No reply)

Teacher. So no one seems to know I know some of you went Fregon tanguru (from Fregon) to watch football. (No response)

Teacher. Kulilaya (listen everybody) You went (pointing) and you, didn’t you?

Teacher. Those who went draw a picture of the football football Nancy (pointing to paper). (Text 1 - Folds 1987:48)

In the above text most of the teacher negotiation is focused upon controlling and orchestrating behaviour. The teacher’s only superficial reference to potential mental engagement is to name a topic for writing. Thus, there appears to be no basis in the teacher’s pedagogy to focus on ways of thinking about the topic or constructing it in writing (except perhaps for the topic suggestion: Fregon tanguru). It is interesting to note that in the face of the inability to communicate about ‘how’ to do the task the teacher resorts to reframing the activity as ‘busywork’ (ie. ‘finish the story called ‘what you did on the weekend’ is reframed as ‘draw a picture of the football’). What is also interesting is that teachers invariably reflect upon these
kinds of difficulties as behaviour problems and their lack of success increases their concerns about their ability to negotiate control around behaviour even further. And, it is in these terms that Folds considers the above interaction.

Pitjantjatjara resistance is not the work of individuals; ‘ridicule’ ‘disruption’ and the ‘wall of silence’ are group activities. Therefore, teachers who might have some success in coping with occasional acts of resistance by individuals are hard-pressed when students act in concert, isolating them in the classroom. (Folds 1987:48)

Now, while the negotiation of behavioural control is an important issue in schooling and in the text under consideration above, Bernstein’s model of pedagogic discourse represented in Figure 2.2 reminds us that the negotiation of procedural behaviour/activity is inextricably intertwined with the negotiation of mental engagement with the instructional field. This is a critical issue with Aboriginal children because, as discussion of the differences between oral as opposed to academic/literate discourses in chapter 1 has indicated, movement into control over academic/literate discourses requires the acquisition of new ways of thinking about the instructional field (refer chapter 1, section 1.5).

2.3.2 THE ORCHESTRATION OF BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL IN REGULATIVE DISCOURSE

Another researcher who focuses strongly upon behavioural control as an issue in the education of Aboriginal children is Malin (1989). Malin (1989) conducted an ethnographic study of classroom interaction with Aboriginal children in both home and school settings. Malin’s primary concern was with the manner in which discontinuities in modes of behavioural control between home and school worked to exclude Aboriginal children from participation in learning. However, beyond this she did not address issues to do with the negotiation of thinking around the instructional field in the sense that the relationship is developed in Figure 2.2 above. Nor did she comment upon the nature of instructional discourse as outcome in the sense identified in Figure 2.1. Thus the focus of her research differs from that of Michael Christie and Folds discussed above.

Malin (1989) argued that the Aboriginal children she studied were allowed considerably more autonomy of action in the home than the non-Aboriginal (Malin used the term ‘Anglo’) children she studied. This autonomy manifested itself in, for example, a higher level of tolerance by Aboriginal parents of their children’s non-compliance to adult requests and direction.

...this (ie. non-compliance) was a vice they (ie. the parents) were willing to tolerate. And, they did not entirely approve of what they perceived as the intensity of persuasion in Anglo parenting. Linda stated the basis for this understanding between adults and children which gave a certain leeway for children to take their times in responding: she also referred to a mother whom she perceived as inadequate, a woman without a true ‘motherly instinct’ who was fostering a five year old boy:

“Kids are kids, they can’t help themselves... If a kid don’t want to listen to you they won’t.” When referring to a mother with unreal expectations she said, “She expect them to be man or woman before their time. She expect them to listen soon as she tells them....”  (Malin 1989:180) (italics added)
In comparison with the ‘middle class Anglo’ parents in her study, Malin found that Aboriginal parents employed far fewer questions which sought explanations from children in order to monitor or control behaviour. These Aboriginal parents also, incidentally, employed fewer display questions aimed at monitoring what the children knew or thought about a particular experience or topic. In addition, they were more accepting of assertive responses on the part of their children to attempts at behavioural direction.

There were 34 such assertive child responses to adult direction in the six recorded hours (during a picnic). In these situations the children would openly and verbally refuse to comply with an adult directive or express annoyance at it, corrected an adult on a piece of knowledge which was perceived as inaccurate, or reprimanded the adult on an act performed by that adult. On 71% of these occasions the adult accepted the child’s correction or simply agreed to differ, hence acknowledging the legitimacy of the child’s different point of view.....

The Anglo children contradicted, reprimanded and attempted to rationalize to adults on twice as many occasions. Anglo parents however, found such acts to be less acceptable. Many of these Anglo child acts did not have the assertive overtone of the Aboriginal acts, having a whining quality to them. (Malin 1989:198) (italics added)

Because of this level of tolerance exhibited in the home, Malin argues the behaviour of the Aboriginal children is in general less submissive than that of middle class Anglo children. It is, therefore, likely to be viewed as confronting by non-Aboriginal adults especially in the context of schooling.

Malin (1989) found that Aboriginal children also commonly did not employ interpersonal language choices which are normally considered ‘polite’ in mainstream interaction.

Just as parent Linda would say to Kylie, “Get that shirt off Bessie” (14v.177); similarly, Kylie (aged 9) would say to her mother, “Open the door.” (14.2.15) Unlike as in the Anglo families, these children would usually not be expected to phrase such directives as requests or favours communicating a deferential posture, nor tag them with such speech acts as ‘please’ or ‘thank you’ as the norm (c.f. Harris 1977 at Milingimbi). (Malin 1989:225)

Moreover, Aboriginal children were more prone than ‘middle class Anglo’ children to state intentions rather than ask for permission.

In the classrooms Malin studied, all of these kinds of behaviours brought the children into conflict with common teacher strategies employed for behavioural control in mainstream schooling. This was especially so with one teacher nominated by Malin (1989) as Mrs. Eyres. Malin argued that this particular teacher became so focused upon the effects of ‘perceived transgressions’ on the part of a small group of Aboriginal children who were less able to adapt to classroom control priorities that she could not effectively evaluate their academic performance. This resulted in her holding inordinately low expectations for their learning performance which were unjustified and ultimately discriminatory.

Malin (1989) further described the process through which an orientation for Aboriginal children to observe the work of others when they were unsure of how to proceed compounded with non-compliance behaviour to frustrate teacher expectations that children should ‘plunge in’ to activities and ‘have a go’.
What is apparent in this situation is how the Anglo children have plunged into the activities making blunders, coloring over the lines, scribbling, leaving blank spaces, not coloring all the balloons, not tracing all the strings, not knowing where to put their pencils and worksheet when they’d finished etc. implicitly trusting that the teacher would guide them as to the correct procedures when they made a mistake. (Malin 1989:410)

In contrast, Malin described how an Aboriginal child exhibited a particular type of peer orientation which resulted in a conservative orientation towards making mistakes.

This is not the case for Naomi, who seemed more to orient to her peers for guidance than to the teacher. (Malin 1989:410)

So all this while, Naomi has not felt impelled to hurry on with completing her work even when under the watchful eye of the teacher, and even after receiving several directives from the teacher. Instead, a greater imperative for her is to survey what is going on; to sit back and watch the whole situation, this first lesson for such a large worksheet. (Malin 1989:410)

What was most significant in the lesson Malin describes was that Naomi’s careful observation strategy meant that she actually produced better work than the other children. She knew about the need to colour without crossing lines and to trace along single lines in colour. She also knew the procedure for storing away paper and implements at the end of the activity. Yet her transgression of procedural constraints was foregrounded as the most enduring memory in the teacher’s mind.

Mrs. Eyres describes this behaviour of Naomi’s as being ‘typically Aboriginal’, of ‘going walkabout in the head’. (Malin 1989:411)

Over time, (Malin observed the classes for a year) Malin proposed that this foregrounding of behavioural control played a major role in constructing the more traditionally oriented Aboriginal children as outsiders in the classroom.

Many a time the displays of competence of the three most culturally different Aboriginal students were thwarted by the teacher’s distraction with minor student ‘infringements’ to the classroom rules. Many a time they were lost in linguistic and social interference. These three students eventually came to lack legitimacy with their teacher as students and subsequently they came to lack legitimacy as friends and fellow-students with their peers in the class, and possibility within their own eyes. Their status progressively decreased with the invisibility of their competence, the prominence of their censure and the public nature of their entreaties for acknowledgment...

Malin pointed out that the construction of children in this way did not arise as a conscious pre-planned activity on the part of the teacher. Rather, it arose from the ongoing interaction processes of the classroom.

This is not to say that it was a conscious, intentioned and pre-planned process. The teacher was operating probably as best she could, with the resources available to her, according to what was logical and common-sense within the frame of her meaning perspectives which evolved before she arrived in this classroom, and which were continuously evolving as she attempted to make sense of life in this classroom. (Malin 1989:629-630)

The outcome, however, was a pedagogic discourse which recontextualised within it the kinds of discrimination which operate in the world beyond the classroom.

In this way, ultimately, the stigmatization that the families of these children face in the society at large, their low status and their domination, came to be mirrored (or ‘reproduced’) in the micro-culture of the classroom. (Malin 1989:630)
Malin (1989) also describes another teacher, ‘Ms. Barker’ who also at times misread the children’s behaviour although her generally high level of tolerance and strong orientation towards positive response reactions developed a far more cooperative and supportive environment. For example, Malin (1989) points out that teacher responses to directives from the children were usually complied with in a good-natured manner by the teacher who when she did choose to prompt for please or thank you did so in a non-threatening and pleasant manner. To put the matter quite simply, it seemed that this teacher was concerned primarily with the individual reactions of her students and in fact acted out of a genuine caring for their feelings. This teacher behaviour was reflected in the behaviour of her students.

I assert that the rules in classroom two, Ms. Barker’s class, particularly at the beginning of the year, were more congruent with the early socialisation of the Aboriginal students in this study. Her students behaved in a more outgoing and confident manner, than did Naomi, Jason and Terry. They initiated more interactions with the teacher, they sought her assistance and evaluation more often, and answered more questions in public, than did the Aboriginal students in classroom one. In classroom two, the Aboriginal children volunteered for ‘show and tell’ quite frequently, whereas in the other room, Naomi, Jason and Terry rarely if ever volunteered. (Malin 1989:552)

Malin’s (1989) study offers, therefore, a useful resource for teachers looking to work with Aboriginal students. Her work points to the importance of building classroom control strategies which seek to promote a continuity with the interpersonal behaviour the children are comfortable with in their homes. However, Malin (1989) does not explore the question of how this behaviour is to be incorporated into a pedagogy that provides access to academic/literate discourses. The discussion that Malin confines to issues of behavioural management needs to be extended to draw a relationship between behavioural control, the negotiation of thinking around the instructional field and the outcome of the pedagogic discourse as recontextualisation.

2.3.3 THE NEGOTIATION OF TASK FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

Malcolm (eg. 1979, 1982, 1987, 1991) does target primarily the process through which teachers attempt to negotiate mental engagement with Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms. In his (1982) study, Malcolm presents a detailed analysis of a ‘discussion’ lesson from a year one class in which two thirds of the children are Aboriginal. The discussion is about what the children want to be when they grow up. However, the lesson breaks down badly in a manner that Malcolm identifies as all too frequent in the education of Aboriginal children. The following is a very brief section from the beginning of Malcolm’s (1982) transcript, when the level of interaction is at its ‘highest point’ of functionality, for it rapidly reaches the point where the children resort largely to silence and resist the teacher’s probing.

Miss W: Jan
what do you want to be when you grow up?
Jan   A matron.
Miss W: A matron. Why? Why would you like to be a matron?
Jan   (2 secs) Um do the um sore ...if they got a sore
Miss W: If they've got a sore what would you do with it?
Jan   (1 sec) Put the bandage
Miss W: Put the bandage on it and clean it all up I hope. And then what happens to it?
Jan: (2 secs) Need
Miss W: Get a needle. And then? (Text 2a - Malcolm 1982:171)

Here the lesson is at its highest point of functionality yet the teacher can extract no more than single word responses from the children. Very soon, the process breaks down and the children begin to resist and to decline to reply. Eventually, the teacher finds herself struggling to maintain procedural control and in the process she begins to misunderstand what the children are saying.

Miss W: You said someone else a minute ago. Who was that?
Jan: If they coughing.
Miss W: Beg your pardon?
Jan: If they coughing.
Several: Coughing...coughy-cough...cough...cough
Several: (coughing)
Miss W: Oh if they cough like that you give them cough medicine
Jan: Yeah, cough medicine.
Clive: (exaggerated cough)
Miss W: Thank you Clive.
Hazel: My more turn now. I bin saying please.
Several: (coughing)
Miss W: Be quiet that’s enough
Craig: what would you like to be when you grow up?
X: Workin’
Craig: (3secs) (inaudible)
Miss W: Oh you’ll have to say it louder than that I can’t hear.
X: E might be working
Miss W: Especially with people like you being so bad mannered. I think you must have left your manners in your pocket.
(Jillian thumps Tommy, who begins to cry).

(Text 2b - Malcolm 1982:172)

Malcolm lists a series of factors that contributed to this breakdown. Essentially, these map out an extensive mismatch in communicative expectations between the children and the teacher. In particular, Malcolm points to the questioning strategy teachers typically attempt to employ as a matter of course in classrooms. That is, the teacher nominates a child and proceeds in a ‘dyadic’ manner, questioning the nominated child with the other children as observers.

The children showed a reluctance to engage in dyadic communication with the teacher, and repeatedly infringed the rules by answering without being nominated, or by failing to take a turn which the teacher offered them. (Malcolm 1982:177)

The basic structure within this pattern of dyadic communication indicated by Malcolm above is essentially the teacherInitiation\ childResponse\ teacher\ Follow-up (IRF) sequence identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Mehan (1978). Malcolm points out that teachers of Aboriginal children tend to build extended questioning chains where the basic ‘pattern’ is repeated as teachers search for ‘suitable’ answers or attempt to guide children’s thinking in a particular direction.

In the interaction we have discussed, the apparently simple sequence of nominate - question nominate - nominee reply - acknowledge - question nominee further, etc., could not be made to work. Procedural rules were constantly being broken, continuity
was upset by frequent backtracking, and none of the exchanges was successful in eliciting open or fluent communication. (Malcolm 1982:178)

Malcolm goes on to produce a flow chart which identifies possible moves by the children which have the effect of subverting this sequence.

**Figure 2.3**
Problems in using ‘individual discussion’ pattern with Aboriginal children (Malcolm 1982:179)

In his (1987) article Malcolm gives a further example of this teacher questioning process in action. Prior to the interaction discussed below, the teacher read the children a story about a little girl with an injured pet. She then tried to get the children to extend the story. However, this did not work. Having failed to evoke engagement on this first goal, she switched her focus and attempted to negotiate a title for the story with the children. To the right of the text are interactive move classifications provided by Malcolm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miss K:</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Miss K:</th>
<th>Shane</th>
<th>Miss K:</th>
<th>Pamela</th>
<th>Miss K:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All right, if you don’t want to do that, let’s think of a name for the story we’ve already got.</td>
<td>“Lisa”.</td>
<td>Well we could call it “Lisa”, but a ... oh, I think we could call it something else.</td>
<td>What do you think we could call the story, Pamela?</td>
<td>What d’you think we could call the story, Pamela?</td>
<td>Put those books away.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think we could call the story that we’ve got here?</td>
<td>What about you, Shane, what could we call the story?</td>
<td>(Michael is playing with books)</td>
<td>(Michael is playing with books)</td>
<td>He doesn’t!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking Boundary</td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td>Check Eliciting</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Miss K:</td>
<td>Shane</td>
<td>Miss K:</td>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>Miss K:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa.</td>
<td>(no reply)</td>
<td>(no reply)</td>
<td>(no reply)</td>
<td>(no reply)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeating</td>
<td>Relaying</td>
<td>Modified Relaying</td>
<td>Qualified Accepting</td>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaying</td>
<td>Modifying</td>
<td>Relaying</td>
<td>Accepting</td>
<td>Eliciting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td>Nominating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td>Declined Repeating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher continues in this vein for 50 interactive turns with the children, prompting heavily, but the children do not seem able to engage with the teacher’s initial request to provide a title.
Eventually she attempts to adjust the group focus and asks a more direct question which is not so ambitious. She then attempts to lead the children from this point to the building of a suitable title.

Miss K. Oh, come on!
    You couldn't have listened very hard ...
    Now who was it about?
    Roberta?
    A what?
    Roberta (two seconds silence)
Miss K. Tracy?
    Tracy (three seconds silence)
Miss K. Who was in the story?
    There was a little girl and a ...
    Z Cat.
    Miss K. And a cat.
    What was the cat's name?
    A Black
    B Blackie
    Miss K. Blackie.
    So what do you think we could call the story?
    Nerina (reply inaudible on tape)
Miss K. Blackie. We could call it Blackie...
    What about Lisa and Blackie...
    or what about ... we could call it something else
    What happened to Blackie?
    What happened to Blackie?
    Sit down
    C Sore leg
    Miss K. He got a sore leg, and we could call it
    "The Cat with the ...?"
    Several Sore leg.
    Miss K. Sore leg.

(Text 3b - Malcolm 1987:43-44)

Thus, after a total of 80 interaction turns the teacher eventually ends up with a title for her story. However, it is quite clear that the children played a very minor role in its formulation. Moreover, most importantly, the children most likely emerged from the discussion with little better understanding of the teacher’s agenda for selecting titles for stories. As Malcolm comments, ‘This is hard going for both teacher and pupils’, Malcolm (1987:45). Malcolm (1987) provides a further example that illustrates similar kinds of resistant responding from Aboriginal children living in urban contexts. He proposes that there is a clear continuity between responding behaviour assumed in both urban and remote contexts.

What I would like to draw attention to here is the continuity - a continuity of interaction patterns, despite the different participants, circumstances and subject-matter of the interaction. Unlike the children in the last extract, Nicky and Clifford are town-dwellers, familiar with white society and with years of primary schooling behind them. Yet, placed under the constraints of the same basic interaction pattern they respond to it in the same way - with Deferred, Declined and Whispered Replying and utterances from one to four words in length. (Malcolm 1987:49)

As earlier discussion has indicated the pattern outlined above is common today to observers of Aboriginal classrooms. Dysfunctional interactions of a similar kind to those outlined by Malcolm (1982, 1987) were also common occurrences in Traeger Park classrooms prior to the development of the teaching program there (see section 2.4 below).
Malcolm (1991) locates the fundamental key to the breakdown of these interactions as the inability of the participants, especially the children, to maintain ‘face’ in the learning negotiation.

One way of approaching this aspect of the classroom is to see it as a context in which “face” is being managed. Face has been defined as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact” (Goffman, 1972:319). When a person’s positive impression upon others seems to be sustained, he is said to “save face”, and when it is not sustained, he is said to lose “face”. The latter may result for the individual in a sense of insecurity, confusion and shame. (Malcolm 1991:10)

Malcolm (1991) identifies four key issues to do with the maintenance of face with Aboriginal children that he considers to be important to their participation in classroom learning negotiation. These are:

- **The right to contribute**: Malcolm points out that this is not a freely accorded right in mainstream classrooms. He points out that Aboriginal children who are anxious to contribute are often censured or ignored because they do not understand the convention.

- **The right not to contribute**: Malcolm points out that children who hold back from participation or who decide not to attend to a particular teacher request are often criticised. Failure to attend or participate in the manner expected by the teacher is constructed by teachers as inability/failure to think.

- **The right to acceptance of the form of one’s contribution**: Malcolm points out that teachers often respond in face-threatening ways when Aboriginal children employ non-standard language choices.

- **The right to acceptance of the content of one’s contribution**: Malcolm points out that teachers often respond inappropriately when children offer answers that are not those expected by the teacher. Often teacher responses to children’s answers/contributions carry subtle but powerful messages to learners. Often these messages are face-threatening.

It is proposed that the above considerations are important ones for promoting effective communication with Aboriginal children. In fact, they could be claimed as important for negotiating learning with all children. Where conflict occurs between Malcolm’s interpretation and the direction taken at Traeger Park has to do with Malcolm’s assumptions concerning the nature of the pedagogic discourse necessary to best accommodate these considerations. According to Malcolm, the type of interactional context that will maximise the maintenance of face with Aboriginal participants is one in which the communication is ‘indirect’.

The more indirect communication patterns are, the less face-threatening they are likely to be. That is why some societies, including traditional Aboriginal societies, have patterns of minimising the possibility of direct verbal confrontation (Harris, 1980). The classroom, in its traditional Western manifestation, is a context where direct communication patterns tend to predominate; it is therefore, potentially, a face-threatening setting. (Malcolm 1991:10)
For Malcolm, therefore, the answer to the difficulty posed by teacher directed questions is to change from this type of teaching sequence towards one in which the teacher's behaviour is 'indirect' and which allows the children to take more initiative in the interaction. Such a role involves the teacher allowing the children to control the topic of the discussion.

A teacher can inhibit the Aboriginal children's participation in an interaction by the way in which he participates in it. He may take over from the children the initiative in determining the subject matter and the discourse pattern. Aboriginal children (like many others) will talk most freely when they can control the subject matter and the way they participate. (Malcolm 1982:182)

Now, while such an approach may accommodate to some degree towards meeting the communicative needs of Aboriginal children with respect to the maintenance of 'face', it provokes another important consideration. This is that if teachers hand over control to Aboriginal children in learning interactions, how will they be able to lead the children into control of the literate discourses that are so important for educational success?

In order to develop discussion of the implications inherent in his sublimation of teacher role it is necessary to consider the text provided by Malcolm (1987) as an example of "real communication" (Malcolm 1987:52) in the classroom. In this transcript, which is given below, the teacher starts by attempting to prepare the children to "write a story about your pets". However, she allows the discussion to follow initiatives which come from the children and the discussion turns to 'tiger snakes'.

```
Mrs W. Okay this morning I want you to write a story about your pets. Well you could tell us about that...
Wayne (non-verbal bid) Unsolicited Bidding
Mrs W. Yes, Wayne?
Wayne Miss Walker Nominating
Mrs W. Which little things?
Wayne That one like you said...
Nicky I caught a snake too, Miss Walker.
Mrs W. Mm?
Nicky I caught a snake.
Mrs W. You caught a snake You can do one of those, Wayne, when you've finished the story.
Nicky 'Bout that long it was.
Wayne Yeah I'll do a story.
Mrs W. Was it?
Nicky Was a - one o' them - what they call it - little brown stripes stripes on.
Mrs W. What sort was it ... you didn't ...
Wayne Piper snake Unsolicited Replying
Nicky No, tiger snake, I think.
Wayne Tiger, yeah.
Nicky Black 'n, black 'n yellow.
Mrs W. Are they dangerous?
Wayne Yeah.
Nicky Dangerous!
Mrs W. Dangerous, are they?
Bertie They not in Australia.
Nicky Tiger snakes, they are!
```
Commenting on the above extract, Malcolm (1987) contrasts it with the kind of dysfunctional text (Texts 2a, 2b) discussed earlier in this section.

There we had a linguistic power struggle: here we have the kind of real communication which makes up everyday life. Of course, like most everyday communication, it is characterised by unpredictability and overlap. The teacher is tolerant of this. In the sequence of forty acts there is only one in which she attempts to impose structure on the discourse. The teacher does not regard herself as the only source of knowledge, and the children are learning from one another. The minority group is having some say in its own learning. (Malcolm 1987:52)

Clearly the children are engaged in the above discussion and clearly there is a positive contrast with the earlier dysfunctional interactions. However, the interaction itself is just what Malcolm claims it to be – “the kind of real communication which makes up everyday life”- ie. a conversation. Like conversations in ‘everyday life’ the primary goal of the interaction is to establish and maintain solidarity between interactants (eg. Eggins and Slade 1997). In everyday conversation ‘learning from one another’ may be construed as a secondary goal but only in so far as the secondary goal (ie. learning about each other’s experiences) serves the primary goal of solidarity. What of the teacher’s original purpose to have the children write ‘a story about pets’? How is the teacher to negotiate the doing of this activity. In particular, how is the teacher to negotiate with the children concerning ‘how’ they are to do the activity, ie. to negotiate appropriate mental engagement in the task. What is it that the children are learning ‘from one another’? How does what the children choose to talk about here relate to the children’s learning to control what were discussed as academic/literate discourses in chapter 1 of this study? (eg. section 1.5) There is also a strong parallel to be drawn here with issues surrounding ‘logicality’ raised in chapter 1 (section 1.5.4) and in section 2.1.1 of this chapter. This issue is also developed in considerable depth in appendix 1 of this study. Ultimately, the point is that, “the educational issue at stake is not just one of valuing the child’s text. Nor is it one of deciding that the text is linguistically complex or logical in some abstract sense. What remains is the issue of employing resources in a manner suitable for building the kind of realities appropriate to decontextualised or literate discourses” (refer: volume 2, appendix 1, section 4.3).

It might be argued in defence of the pedagogical stance proposed by Malcolm (1987) that the above transcript represents the initiation of a ‘teachable moment’ upon which an aware teacher might capitalise such that the initial interest in ‘snakes’ may be transformed into an effective engagement with academic/literate discourse. This claim however raises the vital
issue of how the teacher is going to achieve this ‘translation’ of the activity into the realm of academic/literate discourse. However, this is not an issue that Malcolm pursues. His only comment in this regard is somewhat ambiguous.

A receptive attitude on the part of the teacher, which sees the need for meaningful input from the minority group members above the need for the maintenance of normative structures of classroom interaction will lead to creative adaptation of classroom interaction patterns at least in the short term, and in the long term may enable more functional classroom patterns to become normative. (Malcolm 1987:56-7)

Here Malcolm expresses the hope that change ‘may’ occur but the direction of that change is unclear. Malcolm’s discussion highlights the fact that his model offers no understanding of how the shift from casual conversation to “more functional classroom patterns” is to occur. Consequently, his prescription is very likely inadequate for providing access to academic/literate discourse for Aboriginal children. Frances Christie (1989, 1990), for example, in analyses of primary school writing lessons demonstrates that even teachers working with non-Aboriginal children in mainstream classes experience difficulty in focusing discussion in a manner that leads to effective writing. The difficulty of achieving a focus that could lead Aboriginal children towards engagement with academic/literate discourses through the use of such undirected methodology is immense.

Harkins (1994), like Malcolm, points to a situation where the children are taking part in the ongoing discussion with enthusiasm. And, as is the case with Malcolm’s text discussed above, it appears to be one thing to encourage Aboriginal children to talk enthusiastically, but another to engage in educational discussion in the manner mainstream teachers expect. The transcript reported by Harkins (1994) is given below. In this text, the teacher is attempting to encourage the children to provide ‘explicit’, that is, elaborated statements about some photographs. Harkins comments that the children are very interested in the activity, comfortable with the teacher and eager to please her.

Teacher: D’you wanna say something about your picture?
T: Whose cake is it?
C: Shane.
T: Shane's cake, Shane's birthday cake, Shane's birthday cake.
C: Awe [Arrernte: 'yes']
T: What're those things there?
C: Candles.
T: You've got two candles for Shane.
C2: Two candle, look!
T: Nancy
This a party, Shane.
T: Shane's party, for birthday.
C2: Birthday there. Nighttime. Got there, iwenhele aye, ngenhekwiye [what d'you call it?].
T: Finished, Nancy?
C2: Yeh.
T: Rosemary. (Text 5 - Harkins 1994:133)
In discussing this text, Harkins points out that both the teacher and the Aboriginal children are engaged in different communicative agendas. Moreover, although it is her intention to do so, the teacher never succeeds in making the children respond with the ‘elaborations’ she seeks.

The teacher and the children obviously have different ideas of what the 'classroom game' involves. The children know that it is a question-and-answer game, and are eager to shout out their one-word answers, displaying their knowledge of English vocabulary items........

They do not realise that the teacher also has an elaboration game in mind, and wants sentences as well as vocabulary items. The teacher encourages them in their responses, but does not find a way of making clear to them what she really hopes from them.(Harkins 1994:135)

Harkins goes on to point out that in the above text the children did not attempt to take up teacher models of extended replying. Thus, the discussion of teacher strategy appears to have reached an impasse where it is not possible to move on from commonsense communication to facilitating something remotely resembling true engagement with academic/literate discourses. In resolving the issue by doing away with teacher direction within the pedagogy, Malcolm manages to get the children talking but can not show how they should move beyond this initial point to acquire control over discourses appropriate for mainstream schooling. In this respect, it is possible to question the value of Malcolm’s claim earlier that the “the minority group is having some say in its own learning” (Malcolm 1987:52).

With respect to the model of pedagogic discourse as recontextualisation illustrated earlier in figures 2.1 and 2.2, Malcolm’s research illustrates clearly the processes of miscommunication that arise as teachers seek to engage Aboriginal children with instructional discourses. Malcolm argues quite convincingly that a major factor in the breakdown of communication is that much mainstream teacher behaviour which attempts to orchestrate mental engagement is, in fact, extremely ‘face-threatening’ for the Aboriginal children. He identifies teacher strategies to do with maintaining ‘face’ which are concerned with four key principles (ie. the right to: contribute; not to contribute; acceptance of the form of one’s contribution; acceptance of the content of one’s contribution ). These key considerations are also generally compatible with Malin’s (1989) appeal for teacher tolerance and sensitivity in the more broadly based realm of behavioural control within the regulative discourse.

However, it has been proposed that Malcolm’s concentration of his focus simply upon sustaining the interpersonal nature of the interaction between teachers and Aboriginal children is inadequate. This limited focus leads him to undervalue the need for teachers to pursue the negotiation of an instructional discourse that has any real significance as a recontextualisation of academic/literate discourses which occur outside schooling.

It is proposed here that Malcolm’s pedagogic model which places such store upon the spontaneous emergence of ‘teachable moments’ will be continually frustrated in pedagogic discourse with Aboriginal learners. It is proposed, furthermore, that pedagogic discourse, if it
is to be effective with Aboriginal children, needs to take a more focused and directed stance on the provision of access to academic/literate discourses. Consequently, the question that arises out of the Australian research discussed above is,

“How are teachers to incorporate the kinds of understandings about behavioural control raised by Malin as well as the interpersonal issues to do with the maintenance of ‘face’ raised by Malcolm into a pedagogic discourse that provides meaningful access to academic/literate discourses?”

It was this question that needed to be confronted at the beginning of the development of teaching program at Traeger Park School.

To do this it was necessary to move beyond a concern with behavioural control and interpersonal solidarity to confront the further issue of the negotiation of mental engagement within the instructional discourse. This is not to undermine the importance of behavioural and interpersonal negotiation within pedagogic discourse. These aspects are fundamental to the operation of the regulative discourse and work to project the instructional discourse. However, as earlier discussion (section 2.2.2) has pointed out, the regulative discourse is not confined solely to behavioural and interpersonal negotiation. The regulative discourse can be said to operationalise the engagement with ways of thinking important to the building of an instructional discourse which is a meaningful recontextualisation of academic/literate discourses.

In reviewing Malcolm’s transcripts of teacher child negotiation two issues stand out. The first of these is that not only does the teacher’s ‘dyadic’ questioning style cause a breakdown in the maintenance of ‘face’ for the children, the negotiation context itself is such that the children clearly have absolutely no idea concerning what it is exactly that the teacher expects as a response when she asks a question. It is hard to determine, therefore, whether the children lose ‘face’ because of the teacher’s dyadic questioning or because they have no clear idea about how to meet the teacher’s expectations.

If one takes, for example, the previous text where the teacher leads the children through 80 interaction turns in an attempt to draw from them a title for a story (Texts 3a and 3b - Malcolm 1987), it is important to note that the teacher concerned has not given these children any understanding concerning with the concepts and principles for deciding on a ‘title’ that she herself invokes. She simply presumes the children have these understandings. It is little wonder then that the children have difficulty in responding to her requests for suggestions. Likewise, in Texts 2a and 2b from Malcolm (1982) similar questions arise where the teacher is asking the children to tell her, first, what they want to be when they grow up and, second, what people in those occupations do. What knowledge and understanding base is the teacher presuming here? It is true that teacher interaction moves in both of these texts are frequently face-threatening. However, it is proposed here that this is largely the result of the teacher’s
failure to build any prior understanding with the children of her expectations and presumptions in the interaction.

The issue is essentially one to do with inter-subjectivity (refer chapter 1, section 1.5.4) or more precisely the absence of inter-subjectivity between teacher and children. This absence of inter-subjectivity between teacher and children raises the further issue to do with how inter-subjectivity between teachers and children should originate. For Malcolm (eg. Malcolm 1982, 1987, 1991) inter-subjectivity is achieved only by teachers ‘following’ children (ie. by following the thinking of the children). This perspective ignores the possibility that teachers might orchestrate the regulative discourse such that shared knowledge/understandings to do with thinking about the instructional field (ie. as academic/literate discourse) are made explicit and negotiated with the children.

A second and related issue which stands out from consideration of Malcolm’s work has to do with the eventual value of the instructional discourse produced. That is, to what extent does the instructional discourse resemble something that can be identified as a meaningful recontextualisation of academic/literate discourse? Earlier discussion of research by Michael Christie (eg. 1984) and Folds (1987) has commented upon the propensity for instructional discourse with Aboriginal children to be realised as busywork. However, consideration of all of the transcripts of lessons presented in previous discussion in this chapter provides a further worrying scenario in the search for a meaningful recontextualisation of academic/literate discourse in schooling. For example, the teacher in Malcolm (1982) decides to question the children about their future occupations. This raises the issue to do with whether participation in this conversation (even if children do participate) enhances their ability to control academic/literate discourses? Even if the teacher sees this conversation as preparation for writing, how does the conversation prepare the children’s ability to construct their ‘occupational aspirations’ through recourse to literate resources beyond those that they may already possess? (refer chapter 1, section 1.5.2 for discussion of ‘literate resources’)

The following discussion (section 2.4) will explore both of these issues further with respect to observations carried out at Traeger Park School. In this discussion it will be proposed that there exists a fundamental need for teachers to bridge the gap which exists between what they expect in terms of understanding and responses from children from those typically held by Aboriginal children. Furthermore, it will propose a need to consider the nature of what is recontextualised as instructional discourse with Aboriginal children.

2.4 NEGOTIATING CLASSROOM INTERACTION AT TRAEGER PARK SCHOOL

At the time the intervention at Traeger Park commenced, the key focus for language development for the children was the ‘language unit’. This program operated on a withdrawal
basis with each early childhood grade spending one hour per day in a designated 'language unit' room set up within the school. The language unit was staffed by the school resource/remedial teacher and a teaching assistant. When these personnel combined with the classroom teacher, it was possible to divide the class for small group work. The other area of concern for 'language development' was focused within the classroom activities. Miscommunication of the kind identified by Malcolm (eg. 1982, 1987) was a common occurrence in both of these areas of the teaching program. The following discussion will deal with each area in turn.

2.4.1 THE LANGUAGE UNIT PROGRAM PRIOR TO INTERVENTION

The stated teaching aims of this 'language unit' reflected a preoccupation with the simplistic Aboriginal English/standard English dichotomy pursued by researchers following both the early 'deficit' and 'difference' approaches (refer section 2.1.1, also appendix 1, sections 2, 3 & 4). However, the school's language rationale (Traeger Park School 1978) carefully avoided any mention of the kinds of link between language and cognition adopted by the psycholinguistic 'deficit' position. The rationale (Traeger Park School 1978) proposed that the children were to be taught standard English in order that they should be able to learn from written texts which employed standard English patterns. It was argued that Aboriginal children entering the school frequently had less control over 'standard English' than their mainstream peers. Written texts were considered to employ language that was likely to be stylistically unfamiliar to Aboriginal children. The focus for this difficulty was considered to lie fundamentally in characteristic differences in syntax knowledge.

Consequently, problems in communication were assumed to occur for two basic reasons. First, Aboriginal children may have been unfamiliar with some of the surface features of standard English and simply could not 'decode' what was frequently said or read to them. Second, there were 'social/class' related 'styles' that the children needed to master in order to be 'accepted' in 'mainstream' or 'standard English' communication contexts. However, at the same time, the program proposed that it was also important to maintain Aboriginal English although the statement of the rationale underlying this objective was couched in a somewhat patronising manner.

It would be sad if the distinctive and colourful way of speech of Alice Springs was to disappear and it's unlikely to happen, so we aim to provide the children with alternative (ie. standard English speech patterns). (TPPS 1978:1)

Because the school language policy contained no notion of language development as the acquisition of culturally situated discourses, teachers could see no reason why standard English syntax could not be taught directly the children. The one proviso seemed to be that the syntax should be presented to the children in what were referred to as 'meaningful' situations. This 'meaningful' approach had been proposed by Sharpe (1976a, 1976b, 1977) and fitted with other contemporary approaches (eg. Kaldor and Malcolm 1982 - refer also
appendix 1, sections 4.1 and 4.2). It also closely followed the then current Northern Territory Oral English Syllabus (Northern Territory Education Department 1975) which provided a similar rationale to that outlined above for the Traeger Park School language program.

Defining exactly what should constitute 'meaningful' situations without a point of reference in culturally situated discourses was, however, problematic. The Northern Territory Oral English Syllabus (Northern Territory Education Department 1975) provided the following support in this regard for teachers attempting to prepare lessons. The view of 'meaning' proposed in this document was extremely limited and largely confined to the problem of maintaining some form of 'concrete' reference. That is, during interaction, 'props' (eg. actions or objects) needed to be available as a focus for communication.

The following model dialogues are taken from teaching unit four of The Northern Territory Oral English Syllabus. Unit four was designed to be presented during the first term of the children's second year of school (ie. grade 1).

| Figure 2.4 |
| Model teaching dialogues from the Northern Territory Oral English Syllabus: Unit 4, Block 4, Section 6, Parts A and B. (NT Education Dept 1975:16) |

### A: Tell (someone) to -

| S1: Tell me the boys etc. to sing dance stand up go outside S2: Stand up, Tom Sing Mary Come here, boys etc. |
| S1: Tell Mary Jack the girls etc. to start stop dancing singing running working etc. S2: Start working, Mary Stop dancing, Girls etc. |
| S1: Tell Larry not to talk Helen June hit Tom do that S2: Don't talk, Larry Helen, don't hit Tom Don't do that, June |

### B: Ask (someone) for -

| S1: Ask Bob Joe Henry for an apple some paper two brushes the red book S2: Give me an apple some paper two brushes the red book (please) |
| S3: Here you are S2: Thank you |

Within the program, the above figure (2.2) provided a set of model dialogues which demonstrated syntactic patterns associated with the verbs 'ask' and 'tell'. The dialogues were first modelled by the teacher in so called 'meaningful' situations. For example, the following model interaction was suggested for teachers.
T: (Hands Bob an apple)  
Now listen to me.  
I'm going to ask Bob for an apple. (to group)  
Give me an apple please. (to Bob)  
What did I ask Bob for? (to group)  

G: Apple (Group replies)  
T: That's right  
Give me an apple please. (to Bob who hands over the apple)  
Thank you  
Now Bob etc. you ask me for an apple...  

While conversations such as the above appeared simple enough, the reality of the actual dialogues that occurred within the school's language unit was quite different. The following text was taken from a lesson given after some grade one children had been working for the previous two weeks on the 'ask' and 'tell' unit outlined above. The lesson was seen by the teacher as an opportunity for revision and consolidation.

The children in the transcript were all Aboriginal, in grade one and were from fringe camps around Alice Springs. They were sitting in an informal group on the floor with the teacher. First, the teacher demonstrated the language 'concepts' of 'ask' and 'tell'. For example, the children were each asked to select a toy. Teacher then said Peter, I'm going to ask you what you have - Peter, what do you have? and so on. Next the children were asked to practice responding to questions containing 'ask' and 'tell' under the teacher's direction. This interaction was taken from the practice section. The major focus of interest in this particular interaction is Karen (K).

T: Right Karen tell us what you've got Karen  
K: The red...... (Barely audible whisper)  
T: Pardon?  
A: The Indian (Anne answers for Karen)  
K: I got an Indian (Barely audible whisper)  

(Text 6a)  

Initially, with the help of another child the teacher succeeded in drawing an appropriate response from a painfully shy Karen. Having achieved this, the teacher attempted to extend the discourse by asking Karen to elaborate. This attempt to extend is given below.

T: You've got an Indian?  
What do Indians do?  
A: They fight (Anne again answers for Karen)  
K: Shoot and fight (Barely audible whisper)  
T: What do they do?  
Shoot a gopher? (Misunderstands Karen)  
A: Shoot emus (Anne again answers for Karen)  
R: No shoot cowboys  

(Text 6b)  

The teacher's misunderstanding increased Karen's confusion. Other children sensing her predicament attempted to answer for her. However, the teacher, possibly on the assumption (eg. Malcolm 1991) that Karen must personally engage in the dialogue in order to learn attempted to coax Karen into a more clearly audible answer and again readdressed her initial question to Karen. This is shown in the following extract.
In the above extract, when Karen refused to respond, the teacher reframed this question in a manner she considered less challenging. This reframing of the question ("What's this thing?") simply required a one word answer rather than the full sentence (eg. 'Indian' instead of 'I have an Indian'). Karen still did not respond so the teacher reframed the question again as a simple 'yes' or 'no' probe ('Do you know what this is?'). However, by now Karen was firmly entrenched in the use of a strategy that is very familiar to teachers of Aboriginal children (eg. Malcolm 1982). She simply declined to answer even this. The teacher then switched to another child (Sue) and asked her to direct a question to Karen in the hope that a question from another child would be less threatening for Karen. However, Sue also declined to take part in the interaction. In the next part of the interaction (below), the teacher tried to get Cheryl (who did respond) to ask Karen but Karen still declined to answer. Raylene whispered the answer to Karen who again steadfastly refused to answer.

Finally, as the following interaction shows, the teacher retreated from Karen and focused on Marie who also did not respond to the request to 'ask Sue what she's got'. However, the teacher, fresh from her defeat in the long drawn out attempt to get Karen to talk did not attempt to pursue the issue with Marie. Rather, she continued as if Marie herself had indeed provided the appropriate question and attempted to get Sue to respond to what was essentially an imaginary question (for it had not actually been asked by the other child). The teacher was not successful.

In the next segment, Marie did finally respond to the teacher's request. Sue also finally answered. However, Sue did not tell Marie what she had. Instead, Sue simply repeated Marie's question.
The teacher ignored this problem also. In the next extract (below), she instead switched the responding role back to Marie. At first Marie did not answer. It appeared that by now Marie had become quite confused. She appeared to have lost all contact with the teachers communicative intent. Consequently, when Marie did eventually respond, she interpreted 'tell' to mean the equivalent of 'say' and simply repeated the question as Sue had done previously. Sue, again, did not answer.

Teachers working with these children interpreted these kinds of interactions as evidence that children such as Karen, Sue and Marie did not know the difference between 'ask' and 'say' and 'tell'. The teachers considered that this was the reason the children so frequently became confused in the 'language lessons' and, for that matter, why they appeared to become so confused in the normal flow of classroom interaction. The teachers felt that the only possible solution to this problem was to provide more intensive 'practice' on such activities. The assumption they made in articulating this recommendation was that the children's 'apparent' low level of standard English competence was the cause of the communicative confusion both children and teachers were experiencing.

However, there is an alternative interpretation to the position that low language competence causes confusion. This is that confusion itself causes ‘apparent’ low levels of language performance. Karen's response to the teacher's initial request to tell the teacher 'tell us what you've got, Karen' indicated that Karen fully understood and was capable of responding as her statement, ‘I got an Indian’ demonstrated. One might respond to the above text by pointing out that the teacher employed a questioning strategy in which children were nominated in the manner described by Malcolm (1982). One might also with equal justification point to the fact that the teacher breaks a number of the communicative rights set out by Malcolm (1991). However, it is proposed that the fundamental issue here has to do not so much with these things. Rather, it has primarily to do with the totally ridiculous and confusing nature of the context in which the child is required to respond. The pointless nature of such activities is also highlighted further in discussion within appendix 1 (sections, 2.3 and 2.4). Inherent in this absence of point, is the fact that ‘shared expectations’ with the teacher as to what should count as relevant in the discussion are typically also missing. Observation at the beginning of the intervention demonstrated the type of interaction outlined above to be representative of much of the teaching interaction in the ‘language unit’ program as the teachers tried to ‘develop’ or ‘extend’ the children's control over syntax.
The significance of engaging the children with commonly held (i.e., between teacher and children) understandings and expectations concerning what constitutes purposeful responses is brought out in Gray (1980a). Gray provides a transcript of the same child (Karen) which gives a completely different picture of her language behaviour on the same day, not more than 15 minutes later. The new activity is a role-play context in which the children are to act out the roles of vet, receptionist, and client as the client brings a pet for treatment. The interaction is not simply ‘casual conversation’ but rather provides a context for the children to negotiate texts to do with the kind of client/vet, client/receptionist contexts in a veterinary practice. The teacher and children have studied and practised producing these types of texts in ‘concentrated encounter’ work over some time. The notion of ‘concentrated encounter’ as it was employed at Traeger Park will be discussed later in this chapter (section 2.3.2). Moreover, the concept will be further developed over chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this study. For the moment, it will suffice to say that the concentrated encounter activity leading to this role play involved a visit to the local veterinary surgery to study the roles receptionists, vets and clients played as they went about their business with particular attention to the texts they produced (e.g., how does a receptionist take information from a client - what does a receptionist do?). From this visit and from videotape of the participants in the surgery, the children engaged in ‘workshops’ with the teacher where they practiced various aspects of these roles. The role play in a mock ‘surgery’ was conducted on a regular basis (about every third day) in the language unit with groups of 4 to 6 children at a time.

The text below was taken from an early role play in the development of the intervention before the old language development program had been phased out. Consequently, the text opens as Karen rushes from the previous activity on ‘ask’ and ‘tell’ to the new role play for which she has had only minimal preparation at this stage. Her behaviour is in stark contrast to the picture presented in the earlier interaction as is the flexibility and self-assurance she demonstrates when she realises that the vet cannot choose a fluffy animal for a pet.

K: Me! Me! Me! Me! Me! I want to be the vet Can I be? Can I be the vet? "(Jumping up and down and shouting) (Text 7a)

Karen vies for the role of vet but she has already picked out her pet (a soft teddy bear) for treatment. The teacher points out that the vet cannot have a pet for treatment.

T You don’t have an animal vet. You don’t have an animal.
K: I’m not the vet. (Text 7b)

Karen then took her animal and was happy to play the role of pet owner (client). We can follow her first interview with the receptionist and then the vet. All children in these interactions were from the group considered by teachers lowest in language ability. The participants are Karen (K) who is the client, Anne (A) who is the receptionist and Anthony (An) who is the vet. The teacher plays the role of facilitator to sort out problems and direct
the focus when necessary (NB: on other occasions the teacher (T) might take an active participant role to model negotiating behaviour and appropriate register choices (Halliday 1985).

A: What's your name?
K: Karen
A: Karen, oh yeah ...
just came now
K: My name got /k/ (sound)
(as receptionist starts to record name)
A: Oh /k/ like this? (Sounds and writes letter 'k')
T: What else are you going to ask Karen?
A: What's the matter with him?
K: She got needle (quietly)
A: No, what's his name?
K: Blackie (quietly)
A: Eh?
K: Blackie
A: Blackie, eh Two Blackies now Blackie and Black...
/B/, /l/ (sounds as she attempts to write it).
T: Right, what else are you going to ask?
A: What's wrong with your little thing ... a little teddy bear?
K: She got needle (quietly)
A: Eh?
K: Needle here look (quietly)
T: What's it got?
K: Here (quietly)
A: What she said
K: Needle (quietly)
T: It needs a needle (misunderstands)
A: She needs a needle
 Alright - I'll write it down
T: Where does it need the needle, Karen?
K: There
T: In there? What's that? What's that part, Karen?
K: Tummy
T: Tummy, that's right
A: Here I'll feel it
 Right inside, right inside
I'll got and get it. I'll tell Bissy (the Vet) to get it out again.
Alright are you going to take Karen into the Vet next?
T: Not yet, you got ...
A: What's wrong with him now?
K: She ... She got ...
A: She crying.
K: Crying?
A: Yes
K: Alright I'll do the back of him (rubs back)
T: Alright, well take Karen into the Vet now.
A: Karen's busy
T: Take her Anne, the Vet's waiting dear
A: What ... What ... What... Oh What old he? Seven or?
K: He got needle here (emphasis)
A: Well what old he?
T: How old is he?
A: What old are you?
T: Three or four?
K: Three
A: Three?
K: Three
A: Alright you come through here, come on now. Come on, now. Come with me. Bissy? (Calls Vet)
(The receptionist takes Karen into the Vet's surgery)
An: Aw, what's wrong with it, Hey?
K: She's got a needle here.
A: She's got a needle here. She have a needle you have to get it out of back there (receptionist leaves).
K: Yeah, in it's tummy
An: Needle?
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K  (Laughs) (As Vet pretends to operate and remove the needle)
An  Needle back
T  What are you going to tell Karen?
An  I put some Vicks on there
T  Some Vicks, Karen have to put some Vicks on that?  Karen have to put some Vicks on?

(3)  An  No, the Vet have to.  I'll leave it till… Come back Wednesday at nine.  Wednesday at nine o'clock, OK?  Wednesday at nine o'clock.

(Text 7c)

The most obvious point with respect to the above transcript is that, in contrast to our earlier structured lesson where Karen started with barely audible whispers and withdrew into total silence, here she started her role with a few tentative whispers but her expression and confidence developed as the interaction proceeded. What is significant here is that, in her role as client, Karen faces a veritable barrage of questions targeted directly to her for response. The questions do not pick up and follow her conversation initiatives. Instead, they carry purposes defined by the agendas of others. Karen responds directly to all of these questions. It is useful to note also her resilience in responding during the section bracketed as (1) above. Here, even though her intention has been misinterpreted by the others, she is prepared to work through the sequence of questions. Karen's intended meaning is that the teddy bear has a needle embedded in it that must be removed. However, the other participants think at first that she is asking for an injection. It is also interesting to note how Karen draws upon the resolution of that miscommunication to reformulate her request for assistance more clearly when she subsequently enters the vet's 'surgery' (ie. the section bracketed as (2) in Text 7c above). Karen's responses in the two situations are contrasted below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Karen's first attempt</th>
<th>Karen's second attempt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T:  Right, what else are you going to ask?</td>
<td>K:  She's got a needle here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:  What's wrong with your little thing … a little teddy bear?</td>
<td>A:  She have a needle you have to get it out of back there (receptionist leaves).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:  She got needle (quietly)</td>
<td>K:  Yeah, in it's tummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:  Eh?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:  Needle here look (quietly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:  What's it got?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:  What she said</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:  Here (quietly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:  Needle (quietly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:  It needs a needle (misunderstands)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:  She needs a needle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alright - I'll write it down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:  Where does it need the needle, Karen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:  There</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:  In there?  What's that?  What's that part, Karen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:  Tummy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:  Tummy, that's right</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In her second attempt Karen provides the location of the needle clearly, 'here', and then adds, also spontaneously, a more precise location of the kind that had to be probed for earlier, 'in it's tummy'. A further example of spontaneous adjustment of language choice also occurs with respect to Anthony (the vet). This incident is bracketed as (3) in Text 7c and interpretation requires reference back to a previous consultation with another child (client) just before Anthony dealt with Karen. The earlier attempt at closing the consultation is given on the left below to contrast with Anthony's second attempt on the right.
All of the children in the above interaction in the vet surgery role play were prepared to take considerable risks in communication. They were also prepared to adjust their responses to conform to the expectations of the teacher. It is proposed here that the reason the children were prepared to do these things was primarily because they possessed a clear grasp of what constituted an appropriate response in the interaction context.

2.4.2 THE CLASSROOM TEACHING PROGRAM PRIOR TO INTERVENTION

The low teacher expectation for educational performance that was evident in the pre-intervention language unit program was also carried through to the literacy activities in the classroom. The school's language rationale (Traeger Park School 1978) indicated that the primary objective in the early childhood grades was to make the children comfortable in a school setting. Encouraging the children to take part in schooling was seen as something that had to be achieved before serious formal learning could begin. This focus on preparation for schooling allowed considerable scope for 'readiness' activities to supplant the need for serious and directed engagement with academic/literate discourses. The effect of this concern for 'readiness' was to promote much 'busywork' in the manner proposed by Michael Christie (eg. 1984) and Folds (1987) (refer section 2.3.1).

Observation of the early childhood classrooms indicated that generally interaction between teachers and children was pleasant and friendly. Classroom organisation in the early childhood grades was largely informal and children were encouraged to work in groups and they were generally free to talk to each other except when the teacher felt it was disruptive to others, for example, during the reading of a story. The following quotation is taken from the school language policy:

We make friends with the children, ease their shyness, build their confidence and create situations where they can make friends with their peers. In informal classroom situations and in the playground we accept the language the children use. We don't dampen their enthusiasm by correcting their speech while they are busy telling us about things that are important to them.” (Traeger Park Primary School 1978:2)

The assumption was that the teaching activities were non-threatening and enjoyable and provided a relaxed informal context for the teacher to move about and talk productively with the children. Children were allowed considerable latitude concerning movement about the classroom and talking to their peers. The children appeared happy and generally seemed to enjoy taking part in the activities that were set. However, the image conveyed in the previous quote from the school language rationale (Traeger Park Primary School 1978) of teachers engaging informally with the children in ways that contributed significantly to the development
of children's English language competence was not sustained in the teacher/child interactions that were observed.

Walker (1981) discusses the following transcript involving a child in her first (kindergarten) year of school. The context is an informal group activity of the kind referred to in the above quotation. In the transcript, the teacher approaches Mary (M) and her friend Jane (J) who are sitting side by side on the classroom floor. They have been making things out of coloured rods and 'fit on' wooden shapes in a maths activity period at the beginning of the school day.

| T: | What are you making Mary? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | What are you making? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Very nice (examining Mary's construction) |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Is that pink? (Mary shakes her head) |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Blue? |
| M: | Yeah |
| T: | Mm.. It's blue. What's this one? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | What's this one here? |
| M: | Blue |
| T: | Good, that's blue. What's this one? Yellow? |
| M: | (Mary nods her head) |
| T: | Can you see another yellow one? |
| M: | (Mary points) |
| T: | Very good (This procedure is repeated for other colours) |
| T: | What are you doing now? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | What are you doing now, Mary? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | What are you doing love? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Are you putting it together? Building something? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | What are you building? |
| M: | (No response) - (Mary goes on working) Making chair (As she works) |
| T: | Making a chair? oh? Who's the chair for? |
| M: | Sitting down |
| T: | For sitting down? oh? Who's going to sit on it? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Is Jane going to sit on the chair or you? |
| M: | (No response) |
| T: | Who's going to sit on it? |
| M: | Jane |
| T: | John is, is he? Mm |
| M: | (Teacher moves off to talk with other children) Showing her chair to Jane |
| M: | I can make it, look! I can make it! |

(Text 8 - Walker, 1981)

In the above interaction, Mary appears to resist all attempts by the teacher to draw her into learning discussion. Eventually, the teacher, as teachers in other texts considered previously
have done, becomes confused and the interaction borders on farce as Mary is asked - 'who? - will sit on her tiny chair made out of play blocks'. It is only when the teacher leaves and Mary is free to talk privately to her friend Jane that we see a glimpse of her potential for engagement in discussion,

I can make it, look! I can make it!

In his discussion (Walker 1981), Walker comments on the comparison between Mary's interaction with the teacher and the communication role Mary assumes in play with other children.

In this playground episode, Mary is garrulous and dominant to the extent that no one else has a turn to speak. More significantly, her dominance of the group activity is achieved and maintained through the use of English. She reveals that she can use English confidently and powerfully in this kind of context.....Clearly, there is something about schoolroom contexts that disables Mary. (Walker 1981:6-7)

Walker (1981) goes on to provide an extended text which shows the same child on the same day involved in a 'concentrated encounter' session to do with recounting the steps necessary to make toast. In this lesson sequence the teacher and children made toast together on a regular basis. They also role played making toast and held 'workshops' where they taught each other and other visitors 'how to make toast'. The transcript given below took place during one of these oral negotiations. In it the teacher leads the children through the steps in the activity, trying to build both the shared perception of the instructional field and the manner in which the field can be represented in language as a sequence of events. When the teacher was sure that the ability to articulate a recount of making toast was sufficiently well controlled by all children (ie. held as common knowledge), the teacher and children jointly negotiated a written recount of the process of making toast. The written text was titled 'How to Make Yummy Toast'. This text then became an introductory reading text which was made into a 'big book' for class reading teaching activities to do with the development of grapho- phonetic and other word recognition skills for reading as well as spelling teaching.

T: What are we going to do Mary?
M: Clean it
T: We're going to clean it?
M: (demonstrating) This way
S: Scrape it, scrape it.
T: Why do we have to scrape it?
M: It's yukky!
S: With the knife.
T: No, that's all right! (she thinks the toast doesn't need scraping)
Then what do we have to do?
What are we going to put on it now?
M: Peanut butter
T: What are we going to put on it before we put peanut butter?
M: Butter
T: Butter. Good girl. Come on then, you spread this - a nice piece of toast. Bill's going to put some butter on the other slice of toast.
M: This one?
T: Yes, good girl! Do you help your Mummy butter the toast at home, Mary?
M: (nods)
T: What's happening to the butter?
L: It'll melt.
T: It's melting. That's right, because the toast is hot.
This (the butter container) feels nice and cold.
L: I take it. I take it. (picks up container to feel it)
T: The toast melts the butter.
M: It's melting.
    Look there. It's melting. Look.
T: That's right.
L: Mine melting too. (looking at Mary's toast) (Text 9 - Walker 1981:16)

Once more the teacher is directing the children through a sequence of questions and the children show no reluctance to engage with her questioning because they have a clear perception of what counts as an appropriate response. They possess this perception because, during the series of lessons which make up the ‘concentrated encounter’ lesson sequence, the teacher has worked hard to develop it. It is interesting to note that Tharp and Gallimore (1988:138) report a transcript focused on making sandwiches with Indigenous Hawaiian children. The response of the Hawaiian children is very similar to that obtained from the Aboriginal children in the text above.

To date, it has been proposed that difficulties teachers face in engaging Aboriginal learners with academic/literate discourses is not so much to do with the style of questioning that is employed, nor is it so much to do with the targeting of questioning ‘chains’ to individual children as Malcolm (1982) concludes. Rather, teacher difficulties stem primarily from the fact that teachers are employing these discourse ‘patterns’ in contexts of situation where the children share very little inter-subjectivity regarding what should constitute an appropriate response to the teacher’s probes. In effect, it can be said that teacher interaction processes are such that the basic ground rules for participation are rendered invisible to the learners. When this situation exists, learners not only have no basis for responding appropriately, they also have no basis for acquiring the discourse performance expectations that the teacher presumes.

Even in situations where the children spontaneously attempted to initiate interaction, teachers typically found it difficult to capitalise for English language extension purposes. Consequently, complete refusal, while unnervingly frequent in classrooms at Traeger Park, represented only the most obvious manifestation of a far more pervasive problem. Often the Aboriginal children would continue on, doing the best that they could to negotiate the interaction. These situations can often reveal more clearly the nature of the language problem from the perspective of the children. To clarify the distinctions that are being drawn here it is useful to refer to two further teacher/child interactions collected at Traeger Park School prior to intervention. The transcripts considered below are taken from raw data collected by Walker which was subsequently analysed in his (1982) study of the language of children attending Traeger Park School (refer: appendix 1, section 3.4). These transcripts are important because they both highlight various aspects of the different communicative purposes brought to the interaction by teacher and children respectively. It is proposed that it is the propensity for the participants to engage in what are essentially different discourse orientations that causes the major damage to attempts at learning negotiation initiated by teachers.
The first interaction took place in the Transition (Kindergarten or first year; age 5yrs) classroom, shortly after the start of morning class. The child’s (Raylene’s) first language is Warlpiri. At the time of this recording she was living in a fringe camp on the edge of Alice Springs. In the classroom, Raylene (R) is engaged in a maths activity and is pegging some coloured pegs onto a piece of string stretched along the side wall of the room. The purpose of the activity is to make repeated patterns with the pegs. This short transcript begins after Raylene has finished the task. Raylene calls for the teacher who does not respond. This opens the way for a teaching assistant (TA) to then talk to Raylene about the activity in which she is engaged. The teaching assistant is an experienced, fully qualified infants teacher. She is the parent of one of the few ‘middle class’ non-Aboriginal children attending the school and regularly assists in the classroom in a voluntary capacity.

The teaching assistant has to ask Raylene a series of questions that don’t ever seem to fully connect and eventually the topic changes away from her originally intended educational discussion to a more trivial one which focuses on difficulties Raylene has with keeping the pegs on the line. It is throughout this text that the communication ‘problem’ begins to arise. In this section the teaching assistant attempts to pursue an educational agenda. In order to elicit discussion about patterns she asks, ‘What have you done?’ Raylene does not respond with explicit discussion about patterns in the kind of decontextualised manner the teacher assistant expects. Rather, she says, ‘Colours ...all o’ dem’.

Here Raylene is clearly concerned with the colours. She has grasped the basic purpose of the task. The adult, however, attempts to extend Raylene to lead her to express the relationships in a way that is more appropriate to the language of mathematics. From the teaching assistant’s perspective, Raylene does not really display enough verbally for her to be completely sure of any concepts Raylene might be exploring. So the teaching assistant persists and restructures her question to, ‘How did you put them up?’ to which Raylene again responds, ‘All o’ them, all o’ them’.

Raylene does not seem to have perceived the question as one which seeks to make her reflect on the purpose of the task. Raylene seems to be saying, ‘Didn’t you hear what I said the first time?’ The teaching assistant takes the hint and responds to this insistence with, ‘You put all of them up?’ to which Raylene concurs.
The teaching agenda has not been forgotten, however, and the teaching assistant restructures another question to push discussion towards patterns, ‘How did you put all the colours Raylene?’ Raylene again does not supply the required explicit information about patterns. Instead, she points to the different colour groups, ‘This, this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this ....etc.’

    TA: How did you put all the colours Raylene?
    R: This, this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this ....etc.
(When she says "This, this, this....", she is pointing to each group of colours)

    TA: Yeah, you didn't mix them up, did you?
    R: (Does not respond )

Finally the teaching assistant attempts to reframe Raylene's response more explicitly for her, ‘Yeah, you didn't mix them up, did you?’ Raylene does not reply. This question is clearly confusing for Raylene. Although she has in fact made patterns with her colours she does not share the teacher assistant's way of framing that task within the pedagogic discourse.

The teaching assistant hasn't given up. She tries once again to develop explicit discussion about the patterns, ‘Was that very hard to do?’ (ie. ‘Was it hard to make the patterns?’). The teaching assistant is referring to her previous attempt to refocus on the relationship between the colours (ie. ‘you didn't mix them up, did you?’) Raylene does not pick up this focus.

    TA: Was that very hard to do?
    R: They're almost fall down
    TA: Fall down do they?
    R: These... This one... These stupid thing fall down
    TA: These yellow ones?
    R: Yeah
    TA: They keep falling down?
    R: Yeah
    TA: What about this one?  Is that nearly falling down, that purple one?
    R: Yeah
(Raylene adjusts the purple peg when the TA asks about it)
    TA: Did it take you a long time?
    R: We'll see if Mrs Edwards's ready to look at it
(Raylene calls out to the teacher who is busy with the other children. She goes off on her own when the teacher does not respond)

Fortunately for Raylene, the question provides an ambiguous opening and she responds in a way that the teaching assistant has not anticipated, “They're almost fall down”. The teaching assistant decides to go with this change of focus, “Fall down do they?” Discussion about repeated patterns and related mathematical concepts such as classifying and sorting is abandoned. In fact, if the teaching assistant had not finally abandoned her agenda about patterns when she did it is likely Raylene would have very shortly taken refuge in silence.

In the above interaction the teaching assistant and Raylene seem to have an easy relaxed rapport and Raylene seems quite willing to talk. What the teaching assistant is trying to do is achieve a shift from one discourse perspective to another. For Raylene the activity is anchored in the common sense world of her everyday experience. The teaching assistant is attempting (unsuccessfully) to shift Raylene into engagement in a quite different perspective.
which constitutes mathematical discourse relocated as curriculum focus within the classroom. The process she is attempting parallels that discussed in relation to Walkerdine (1982) in chapter 1 of this study (section 1.5.2). It is useful here to repeat part of a quote from Edwards and Mercer (1987) which was employed in this earlier discussion. Edwards and Mercer (1987) point out that learning mathematics requires a shift to a more decontextualised perspective and that this shift is typically negotiated between teacher and child.

In the above example it is clear that the teacher is engaged herself in a perspective derived from mathematical discourse with little chance of developing inter-subjectivity with the child in this particular context. The child proceeds on in her own common sense world quite happily until she begins to suspect that this perspective might not be what the teacher is seeking. It is only at this point that she begins to lose confidence and withdraw from the interaction.

The process of teachers working with learners to achieve a shift from a common sense perspective to a decontextualised perspective is also illustrated with reference to Bernstein’s notions of restricted and elaborated codes by Hudak (1995). Hudak shows how a teacher working with a class over a semester transforms their perspectives in a unit on popular media.

It was found that as the semester progressed, speech patterns gradually shifted from the restricted to elaborated. The elaborated speech code forms the basis of contemporary schooling. That is, the school system becomes a “major setting for the intensive conversion of students from casual to reflexive speech, or in Basil Bernstein’s terms) from restricted to elaborated linguistic codes.” (Gouldner, 1979, p.3). (Hudak 1995:264-5)

It is proposed that, in the discussion about pegs earlier (Texts 10a-d), both Raylene and the teaching assistant are operating within the ground rules for two very different discourses.

The teaching assistant seeks to engage the child within a particular interpretation of the ongoing activity deriving from academic/literate discourse. The child, however, views the communication through the lens of her common sense experience - a common sense experience that is grounded strongly within social purpose. The link between common sense experience and social orientation in learning can be seen even more clearly in the second example transcript drawn from Walker’s (1982) data which will be discussed below.

The following text example from Traeger Park (Texts 11a-d) is from a transcript in which a number of first year (kindergarten) children were engaged in ‘educational’ water play in a play tank set up just outside the door of the classroom to avoid mess. Rebecca (R) was playing with her friend Paula (P) at this point in time. Again both children reside in fringe camps. In the midst of their activity, Rebecca had just decided to remove all of the water from the tank.
R: I'm going to get all this water  (Rebecca is scooping up all the water)  
P: Hey look how deep its going  (Talking about the water in the tank)  
R: We getting all the water eh?  (Rebecca is pouring it into buckets and bottles)  
We getting all the water out eh Paula?  
So we can make a little bit  (Rebecca is still putting all the water into buckets and bottles. She is then putting the bottles on a table which is a short distance from the tank)  

(Text 11a)

The teacher came over to the table to talk to the children. The table was a short distance away from the tank and she asked a question about the bottle Rebecca was putting onto the table.

T: Is it full of water?  (T comes outside to see what everyone is doing. She speaks to Rebecca who has a bottle of water in her hand. T asks her if it is full)  
R: Yep  

(Text 11b)

Because the teacher had only just entered the context she had no idea of Rebecca's quest to empty the tank. The teacher seized upon what seemed to her to be an excellent opportunity to explore and possibly extend Rebecca's understanding of 'full' and 'empty'. And, the teacher was satisfied, therefore, when Rebecca agreed that it was full.

However, Rebecca had another focus that did not match with that of the teacher. She, in fact, did not start out on her quest to empty the tank as a means of exploring the meaning of the abstract concepts 'full' and 'empty'. Rebecca commenced to empty the tank for far more basic and fundamental reasons. Her action followed a disagreement with her friend Paula who took a bottle Rebecca was playing with and refused to give it back. Unable to physically retrieve it, Rebecca retorted that she would tell her big sister. This started a heated discussion over who had the biggest big sister. Paula held her own in this argument and Rebecca started to empty the water as a means of upping the ante in the argument and upsetting Paula. However, instead of becoming upset, Paula thought this was a good thing to do and joined in whole heartedly with Rebecca. In this way, the conflict was perfectly resolved.

The resolution suited Rebecca also because, having instituted the 'game', she could now assume the role of 'boss of the game' and maintain peer status relative to Paula. Consequently, pleased with herself for having instituted this 'work', Rebecca took the initiative in the conversation and drew the teacher's attention to her achievements in the water tank. However, although the teacher was now standing with the children at the table, she did not share any knowledge of the motives behind the tank emptying activity prior to her intervention. Consequently, she did not realise that Rebecca was attempting to move attention away from the immediate focus of the bottles on the table. This lack of inter-subjectivity concerning a common focus and communicative purpose caused considerable confusion for all concerned.
R: Miss Evans look (Attempting to get the teacher to focus on the tank that is nearly empty)
T: Is that full of water? (Focusing on another bottle on the table. This bottle is also full)
R: No (Rebecca is talking about the tank)
T: Is it empty? (T proposes an alternative response as a challenge)
R: No (Rebecca says no because the tank is not completely empty)
T: Hey? (T is confused by Rebecca's response and requests clarification)
R: No
T: What is it? (T requests further clarification)
R: Cold water cold (Rebecca is now also confused - she searches for another attribute of the water in an effort to satisfy the teacher)
T: Cold? Its full, isn't it? It's full. (T has no idea what Rebecca is talking about and, rather confused, points out that the bottle is full. This of course must be rather amazing news to Rebecca who thinks the teacher is talking about the tank that she has almost completely emptied)

Rebecca's reference to cold water here seemed particularly strange to the teacher. However, even this reference, just like Rebecca's preoccupation with her emptying of the water tank, can be traced back to earlier events in the interaction between Rebecca and the other children. At the very start of the water play there was a short discussion amongst the children about the temperature of the water in the tank. The water was hot because it had been in the sun for some time. Moreover, in the desert climate of Alice Springs with its extreme overnight temperature variation, water temperature in the school washroom was frequently very cold and was a common topic of conversation with the children as they washed their hands. Why Rebecca said 'cold' instead of 'hot' in the text above can only be speculated upon. She was certainly confused, having had a response she considered correct challenged three times in succession by the teacher.

A significant point here is, however, that the teacher needed to be more attuned to the total context of the water play in which Rebecca was involved. In order to communicate effectively, the teacher needed to know not just what was happening at the time of intervention but the whole context of development of the activity in which Rebecca was engaged. Had she shared this she would have been in a far better position to connect with Rebecca's communicative agenda during their discussion.

A second and related point to be drawn here concerns the nature of the experience Rebecca was engaged in as she played around the water tank. For Rebecca, the experience was first and foremost a social one. She did not commence the water play because she wished to explore the teacher's agenda of refining her conception of 'empty' and 'full' or even perhaps exploring other associated concepts such as volume. None of these issues entered her mind. For Rebecca it was a chance to make a game with her friends. And, as she played, her foremost concern was with her role status within the game and her broader social status with her peers. The teacher existed largely as a potentially powerful ally who might possibly be co-opted in the pursuit of those goals. When she asked the teacher to look at her work with the tank, she was seeking social approval from her. She didn't wish to demonstrate her knowledge of 'full' and 'empty'. She was, therefore, confused when the teacher chose to
make knowledge of 'full' and 'empty' the currency for communication. Luckily for the teacher, Rebecca was already familiar with the terms 'full' and 'empty'. Even so, the teacher's preoccupation with exploring the 'terms' as a focus for learning was not predicted by Rebecca. In effect, the teacher and the children were pursuing completely different communicative agendas in the interaction. The children's focus was largely social and 'contextualised' in the sense referred to by Wertsch (1990) in chapter 1 (section 1.5.2) of this study. However, the teacher wished to pursue discussion of 'full' and 'empty' as 'decontextualised' concepts separate from the social context in which they were embedded.

In fact, the intensity of the social agenda on the part of the children surfaced even more in the very next part of the interaction discussed above. Standing with Rebecca during Rebecca's ill fated discussion which ended with the teacher correcting 'Cold? Its full isn't it? Its full' was Rebecca's friend Paula. Paula now seized on her chance to monopolise the teacher's attention. Having realised that the teacher seemed to place a lot of value on things that were full, Paula presented to the teacher the bottle that she happened to have in her hands. Unfortunately, it was not quite full. This, however, did not daunt Paula and she said as she held the bottle up,

**P:** Have a look inside  *(Paula shows T a bottle with water in it)*

**R:** Nothing in there  *(Rebecca fights back for attention as best she can)*

**P:** Its full  *(Paula tells T what she thinks T will reward)*

**T:** Mmm... My goodness me... Lots of bubbles... Not full though, is it?  *(T appears to have lost her confidence in pursuing the educational agenda and closes off conversation. T gives the bottle back to Paula and both children run back to the water tank and continue playing with the water)*

(Text 11d)

Here it is possible to see the competition for peer status and teacher recognition in full flight between the two little girls. Paula sought to move into the gap left by the faltering conversation between the teacher and Rebecca and showed the teacher the bottle she (Paula) was holding. Rebecca valiantly attempted to maintain her status by challenging that Paula's bottle was empty. This was clearly not the case and Rebecca had already demonstrated in the previous conversation that she knew the difference between 'full' and 'empty'. Rebecca was competing for attention here. Paula also knew the difference between 'full' and 'empty'. Yet she maintained here that the bottle was 'full'. In doing this, she was attempting to read the meaning of 'full' from the context of this particular communication. Her intent in this regard is social and characteristic of an 'oral' perspective in the sense outlined in chapter 1 of this study (section 1.5.2).

It was unfortunate for Paula that the bottle was only part full. If she had thought to say even that it was a 'little bit full or empty', something well within her communicative competence, she would have been rewarded by the teacher's approving attention to her bid. However, Paula did not think to say this because she was mostly concerned with working out what the teacher would applaud there and then. The teacher had not demonstrated that such deviations were to be part of the agenda for this conversation. Moreover, because Paula and Rebecca were
socially focused and were not considering 'full' and 'empty' as concepts for inspection and exploration in the decontextualised literate discourse sense outlined earlier in chapter 1 (section 1.5) it was unlikely that they would spontaneously expand the conversation in this way.

It is significant to note that the actions of the teachers in pursuing explanatory responses in the unsuccessful transcripts discussed in the above section constitute commonplace realisations of teacher behaviour in activity lessons. For example, Cambourne (1988) details this language expansion strategy for Whole Language classrooms (see Figure 2.5 below).

![Figure 2.5](image)

What the transcripts in this previous discussion have illustrated are the potential hazards which exist when teachers pursue this strategy in contexts where no inter-subjectivity exists with respect to academic task focus between teachers and children – a context which is all too common in the negotiation of learning with Aboriginal children in mainstream schools.

### 2.4.3 PRINCIPLES FOR INTERVENTION AT TRAEGER PARK SCHOOL

The implication drawn from consideration of classroom interaction research with Aboriginal children to this point has been that the building of inter-subjectivity concerning the negotiation of academic/literate discourses must constitute the primary focus. The notion of 'inter-
subjectivity’ employed here and its role in negotiation within discourses was raised earlier (chapter 1, section 1.5.4). It was pointed out in this earlier discussion that it was the existence of a high level of inter-subjective sharing that provided a culturally located ‘tool’ through which participants (‘members’ - Fairclough 1989) of that discourse interpreted their experience.

It has been proposed above in this chapter that it is the lack of inter-subjectivity between teachers and Aboriginal children concerning appropriate expectations and presumptions for negotiating the construction of knowledge within academic/literate discourses that interferes fundamentally with classroom learning negotiation. While issues to do with the building of behavioural control, sustaining ‘face’ and continuity with respect to children’s prior experiences and expectations are important, these issues are pointless without attention to the building of inter-subjectivity concerning learning negotiation in academic/literate discourses. It is difficult for a child to sustain ‘face’ if they have no idea of what teachers expect and, likewise, they cannot pay attention appropriately if they do not know how to engage within academic/literate discourse. Unfortunately, as pointed out in the above discussion, there is little information available for teachers that would assist them to build inter-subjectivity around the negotiation of academic/literate discourses. In contrast, the program at Traeger Park was specifically designed to address this issue. The following discussion will outline the basic principles employed to do so.

2.4.3.1 Setting goals around text

The first feature of the Traeger park program considered here has to do with the nature of the language/literacy goals that were set within the teaching program. In chapter 1 (section 1.5.1) it was proposed that the primary educational focus for promoting entry into a discourse should be upon ‘key texts’ within the discourse. Furthermore, approaches to providing access to these key texts needed to be premised upon a functional perspective of the kind proposed by Halliday (1985) and Fairclough (1989).

Programming goals in the Traeger Park program, from the very start (eg. Gray 1980a, 1982, 1985), focused on texts as goal and drew from a developing taxonomy of different text types (ie. genres - Martin 1985). An early programming taxonomy is set out in Gray (1985) which is included as appendix 3 in this study. This programming taxonomy was informed by Halliday’s (1985) and Martin’s (1984) notions of the relationship which exists between text and register. Over time the choice of text as goal was increasingly informed by research in systemic linguistics that was emerging at the time (eg. Martin & Rothery 1980, 1981; Martin 1984, 1985, 1985a, 1990; Frances Christie 1985, 1989, 1990, 1991; Rothery 1985, 1992). Gray (1990) refers to programming activities drawn from the following taxonomy of generic structures that were broadly categorised as ‘narrative’, ‘factual’ and ‘transactional’.
Narrative genres: The two primary narrative genres for focus were those of recount and narrative (eg. Martin (1985)). Thus, narrative texts were identified that could contribute to the class reading program in some way, that is, the children could be taught to read them or they could profit by engaging at some level with register and staging choices within the text. The selected narrative texts were not always closely tied to instructional field topics explored. However, it was often found to be advantageous to promote links between different curriculum areas. Thus, for example, ‘The Very hungry Caterpillar’ (Carle 1970) provided a fanciful version of a caterpillar life cycle that created interest and criticism from children who were raising and observing caterpillars as part of a unit on insect lifecycles in order to write a factual text in science. Once selected, each narrative text was set as a target for development in concentrated encounter activities (see below, section 2.4.3.2).

Factual genres: Factual texts set as goals were drawn primarily from those identified by Martin (1985, 1990) as important to the development and comprehension of scientific genres typically encountered in secondary school grades. In section 2.4.2 above, an example (Text 9) of one such introductory activity for kindergarten children was given to do with the writing of a simple recount of the procedure involved in making toast. Gray (1990) develops further discussion around the selection of factual texts as teaching goals (refer appendix 2). Once a factual text was identified for development as part of the exploration of a particular instructional field it became the focus for a concentrated encounter lesson sequence (see below, section 2.4.3.2).

Transactional genres: Transactional texts represented a rather loose collection of text types drawn together for practical programming convenience. Transactional texts represented the texts of everyday community business in the instructional fields chosen for exploration in the teaching program. Thus, if the children were studying health issues they would explore community roles to do with say the provision of health services at the local health clinic. So as well as dealing with the instructional through the production of reports or explanations of health topics such as ‘infection’ or ‘good food’, the children would study community roles (eg. doctors, receptionists, nurses etc.). As part of that study of community roles, they would learn to fill out registration forms and case files. They would learn how to answer phones, ask appropriate questions and make notes etc in the role of receptionist, doctor or nurse. Often, the production of factual texts, (for example, procedural texts to do with ‘how to test eyes’ or ‘how to bandage a cut’, explanations to do with ‘how ice treats burns’, reports on body systems ‘circulation’) would also be developed in conjunction with work on transactional texts. Transactional texts were typically developed around role play activities to do with a particular instructional field. Discussion of a transcript featuring Karen above (Texts 6a-g, section 2.4.1) provides an example of a context for the exploration of transactional texts. Gray (1985) gives a notional list of various kinds of roles from which transactional texts could be drawn. Texts
might be written (eg. forms, case notes) or oral (eg. recording specific information from a phone call, explaining a procedure to a patient, dealing with a customer). Thus, the children in the role play on vets involving Karen above (Texts 6a-g, section 2.4.1) would have encountered a number of texts commonly negotiated in these contexts (eg. oral - receptionist/client, vet/client - written - notes, forms, case files etc.). These were studied, practiced in small group activities with the teacher and then children were encouraged to incorporate them in role play. Further discussion of transactional texts is provided in Gray (1985 & 1990) which are included as appendices 2 and 3.

2.4.3.2 Negotiating interaction around the production of text

It has been argued above (section 2.4.3) and in chapter 1 that a primary focus in the education of Aboriginal children should be the development of inter-subjectivity around the expectations and assumptions underlying successful engagement with academic literate discourses. It has been further proposed above (section 2.4.2) that Aboriginal children typically enter the classroom negotiation context prepared to engage on a social level and do not easily pick up the academic task focus expected by teachers.

It is possible to draw a number of parallels between the circumstances for teaching/learning discussed here and key aspects of Vygotsky’s (eg. 1978, 1987) theoretical stance on learning as a social process. Within Vygotsky's theory, learning is conceived as a socio-historical process (ie. it is socially mediated over time). Moreover, Vygotsky proposes that learning begins on what he terms an 'inter-psychological plane' (Vygotsky 1987) and is transformed via a process of engagement with more knowledgeable others to an internalised or intra-psychological process within the mental functioning of the individual. Once internalised, these culturally located ways of thinking and doing function as 'member's resources' (Fairclough 1989) for participation in discourse at an 'inter-subjective' level of the kind referred to by D'Andrade (1987) (refer chapter 1, section 1.5.4).

Consideration of this shift from inter to intra-psychological processing for an individual engaged in learning activity can be viewed from at least three related perspectives which all illuminate different dimensions of the context for learning within Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (Zone of Proximal Development). The first perspective view can be interpreted directly in terms of control over processes within the individual, from inter-psychological to intra-psychological processing, as the discussion above points out. A second perspective can encompass the transfer of control within learning negotiation roles between child and ‘knowledgeable’ adult as the child shifts progressively towards intra-psychological processing of the task. This shift in negotiation role is often represented by diagrams such as the following drawn from an unpublished paper by J. Campione 1983.
Figure 2.6 above illustrates the shift that occurs in teacher and student behaviour to do with the task as learning is negotiated over time in the zone of proximal development. This process has been called scaffolding (eg. Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976, Ninio & Bruner 1978, Bruner 1986) and will be developed further in later discussion (section 2.4.3.2.1). A third interactional stance that can be taken on the shift from inter-personal to intra-personal processing is to consider the perspective from which the child must necessarily construct the task activity he or she is expected to master. In many learning contexts there will exist in the beginning a stage where the child will not possess any idea of the learning requirements for the task. At this stage, the child is often not ‘task focused’ or ‘academically purposeful’ in the manner referred to in earlier discussion (eg. section 2.1.2). A good example of this state occurs with very young children in the early stages of ‘book reading’ in literate homes. When very young children in literate contexts first enter into learning negotiation with adults around books they do so for purely social reasons. They have no idea of the activity as ‘reading’ in the sense that ‘reading’ is regarded by already literate persons. They engage simply because they want to do things with a supportive adult. The adult’s ability to establish and pursue engagement that leads the child towards task focus is critical to the success of the whole enterprise at this stage of intense social focus by the child. What is interesting with respect to adult responses to the behaviour of the child at this time is that they observe much the same kinds of considerations raised by Malin (1989) and Malcolm (1987) to do with responding to Aboriginal children. While parents continually press for engagement on their terms, they do not expect that the children will immediately tune into the adult’s task orientation. Adult behaviour is extremely flexible and allows considerable latitude in terms of the responses children give. Adults accept that children will lose interest and they adjust flexibility to that circumstance. Adults observe the interaction rights proposed by Malcolm (1991), that is, the right to contribute, the right not to contribute, the right to the acceptance of the form of one’s contribution and the right to the acceptance of the content of one’s contribution. What is
particularly important to this study is that they manage to accommodate to the latter two considerations while leading the child towards the kind of task focused engagement that they are promoting. To achieve this they build up, over time, a shared store of common knowledge which allows for the development of a high level of mutual inter-subjectivity with respect to the form and content of appropriately task focused interaction.

For many children, but particularly for Aboriginal children, entry into school means encountering a discourse for which they have no resources established at an intra-personal level. Consequently, they do not know how to engage academic/literate discourse on any kind of inter-subjective level. In fact, as previous discussion has proposed, in the absence of inter-subjective access to academic/literate discourse all they have to fall back on are their resources for participation in social discourse. For these children, the concept of engagement on ‘an inter-psychological plane’ or of ‘learning as a social process’ takes on a particularly critical dimension. For Aboriginal children entering school, this need to operate initially on an inter-psychological plane clashes with the tendency in mainstream schooling to demand that children take responsibility for learning at an intra-psychological level. Aboriginal children not predisposed to this interaction can not be expected to take personal responsibility for task focused learning and for task focused behaviour from the very outset.

In building a context for the negotiation of learning at Traeger Park, therefore, the teaching methodology drew heavily upon the strategies employed by mainstream literate parents in socialising their children into literate/academic discourses. This orientation allowed for learning to start as a socially focused activity. And, as the project developed, this orientation came to be increasingly framed in terms of principles drawn from the work of Vygotsky (eg. 1978, 1987) and Bruner (1983, 1986). These principles formed the presumptions underlying a curriculum programming concept that was termed ‘concentrated encounters’.

The teacher’s role in concentrated encounters is to facilitate this shift from an inter-psychological, social orientation towards an intra-psychological, task focused orientation to the production of texts representative of academic/literate discourses. Moreover, the task facing the teacher is one that requires the adoption of a socio-historical perspective, for the children will not usually respond immediately in the desired interaction mode for learning. The following Figure 2.7 presents this process diagrammatically.
In order to develop further principles employed in the teaching negotiation at Traeger Park School, the next section (2.4.3.2.1) will elaborate upon some of the key implications drawn from Vygotsky’s notion of ‘zone of proximal development’ (zpd) and Bruner’s interpretation of ‘scaffolding’. Particular emphasis will be placed on the manner in which adults build and exploit shared knowledge in socialising children into academic/literate discourses.

2.4.3.2.1 Zone of proximal development and Scaffolding: implications for teaching

In positing the notion of zone of proximal development, Vygotsky was concerned with the relationship between two levels of development; (i) a child’s level of individual independent functioning and (ii) the level at which he/she can function in instructional social interaction under adult guidance or with more capable others (i.e. the level of the child’s 'potential' performance). Vygotsky was critical of the notion that instruction should be targeted simply at, or close to, the point of child’s independent functioning and argued instead that the most effective learning occurs when the adult draws the child out to the jointly constructed 'potential' level of performance.

Thus the notion of a zone of proximal development enables us to propound a new formula, namely that the only ‘good learning’ is that which is in advance of development. (Vygotsky, 1978:89)
Bruner's notion of scaffolding arose out of his attempts to understand the process through which the child's performance potential was jointly constructed between the child and the adult,

Nowhere in Vygotsky's writings is there any concrete spelling out of what he means by such scaffolding. But I think I can reconstruct his intentions from two sources, one of them philosophical-historical and in Vygotsky's own hand, so to speak, the other from research on such 'scaffolding' that I undertook myself, better to grasp what this intriguing concept might mean. (Bruner, 1986:74)

It is by leading the child's learning out into Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, beyond what the child could achieve if left to his/her own resources that this 'joint culture creation' is possible.

To Vygotsky we owe a special debt for elucidating some of the major relations between language, thought and socialization. His basic view, .... was that conceptual learning was a collaborative enterprise involving an adult who enters into dialogue with the child in a fashion that provides the child with hints and props that allow him to begin a new climb, guiding the child in next steps before the child is capable of appreciating their significance on his own. It is the 'loan of consciousness' that gets the child through the zone of proximal development. (Bruner, 1986:132) (emphasis in bold type added)

In general, the relationship between Bruner's notion of scaffolding and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development is considered to be one of complementarity. As Garton (1992) outlines:

The zone of proximal development is a theoretical construct that describes (the child's) potential, the distance between unaided and aided competence. Scaffolding refers to the aid component, with emphasis on the provision of appropriate support for successful learning. For Vygotsky, both the instructional and the developmental component are integral, and his focus is on the child (or less competent) rather than on the instructional process per se. (Garton 1992:96)

However, it is important to realise also that Bruner's concept of scaffolding, embedded as it is within the apprenticeship to academic/literate discourses, places a particular interpretation on the nature of the support process. One difficulty inherent in much of the teaching methodology that has attempted to translate the notions of scaffolding and the zone of proximal development into classroom programming has been the multitude of interpretations that have applied. Frequently, the relationship between research on literacy development and Bruner's description of the mediating process as scaffolding is ignored. Instead, some prevailing teaching methodology is reinterpreted through a loosely defined notion of zone of proximal development. This is a point commented on by Moll (1990) with respect to the reframing of Behavioural techniques as scaffolding within the zone of proximal development.

For example, a problem in applying the concept of the zone to the analysis of classroom instruction is that a definition of the zone emphasizing the transfer of knowledge, and especially of skills, by those knowing more to those knowing less, may characterize virtually any instructional practice. Consider the following three characteristics of the zone as usually presented. The zone is:

1. Establishing a level of difficulty. This level, assumed to be the proximal level, must be a bit challenging for the student but is not too difficult.
2. Providing assisted performance. The adult provides guided practice to the child with a clear sense of the goal or outcome of the child's performance.
3. Evaluating independent performance. The most logical outcome of a zone of proximal development is the child performing independently. (Moll 1990:7)
Moll's argument is that the above interpretation of the zone of proximal development allows the mediating process to be represented through rigid teacher control and mindless drilling. In such contexts the mediating process can be misleadingly reframed through the lens of Behaviourism. Furthermore, as Gray (1987) has argued, it is also possible to reframe misleadingly the mediating process of scaffolding through the lens of a child-centred methodology that refuses to allow the adult a strong and active role in the process. Significant factors underlying the notion of scaffolding as it was interpreted in the Traeger Park Program are set out and discussed below.

The importance of the adult taking an active role: one which leads the child towards a task focus appropriate to academic/literate discourse

The process through which children are socialised into literate discourse has been described by a number of researchers (eg. Ninio & Bruner 1978; Snow 1983; Bruner 1983, 1986; Goldfield & Snow 1984; Painter 1986, 1992; Williams 1990, 1991, 1995). The process described by this research is best identified by Bruner's concept of 'scaffolding' (Bruner 1983, 1986). The term itself was first introduced by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) as well as Ninio and Bruner (1978) who used it to refer directly to the supportive interaction provided by parents which drew children into construction of meanings which they would have been unable to achieve if left to their own devices.

The implication for classroom interaction that Bruner draws from the relationship between scaffolding and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development quite clearly proposes that teachers and children must engage in the joint construction of meaning in which the adult must play a proactive role that both directs and informs. In fact, scaffolding involves both participants in proactive roles at different stages of the negotiation process. Bruner's interpretation is different to that advocated by some progressive educators (eg. Goodman & Goodman 1990, Cairney 1989, Haste Woodward and Burke 1984).

Some years ago I wrote some very insistent articles about the importance of discovery learning - learning on one's own, or as Piaget put it later (and I think better), learning by inventing. What I am proposing here is an extension of that idea, or better, a completion. My model of the child in those days was very much in the tradition of the solo child mastering the world by representing it to himself in his own terms. In the intervening years I have come increasingly to recognize that most learning in most settings is a communal activity, a sharing of the culture. It is not just that the child must make his knowledge his own, but that he must make it his own in a community of those who share his sense of belonging to a culture. It is this that leads me to emphasize not only discovery and invention but the importance of negotiating and sharing - in a word, of joint culture creating as an object of schooling and as an appropriate step en route to becoming a member of the adult society in which one lives out one's life. (Bruner, 1986:127)

In, for example, bedtime reading activities adults and children jointly construct the text that is being read and also jointly construct texts appropriate for negotiating and interrogating meanings around the focus texts. In the very early stages it is the adults who take the lead to point and name illustrations. When the children begin to respond the adults begin to question and probe for appropriate verbal labels. As children begin to answer these, Adults model and
probe for more extended discussion (see Gray 1990, appendix 2). Eventually negotiation around the text evolves and develops in complexity. In the process, children begin to take over many interaction roles formerly held by adults.

In doing this, the parents actively support children's learning attempts by providing models of the appropriate language and by structuring and regulating the input they provide so children can gradually take over the task of text production. Bruner (1986) describes quite explicitly the general nature of the process he terms 'scaffolding'.

In general, what the tutor did was what the child could not do. For the rest, she made things such that the child could do with her what he plainly could not do without her. And as the tutoring proceeded, the child took over from her parts of the task that he was not able to do at first but, with mastery, became consciously able to do under his own control. And she gladly handed these over. (Bruner 1986:76) (his emphasis)

Ninio and Bruner (1978) discussed 'scaffolding' in relation to the dialogue parents engage in with their children about books. In the earliest stages of these interactions the mother is skilled in a practice that the child is not. However, the child,

is seen by the mother as having the intention to carry out the function that will later be realized by the linguistic form she is trying to teach him. (Ninio & Bruner 1978:2)

Early on, therefore, the mother supplies the linguistic interaction that she believes the child is intending to express, eg.:

| Mother: | Look! |
| Child: | (touches picture) |
| M: | What are those? |
| C: | (vocalizes and smiles) |
| M: | Yes, they are rabbits |
| C: | (vocalizes, smiles and looks up at mother) |
| M: | (laughs) Yes, rabbits |
| C: | (vocalizes, smiles) |
| M: | Yes, (laughs) |

(Text 12 - Bruner 1983:78)

The importance of routines

As Bruner (1983) points out, an important feature of this early book reading interaction is the fact that the adult sets such patterned interactions up as 'routines'. Snow (1983) also points out the importance of such 'routines' in language development.

Another aspect of interaction which also contributes to language acquisition is parental use of routines (see Peters, in press; Snow, in press; Snow, de Blauw, and Dubber, 1982). Bruner refers to such routines as formats emphasizing the fact that they are neither rigid nor unexpandable, but are highly predictable and thus constitute ideal contexts for language acquisition. (Snow 1983:177)

Bruner gives the following example of the structure of an early book exploration format of the kind previously discussed,

The key utterance types, moreover, were governed by strict discourse and ordering constraints. Within a given cycle, the order of utterance was remarkably stable. They occurred almost exclusively in the order:

(1) Attentional Vocative (Look!)
(2) Query (What are those?)
(3) Label (Yes, they are rabbits)
(4) Feedback (Yes, rabbits) (Yes) (Bruner 1983:80)
Because the interaction is part of a cycle of routines the child is able to draw on past models provided by the parent in his/her attempt to participate. Within the routine nature of the format then, a 'scaffold' is set up in which the mother can respond to the child,

When a step is left out, it is for good reason, as noted. Richard's mother responds to what he does. If he initiates a cycle by pointing or vocalizing, she responds with a Query and omits the Attentional Vocative. Or, if he offers an acceptable Label after the Query, she will virtually always skip the Label and jump back to Feedback. In a word, she is responding to him as she would to a 'real' partner in an exchange. That premise provides the basic structure of their format. (Bruner 1983:81)

Bruner points out that what is happening between the mother and child in this kind of interaction cannot be dismissed as imitation. In a scaffolding interaction both mother and child are active participants in jointly constructing a text which is functional for both.

The child is trying to answer a question. The mother's label provides him with a model for doing so. But the model word is to be used in reply to a question - not as an imitation of the parent. He, the child, is responding to the intent of his mother's question. He rarely mirrors her label. (Bruner, 1983:84) (his emphasis)

In these kinds of interaction contexts, parents expect the child to 'approximate' and they assume that the child will take 'responsibility' but the procedure is one in which the child is allowed to assume responsibility for the text in his/her own time when he or she feels confident to do so. Joint responsibility is the basis from which the child develops sole responsibility for the text.

An important feature of the interaction routines that the parent and child create together is that a high degree of flexibility in initiating and responding is accorded to both parties. As the child takes part in the routine with parents, he/she is free to make decisions about what aspects he/she will attempt to initiate and, because meaning intent is shared by both parties, attempted approximations on the part of the child are low risk activities which are very easily interpreted and accepted by the parent.

From the parents' viewpoint, routines of this type provide a context where both adult and child are active in true negotiation even though the adult is more competent in the task than the child. It is not just that the adult models and encourages the child to take over the text. The adult actively assists the child to interact with the text in special ways that are crucial to the development of that child's future literacy.

The importance of engineering routines such that the child is required to take over more and more of the text

The mechanism for promoting the take over of the text by the child is basically straightforward. Firstly, a context (format) is set up in which control of text production can be handed over to the child at a rate and order that responds to the child's decisions about what is to be learned at any point in time. Secondly, the format provides a basis from which the adult can negotiate development by successively leading and responding as the child moves towards
control of the activity. In order to achieve the first objective of handing over control of text production to children, parents simply need to respond to children's attempts to take over the task. As the children start to initiate, the parents simply let them. Parents adjust and sustain joint text construction by contributing only those parts which the children cannot, as Bruner illustrates in his previously quoted discussion of "Richard".

The second objective of continually extending children's performance of 'keeping the ball rolling' is achieved by what Ninio and Bruner (1978) refer to as 'upping the ante'.

In response to Richard's efforts, his mother appeared to be operating on a freshly updated, detailed 'inventory' of his knowledge of objects and events, of the words he had previously understood, and of the forms of expressions of which he was capable. In the main, she gave him the benefit of the doubt when he made an ambiguous utterance (of which more presently) or 'excused' a wrong response to her Query with kind words and expression 'You haven't seen one of those; that's a goose...'. But she could also insist: 'Come on, you've learned "bricks". (Bruner, 1983:82)

For example, once a child began to produce the labels that the mother was requesting within Bruner's early book reading routines that were discussed earlier (ie. 1. Attentional Vocative, 2. Query, 3. Label, 4. Feedback), the mother began elaborating comments and questions that focused on new information, eg:

M: What's that? (falling intonation)
C: Fishy
M: Yes, and what's he doing?

(Text 13 – Bruner 1983:82)

In this way, the negotiation within the format is continually pushed forward and developed by the actions of both participants.

**The importance of continuous building and exploitation of inter-subjectivity for sustaining both the adult’s ability to push child towards control and the child’s ability to assume control in negotiation.**

A critical factor behind the ability of parents to scaffold children's attempts in joint meaning construction is the existence of a history of shared experience from which a joint perception of the appropriate meaning can be established. Shared experience allows the process of joint construction to operate. Without it, the activity often breaks down. Painter (1986) gives the following example,

Another relevant response is the question that is able to elicit further information because the adult knows there will be something to recall on this point,

(H has spent a day with M)
F: Where did you go today?
H: To beach
F: What did you do?
H: (silence)
M: Did you get wet?
H: Yes, girl got all wet too. Crying.

(Text 14 – Painter 1986:74)

Here the mother was able to use knowledge of shared experience to continue the joint construction that had broken down because of the child's inability to structure the information
requested by the father. It is in this way that the notion of inter-subjective sharing (D'Andrade 1987) that was discussed in chapter 1 (section 1.5.4) becomes so central to the scaffolding process. It is knowledge that is inter-subjectively shared that is brought forward by the child from one interaction context to the next. Moreover, inter-subjective sharing underlies the capacity of the adult to build accurately on what the child already knows. It allows the adult to target and structure information and questions that are genuinely interpretable by the child. It is inter-subjective sharing that provides the basis from which the adult can ‘up the ante’ in order to move the child on to higher levels of performance and to allow the child to most efficiently take over control of the text.

Most importantly also, the language resources which the children are able to draw on to respond to adults’ attempts to extend are frequently directly available from previous language models provided by the adult within earlier occurrences of the format. Furthermore, children themselves provide for extension by spontaneously introducing such models.

Information from previous conversations about a given picture, especially if it had been introduced by mother and imitated by N, was likely to be spontaneously introduced by N at a later discussion of the same illustration. (Goldfield and Snow, 1984:210)

Painter (1986) also draws attention to the fact that what a child says in one interaction is very frequently based on the language model provided by an adult in a previous encounter, for example,

M: Did you have a good time at playgroup?
H: No pushing /a/ babies
M: Yes, that's what mummy said.

(Text 15 - Painter 1986:72)

She comments that an important point about this encounter is that,

The event the child selected to comment on concerning the playgroup outing was in fact not something we did but something that we said. And this was a very frequent occurrence. (Painter 1986:73)

The place of questions in a scaffolding context is important because the way questions are used for scaffolding signals a fundamental change from the common pedagogic approach in schools which employs questions as an information seeking tool in learning negotiation. In teaching children how to respond to questions which seek, for example, extended recounts of experience or negotiation around stories, parents do not generally request new information from children in the early stages of their literacy learning. This contrasts with the school where teachers typically ask questions to find out what the child knows or to probe the child to work something out by himself/herself. However, to respond to and use questions in the manner teachers expect, children must already share considerable inter-subjectivity concerning how questions function in academic/literate discourses. Parents, in their attempts to develop literacy, target questions towards information that they already hold inter-subjectively as common knowledge with their children. It is in these circumstances, where questions target common knowledge, that children are able to respond to and control questions within academic/literate discourses.
The importance of maintaining a high level of inter-subjectivity around past experience for supporting children in constructing their own texts within the discourse

Through engaging in joint construction of recounts of previously shared experience, children are then able to draw on these earlier language models to build individual monologues that recount experience. As an illustration, Painter gives this example which followed a trip to the zoo,

While we were observing, and of course talking, about this, a baby giraffe looked out of the shed several times as if playing peepbo, much to Hal's delight. A few weeks later at home the following conversation took place,

H: (cuddling a toy giraffe) I saw a big giraffe
M: Yes, what was the giraffe doing?
H: Eating the leaves
M: What about the little giraffe? Remember what he did?
H: go peepbo
M: Yes, he was looking out of the door, wasn't he?

In this way we jointly reconstructed the event. Two days later Hal was reading and came on a picture of a giraffe and said:

H: That's a giraffe. I saw a big giraffe. Big giraffe eating /a/ leaves; little giraffe go peepbo /a/ door

(Text 16 - Painter 1986:75)

Painter (1986) points out that it is through the joint building of texts of this kind and the subsequent development of their own ability to produce them unaided that children learn to produce extended recounts appropriate to the culturally situated discourses in which they are being inducted.

So we can see how from his experience as a conversationalist Hal had become able to produce a short but more complete and self-sustained little monologue (and one which incidentally freely takes over language used to him). (Painter 1986:75)

The kind of scaffolding context outlined above for access to academic/literate discourses provides a context in which children are both able to respond correctly and learn how to learn within the discourse. In effect, the kind of scaffolding activity that operates in literate homes functions as a pedagogic discourse in the Bernsteinian sense discussed earlier. Through the interaction of this particular pedagogic discourse literacy is recontextualised as a specific type of cultural resource, one that is differentiated from the literacy of various other groups within the wider society (eg. Heath 1982, 1983; Williams, 1990, 1991, 1995: Hasan 1996). The issue considered important for teaching at Traeger Park was that of how such a facilitating discourse operating in literate homes could be adapted and recontextualised as the pedagogic discourse of the classroom.

2.4.3.2.2 Concentrated encounters as a context for scaffolding

In developing a context that would permit teachers to scaffold the ability of the children to produce and interrogate texts representative of academic/literate discourses the program at Traeger Park employed a concept derived from Cazden (1977, 1983). Cazden (1977)
describes concentrated encounters as ‘condensed forms of familiar interaction experiences’ where the language behaviours have functional value for the child. These experiences are focused on a particular language task and ‘involve a smaller than usual group of children so that each child’s experiences are maximised’. They include both teacher-child interactions and child-child interactions. Cazden’s use of the term arose as an attempt to interpret Bernstein’s work in a very poor district of East London (ie. Gahagan & Gahagan 1970).

If you believe, as Bernstein and his colleagues did, that language use is closely tied to the context of situation, and to the speakers’ or writers’ roles within them, then curriculum design becomes a task of creating situations that put learners in new relationships, and give them both the content knowledge of what to talk and write about, and the language knowledge of how to say or write it. So, in the experimental program, frequent use was made of role-playing in order to create such situations within the classroom. (Cazden 1992:1)

In the development of the teaching program at Traeger Park, the interpretation of concentrated encounters moved beyond ‘role play’ to provide a broad context for establishing a ‘format’ within which scaffolding negotiation could be developed and extended over time (refer earlier discussion (section 2.4.3.2.1). This interpretation allowed concentrated encounters to be set up around the production of any text representative of academic/literate discourses. The key focus in the concentrated encounter was the joint negotiation of control over the production of a text and the nature of this text was identified by the teacher before the activity commenced (refer to discussion of text goals in the previous section 2.4.3.1). Thus, for example, the teacher would introduce a narrative, factual or transactional text or develop a context of situation appropriate for the production of such a text. The teacher would then engage with the children in activities that would simultaneously deconstruct meaning relations realised within the text and involve the children working with her to produce that text themselves.

Use of the term ‘format’ is appropriate here because the concentrated encounter did not involve simply learning the text ‘by rote’. Rather, the teacher concentrated upon building a deep understanding of what Halliday (1985) refers to as the context of situation (refer chapter 1, section 1.5.1) and, as part of that exploration, the children engaged with the language choices employed by the author/speaker. The effect was somewhat parallel to the kind of interaction Cazden (1988) reports between mothers and children in book reading ‘games’.

Variations in the games over time are critical. The adult so structures the game that the child can be a successful participant from the beginning; then, as the child’s competence grows, the game changes so that there is always something new to be learned and tried out, including taking over what has been the adult’s role. (Cazden 1988:104)

Gray (1990, 1985 - refer appendices 2 and 3) provides in some detail an elaboration of the kinds of activity that constituted concentrated encounter ‘formats’. In addition, chapters 4 and 5 trace in detail the development of one concentrated encounter that was focused on the joint construction of a scientific explanation about the development of a chicken embryo. Consequently, specific examples will not be discussed further here.
Because the sequence of scaffolding formats progressed over time (i.e. usually over a number of weeks) there was room for the negotiation roles adopted by the teacher and children to change substantially as the children assumed more competence in text production. In the beginning, it was the teacher who typically contributed most to the negotiation. However, as the children developed competence, the teacher allowed them to take a more dominant role. The process of shifting responsibility over time within a sequence of scaffolding formats can be represented by means of a simplification of the diagram (Figure 2.6) discussed earlier. This representation was chosen largely because it did not separate out the provision of a model by the teacher from the processes of ‘guided practice’ and ‘application’. In this construction of scaffolding, modelling along with child attempts to take over and consolidate the model were conceived as largely simultaneous and ongoing processes.

![Figure 2.8](image)

The shift of responsibility promoted in a concentrated encounter macrogenre as the teaching sequence progressed over time

However, the focus of academic/literate discourse on written text provided for a second stage in the development of negotiation within concentrated encounters. Once the teacher was sure that the children had achieved a strong level of control over the construction of the target text orally she typically shifted the children to a new plane of engagement which focused directly upon how the text would be represented as writing. Usually this was achieved through the joint construction of a written text by teacher and children. This shift represented a significant ‘upping of the ante’ (Bruner 1983) which is worth representation as a separate stage in the concentrated encounter model outlined above. This shift, as discussion in chapter 5 will show, required an even more focused attention on language choice as well as (with early childhood age pupils) the development of orthographic relationships.

As they moved from negotiating and deconstructing the target text orally and into the joint writing of the text, the children were challenged to make explicit and conscious choices concerning just how a text would be staged and written down. This requirement meant that the teacher had to re-establish a context in which she once again could provide the major input and guidance in the negotiation. Consequently this shift to a more precise level of engagement in order to construct a jointly written text can be represented by the following Figure 2.9.
As previous discussion has pointed out, chapter 5 of this study provides a detailed discussion of the nature of the shift into joint construction of a written text. Gray (1990) (in appendix 2) also discusses this aspect. It is important to point out at this point, however, the intensive focus on deconstruction and construction of the target text that was pursued orally in the first stage of the above Figure 2.8. A clear distinction must be drawn between the negotiation process in which specific texts (usually from academic/literate discourses or other discourses deemed important) were pursued in oral negotiation at Traeger Park and the typical manner in educational practice of talk about a topic before writing in schools. The intensive focus on language choice pursued from the very start of concentrated encounters will be developed further in chapters 4 and 5.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed research into language/literacy development with Aboriginal children in order to provide a point of departure from which the particular initiatives employed at Traeger Park School could be drawn. At the beginning of the program at Traeger Park the dominant educational discourses around the education of Aboriginal children derived primarily from the ‘difference’ perspective deriving from Labov’s (1969) critique of earlier initiatives deemed to embody a ‘deficit’ perspective. Labov’s critique set the parameters for discussion of deficit/difference based upon a generalised and undifferentiated notion of logical equivalence located within the construct ‘dialect’. It was proposed that the parameters within which this debate was and still is confined ignore issues of register difference associated with control over different discourses.

Thus, while notions of logical equivalence with respect to different dialects could be held to be true in the sense that Labov (1969) proposed, his notion of ‘logical equivalence’ was inadequate for pursuing issues of access and control to do with different discourses. As such it was proposed that the linguistic research positioned within Labov’s framing of the deficit/difference debate could offer very little of value to the development of access to academic/literate discourses at Traeger Park School. However, because of the pervasive and
ongoing influence of this debate in the education of Aboriginal children in Australia, an extended discussion of issues was included in this study as a separate appendix (appendix 1) in volume 2.

Instead of concentrating on formal linguistic research on issues to do with Aboriginal English and its validity as a linguistic system, this chapter pursued a more detailed discussion of research which has focused upon the direct negotiation of access to mainstream education. It was proposed that while this research provided useful insights for teachers working with Aboriginal children, it still largely avoided addressing primary issues to do with the provision of access to academic/literate discourses.

It was proposed that the primary factor in the difficulties faced by Aboriginal children and their teachers was the lack of inter-subjectivity to do with what counts as task focused interaction in academic/literate discourse. It was proposed that when this factor was addressed other formulations, framed as more generalised and non-differentiated concepts such as cultural difference, could be more easily accommodated by participants in the negotiation. It was proposed further that assuming an appropriate task focus within academic/literate discourses was the outcome of a process of socialisation and that it involved the development of a high level of inter-subjectivity between participants which allowed each of them to predict and respond to the initiatives of others.

A model for the provision of access to underlying assumptions for participation in academic/literate discourses was drawn from the manner in which children in literate cultural contexts are inducted into participation within academic/literate discourses. It was proposed that the process of learning how to learn within literate discourses is best represented through appeal to Bruner's (1983, 1986) notion of 'scaffolding' as a means through which socially constructed learning is achieved in Vygotsky's (1978) 'zone of proximal development'. A number of features of 'learning in the zone of proximal development' were articulated as important learning/teaching principles for the successful realisation of socially constructed learning.

These are, first, that learning must be considered as a socio-historical process that is reliant for its effectiveness on the building of an appropriate level of inter-subjective sharing between participants who engage jointly in the performance of tasks that are the focus of the learning.

Second, the building of suitable formats (routines) which provide for repeated performance of learning tasks over time is essential in the building of inter-subjective sharing between participants.

Third, the establishment of inter-subjective sharing provides for a high level of sensitivity and flexibility on the part of the adults and children in the learning activity. This allows adults to
judge accurately the children’s zones of proximal development at any time and allows the adults to ‘up the ante’ in pushing the child towards more independent functioning.

Fourth, inter-subjective sharing likewise allows the children to tune into and to anticipate the focused agenda that the adult sees as the purpose of the task. In this way, children can start to engage in learning interactions with a predominantly social intent and can, during the course of the scaffolding interaction, take on the focused educational agenda that is promoted by the adult within the interaction. In moving from an initial 'social' to a particular 'task focused' orientation the 'members' resources' for acting 'purposefully' within the discourse are established.

In the program developed at Traeger Park negotiation strategies based upon these aspects of early induction into literate/academic discourses were used to promote the production of discourse appropriate texts considered important for the children’s educational development. The contexts or ‘formats’ constructed in curriculum programming to facilitate this process were termed ‘concentrated encounters’ after Cazden (1977,1983).

In chapter 1 of this study, it was proposed that mainstream schooling needed to be considered as a cultural process through which children gain control over culturally-situated discourses that are projected as educational goals. Moreover, it was proposed that Aboriginal children entering mainstream classrooms were at a significant disadvantage because they typically entered school with little grounding in the employment of the 'members' resources' (Fairclough 1989) necessary for successful participation. Unfortunately, the pedagogy they encounter is often constructed such that a reasonable level of inter-subjectivity is assumed as a starting point for negotiation.
3 RATIONALE AND MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE IN A CONCENTRATED ENCOUNTER MACROGENRE

3.1 FOCUS AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the analysis undertaken in this study is to provide for discussion of the manner in which teachers might build a facilitative and educationally productive discourse with Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms. This chapter will provide a rationale and outline of the analysis presented in chapters 4 and 5. However, constructing an analysis that is capable of exposing the finely tuned scaffolding process required to promote the productive engagement of Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms is problematic. As discussion in chapter 2 of this study has proposed, research which has investigated how teachers interact with Aboriginal children points primarily to instances of communication failure. Moreover, the research has found it difficult to offer positively framed and effective directions for teachers to follow.

3.1.1 THE EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

This study constitutes a detailed linguistic analysis of a series of six scaffolding formats (see chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.2) taken from a concentrated encounter macrogenre. The analysis employed in the study draws heavily on Frances Christie’s (1994) model for the analysis of 'curriculum macrogenres', the fundamental principles of which will be outlined later in section 3.3 of this chapter.

3.1.1.1 The language sample

The language sample was collected from lessons occurring at three different stages of the development of a concentrated encounter macrogenre. Language data was recorded on videotape and then transcribed for analysis. A complete transcription of the data considered in this study is given in appendix 4 which is included in a separate volume (volume 2). The writer of this study worked jointly with the teacher of the recorded formats to develop the teaching program she was to implement. This coordination with the teacher was part of the normal formative strategy for building the overall teaching program across the elementary section of the school. Following the teaching of each scaffolding format, the writer watched and discussed the videotape with the teacher. In this way, a consensus concerning the interpretation of educational goals and strategies was built up between the teacher and the writer of this study.
The videotapes of the formats chosen for analysis were recorded in the course of the formative development of the teaching program at the school. They were chosen for analysis because they provided a sequence of formats representative of strategic points over the duration of one concentrated encounter macrogenre.

The concentrated encounter macrogenre to be studied in this analysis was focused ultimately on the development of control over an explanation text (Martin 1985) about the development of a chicken embryo to the stage of hatching. This text was one text produced within a unit of work that was concerned with development of literacy competence to do with a number of texts. Each of these texts taught during the unit of work was developed through a concentrated encounter macrogenre according to the principles outlined in chapter 2 (section 2.4.3). The range of texts with which the children were involved varied from the simple one sentence/phrase per page of 'Rosie's Walk' by Pat Hutchins (Hutchins 1968) through to texts such as 'Little Red Hen' and 'Chicken Licken' which were traditional European folk tales. Texts such as these were chosen because of the clarity of their structure and the repetition of significant segments within their text. They were also considered for their ability to provide exposure to language resources appropriate to written as opposed to oral discourse (see chapter 1, section 1.5.2). As such, the texts provided an introduction to the generic structure and register of narratives of the kind children would encounter in mainstream schooling. Other simple factual texts such as 'How to scramble an egg' (ie. procedural text - Martin 1985) were also introduced.

The explanation text on chicken embryo development which was the focus of the macrogenre chosen for study here was the most complex written text that the children were required to jointly construct in the unit of work they were undertaking. The text was selected to provide a challenging context in which the children could be encouraged to employ language resources required to compose a written text that was significantly beyond their normal experiences in everyday language use. In the process of this interaction, it was also considered important to develop the children's understanding of orthographic conventions to do with writing and spelling as well as reading.

The relative position of each format transcript in the concentrated encounter macrogenre leading to the joint writing of an explanation to do with the development of a chicken embryo is given in the following Figure 3.1.
The above figure demonstrates the model for the release of teacher responsibility developed in chapter 2 (section 2.4.3.2). It indicates that the first set of two scaffolding formats was taken from an early stage in the lesson sequence. At this early stage, little common knowledge existed between teacher and children from which to engage in joint construction of oral explanation texts about the development of chicken embryos. The second set of two formats was taken from a concentrated encounter stage where considerable common knowledge existed for building the joint construction of oral explanations. The third set of two formats was taken from a point in the macrogenre where the teacher was negotiating the joint construction of a written explanation text. Each of the formats represented approximately 20 minutes of teaching time.

The relationship between the three sets of format texts was 'developmental' in the sense that earlier lessons were designed to contribute to the building of common knowledge that was carried forward and built upon in following lessons. As Figure 3.1 indicates, the first two format sets represented what were essentially different extremes of a scaffolding continuum to do with the development of the ability to articulate oral explanations of phenomena. The final two formats, however, represented an overall shift to a clearly different level of competence represented by physical engagement in the construction of a written explanation text.

Formats were conducted with small groups of children (Day 1-Formats 1&2=5 children; Day 19-Formats 3&4 = 4 children; Day 24-Formats 5&6 = 4 children). The same children were not necessarily in each format, although three children remained consistent participants across formats 3,4,5 and 6. The formats recorded were taken from the normal teaching program and children included were those present on the day in question. It was not considered necessary
to contrive to include the same children in each lesson as this would have disrupted the
teaching program. Moreover, the focus of the analysis is upon the manner in which the
teacher constructed her classroom discourse in the face of differing levels of inter-subjectivity
concerning task focus between herself and the children. Its purpose is descriptive, and, with
such a small sample of children, the benefit of staying with the exact same group was limited.

3.1.1.2 The children

The children involved in the lessons were (with the exception of one non-Aboriginal child)
Aboriginal children attending Traeger Park School and were involved in the curriculum program
from which this particular macrogenre was drawn. The ages of the children involved varied
from five to seven years. This reflected the fact that Aboriginal children did not always
commence school when they turned five and also that some of the children had attended other
schools with varying degrees of participation and success prior to entry into Traeger Park. In
the early grades also, the children were taught in 'composite' classes in which two grades
were blended together (eg. kindergarten/grade one composite). However, all of the children
were pre-literate in the sense that they were unable to read even the most basic of reading
texts. Moreover, the children possessed extremely limited knowledge of fundamental
orthographic understandings commonly referred to as 'concepts about print' (eg. Clay 1979;
Holdaway 1979). This is clearly evident during discussion of the analysis in chapters 4 and 5.

The non-Aboriginal child (Jenny) was from a low socioeconomic background and had been
assessed by the school guidance officer as requiring placement in a 'special school' on the
basis of a W.I.S.C. (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Wechsler 1974) intelligence
quotient of 75 and a prior history of difficulty in pre-school. However, she was being
'mainstreamed' in the normal classroom program with part time tutorial support (approximately
1 hr per day). Jenny appears in four of the Formats considered in the analysis. Her
appearance in the groups is coincidental as they were not ability graded. However, the
children in the study all represent children considered to be in the lower ability levels of their
class. Of incidental relevance to the earlier discussion of classroom interaction in chapter 2
(section 2.3.2) is the fact that one child who participates in the last four format transcripts
(Naomi - who had transferred to Traeger Park) is the same child whose marginalisation was
discussed by Malin (1989) in her study of a school in Adelaide. (Malin - personal
communication – ‘Naomi’ is given the same name in this study).

3.1.2 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ANALYSIS

The construction of an analytic model for this study is premised upon an assumption of the
potential inherent within a systematic and principled linguistic analysis of classroom
interaction. This direction was adopted in place of a more loosely descriptive or ethnographic
approach because it was considered important to move beyond what is typically seen as
discourse semantics - to establish a principled and finely detailed relationship between the
educational strategies adopted by the teacher and the language choices she employed at the level of lexico-grammar. This was important because, as discussion in chapter 1 (section 1.5.2) has proposed, different meanings are realised in differing patterns of language choice. Moreover, it was considered necessary to move beyond the identification of characteristic features of loosely conceived notions of 'teacher talk' to reveal the register choices appropriate for achieving a particular kind of educational outcome. This was important because the study was intended to provide advice to do with the building of productive task oriented educational discourse with Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms.

A further consideration underlying the analysis stems from the development of a concept of concentrated encounter in the Traeger Park program which was based upon notions of socially constructed learning. The analysis being pursued in this study, therefore, seeks to explore patterns of language choices by the teacher which realised a pedagogical discourse that attempted to employ principles of socially constructed learning (eg. Vygotsky 1978; Bruner, 1983, 1986; Wertsch 1990).

In the light of this orientation towards socially constructed learning, it is important to note that Vygotsky proposed that investigation of socially constructed learning should adopt a sociohistorical perspective (eg. Kozulin in Vygotsky 1986:xxviii; Vygotsky 1987, Wertsch 1985a). The need to adopt a sociohistorical approach to the investigation of classroom discourse is also recognised to varying degrees by a number of researchers currently working in the field (eg. Edwards & Mercer 1987; Gilbert 1992; Green & Dixon 1993; Frances Christie 1994). In order to relate to socio-historical issues to do with the variation in patterns of teacher/child interaction over time, sample formats were drawn from different stages of the concentrated encounter macrogenre. Within a sociohistorical perspective, it is important not to decide the function of strategies associated with teacher intervention on the basis of their realisation in a sociohistorically isolated instance. For example, what appears as an informing or questioning move on the part of the teacher at one point in time may, under certain sets of conditions, constitute a precondition for a seemingly 'spontaneous' initiation on the part of a child in interaction at a later stage of discourse evolution. Consequently, it can be argued that a particular interactive strategy cannot be adequately interpreted unless it is considered as a dynamic component of a sociohistorical system that occurs as the discourse develops over time. It will be proposed in the following discussion that a failure to consider this issue in much influential classroom interaction research has presented teachers with inadequate and misleading accounts of the manner in which particular interaction strategies might function to support learners.
3.2 APPROACHES AND ISSUES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE CHOICE IN CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

The following discussion will place an emphasis upon issues to do with the manner in which teachers should employ various types of lexico-grammatical choices in the pursuit of teaching/learning negotiation. The discussion will propose that the two issues identified above to do with, (a) establishing a principled, credible link between systems of language choice and the pedagogical processes of the teacher and, (b) the development of a suitable sociohistorical perspective, have provided difficulties for studies which have attempted to explore how teachers use linguistic resources in the classroom.

3.2.1 SYSTEMATIC OBSERVATION APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

The most influential of the very early research perspectives on the relation between the way teachers employed linguistic choice and their pedagogical practice (eg. Flanders 1970; Dunkin & Biddle 1974; Allen & Ryan 1969; Turney et al. 1973, 1975) was not a research tradition that specifically considered the nature of lexico-grammatical choice at all. However, even though the tradition did not employ any principled linguistic or sociolinguistic analysis, its research outcomes carried a message for teachers about how they should employ certain lexico-grammatical language choices that had a significant effect on teaching practice. Because of the effect the findings of 'systematic observation' methodology (as it was termed by Stubbs 1981) has had on curriculum models, it will be dealt with briefly here. The message from the results of this research to curriculum developers and classroom teachers was essentially that teachers talked for a significant proportion of the time and that teachers asked a high number of questions. Edwards and Mercer (1987) characterise the contribution of this kind of analysis in terms of the 'two-thirds rule'.

(a) for about two-thirds of the time someone is talking;
(b) about two-thirds of this talk is the teacher's;
(c) about two-thirds of the teacher's talk consists of lecturing or asking questions. 
(Edwards & Mercer 1987:25)

A major problem with the information obtained within this tradition was articulating the relationship between such a characterisation of classroom discourse and the effective realisation of pedagogical goals. This was difficult because the analysis did not directly address issues to do with the manner in which particular language choices were marshalled and organised to construct the discourse itself. Edwards and Mercer (1987) make this point with respect to the Flanders Interactional Analysis Category System (FIAC, Flanders 1970) as well as the ORACLE (Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation) project in Britain (Galton, Simon & Croll 1980).

One feels, therefore, that there was surprisingly little of the right kind of information available to researchers wishing to explain why teachers did one thing rather than another, or why certain patterns of classroom interaction seemed to work better in the teaching of some topics rather than others. (Edwards & Mercer 1987:25)
Willes (1983) and Frances Christie (1989) present a similar view of the inability of this type of research to deal with issues of how language choices are marshalled towards the attainment of educational goals. However, despite its inability to offer educationally satisfactory explanations for the phenomena it identified, this research did raise issues to do with the effect of teacher orchestration of classroom discourse. In particular, it raised issues to do with teacher control and the use of questions which have challenged researchers since. These issues were taken up by the research tradition sometimes described by some researchers (eg. Stubbs 1981, Edwards & Mercer 1987) as 'insightful observation'. This tradition of research will be discussed below and it will be proposed that it brought its own set of interpretation difficulties to the task of learning about classroom discourse.

3.2.2 INSIGHTFUL OBSERVATION APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

An alternative research tradition to systematic observation, labelled 'insightful observation' by Stubbs (1981) did set out to draw a firm link between how teachers utilise language resources and the realisation of pedagogical intent (eg. Britton 1970; Barnes 1971, 1976; Barnes, Britton & Rosen 1971; Rosen & Rosen 1973; Barnes & Todd 1981). Like the earlier systematic observation studies, this research has had a powerful influence upon the manner in which teachers set out to employ specific kinds of lexico-gramatical choice in the negotiation of learning in the classroom. The basic research and consequent pedagogical principles to do with the negotiation of learning exemplified by that research tradition still enjoy a strong influence on classroom discourse in Australian schools to this day through the work of curriculum researchers such as Cairney (1989) and Cambourne (1987, 1988). These writers have proposed models for curriculum programming which are similar in many respects to those typically associated with the American 'Whole Language' movement (eg. Goodman & Goodman 1990; Harste, Woodward & Burke 1984; Weaver 1990; Neuman 1985, Lindfors 1987, Graves 1983.).

The following discussion, however, will propose that the research methodology which underpins insightful observation is not sufficiently analytical to investigate questions concerning the relation between the language strategies of teachers and the realisation of pedagogical intent. Consequently, attempts by its proponents to resolve issues to do with the nature and consequences of teacher talk in the classroom need to be qualified by other more systematic and principled research.

Researchers in the tradition of 'insightful observation' worked directly from brief and selected excerpts transcribed from classroom lessons. Furthermore, the tradition pointedly rejected any attempt to subject classroom speech to formal or systematic analysis, especially linguistic analysis. This lack of attention to a systematic analysis of the texts it considered provided
grounds for criticism by other researchers (eg. Willes 1983; Stubbs & Robinson 1979; Edwards & Mercer 1987).

One problem was that this research did not deal with the whole of the text produced. Instead, lesson transcripts were 'mined' for suitable examples to present within a more general discussion of educational principles. Willes (1983) drew from the writing of Rosen and Rosen (1973) to comment upon their perspective on classroom research.

Their brief, to seek out and to study examples of good practice in classroom interaction, allowed them to collect 'lucky random trophies ... on raiding expeditions'. These trophies, examples of the spoken English that can occur in classrooms where gifted and imaginative teachers share the authors' conviction that children experience vividly the reality of learning in minimally constrained talk to a sympathetic listener, comprise, with commentary, the most interesting part of the report. (Willes 1983:35)

As Willes (1983:35) pointed out, researchers employing this methodology presented their data as an indication of what children can do and made no claim to the typicality or representativeness of the extract. The text extract was simply marked by the researcher as excellent - as a benchmark for which teachers were to strive.

Although researchers in the insightful observation tradition have claimed affinity with the work of Vygotsky (eg. Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:108, 136), none of their research sought to analyse text in a way that explained sociohistorical processes within the discourse which might have led to the production of text extracts deemed 'excellent'. Furthermore, the lack of a systematic approach to research data embodied in the insightful observation approach does not lend itself easily to exploiting such considerations. Consequently, the interpretation of the text extracts selected remained on a largely subjective level, driven largely by prior assumptions concerning the nature of an appropriate pedagogy.

The failure to consider how interaction between teachers and children might develop over time severely limits the adequacy of translations of this research into classroom practice. In particular, a major difficulty is that insightful observation methodology is unable to demonstrate the process through which the interpretations imposed upon the data might actually lead to the achievement of educational goals with children (such as Aboriginal children) who do not already possess a reasonable level of inter-subjectivity with the teacher concerning what counts as effective task focused learning behaviour.

One damaging effect of the tradition of insightful analysis research has been that it has resulted in certain language strategies being dismissed prematurely as inappropriate simply because they involve the teacher shaping to some degree the language responses of the children. Moreover, while one may even agree that a particular language strategy is unsuccessful in the instance that the analysis presents, this does not necessarily mean that the strategy is always inappropriate. Barnes (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986), for example, is highly critical of instances where teachers employ 'cued elicitation'. That is, where teachers
commence a statement with the expectation that the children will fill in the rest in an appropriate manner. He provides an example which contains a series of questions such as the following.

T: The reason why they want to have air cylinders is because...?
C: There isn't any air sir.
T: Good. There isn't much air.  (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:39)

However, even though the child provided the correct response in the extract above, the 'real' purpose of the strategy is constructed by Barnes as procedural control of pupils and little else.

Although requiring the children to fill the gaps in a structure controlled by the teacher may give them some familiarity with the rational processes involved, we can surmise that its value for advancing understanding is limited. It is a powerful device for classroom control: by such questions a teacher can hold the attention of a class and focus it upon the intended sequence of statements.  (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:39)

The above instance of the pedagogical potential of 'cued elicitation' is pursued only to the level of a 'teacher control device' and the strategy is constructed generally as outside the legitimate process of developing real understanding in classrooms. It is the language strategy, dealt with in isolation, that is assumed inherently 'wrong'. No account is taken of the circumstances (including the sociohistorical context) in which the strategy is employed yet the issue is clearly more complex than Barnes pre-supposes. For example, chapter 4 of this study (eg. section 4.3.2.2.2) illustrates how eliciting strategies of this kind can form a powerful resource in the negotiation of common knowledge between teacher and children.

Similarly, Barnes, rewriting his earlier contribution to Barnes, Britton and Rosen (1971) (ie. Barnes Britton & Torbe 1986) could find little that was educationally useful in intervention which leads children into employing the teacher's way of saying or expressing an issue. For example, teachers were warned that,

Teachers who try to deal directly with sequences of thought may involve themselves in other problems.  (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:35)

Barnes gave the following example of an interaction between a teacher seeking an explanation about 'how fish get oxygen' from a secondary school student (male).

In Lesson E (1966; biology; comprehensive school) the teacher was recapitulating material previously taught:

T How does the fish obtain oxygen from water? What happens...? Stephen?
P It allows the water to run over its gills and the ... er ... and extracts the oxygen.
T First of all think of it in stages, Stephen. Where does the water go first of all?
P Miss, it enters the mouth and then it passes over the gills taking out the oxygen. Then it comes out of the gills.
T comes out the back of the gill-cover...  (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:35)

In interpreting this interaction, Barnes was critical of the teacher's attempt to lead the child through a more systematic and precise statement of the phenomenon in question rather than allowing for the child's natural expression. He proposed that attempts to lead children through such sequences of reasoning were only appropriate when children were at the very point of discovering the understanding for themselves.
A carefully guided argument can be valuable when the pupil is on the point of comprehending the teacher's criterion, and can lead to the sudden jump of insight needed (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:35)

At that point he proposed that ‘open’ questions should be employed. At the same time he observed that instances where such ‘a flash of insight’ (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986:35) occurs were exceedingly rare in his data and could cite only one example. While Barnes may be correct in claiming that leading children through a teacher directed sequence may render the teacher's educational goals invisible and may lead to ritual response on the part of the children concerned, other possible interpretations identify dimensions of the issue which prove the situation once again to be less simple than Barnes proposed. Wells (1993), for example, writing from an analysis that pays attention to the sociohistorical context of a similar questioning interaction, presented a very different interpretation of a similar kind of interaction.

Wells (1993) examined a sequence of lessons on the measurement of time. Taken out of its sociohistorical context as short excerpts in the manner of insightful observation methodology, much of the dialogue presented by Wells could be portrayed through the theoretical position presumed by Barnes for the teacher questioning strategies considered above. For example, the following extract is taken from a larger section of discourse presented by Wells.

T: OK. why must we control our variables?
Te: Because if we don't, the time won't be accurate and so you won't get the correct timing
T: Not so much the time is not accurate, what is not accurate?
Bi: It's not a fair test.
T: It's not a fair test. A fair test.  (Wells 1993:26)

This brief interaction contains the kind of teacher request for specification of terminology along with the joint construction of statements that were dismissed as superficial by Barnes in the two earlier quotations from Barnes (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986) given above. Wells, however, argued that in the lesson sequence he was exploring, such an interaction segment could not be interpreted merely as the development of superficial knowledge.

There is no doubt that, in these exchanges the teacher knows what information she is trying to elicit. She had, after all, been present during the experiments and discussed what they were doing with each group. However, this is not a quiz. She is not testing the students to see whether they can give the correct answer. Rather the purpose of is to establish an agreed account of what they did that will serve as an instantiation of the practice of controlling independent variables to ensure that it is a fair test.  (Wells 1993:27)

The potential conflict between the kind of child centred interpretation proposed by insightful observation researchers such as Barnes, Britton & Torbe (1986) and the more socially oriented perspective adopted by researchers working from a Vygotskian perspective has been raised by Cazden (1986:441). It is proposed here that any resolution of such issues requires recourse to an analytic perspective which takes into account socio-historical factors in the development of intersubjectivity between teachers and their children.

Other recent research into classroom discourse which has attempted in some way to account for sociohistorical processes (eg. Edwards & Mercer 1987; Wells 1993 and Frances Christie
1994) indicates also that the picture is not as simple as that which is assumed in studies based upon 'insightful observation' methodology. In fact, Edwards and Mercer (1987) illustrate clearly how the assumption of principles concerning the kind of learning context where teachers promote 'exploratory talk' with minimal teacher intervention can quite easily lead to the construction of a classroom interaction context where the learning goals and strategies presumed by the teacher are equally invisible to the learners. Furthermore, the above research indicates that many of the strategies discarded as of marginal or no educational worth by Barnes, Britton and Torbe (1986) can potentially play important roles in the development of classroom discourse. If this is so, it is important that they are not dismissed from teachers' repertoires prematurely because such an omission has the potential to distort severely effective classroom discourse. In particular, it is of considerable importance for teachers to determine specific features of the contexts and the circumstances under which strategies involving teacher intervention function in a sociohistorical sense.

3.2.3 EARLY LINGUISTIC APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

Concerns about difficulties inherent in the insightful observation perspective, particularly the level of subjectivity required for its analysis led to a focus upon more principled and systematic linguistic approaches to classroom discourse. However, in their attempts to establish this analytic rigour, the methodology employed by early systematic approaches to linguistic analysis lost contact with the most useful issue that was raised through insightful observation research. Namely, many failed, or did not choose, to deal with issues to do with identifying the manner in which teachers might marshal language choice in the pursuit of various educational goals. The following section will concentrate upon studies which attempted to provide more systematic and linguistically principled approaches to classroom discourse.

One highly influential research tradition to 'insightful observation' which attempted a more systematic and linguistically principled approach to classroom discourse is represented in the work of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Sinclair and Brazil (1982). Aspects of this analytic model were taken up also in the work of Stubbs (1981, 1983), Willes (1983) and Mehan (1979). Sinclair et al. proposed that 'teacher talk' could be analysed within a hierarchically organised model of discourse structure. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) proposed that their structure for analysing discourse represented a largely semantic level that lay 'between the level of grammar and non-linguistic organisation'. They give an outline of this relationship in Figure 3.2 below.
One important feature of this model is that, in contrast to the limited selection process involved in insightful observation approaches, Sinclair and Coulthard's model provided for the consideration of whole discourse texts. Research which has drawn on this model has been able to demonstrate that classroom discourse is highly structured and that participating in schooling involves a process through which children are socialised into participation within such highly structured contexts (eg. Stubbs 1981; Willes 1983; Mehan 1979).

One area of Sinclair and Coulthard's model that has attracted considerable attention in educational literature has been the identification of characteristic patterns of teacher/child interaction within the level of Exchange that have been referred to as IRF (Initiation^ Response^ Follow-up - Sinclair and Coulthard) or IRE (Initiation^ Response^ Evaluation - Mehan 1979) structures (where ^= followed by). Sinclair and Brazil (1982) give the following example to illustrate a 'sequence' that is comprised of a related set of 'exchanges'.

**Exchange 1**
- **T:** What kind of word is always?  
- **P:** An adverb.  
- **T:** Good  

**Exchange 2**
- **T:** And wonderful?  
- **P:** An adjective.  
- **T:** Good  

**Exchange 3**
- **T:** And tranquillity?  
- **P:** Noun.  
- **T:** Good. So you should be able to work out the structure of that phrase now.

The above sequence consists of three exchanges each of which is structured according to the IRF pattern identified by these authors and generally considered (eg Cazden 1986, 1988) to constitute a significant feature in much of classroom discourse. Malcolm (1982, 1987, 1991), moreover, has demonstrated that participation in IRF structures as they are typically orchestrated by teachers is problematic for Aboriginal learners (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.3).
However, despite the contribution of such insights, what has emerged from the tradition of research dominated by this model is essentially the establishment and investigation of a generalised linguistic system characterised as 'teacher talk'. Within such a tradition, the focus of investigation is largely to identify 'features' of the teacher talk register. Thus, while communicative 'function' associated with these features may be analysed, the analysis is limited by its generality in the extent to which it can describe how these features might be marshalled and deployed to achieve specific educational goals within particular contexts of situation in classroom interaction.

Consequently, the researchers' ability to provide specific direction about how teachers should engage in interaction with children was limited. Sinclair and Brazil (1982), for example, provide observations such as the following concerning teacher role in the classroom.

> The teacher can change from one type of talk to another without warning, and many teachers make it a point of their style to vary the talk so that the pupils do not spend long periods in the rather passive listening role, where not even acknowledgment is demanded. Indeed, teachers often ask questions to check whether their information has been received efficiently. So we can say that one function of discourse in the classroom is the giving of information by the teacher. Since the overall purpose is a teaching learning one, the teacher has a permanent right to speak and the pupils do not signal their acknowledgments verbally. (Sinclair & Brazil 1982:57)

From the perspective of an educator seeking information about how to construct teaching practice, information such as this provides a very generalised picture of an observed language process. It barely touches upon the specifics and dynamics involved in making educational discourse work to achieve learning goals.

Mehan (1978, 1979), while he was concerned with more broadly defined educational issues than Sinclair et al., built his systematic analysis of language structure, however, primarily within the level that Sinclair et al. define as Discourse. Cazden (1988:31-41) provides an analysis that is constructed from Mehan's (1979) model which is very similar to that employed by Willes (1983) whose analysis draws heavily upon that of Sinclair et al. Cazden (1988) proposes that analyses which abstract classroom discourse in this way as components of a generalised teacher talk register do have some benefits.

> When the words in which the pattern has been enacted in any one instance have been stripped away, it is much easier not only to understand classroom lessons but also to consider similarities between this speech event and others. (Cazden 1988:40)

She goes on to point out that the abstracted IRE pattern identified in classroom discourse can be paralleled to a similar structure identified by Ninio and Bruner (1978) in parent child picture book reading interactions before school (the structure of these interactions was discussed in chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1).

> With the mother’s attentional vocative replacing the teacher’s turn allocation procedures, the remaining parts of the book-reading dialogue fit the IRE sequence of lessons. Moreover, the initiations in both events are typically questions to which the adult asker knows the answer. (Cazden 1988:40)
However, while the drawing of such parallels may point to an educational relevance, the link is itself circumstantial and essentially correlational. The problem for the educator is, once again, how to move beyond such an observation in order to understand the role such structures can potentially play in the moment by moment decision making involved in staging interaction towards achieving educational goals. That is, with respect to the above observation by Cazden (1988), upon what principles and circumstances can the classroom IRE sequence be constructed as a scaffolding event equivalent to 'book-reading dialogue'?

Concern with difficulties in interpreting the educational relevance of Sinclair et al.'s research model to classroom practice can be found in the work of Edwards and Mercer (1987) who point out that Sinclair and Coulthard's motivation in developing their model of classroom discourse was primarily linguistic rather than educational. Edwards and Mercer (1987) acknowledge that useful understandings about classroom discourse have been obtained from research based upon Sinclair and Coulthard's model. However, in concert with earlier discussion in this section, they argue that the model has difficulty supplying information that is able to contribute actively to applied educational decisions in the classroom.

Because it was devised to reveal linguistic structures, not educational or cognitive processes, it deals most explicitly with the form of what is said, rather than with its content. So those matters identified by Stubbs as important - the spoken presentation of curriculum content as 'bits of knowledge', items of knowledge' or 'topics' - actually lie outside the domain of discourse analysis and its underlying theory. For psychologists interested in cognitive and educational processes, and particularly those whose research incorporates a developmental perspective, it is arguably discourse which 'scratches the surface'. (Edwards & Mercer 1987:10)

Edwards and Mercer (1987) propose that Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) model is unable to achieve these ends because in building the coding system for analysis, it loses contact with the motivation underlying individual language choices. In doing so, Edwards and Mercer argue that it is the reduction of the analysis to concentrate on 'form' that can be considered to be 'scratching the surface'. However, it is important to point out that 'form' as it was applied within analyses derived from the Sinclair et al. model was confined largely to the level that they refer to as discourse. There was, in effect, very little consideration of interaction strategies at the level of grammar. Willes (1983), for example, does not carry out a principled analysis of grammatical choices and moves directly between an analysis at the discourse level of 'Act' and raw speech data. Thus, even as an example of the linguistic analysis of classroom discourse, the model proposed by Sinclair et al. has proved to be limited with regard to its ability to contribute at the level of lexico-grammatical choice. In fact, Frances Christie (1989) has proposed that it is the model's separation of the lexico-grammar from meaning that has made it difficult for researchers to engage other than incidentally with the lexico-grammar. Furthermore, it is proposed that it is the failure to deal with actual language choices in a functional manner that has limited the ability of the model to explore manner in which educational goals may achieved in classroom discourse.
One advantage of ‘insightful observation’ (discussed in section 3.2.2) was that its proponents did offer specific advice to teachers about how to engage in classroom discourse in order to promote learning. It could do this because the analysis embodied a theory of learning through which the language data considered was interpreted. However, ‘insightful observation’ methodology was not capable of documenting an adequate and verifiable description of the learning process assumed by the underlying theory. In particular, ‘insightful observation’ as it was implemented could not provide any linguistic insight into a central question posed for this analysis. That is, it could not employ its language data to demonstrate the process through which children might ‘learn how to learn’ within classroom discourse.

On the other hand, the purely linguistic approach adopted by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) did provide a more principled and systematic analysis of language data. However, this model was limited in terms of the practical direction it could give about how teachers should engage in classroom discourse. The model could not do this because of its inability to achieve an acceptable nexus between the model of linguistic analysis and educational or psychological theories of teaching and learning.

3.2.4 CURRENT APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

The inadequacy of the structured linguistic approach to classroom discourse exemplified by Sinclair et al. has prompted researchers such as Edwards and Mercer (1987) to resolve their dilemma by rejecting both systematic linguistic interpretation of their data and ‘insightful observation’ as it was employed by analysts such as Barnes (Barnes, Britton & Torbe 1986). Instead, Edwards and Mercer engaged in what was essentially an educationally driven analysis that drew on more substantial lesson transcript segments as a basis for discussion. To avoid the pitfalls inherent in earlier ‘insightful observation’ approaches they employed a more systematic approach to interpreting teaching/learning activity across substantial sections of lesson transcripts. Moreover, from a sociohistorical perspective, they did consider to a certain extent the manner in which common knowledge was built up over time in the lessons they studied.

However, Edwards and Mercer’s interest was centred upon providing an informal account of the semantic processes through which meanings and understandings came to be shared between teacher and children. They provided no systematic linguistic analysis of the nature of the language choices made within classroom discourse nor did they attempt to relate language choices (other than incidentally) to meanings realised within the discourse.

In our treatment of classroom discourse in later chapters, linguistic notions such as given and new information, and of IRF sequences in the flow of talk, have influenced our analyses. But we have made no attempt to present the data systematically in terms of these sorts of features. We are interested more in the relations between discourse and the sharing of knowledge than in linguistic devices and structures. (Edwards & Mercer 1987:14)
Quite understandably, Edwards and Mercer (1987) took this course because they considered that linguistic approaches had reached the limit of what they could offer to classroom teachers. In making the decision to reject systematic consideration of linguistic structure in their analysis, Mercer and Edwards moved their analysis towards a more broadly focused research tradition originating in the work of ethnography and sociolinguistics that has been gathering strength since work in the early seventies (e.g. Green 1983; Bloome 1985; Mehan 1978; Cazden, John & Hymes 1972; Brice Heath 1983, Cazden 1986, Stubbs & Delamont 1976). The work of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group (see Green & Dixon 1993), for example, represents recent analysis of classroom interaction within this perspective. However, while the validity of adopting a broadly based ethnographic/sociolinguistic approach to classroom discourse is eminently defensible, the decision by Edwards and Mercer (1987) to reject consideration of a systematic analysis at the level of lexico-grammar as pointless is perhaps premature. Given that classroom discourse is, at the present time, still poorly understood and that the offerings from research for classroom teachers are so limited, this exclusion of an important aspect of linguistic insight is a cause for concern. A more cautious position would be to look for circumstances where there existed a level of compatibility and even overlap between approaches characterised as ethnographic and sociolinguistic and approaches which provided a systematic consideration of language choice at the level of lexico-grammar.

Despite the reservations of Edwards and Mercer (1987), there is, in fact, evidence from some recent research that it may be feasible to cross discipline boundaries in this regard. One common feature of the research methodology which is developing draws a distinction between language choices which realise what might be termed the instructional content of classroom discourse and the language choices employed to operationalise teaching and learning activity. Lemke (1985, 1990) whose notions of discourse as an interaction between 'activity structures' and 'thematic systems' and Frances Christie (1989, 1990, 1994) who distinguishes between the operation of 'regulative and instructional registers' within classroom discourse have made significant contributions to understanding the contribution of lexico-grammatical choices to the building of meaning within classroom discourse. Hammond (1995) has also recently contributed to this perspective and draws a distinction between language choices to do with 'primary and secondary fields' within pedagogic discourse. Primarily, the above researchers view language choices at the level of lexico-grammar as elements which potentially contribute to interaction between educationally functional language sub-systems or registers within classroom discourse. This approach allows for a dynamic interpretation of the negotiation process that operates between teacher and children. Notably, also, it is significant that the research of these writers draws heavily upon Halliday's (1985b, 1994) systemic functional grammar which provides for a functional goal-directed analysis of lexico-grammatical choices.
The ability of this grammar to draw relations between semantics and lexico-grammar is also notable in this regard (this is explained in more detail later in section 3.3.3).

An illustration of the potential for complementarity between systematic linguistic research and the less linguistically systematic approach of much ethnographic/sociolinguistic research can be found, for example, in the work of Brilliant-Mills (1993) writing from the perspective of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group. While Brilliant-Mills (1993) does not employ a systematic approach to linguistic analysis, she does draw upon Lemke's notion of activity structure to identify segments in a teacher's instructional discourse which she calls 'time indicators', for example, come up with an estimate, share estimates, gather more information, work together to calculate. She proposes that, in the text she is exploring, the development across the transcript of these segments within the teacher's speech shows,

...that the topic of negotiation and how to negotiate, act, interact and, therefore, engage in mathematics, recurs. Each segment introduces new information and creates a tie to earlier information. In this way, the teacher ties past and future actions and knowledge together (Edwards & Mercer, 1987) to build an intertextual framework for action. (Brilliant-Mills 1993:320)

Brilliant-Mills offers no systematic linguistic basis for her choice of particular lexico-grammatical elements to highlight within the text she considered. However, her concern for the manner in which particular kinds of language choices operate functionally within the discourse to construct learning in various ways (see also Lin, 1994) points to a need within sociologically and psychologically based ethnographic paradigms for the kind of contribution more systematic approaches to the analysis of language choice might make to the field of classroom discourse.

The approach to the analysis of classroom discourse adopted in this study is based upon the analytic model adopted by Frances Christie (1989, 1994). While there is considerable common ground between the orientations to analysis taken by Christie, Lemke and Hammond, there is also a degree of difference particularly in terms of the sets of language choice that each researcher includes in the respective operational systems they identify within classroom discourse (eg regulative & instructional registers - Christie (1994); activity structures & thematic systems - Lemke (1985); first & second order registers - Hammond (1995)). It is useful to note that Christie has also employed the terms 'first and second order registers' in her earlier work (eg. Christie 1989, 1991a). However, Christie’s interpretation of these terms differs from that of Hammond and is synonomous with Christie's later notion of regulative and instructional registers which she has adopted in their place in order to acknowledge the influence of Bernstein (1986, 1996).

Lemke (1985, 1990) who worked with secondary science students distinguished an 'activity structure' to do with the ongoing staging of teaching-learning behaviours and a 'thematic system' to do with the themes or 'content' taught. There is a relationship between these two systems and Christie’s notion of regulative and instructional registers. However, for the
purposes of this study, Lemkie’s system is less delicate because it does not draw links between the use of specific grammatical choices and the realisation of educational intent. A further point is that Lemke’s notion of activity structure concentrates largely on defining teacher activity in terms of control issues and the concept is not well tuned to consideration of how teacher behaviour within activity structures might work to promote understandings about how to learn. These issues are considered via inspection of the manner of presentation of ‘content’ within thematic systems.

Hammond (1995), whose study dealt with primary (grade 3) school children and focused on a selective approach to a large corpus of data, discarded consideration of language choices to do with behavioural control and directing activity of the kind Lemke selects as the fundamental constituent of activity structures. Hammond’s primary field was instead confined to language choices to do with what she called ‘doing literacy’, a focus for language choice that Lemke included in the notion of thematic system.

...primary field includes all language that instructs students about the nature of literacy, about how to undertake reading and writing activities, that comments on written texts or points to features of written texts whether they be students' texts or published books, and that directs students towards ways of dealing with and valuing written text. (Hammond 1995:93)

The other field within classroom discourse defined by Hammond was termed the 'secondary field'. This field was concerned with what can be referred to as the 'content' or topic of the discourse.

Frances Christie (1989, 1994) has ranged in her research between early childhood and upper primary school settings. Unlike Hammond, who employed a sampling technique, Christie has concentrated her research upon more intensive analysis of each individual text. Christie’s analytic approach is focused particularly upon the description of the manner in which the two registers she identified interact. This ability to focus on interaction (i.e. ‘convergence’ as Christie terms the process), allows for an appreciation of the regulative register as more than a vehicle for directing procedural control or learning activity. Thus, her analysis offers, in its notion of a regulative register through which the instructional discourse is ‘projected’, a particularly sensitive and comprehensive framework for viewing the regulative register as an explicit means of constructing and shaping explicitly (projecting) the academic content (instructional register). From this perspective the regulative register becomes far more than a means of operationalising learning behaviour in its narrow sense of directing activity. Christie’s notion of regulative register includes the operationalisation of procedural behaviour, learning activity and the cognitive aspects of learning processes and strategies (refer chapter 2, section 2.2.2). It is, broader in its chosen scope and more applicable to the needs of this study than both Lemke’s notion of activity structure and Hammond’s first order register.

The decision to employ Christie’s analytic model in this study was made on two grounds. The first concern had to do with the requirement for an intensive analysis of teacher interaction
3.3 DETAILS OF THE ANALYSIS EMPLOYED IN THIS STUDY

Christie draws upon three major sources in the construction of her analytic model which she claims allow her to employ a high level of delicacy in the description of language choices. Moreover, she proposes that drawing on these sources facilitates a more effective nexus between educational/psychological learning theory and linguistic analysis. The three major sources underlying Christie's model of analysis are Martin's (1984) concept of genre, Halliday's (1994) systemic functional grammar and Bernstein's (1986) articulation of the role of 'regulative' and 'instructional' discourses in the construction of pedagogic discourse (discussed in chapter 2, section 2.2.2). Each of these sources will be examined below with particular reference to the role they play in Christie's approach to classroom discourse (sections 3.3.1, 3.3.3 and 3.3.5). Following each of these sections, a further section will expand the discussion to cover specific details of the analysis employed in this study (sections 3.3.2, 3.3.4 and 3.3.6).

3.3.1 THE ROLE OF MARTIN'S CONCEPT OF GENRE IN CHRISTIE'S APPROACH TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

An important feature of Christie's approach to the analysis of classroom discourse is revealed through her concepts of 'curriculum genre' and 'curriculum macrogenre'. These concepts involve the application and extension of Martin's (eg Martin 1992, Martin & Rothery 1980, 1981) notion of genre to the analysis of classroom discourse. Martin proposed the term genre to identify culturally established language routines through which language is organised in stages to achieve various social goals. Eggins (1994:33-36) describes genre as a more abstract concept than register in the sense that it is possible to abstract and identify features of genres without knowing the specific register details appropriate to 'context of situation'. Genre can be said to function at the level of 'context of culture', while register deals with the relation between language choices and context of situation. The relationship between individual language choices, register and genre is usually represented in the following manner.
This figure can be read to indicate that genres are ultimately realised through choices in register which in turn are realised in the linguistic system. Christie (1989a) describes the nature of the relationship represented in Figure 3.3 above as 'parasitic'.

Genre, register and language are each held to constitute semiotic systems operating on different communication planes. In the bottom right hand corner lies language itself, functioning as a meaning system. Above it, and standing in a parasitic relationship to language lies register. It is parasitic because it must select from language in order to realise its meanings, since it has no form of expression of its own. Similarly, genre is said to stand in parasitic relationship to register, in that it finds its expression through register, which, as we have just noted, is said in turn to find expression through language. Thus genre and register are said to ‘stack up’ in relation to language, accounting for the manner in which they are represented in the model. (Christie 1989a:3)

Thus, a text may carry a particular kind of schematic structure and other identifying language features that mark it as an example of an established genre within a culture. However, the actual text produced will simultaneously draw upon a specific set of language choices at the level of register that tie it to a particular context of situation. Consequently, an important feature of the above concept of genre is that there is no disjuncture between the structures identified as constituents of the genre and the language choices that are made at the level of register and language.

A further feature of genres that is relevant to the discussion here is that, in concert with the functional definition of language elements within Halliday's lexico-grammar, constituent elements which make up the schematic structure of genres are defined in functional terms. That is, constituents are defined according to the functional role they play in assisting the text to achieve its communicative purpose rather than simply filling formal categorical roles identified within the structure of the grammar without recourse to communicative purpose. Eggins (1994) provides a comparison example to demonstrate the difference between the two perspectives.

In discussing linguistic models of classroom discourse analysis such as that of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Christie argues that a major deficiency in their construction is that they carry no notion of purposeful organisation towards the realisation of classroom discourse as goal focused social practice. Consequently, they do not provide a suitable basis for the effective
Rationale and Model for the Analysis of Discourse

application of functional labelling. This failure to employ functional labelling of constituents, in turn, means that it is not possible to compare different generic structures effectively because a suitable level of delicacy (or differentiation) is not available within the representation that is achieved.

Christie's argument can be illustrated by reference to the kind of lesson structure analysis that is the outcome of models such as that of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) or even that of Mehan (1979) which carries some similarities in this regard.

\[\text{Figure 3.5} \]
\[\text{The structure of classroom lessons (from Mehan 1979:73-74) (Cited in Cazden 1988:39)}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Phase</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of sequence</td>
<td>Directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of sequences</td>
<td>I-R-E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>T-S-T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: T = teacher; S = student; I-R-E = initiation-reply-evaluation sequence; (E) = evaluation optional in informative sequence.

While the above structure does contain a level of progression, moving through a beginning, middle and end sequence, Christie argues that such terms are essentially categorical and formal. She considers that they cannot effectively exploit the potential inherent in a functional approach to the constituent analysis of curriculum genres.

For Christie, curriculum genres occur as patterns of language choices arising out of the application of particular educational assumptions and methodology. They are, in turn, marshalled in characteristic ways toward the achievement of educational goals. This 'goal focus' allows for differentiation of constituents in functional terms. For example, Christie (1989) identified one particular generic structure for 'writing lessons' that she encountered in her study of early primary classrooms. She found that the teachers she studied all involved the children in a period of 'Task Orientation' in which they engaged in some kind of discussion/exploration of the topic field about which they expected their children to write. This more loosely focused orientation stage was followed just prior to writing activity by an attempt on the part of the teacher to reframe the discussion more precisely in terms of the specific requirements of the writing task. This second stage of the constituent structure she called 'Task Specification'. Following this Task Specification stage, the teacher would then typically give specific instructions for the task in order to direct the children into the writing activity. This final stage which included the actual writing activity of the teacher, Christie called 'Task'. Christie represented this particular 'curriculum genre' via the following notation.
It should be noted in passing here that even though Christie’s ‘writing curriculum genre’ does carry a certain level of intuitive generality for anyone familiar with the operation of Australian schools, she did not propose that it accounted exhaustively for all classroom writing lessons. The curriculum genre she identified represented one particular generic approach to the setting of writing lessons that was characteristic of teachers working within the educational culture she studied. In her analysis, Christie was able to show that stages within the genre were realised through specific patterns of language choices at the level of register.

A further point to note with regard to Christie’s analysis is that the curriculum genre she identified in the early childhood classrooms she studied arose as a result of a teaching model which sought to complete educational activity as a discrete process that could be contained within the time frame of a single lesson time period. However, it is possible and eminently desirable that the realisation of educational goals should not be considered only within the frame provided by a single lesson. This extended approach to educational planning is particularly necessary if the teacher takes a conscious and explicit concern with the development of classroom learning as a sociohistorical process through which common knowledge is constructed between teacher and children over time. One option for a teacher working from such a perspective would be to program for sequences of lessons which typically employed number of curriculum genres. These sequences would be staged in a manner that built development towards the attainment of specific learning goals as the culmination of an educational process which occurred over time. Christie (eg. Christie 1994) employs the term ‘macrogenre’ to refer to such programming constructs.

For example, one curriculum macrogenre in upper primary science teaching described by Christie (1994) was composed of a series of curriculum genres which were identified over time as,

Curriculum Initiation ^ Curriculum Collaboration ^ Curriculum Closure

Each of these curriculum genres could comprise an individual lesson or a number of lessons which specified a functional stage within a sequence of lessons aimed at preparing the children to write procedural and explanation texts in science (as was the case of the science lessons studied by Christie (1994)).

To identify functional levels of staging below that of curriculum genre Christie employed the term ‘element’. An ‘element of schematic structure’ was defined by Christie (1994) as,

An element of schematic or generic structure has significance as one of the functional steps in which goals of a given genre are achieved. It is identifiable because of the various sets of choices both with respect to the overall structure of the element and with respect to the register variables of field, tenor and mode through which that element is constructed: both sets of choices are in turn realised through linguistic choices. (Christie 1994:14-15)
Thus, in the curriculum genre identified by Christie (1989) in early primary writing classes (see above), the obligatory generic structure was seen to be composed of the 'elements', Task Orientation-(TO), Task Specification-(TS) and Task-(T).

The next (lower) level of generic structure identified by Christie is that of 'phase'. Phases occur as components of elements and Christie proposes that the notion of phase applies to functionally relevant shifts towards the attainment of educational goals within elements.

A phase within such an element of schematic structure occurs whenever that element can be shown to have steps within it, all of them functionally relevant to the achievement of the goals of the element. (Christie 1994:15)

As is the case with elements, shifts within the discourse to new phases are realised by shifts in linguistic choices which realise some or all of the contextual dimensions of field, tenor and mode.

3.3.2 APPLICATION OF THE CHRISTIE'S NOTION OF MACROGENRE TO THIS STUDY

The representation of generic structure for the macrogenre under study quite naturally differs from that proposed by Christie (1994) in her description of the curriculum macrogenre she studied on that occasion. However, the generic description adopted does accord generally with the principles underlying her approach. In order to explain the description of generic structure employed here it is useful to reconsider briefly some aspects of the manner in which concentrated encounter macrogenres of the kind chosen for analysis in this study were conceived and programmed.

Essentially, what occurred in the development and programming of a concentrated encounter was that the 'orientation' or 'preparation' component for completing a given learning task was extended through the development of scaffolding routines (formats) that could be repeated over time in a manner that allowed for a reasonable level of consistency concerning linguistic demands. These recursions did not necessarily have to consist of the same format repeated verbatim each time but there had to exist a basic core of interaction that was purposefully related to performance within the eventual task which the teacher and children could revisit. This presumed a cumulative development of common knowledge in text negotiation in each format recursion as the macrogenre progressed. This process can be represented as,

\[ \text{first format (a) } \wedge \text{ second format (a + d) } \wedge \text{ third format (a + dx) } \ldots \text{ final format (r)} \]

where:
- \( a \) = initial competence
- \( d \) = increase in inter-subjective competence
- \( x \) = incremental factor
- \( r \) = inter-subjective control of discourse
- \( \wedge \) = followed by

In the macrogenre under study here (ie. developing an explanation text about chicken embryos), each format provided the opportunity for the teacher and children to engage in the joint negotiation of an appropriate explanation text. The following kinds of activities to do with
chicken embryos illustrate a typical range of classroom activities that could be developed as
formats or format variations recurring over time.

- Work with a shared reading text(s) to do with the development of a chicken
- Discuss and compare various different kinds of embryos and various life cycles (from different
  sources - eg. books, health workers etc).
- Set up an incubator in the class to hatch your own chickens.
- Talk through picture sequences to do with the embryo development.
- Observe and discuss unfolding of events in incubator and engage in explanations about how an
  incubator works. (eg. explain and teach other children, visitors, talk to experts etc.)
- Visit a chicken hatchery- take photos of processes to be explained (eg. incubators etc.) and build
discussion formats around them.
- Watch and discuss videos of the process.
- Build a 'number line' on the wall with the children and locate appropriate times where significant
developments occur - mark these with pictures of development.
- Engage in observation experiments with eggs. Soak an egg in vinegar to dissolve the shell and
  reveal the water sac membrane. Candle fertile eggs as they develop - break an egg and keep the
  yolk intact - Hard boil an egg and dissect it to reveal its inner structure - examine the contents of
  other eggs, eg. duck, quail, turkey.
- Make paper mache models of egg cross sections with the children to show different stages of
development (these need only big enough for a group to see and discuss). Stick illustrations of
  developmental stages on the inside of each egg. Use these in discussion activities in which children
  predict with the teacher ‘what comes next’ when egg is turned face down, then, as discussion
  progresses, turn eggs over to find the next one in the sequence. When game is finished jointly
  construct the whole text orally with the children.

Activities such as these typically provided for scaffolding formats that could be exploited as
contexts for generation of explanations that embodied language resources to do with the
construction of an explanation about the development of an embryo into a hatched chicken. In
the first instance, each scaffolding format comprised a programming event with a similar
function to the element Christie (1989) identified as a Task Orientation aimed at preparing to
assist the children to undertake the scheduled writing task. The major difference in the case
of the curriculum planning model studied here is that the whole format functioned as a TO
element in the macrogenre. Thus it is possible to refer to the notion of Task Orientation
format. Moreover, individual Task Orientation formats recurred over time such that the Task
Orientation of the whole macrogenre (ie. Macrogenic Task Orientation) was made up of a
number of individual TO lessons. This can be represented in the following figure

![Figure 3.6](image)

This figure represents the Task Orientation of the macrogenre as a sequence of Task
 Orientations with each TO functioning at the level of lesson (ie. curriculum genre). The
Macrogenic Task which involved the joint negotiation of a written explanation text between
the teacher and children was also made up of a series of lesson level component structures
which recurred as the children and teacher progressed through the writing task. Thus, each
day at this stage of the macrogenre, the teacher would engage the children in a Task
Specification activity in which they reviewed what they had written to date and set a focus for
the continuation of the writing activity. This was followed by a Task component in which the actual writing was negotiated.

The effect of this process was similar to that of spreading Christie’s single lesson elements (TO^T^S^T) across the whole of a macrogenre. However, each element of the macrogenre reoccurred until the children had assumed sufficient control of task principles to move easily onto the next element in the sequence.

The following Figure 3.7 illustrates the relation between the macrogeneric structure for the concentrated encounter under study and the language samples considered in this analysis.

![Figure 3.7](image)

Relation of texts analysed in this study to the overall macrogeneric structure MTO -> MT

(ie. Macrogeneric Task Orientation ^ Macrogeneric Task)

The analysis pursued in chapter 4 which concentrates upon the Task Orientation for the macrogenre (MTO) samples two early Task Orientation formats which are labelled ETO1 and ETO2 (ETO = Early Task Orientation). The analysis in chapter 4 also discusses samples taken from what have been termed Late Task Orientation Formats (LTO1 & LTO2). The analysis reported in chapter 5 focuses upon one Task Specification / Task format sequence (TS^T) taken from the Task component of the macrogenre (MT).

### 3.3.3 THE ROLE OF HALLIDAY’S SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR IN CHRISTIE’S APPROACH TO CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

In earlier discussion within this study (chapter 2, section 2.2.3), it was proposed that Halliday’s (1985b, 1994) systemic functional grammar allows for considerable delicacy in the analysis of the differences which exist between oral and written language. This is because Halliday, following in the tradition of Firth (1935), does not draw a distinction between semantics and grammar. Instead, Halliday’s grammar seeks specifically to systematise the relationship between language and meaning. Halliday’s model relates context of situation (specified through the dimensions of field, tenor and mode) to three corresponding semantic metafunctions (identified as the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions). These three metafunctions are, in turn, realised through specific sets of language choices in the
It is important to note that the term 'realised' indicates that a fundamentally important relationship exists between lexico-grammatical choices and the systems of meaning that are constructed through recourse to those lexico-grammatical choices. The claim is that meaning is constructed and not merely represented in discourse. This recognition of the importance of the relationship between choices in the lexico-grammar and semantics is fundamental to Halliday's model.

Unsworth (1993) provides a useful graphic representation of Halliday's tri-stratal model of language which concentrates specifically on representing the role of semantics in providing what he terms the 'interface' between the social system and the grammatical system. This model is given below.

Unsworth describes the relationships involved in the following terms.

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)

Halliday's model of language, therefore, provides 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 classroom discourse. This is an area of difficulty identified in more formal approaches fashioned after the model proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

As earlier discussion has pointed out, Christie (1989) is critical of the failure of the Sinclair and Coulthard model to achieve a satisfactory nexus between 'semantics' and 'linguistics'. She argues that Halliday's (1985b) systemic functional grammar provides a more effective base for analysing classroom discourse because it does not draw such a distinction. She says of her own study,

...those approaches which dissociate grammar or language on one hand, and semantics or meaning on the other, are in the logico-grammatical tradition referred to by Firth, and they involve a tendency to create dualisms or dichotomies which Firth, Halliday and others in their tradition do not accept. On the contrary, a semantically driven grammar of the kind Halliday has proposed and which we are using in this study, sees the object of linguistic enquiry as being to demonstrate the manner in which grammar operates to realise meanings. (Christie 1989:630)

Thus, she proposes that it is only through recourse to a model of analysis that rejects such dualisms between grammar and semantics that it becomes possible to provide an efficient description of how language resources are marshalled and focused within classroom discourse to achieve particular educational outcomes.

3.3.4 ASPECTS OF HALLIDAY'S SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR EMPLOYED IN THIS STUDY

The analysis proposed in this study will draw fundamentally upon the operation of two systems within Hallidaiy's (1985b, 1994) systemic functional grammar. These systems will be those of Theme and Transitivity. The operation of other systems, specifically those of Conjunction, Mood and Modality will be dealt with incidentally as they become relevant in the analysis. The decision to centre the analysis around the analysis of the systems of Theme and Transitivity was taken because these two systems allow access to important aspects of the negotiation of curriculum content and cognitive strategies. Detailed explanations of the operation of systems within Halliday's systemic functional grammar are available from a variety of sources (eg. Halliday 1994, Eggins 1994, Gerot & Wignell 1994, Williams 1993, Bloor & Bloor 1995) most of which provide for introductory explanation. Consequently, the following discussion will provide a brief explanation of the systems of Theme and Transitivity sufficient to enable the reader to follow the analysis presented in this study.

3.3.4.1 Theme

Halliday (1994) defines Theme in the following way,

Theme is one element in a structural configuration which, taken as a whole, organises the clause as message; this is the configuration Theme + Rheme. A message consists of a Theme combined with a Rheme. Within that configuration, the Theme is the starting point for the message; it is the ground from which the message is taking off. So part of the meaning of any clause lies in which element is chosen as its Theme.

(Halliday 1994:38)

Theme, as a system in language, possesses special properties which make it a powerful resource for examining the nature of classroom interaction. Theme is fundamental to this
analysis because of the role it plays in the realisation of the Textual metafunction within systemic functional grammar. It is through choices in Theme that certain language choices are foregrounded within the discourse. The ability to control choices in Theme is directly related to the ability to determine the direction and nature of the discourse itself. Thus, there exists a relationship between Theme and the foregrounding of different registers in educational discourse as well as Theme and the realisation of educationally based notions of 'control' within classroom discourse. It is through the exploration of the link between the foregrounding of different registers and the consideration of notions of 'control' within educational discourse that it is possible to draw a strong link between linguistic analysis and the realisation of educational objectives.

In the first instance, Theme is an essential realisation of the textual metafunction and, as such, contributes to the linguistic realisation of the mode of organisation or texture of a text. Halliday (1994) proposes that Theme, in contributing to the building of 'texture' within the discourse, functions as the focus of the communication. In English, Theme is the starting point of the message. It identifies the ground from which the clause is taking off (Halliday 1994:38).

The Theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called in the Prague school terminology the Rheme. As a message structure, therefore, a clause consists of a Theme accompanied by a Rheme, and the structure is expressed in that order - whatever is chosen as the Theme is put first. (Halliday 1994:37)

In the analysis of Theme it is necessary, as a first step, to identify the Theme/Rheme structure which is the basic form of organisation of the clause as message. Gerot and Wignell (1994) illustrate the Theme/Rheme relationship by saying that broadly speaking,

Theme represents 'This is what I'm talking about' and Rheme is 'This is what I'm saying about it'. (Gerot & Wignell 1994:103)

In classroom discourse, patterns of Theme choices identify what is foregrounded or made the prominent organisational point of departure within the discourse. For example, in the following set of clauses it is teaching content, through the choice to foreground the hatching chicken (realised via the pronoun he) and the water sac, that is made prominent as the point of departure in the organisation of the discourse in each case in Topical Theme position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHENE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>'s in a water sac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>'s right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the water</td>
<td>bursts, right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the water sac</td>
<td>bursts like a balloon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>'s getting a little egg tooth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following examples, however, the teacher and children are foregrounded in the teachers speech as the teacher focuses upon the organisation of the children's behaviour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHENE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>'d better get someone to show me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>find it in the book for me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above examples, Theme consists of one element only and in each case it is a nominal group acting as the subject of the clause and is conflated with the subject of the clause. However, Halliday's (1985b, 1994) grammar allows for the existence of multiple themes within the one clause. The existence of multiple Theme allows for the foregrounding of each of the experiential, interpersonal and textual metafunctions (NB: ideational metafunction comprises experiential and logical components). This multiple representation may occur simultaneously or in various combinations within a clause and ultimately across the whole of the text. Thus, while Theme is, in the first instance, a realisation of the textual metafunction there exists simultaneously a second level of choice which allows for the thematic structure of a particular text to be built around the foregrounding of elements which realise any or all of the three metafunctions.

Halliday proposes that there is always an experiential development in Theme although optional choices are available for the other two metafunctions. The typical sequence of choices for Multiple Theme is: textual ^ interpersonal ^ experiential (where ^ means 'followed by'). The experiential (or topical) element contained within Theme is some entity that is functioning as Subject, Complement or circumstantial Adjunct and is referred to as the Topical Theme because it corresponds fairly well to the element identified as 'topic' in topic - comment analysis (Halliday 1994:52). Language choices which realise experiential meaning contribute generally to the establishment of the 'field' of the discourse. However, when experiential choices are constructed as thematic within clauses, as 'points of departure', they simultaneously contribute to the textual function of the clause concerned with constructing a message (ie. the 'textuality' of the text of which the clause is part) by virtue of their role as components of Theme. According to Halliday (1994:53) the boundaries of a multiple Theme are defined by the operation of another system, Transitivity.

In the analysis presented for this study the following representation (shaded) will apply for the representation of Topical (or Experiential Theme).

Likewise, the interpersonal metafunction is represented within the Theme system as Interpersonal Theme. Language choices in Interpersonal Theme are choices that contribute to the establishment of interpersonal roles between speaker and listener in rhetorical
interaction. They include, for example, Modal Adjuncts such as 'unfortunately', 'in my opinion' etc., Vocatives as in 'Mary come here', the Finite verb in 'yes/no' questions such as 'Can you come here?' and 'wh' and 'th' elements in Wh interrogative questions (eg. What do you mean?). Once again, similarly to the situation with ideational elements, interpersonal elements in Theme contribute significantly to both the textual function of the clause concerned with constructing a message as well as to the interpersonal metafunction generally.

Textual meaning within the clause is concerned with the manner in which relationships are established between both the preceding (and following) text, and the context of situation. Choices in Textual Theme contribute to the textual function of the clause within the overall discourse. They include 'continuatives' which represent a small set of elements which signal a new move is beginning, a dialogue response or a move to a new point in the progression of the dialogue, for example, 'yes', 'right', 'well', 'now'. Other choices can be 'structurals' which include conjunctions and WH relatives or conjunctive Adjuncts such as 'moreover', 'in that case', 'meanwhile'.

Halliday (1994) gives the following table which summarises the various lexico-gramatical elements that can realise each metafunction as components of a multiple Theme. The table has been modified for this discussion to include in an additional column to the right, the abbreviations used in this analysis for each lexico-grammatical element.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>metafunction</th>
<th>component of Theme</th>
<th>abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>textual</td>
<td>continuative</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>structural (conjunction or WH- relative)</td>
<td>Struc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>conjunctive (Adjunct)</td>
<td>Conj. Adjunct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interpersonal</td>
<td>vocative</td>
<td>Voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>modal (Adjunct)</td>
<td>Modal Adj.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>finite (operator)</td>
<td>Finite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WH- (interrogative)</td>
<td>WH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiential</td>
<td>topical (participant, circumstance, process)</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the clause presented earlier would be coded in this analysis in the following manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One notion that Halliday raises in Table 3.1 above is that some elements can play roles in the clause which simultaneously realise two metafunctions in multiple Theme. These are the WH-relative and WH-interrogative elements (along with let's) which combine the roles of Interpersonal with Topical Theme. These are represented in the analysis as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above analysis, what is given the subscript WH / Top. to indicate that its simultaneous realisation of both roles discussed above.

### 3.3.4.2 Marked Theme

A further consideration that will enter discussion in the present analysis is the notion of 'marked Theme'. Normally, Topical Theme conflates with Subject in declarative clauses. This has been the case in all of the examples provided so far in this discussion. This is referred to as the 'unmarked' option for the speaker. However, should the speaker choose to set another element as point of departure for the clause the result would normally comprise the selection of a 'marked' Theme. For example, the clause,

> Ok so Naomi we'll have a little look at our science book in a minute

which has been analysed for Theme previously has an example of 'unmarked' Theme. However, the following reconstruction of that clause would provide an example of marked Theme.

> Ok so Naomi in a minute we'll have a little look at our science book

This clause would appear in the analysis in the following manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ok Cont. so</td>
<td>Naomi Voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we'll have a little look at our science book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.4.3 Theme in clause complexes

A further issue of importance to the analysis in this study is the notion of hypotactic clause as Theme in a clause complex. Hypotaxis occurs in a clause complex when one clause is dependent on another. The normal realisation of a hypotactic clause relationship is for the Head or dominant clause to occur first. The Head clause is then followed by the dependent clause. This configuration occurs in the following complex which includes a teacher question as the head clause.

> what else do we have to remember to do before we put these eggs in
However, if the speaker chooses to change this order so that the dependent clause precedes the Head clause, a Theme/Rheme relationship can be said to exist beyond the clause at the level of clause complex. This relationship is shown below,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHENE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>before we put these eggs in</td>
<td>what else do we have to remember to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This Theme/Rheme relationship at the level of clause complex is additional to the Theme/Rheme relationships which exist within each clause. These 'within clause' relationships are set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHENE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>before Struc.</td>
<td>what else WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we Top.</td>
<td>do we have to remember to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In classroom discourse, the decision to employ a hypotactic or dependent clause as Theme before a question has the effect of providing an orienting component or context which, in effect, announces and makes common to some degree the context assumed for response. French and MacLure (1981) refer to this strategy as 'preformulating'. As later discussion in chapter 4 will illustrate, there is considerable flexibility and delicacy afforded to teachers through the manipulation of such strategies as tools for scaffolding the development of intersubjectivity concerning task focus.

### 3.3.4.1 Conjunctions as Structural elements in Theme

Conjunctions are elements which join clauses together to help build clause complexes. In discourse, they play two roles simultaneously which are recognised within Halliday's (1994) systemic functional grammar. By virtue of the role they assume as Structurals within Textual Theme, they contribute to the grammatical structure or mode of organisation of the text and thus the realisation of the textual metafunction. The second role they assume is in the building of logico-semantic relationships within the text through the operation of the Conjunction system itself which is a semantic system located in the discourse stratum of language. While it is not usual to identify semantic relations associated with Conjunctions in a Theme analysis, they have been marked in a limited manner in this analysis for convenience.

Rothery (1992) gives the following system network for Conjunction. Her network is drawn from the work of Martin (1983). In it, the logico-semantic relationships are described in terms of temporal sequence and simultaneity, consequence, comparison and addition.
These types of Conjunctions (system 2) can be cross classified explicit/implicit; external/internal and subordinating/non subordinating. The set of choices available for type of Conjunction is capable of further extension in terms of delicacy. However, because Conjunction as a system is only to be dealt with incidentally within this study as an adjunct to the discussion of Theme, a simpler notional set of Conjunction types has been employed to make the discussion less complex. A further reason for this decision is the fact that, because the texts studied were the result of oral interaction with infant grade children, the range of Conjunctions employed was relatively small. The following notation was employed to identify types of Conjunctions that will be encountered in this study.

**additive** notated in Theme analysis as *C. add.*

T: I came down to the Language Unit
   and I put them straight into the incubator
T: so that they can't walk properly
   or something might be wrong with their head

**temporal** notated in Theme analysis as *C. temp.*

T: what else do we have to remember to do?
   before we put these eggs in

**causal** notated in Theme analysis as *C. caus.*

T: Yeah, they could have a little crippled leg
   so that they can't walk properly

S: the little chicks can't feel it
T: Yeah. Why?
Ch: **Because** they're in the water sac
T: Yes. **Because** they're in the water sac
conditional notated in Theme analysis as C. condit.

S: If mother hen kicks it
   It's going...
   the little chicks can't feel it

adversative notated in Theme analysis as C. adver.

T: Now, who've we got here?
Cn: Mother hen
T: Yeah, we got mother hen haven't we
   But have we got mother hen?

projecting notated in Theme analysis as C. project.

T: All right can we say
   that the little chick's floating in a water sac?

An example of a section of Theme analysis in which Conjunctions are identified is given below. Note that each Conjunction has been identified as a Structural (Struc.) element in Theme as well as in terms of its role as a logico-semantic element within the Conjunction system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. caus.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C.condit</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yeah</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so that</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. caus.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. caus.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.4.2 Summary - Theme and the analysis in this study

Theme as a system in grammar deals, in the first instance, with the realisation of the textual metafunction in Halliday's (1985b,1994) systemic functional grammar. Simultaneously, on what might be referred to as a second level of operation, Theme provides for consideration of all three metafunctions by virtue of the potential roles they can play as components of Theme. An analysis of Theme, therefore, does have the potential to tap all three metafunctions. Furthermore, because Theme provides access to patterns of language choice which establish 'points of departure' for clauses within texts, it allows for interpretation of the respective roles played by the 'foregrounding' of each of the regulative and instructional registers in the operationalisation of classroom discourse. The manner in which the analysis of Theme relates
to the operation of the regulative and instructional registers will be developed further in section 3.3.6 of this study.

### 3.3.4.3 Transitivity

Whereas the Theme system deals primarily with the realisation of the textual metafunction in Halliday's (1994) grammar, Transitivity as a system, deals primarily with the realisation of the experiential metafunction. Thus, Transitivity is concerned with the manner in which 'experience', that is, the people, objects, concepts, actions etc. are represented through language choices within the clause. An analysis of Transitivity is important to this study because it provides access to a major system in grammar through which the experience of schooling (i.e. what counts as learning and learning behaviour) is represented and made audible to the learner.

The analysis of Transitivity within a clause involves the identification of the process within the clause and the specification of the relation between the 'Process', 'Participants' and 'Circumstances' within it.

The Process is realised within the verbal group of the clause, eg.

> and she **turns** the eggs over with her nose
> We **had to get** it to the right temperature
> Ok so we **'ll have** a little look at our science book

Participants are realised in nominal groups, eg.

> and **she** turns **the eggs** over with her nose
> **We** had to get **it** to the right temperature
> Ok so we **'ll have** a little look at our science book

Circumstances are realised through adverbial groups and prepositional phrases, eg.

> We had to get it **to the right temperature**
> Ok so we'll have a little look at our science book
> and she turns the eggs **over with her nose**

Figure 3.10 (over) provides a simple system network for available Process choices within the Transitivity system.
This figure shows that there exist two simultaneous system choices for Process and Circumstance. Choice for Relational Process and Mental Process open further sets of choices.

In addition to this, making a choice for any Process brings with it a particular configuration of participant choices within the clause. These choices are not included in the network above. However, some examples are given below. For example, the choice of a 'Material' Process involves roles such as Actor, Goal, Range, and Beneficiary, eg.

**Material**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>had to turn on</td>
<td>the incubator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Material**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Beneficiary</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>has to give</td>
<td>those little eggs</td>
<td>exercise too</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choice for a Mental Process on the other hand brings with it participant role choices for Senser and Phenomenon.
Each category of process available within the system network in Figure 3.10 above offers the potential for the realisation of different constructions of reality within the experiential metafunction. Each category of language choice for process will be outlined briefly below.

**Material Processes:** are defined by Halliday (1994) as processes of doing. They express the notion that some entity does something - which may be done to some other entity (Halliday 1994:110). Halliday further proposes that the notion of doing to can be somewhat abstract and does not necessarily refer to concrete, physical events. However, abstract examples of Material Processes such as the one encountered in the clause below (ie. were hatching ) were rare in the transcripts considered in this study.

In most instances Material Processes related to concrete action of some kind such as the one below.

**Mental Processes:** have to do with thinking and feeling and Halliday argues that they are grammatically different from other Processes such as Material Processes. The participant roles associated with Mental Processes are functionally different to those of Actor and Goal which are associated with Material Processes. Halliday proposes the terms Senser and Phenomenon to represent participant roles in Mental Process clauses. A further property of Mental Processes that will be encountered in this analysis is their potential to ‘project’ another process as the outcome of an idea or thought. In the following example a Material Process clause is projected as the outcome of the Mental Process remembering.

Three different types of Mental process are distinguished in this analysis. In addition to those of Cognition illustrated in the above example, choices for Mental Processes to do with Affect and Perception are also identified.

**Verbal Processes:** have to do with saying (Halliday 1994:140). However, Halliday adds that ‘saying’ has to be interpreted in a rather broad sense; it covers any kind of symbolic
exchange of meaning, like the 'notice tells you to keep quiet' or 'my watch says it's half past ten'. Verbal processes, like Mental Processes, can project other processes, eg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Relational/Intensive/Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>'s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tells</td>
<td>on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>Attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioural Processes** are defined by Halliday (1994:139) as the least distinct of all process types. He proposes they draw upon aspects of both Material and Mental Processes for their identity and are processes of (typically human) physiological and psychological behaviour, like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming and staring. Frequently occurring Behavioural Processes in the transcripts analysed in this study have to do with the processes of reading and writing, eg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural: Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all right so let 's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro- Behaver-cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read [what we've said]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

along with other manifestations of learning activity, for example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So if we have a look around this other way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaver Process Range Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relational Processes:** The next system to be discussed here, that of Relational Processes, is the most complex in terms of the system choices it affords as Figure 3.10 (above) illustrates. Halliday (1994) defines Relational Processes as processes of being. They include, most commonly, the verb 'to be', and substitutes for it. Halliday, however, differentiates Relational Processes from Existential Processes which will be discussed later in this section.

As the term 'relational' suggests, this is not 'being' in the sense of existing. There is a related, but distinct, category of existential clauses, such as there was a storm;.....In relational clauses there are two parts to the 'being': something is being said to 'be' something else. In other words, a relation is being set up between two separate entities. (Halliday 1994:119)

The following clauses are examples of relational clauses.

- that's [what we call an arm]
- ok so he's getting old, day thirteen
- all right this is an incubator
- now we haven't got seventeen, eighteen
- and he's in a water sac
- and we don't have mother hen

There are three fundamental types of Relational Processes: Intensive; Circumstantial and Possessive. Examples of each type are given below.

- **Relational: Intensive:** These are processes in which the relationship between the two terms is one of sameness, that is, $x$ is at a. (Halliday 1994:114). Two sub-types are distinguished. These are **identifying** and **attributive**. Examples of each are given below.
Rationale and Model for the Analysis of Discourse

Relational / Intensive / Identifying
That’s the thermometer

Relational / Intensive / Attributive
and the temperature is almost a hundred

- Relational: Circumstantial: In these clauses, the relationship established is one of time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, matter or role, that is, \( x \) is at a (where ‘is at’ stands for ‘is at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘for’, ‘with’, ‘about’, ‘along’, etc.) (Halliday 1994:119). Once again two sub-types are possible to do with identifying and attributive relations. Examples of each are given below.

Relational / Circumstantial / Identifying
Now that was Friday

Relational / Circumstantial / Attributive
and that’s just like with mother hen

- Relational: Possessive: In these clauses, the relationship established is one of ownership: one entity possesses another, that is, ‘x has a’ (Halliday 1994:121). Once more two sub-types are possible to do with identifying and attributive relations. Examples of each are given below.

Relational / Possessive / Identifying
that egg is the chicken’s

Relational / Possessive / Attributive
we don’t have a mother hen in the incubator

Existential Processes: represent the final category of choice available in Figure 3.10 (above). This language choice for process will be described here to complete the system network in Figure 3.10. However, no examples of this process choice occurred in the transcripts studied. Halliday proposes that existential processes represent that something exists or happens, as in ‘there was a little guinea pig, there seems to be a problem, has there been a phone call’ (Halliday 1994:142). Eggins (1994) adds,

Existential processes typically employ the verb be or synonyms such as exist, arise, occur. The only obligatory participant in an existential process which receives a functional label is called the Existent. This participant, which usually follows the there is / there are sequence, may be a phenomenon of any kind, and is often in fact an event (nominalized action). (Eggins 1994:255)

The following constructed example is of a kind that could potentially occur in the transcripts under study.
3.3.4.4 Summary - Transitivity and the analysis in this study

As the discussion at the beginning of this chapter has proposed, the importance of Transitivity to the analysis of classroom discourse lies in the interpretation it contributes concerning the construction of schooling as an 'experience' for learners. A simple example of the role played by the Transitivity system can be illustrated through an examination of the following two teacher questions.

In the first clause, the teacher makes use of a Relational Process and the participants (Carrier - the incubator & Attribute - what temperature) are drawn directly from the realm of the instructional field that constitutes the content for the lesson. This means that, in order to respond to this question, the children have to enter the instructional field in a decontextualised manner. Thus from the perspective of the Transitivity system discourse focus has to do with the instructional field.

The second clause, however, constructs the experience of 'doing learning' in a very different manner. The choice for process this time is a Mental Process of cognition which projects the instructional field, not as an externalised set of field relationships but rather in terms of prior experience of the learner. The primary participant is the learner and the whole set of instructional field relationships is constructed as a kind of second level participant (the Phenomenon) that is mediated through what might be referred to as a primary social field of experience. Inspection of the participant structure within the two embedded clauses in the Phenomenon (not analysed for Transitivity here) shows that the primary participant in both embedded clauses is we. This choice for we constructs the learner's prior experience as joint experience that is held in common with the teacher.

A central question for this analysis is to determine the relationship between different kinds of choices within the Transitivity system to do with how the experience of learning is being constructed and the pedagogic strategies and principles of the teacher: From an educational perspective the aim is to interpret why the teacher makes such choices in the pursuit of her educational goals. In order to develop an understanding of the process of constructing learning, Frances Christie (eg. 1989, 1990, 1994) defines functional elements in terms of the extent to which they realise regulative and instructional registers in pedagogic discourse.
These registers will be discussed below in section 3.3.5. Section 3.3.6 will then illustrate the manner in which regulative and instructional registers are identified in this study.

3.3.5 **THE ROLE OF BERNSTEIN'S NOTION OF 'REGULATIVE' AND 'INSTRUCTIONAL' DISCOURSES IN CHRISTIE'S ANALYTICAL MODEL**

Bernstein's model of pedagogic discourse as a recontextualising principle within which the operation of the regulative discourse embeds the instructional discourse has been discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.2). Christie (eg. Christie 1989, 1990, 1994) approaches Bernstein's notions of dual discourses which combine to construct pedagogic discourse from the perspective of Halliday's systemic functional grammar. In doing so, she modifies Bernstein's terminology in order to bring about a more direct parallel with concepts already existent in systemic functional grammar. She employs the term 'register' in order to identify the regulative and instructional registers as component systems within an overall pedagogic discourse.

Christie's interpretation of the relationship between the two registers as one of 'projection' is closely akin to that which Bernstein proposed. That is, the **regulative register** functions as the means through which the **instructional register** may be projected as a 'relocation' of a discourse taken from a field of culturally situated knowledge or activity which existed within the culture 'outside' the school.

Educational enquiry, I have already suggested, following many of Bernstein's observations on the matter, takes significant discourses - a systemicist would say significant fields of human experience - from 'outside the school' as it were, and relocates these 'within schools' in order that initiates shall learn. The process of relocation may be represented as a kind of projection. (Christie 1989a:6)

Christie (eg. 1990:19) also introduces the terms 'regulative field' and 'instructional field' to refer to what might be termed the 'content focus' of the associated register. The term 'field' refers to 'content' as it might be conceived in its broadest sense.

Field is to do with what is going on in a text. The general model of field adopted owes in part to Halliday's definition (Halliday & Hasan 1985/1989) and in part to Martin's (1992) development upon Halliday's work. In particular, fields are defined as "sets of activity sequences oriented to some global institutional purpose" (Martin, 1992, 292). In general, a first order or regulative field is oriented to purposes of inducting students into practices, habits, attitudes and knowledge of a kind valued as part of the institution of schooling. A second order or instructional field, as already noted, is a field of experience taken from outside school and relocated for teaching it to students. This field constitutes the "topic" to be taught. (Christie 1994:19)

Christie proposes that the two fields are foregrounded to different degrees at different stages of educational activities. The foregrounding of different fields within classroom texts indicates whether the regulative or instructional register is dominant at any particular stage of the pedagogic discourse. As earlier discussion in section 3.2.4, has indicated, Christie argues that recognition of the existence of two component registers and their associated fields within educational discourse allows for a considerable increase in the delicacy of analysis available from the study of interaction between teachers and children.
In her analysis of the writing curriculum genre discussed earlier in an earlier section (section 3.3.1), Christie (1989) was able to demonstrate that regulative and instructional registers were foregrounded (i.e., given a dominant and pivotal role in the construction of the discourse) in different components of the generic structure. For example, in the early childhood writing lessons Christie studied, the regulative register was foregrounded primarily in the opening phase of the Task Orientation element through specific sets of lexico-grammatical choices in systems such as Theme and Transitivity. However, once this short opening phase was completed, the instructional register was then foregrounded for the rest of the Task Orientation stage. The foregrounding of the instructional register was realised by different patterns of choices in the Theme and Transitivity systems.

Most importantly, Christie was able to demonstrate through an analysis of lexicogrammatical choices that the foregrounding of the regulative register in the opening phase of the Task Orientation was realised largely through patterns of language choices concerned with setting in motion physical activity. No support was provided concerning the cognitive and linguistic requirements necessary to construct the writing task as a suitable text. Similarly, the foregrounding of the instructional register in the 'body' of the task orientation was realised through patterns of language choices that were concerned with what was essentially an unfocused and very limited exploration of the potential 'content' or instructional field. Furthermore, the Task Specification and Task elements which both foregrounded the regulative register were also unhelpful in providing support to the children around how they might access and organise the language resources necessary to produce the texts they were expected to write.

Christie (1994) extended her analysis to explore a curriculum macrogenre focused upon the writing of discussions and argument in science. In this analysis she was able to demonstrate that both regulative and instructional registers were foregrounded at different stages within the development of the curriculum macrogenre over time. These changes were related to the nature of the educational processes that were put in place by the teacher in planning the macrogenre. The presence of the changes in the register realisations were proposed as an important indicator of growth and development across the overall teaching cycle of the macrogenre.

Most importantly for the study of the concentrated encounters developed at Traeger Park, Christie found that as 'common knowledge' was built intersubjectively between teacher and children over time, the children took over and internalised aspects of the regulative register such that the explicit deployment of the regulative register by the teacher tended to disappear as the macrogenre developed over time.
3.3.6 **THE IDENTIFICATION OF REGULATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL REGISTERS IN THIS ANALYSIS**

Having discussed briefly Halliday's (1995) systems of Theme and Transitivity in section 3.3.4, it is now possible to return to Christie's (1994) interpretation of regulative and instructional registers to explore how she defines and demarcates the operation of each of these registers through recourse to Halliday's systemic functional grammar.

Christie proposes that it is possible to map the extent to which a particular clause creates the regulative or instructional registers within classroom discourse through recourse to the realisation systems within the grammar. Two systems in the lexico-grammar which play an important role in the functioning of the two registers are Theme and Transitivity which have been outlined previously in this chapter (section 3.3.4). Theme is involved in building aspects of the textual metafunction while Transitivity is involved in building the experiential metafunction. Mood, which is only dealt with incidentally in this study, realises aspects of the interpersonal metafunction.

The theory proposes that the regulative register (to do with pedagogic goals and direction) determines or projects the operation of the instructional register. Following Bernstein, it is important to stress the consideration, discussed earlier in this chapter, that the regulative register is of primary significance. Keeping this aspect of the relationship between registers in mind, it is possible to identify examples of various configurations (or patterns of interaction) that can occur in pedagogical discourse.

**3.3.6.1 Clauses which wholly realise the regulative register**

One possible configuration of the regulative and instructional registers in classroom discourse is the situation where the whole of the clause realises the regulative register. It is useful to identify three broad pedagogical functions to do with the operation of the regulative register. These are, operationalising (1) procedural behaviour, (2) learning activity and (3) cognitive strategies for learning. Each of these will be discussed in turn below.

**Operationalising procedural behaviour:** This is the case in the following clauses.

Naomi would you like to come over here please dear?
We don't need another chair thank you
Pop the chair down

In this instance, the regulative register elements are naturally foregrounded in Theme position within each of these clauses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>Voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, what are thematised as point of departure for the above clauses are, respectively, the Vocative (Naomi) and Finite (would) in Interpersonal Theme position, joint participants (we in Topical Theme) and the Material Process (pop). All of these language choices have to do with operationalising the behaviour of the child Naomi. Thus, it is the regulative register that is foregrounded (set as point of departure for the clause) in all of the above clauses. The focus of the regulative register in this particular circumstance is purely upon what might be termed procedural control of behaviour.

Examination of the Transitivity system choices for the above clauses reveals further that all participant choices across all of the clauses have to do with operationalising procedural behaviour and thus promote the regulative register within the discourse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Naomi</th>
<th>would</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>like to come</th>
<th>over here</th>
<th>please dear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Circumstance: location: place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: affect</th>
<th>We</th>
<th>don't need</th>
<th>another chair</th>
<th>thank you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensor</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Pop</th>
<th>the chair</th>
<th>down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Circumstance: location: place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the analysis shows that it is not just the Theme choices but all of the participants and processes within the clauses that are concerned with operationalising process relationships to do with the regulative register. Thus, the above clauses can be proposed as representing an instance of the regulative register operationalising procedural control.

**Operationalising learning activity:** However, the potential of the regulative register extends well beyond regulating behaviour in some procedural sense within educational discourse. The regulative register can be employed to operationalise activity to do with the manner in which the teacher expects the children to go about learning within the discourse. For example,

0165 Now let's have a look at our little science book  *(Holds up science book)*
0166 and find out
0167 where we're up to

In the above extract, the teacher is operationalising activity not in a procedural sense but towards engagement with the instructional register. The instructional register has to do with the development of a chicken from an embryo within an egg. However, even though the teacher is operationalising learning behaviour, she does not position that behaviour within the instructional field itself. There is no realisation of the instructional field in the clause. The teacher is, in fact, directing learners towards learning activity. However, she is merely directing the children into the task without providing explicit information about how to operationalise learning within the activity.
In the three clauses above, the dominant role of the regulative register is relatively straightforward to propose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0165</td>
<td>now Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0166</td>
<td>and Struc. / C. add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0167</td>
<td>where Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Theme, all of the language elements have to do with operationalising activity (ie. now, let's, where, and). Transitivity choices (below) are also all concerned with operationalising activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0165</th>
<th><strong>Behavioural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now let</td>
<td>'s have a look at our science book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-cess</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0167</th>
<th><strong>Mental: cognition</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and find out</td>
<td>'where we're up to/'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above clauses, the teacher employs Behavioural and Mental Processes to specifically direct visual and cognitive processes towards learning activity. Consequently, the regulative register is realised here. The only participant within the Transitivity structure that might give cause for concern is the Circumstance in clause 0165 (at our little science book). However, this is considered part of the regulative field because it constitutes a learning resource rather than a direct component of the instructional field. If, for example, the teacher had said *our little science book about the development of a chicken*, the instructional field (underlined) would have been included (but not foregrounded) as a minor component of the clause (ie. as part a nominal group realising the participant role of Goal). It would simply have been identified or named.

An interesting aspect of the operation of the regulative register in the extract above is that the teacher does not only direct the children to a particular learning resource (clause 0165). She extends the involvement of the regulative register in the discourse to identify explicitly for the children the reason why one would seek out the book in the first instance (clauses 0166-0167). Thus, in a small way, the teacher is modelling/informing the children explicitly 'how' one goes about learning to function as a learner within the pedagogical discourse. Thus, she is starting to move towards making cognitive/strategy information explicit to the children. If the teacher next went on to negotiate the determination of *where we're up to* explicitly with the children she would most likely involve herself in making the operation of cognitive processes even more explicit for the children.

**Operationalising cognitive strategies for learning:** As prior discussion has indicated, a further operation of the regulative register which extends its scope in the building of classroom discourse is that it can be employed to provide explicit information to children.
about the processes through which learning is expected to take place. The following set of clauses (analysed below for Theme choices) provides an example of this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0139</td>
<td>right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0140</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0141</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0142</td>
<td>let's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>find</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above analysis of Theme, the joint participants (we, let’s) represent one set of language elements which are foregrounded in the clause as Topical Theme choices. Also foregrounded, are the Structurals then, because, so. These elements, in the simultaneous role they hold within the Conjunction system also explicitly highlight the logico-semantic relationships involved in the process the teacher is expounding. Thus, through the foregrounding of the regulative register here, the teacher is providing the learners with an explicit rationale and purpose for a learning behaviour. In this instance, also foregrounded in the clause as a Textual Theme choice, is the teacher’s use of the Continuative right which she has employed to signal an explicit shift in the staging of the discourse.

An analysis of Transitivity also reveals Process/Participant/Circumstance relationships which all draw upon the regulative register.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>0139</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>right</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>then</td>
<td>put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little mark there</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: Affect/ Verbal</th>
<th>0140</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanted to say</td>
<td>wanted to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>something else</td>
<td>something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: Affect/ Verbal</th>
<th>0141</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>wanted to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanted to say</td>
<td>something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>something else</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>0142</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So</td>
<td>let’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>the little mark over here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Participants in the roles of Actor and Sensor are we and us (’s). Processes comprise Mental, Verbal and Material choices to do with achieving educational goals. Secondary Participants are realised through Goals or Verbiage also to do with learning resources (something else, the little mark). It is significant to note that these resources, however, do not realise directly the instructional field. For example, something else is a generalisation and not a direct reference to specific information within the instructional field. Similarly, the little mark
realises a resource employed to mediate activity within the instructional field, not the instructional field itself.

A further example of language choices which wholly realise the regulative register to operationalise cognitive strategies can be found in the following clause.

T: There's another word [[that starts with a /s/]]

Here none of the participants or process engages specifically with the instructional field which has to do with the development of a chicken embryo into a hatching. Rather, the whole clause serves to make explicit information to do with the operationalisation of the instructional field in the construction of a written text and thus can be considered to represent regulative register choices. What is being promoted here through the mediation of the regulative register is not simply knowledge about letter sounds or spelling. Rather, the regulative register is making explicit for the children, how these resources can be marshalled to construct a written text about the instructional field. The following section (3.3.6.2) will explore the manner in which clauses can be said to realise the instructional field. Discussion in the next section (3.3.6.3) will then consider the notion of ‘convergence’ between the two registers.

3.3.6.2 Clauses which wholly realise the instructional register

Another possible configuration of the regulative and instructional registers in classroom discourse is the circumstance where the whole of a particular clause realises the instructional register. This is the case in the following clauses where the topic under consideration is the movement of the mechanical arm in an incubator. The arm turns the eggs to 'exercise' them. The clauses are shown analysed for Theme below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>normally</td>
<td>Conj. Adjunct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Earlier discussion has pointed out that Theme, according to Halliday (1994:38), is the starting point for the message; it is the ground from which the message is taking off. In the clauses above, amongst language elements thematised as the point of departure for the clauses are the nominal groups that (meaning the arm) and this arm. The other thematised element is the Conjunctive Adjunct normally which also carried information pertinent to the instructional register. Thus, what can be said to be foregrounded in the above clauses is the instructional register.

However, in the clauses considered above, the instructional register is not only foregrounded within the clause, it is realised across the whole of the each clause. An analysis of Transitivity gives access to the broader field of activity promoted through the clauses in
question. As earlier discussion has pointed out, Transitivity is concerned with the manner in
which the clause models experience. Experience is construed by Halliday (1994:106) as
‘goings on - happening, doing, sensing, meaning, and being and becoming’. Thus, according to
Halliday, the clause embodies amongst other functions ‘a general principle for modelling
experience - namely, the principle that reality is made up of processes’. He goes on to define
a process as consisting of ‘three components - the process itself, the participants in the
process and the circumstances associated with the process’ (Halliday 1994:107). A
Transitivity analysis for the clauses which were previously considered for Theme is given
below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational: Intensive: Identifying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an arm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Value | Process | Token |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normally this arm works on its own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actor       Process   Circumstance: Manner

In these clauses, all of the Processes (ie. is, works), Participants (ie. that, an arm, this arm)
and Circumstances (ie. on its own) realise the instructional register. Thus, it can be claimed
that it is the instructional register that is in operation in the clauses under consideration.

3.3.6.3 Clauses which realise convergence of the regulative and instructional
registers

One further aspect of the functioning of the regulative and instructional registers that Christie
(1994) considers to be significant has to do with the notion of convergence between the two
registers. Convergence can be said to occur both within individual clauses and across a
sequence of clauses. For example the first question listed below (ie. how many days all
together was she sitting on the eggs?) can be said to realise convergence between the
regulative and instructional registers. By virtue of the choice for a ‘wh’ question element as an
interpersonal item in Theme (as well as an interrogative choice in the Mood system), the
clause can be said to foreground the regulative register). 3341 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many days all together WH/Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remember Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when Struc./C.temp.</td>
<td>we Top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many WH/Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, because of the role ‘wh’ items play in combining simultaneously the roles of
Interpersonal and Topical Theme (marked WH/Top. above – see Table 3.1, section 3.3.4.1),
the first clause also foregrounds the instructional register. That is, there is a foregrounding of
a convergence between the two registers. This foregrounding of convergence is further
marked in this case by the specific inclusion of the instructional field item *days*. Consideration of the ‘wh’ element from within the Transitivity system places it within the instructional field as a Circumstance of location: time (see section 3.3.4.2) and its regulative role is not marked in this system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many days all together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitting on the eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumstance: Location: time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pro Actor Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumstance: Location: place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspection of the above analysis of Transivity indicates, in fact, that all of the Participants and Circumstances are located within the instructional field. Thus, it can be proposed that ‘wh’ elements often (but not always - as the following discussion will show) realise a simultaneous convergence of the regulative and instructional registers.

In the above clause also there is also a convergence between the regulative ‘wh’ element (*how many all together*) and the rest of the clause which has to do completely with the instructional field. In the above analysis regulative register choices have been highlighted in **bold normal** type where appropriate. Text extracts in the analysis in which distinctions between instructional and regulative registers have been drawn will employ **bold normal** type in this manner. In Theme analyses ‘wh’ items will always be marked in **bold normal** type and simultaneous realisations of the instructional field through this item choice will only be apparent on consideration of Transitivity analyses where the realisation of the instructional field will be identified in plain normal type as is the case above. It should be noted that the above discussion covers what is one of the most complex cases of convergence encountered in this study.

Taken as a whole, the four clauses in the above analysis of Theme further realise convergence across a sequence of clauses. They do this even though the final three clauses exclusively realise the regulative register. Convergence can be said to exist because the final three clauses, in effect, represent an attempt by the teacher to reframe the question presented in the first clause. The reframe, however, involves a shift outside direct engagement with the instructional field to appeal to an analogous strategy the teacher has previously constructed as cognitive support for the children. In this way, through recourse to the regulative register, teacher pedagogic moves are laid open for consideration and discussion.

From the perspective of the Transitivity system, the second clause employs a Mental Process which focuses the children upon cognition in a meta sense.

| Mental: cognition             |
| remember                      |
| Process                       |
This Mental Process clause in turn projects a Material Process clause to do with a strategy provided by the teacher as a cognitive resource to assist the children to process instructional field information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumstance: Location: time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question which follows also operates with respect to the cognitive strategy and does not engage in any direct sense with the instructional field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus in both Theme and Transitivity analyses for the final three clauses, all language choices are identified as exclusively regulative via the use of **bold** *normal* type.

One related distinction drawn between regulative and instructional registers in this study has to do with the development of strategies for writing. Reference to writing strategies (physical and mental) as opposed to the topic content of the writing itself is considered to represent a regulative register choice because it involves the operationalisation of a resource for constructing the instructional field. The following extract was taken from a situation in which the teacher and children were jointly writing a text about the development of a chicken from embryo to hatchling. This text was the focus of the Task in the macrogenre which will be discussed further in chapter 5 (section 5.4.2.3). In the extract, the teacher and children are pondering the next word they wish to write which is *tooth* (he grows a tiny tail and an egg *tooth*). The content they are writing, therefore, has to do with the realisation of the instructional register. However, the discussion about how to operationalise the writing of the clause has to do with the realisation of the regulative register and represents a teacher mediation of the task. Again regulative register choices are in **bold** *normal* type.

```
0389 T: What's tooth start with?
0400 J: /to/
0401 N: /to/
0402 M/D: /n/  
0403 T: /h/ ... N  
0404 N: a /h/  
0405 T: two /o/ together a /h/ and a /h/  T writes 'tooth'
```

This extract contains two clauses that can be analysed. The others, although numbered here, do not constitute major clauses. However, even so, apart from the word *tooth* which clearly realises the instructional field, the rest of the extract has to do with the regulative field. Once again choices in Theme and Transitivity support this although this aspect will not be expanded upon here.
The following extract provides some further examples of convergence. Again regulative register choices are given in **bold normal** type. The extract is drawn from a situation within the Task Element of the macrogenre where the children and teacher are jointly writing a text.

| 0255 | What are we going to say about the water sac? |
| 0256 | What are we going to say about the water sac? |
| 0257 | T: How are we gonna write that down? |
| 0258 | M: When... |
| 0259 | J: When she do's the exercise... |
| 0260 | D: When the little chick crack the egg open the...the egg |
| 0261 | the chick first comes out wet |
| 0262 | T: He does |
| 0263 | You're so right |
| 0264 | He does come out... |
| 0265 | When the... when the little chick cracks open the shell |
| 0266 | he comes out all wet |
| 0267 | **But we... do we want to tell the people [[that want to read our book...]]** |
| 0268 | J: Yes |
| 0269 | T: that he floats in a water sac? |
| 0270 | J: Yes |
| 0271 | T: All right well what will we...what would you like to say? |
| 0272 | While... |
| 0273 | **Do you want to say** while the little chick...? |
| 0274 | J: While... |
| +274 | D: the... |
| +274 | J: While... |
| +274 | T: While the little chick... |
| +274 | D: floats... |
| +274 | T: is... |
| 0275 | J: Yes |
| +274 | T: in the... |
| +274 | D: water sac |
| 0276 | J: No while... Jenny wants the teacher to start writing |
| 0277 | T: **Where is he?** |
| 0278 | in the... |
| +278 | D: water sac |
| +278 | N: egg |
| +278 | T: in the egg |
| +279 | N: he floats in a... |
| +279 | Cn: water sac |
| 0280 | T: **Shall we write something like** that |

A Theme analysis of the first two clauses (0255-0256) illustrates that it is the regulative register that is foregrounded the beginning of the interaction. In this instance the ‘wh’ element does not engage directly with the instructional field. Instead interaction with the instructional field is mediated via the Verbal Process ‘saying’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0255</td>
<td>What</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0256</td>
<td>What</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the teacher is attempting to operationalise activity to do with ‘saying’ and the Wh element *what* which assumes the interpersonal Theme position in the clause refers to the ‘saying’ activity. It is this link between *what* and *going to say* that marks the Wh element as realising the regulative register. This becomes clear when the Transitivity system which delineates participant/process relationships within the clause is examined.
Within the Transitivity system it is *what* that assumes the Participant role of Verbiage. The actual element within the clause which does realise the instructional field, *the water sac* is consigned to an ancillary and secondary role within the clause as a constituent of a Circumstance of Matter. The effect of the teacher's use of the regulative register in the above clause is to mediate the engagement of the children with the instructional field. A further mediating participant choice above has to do with the specification of joint responsibility (*we*) for producing a clause about the instructional field. Had the teacher chosen, for example, to select *you* instead of *we* she would have employed the regulative register to mediate engagement with the instructional field by transferring explicit responsibility to the children (*ie. what are you going to say?*).

Clause (0257) *How are we going to write that down* which follows also realises a continued dominance of the regulative register. Thus, between clauses 0255 - 0257 the teacher is employing the regulative register to operationalise activity that is focused on the instructional register. The extent of the mediation (*ie. teacher orchestration*) effected through the regulative register merely consists of pushing the children to develop a specific aspect of the instructional field (*ie. the water sac*) which is simply nominated in the clauses concerned. That is, while some convergence exists, it is the regulative register which is strongly foregrounded.

What follows then, is an extended engagement (clause 0258-0280) with the instructional field in which the instructional register is for the most part strongly foregrounded. This emphasis is punctuated at times by teacher recourse the regulative register (convergence) to help shape the manner in which the children construct the instructional field. The above extract is discussed in more detail in chapter 5 (section 5.4.2.2).

### 3.4 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the methodology employed in the analysis to follow in chapters 4 and 5 of this study. Section 3.1 outlined the origins of the language sample studied and proposed a focus for research that valued the need to move beyond the identification of characteristic features of some generalised notion of 'Teacher Talk' to a position that offered insights in to the manner in which a teacher might employ language choice in the pursuit of educational goals. In particular, it proposed an analysis which included a systematic consideration of choice at the level of the lexico-grammar. Moreover, it proposed that there was a need to consider classroom discourse as a socio-historical process in which the roles and language behaviour of children changed purposefully over time.
Section 3.2 then discussed earlier approaches to the study of classroom discourse which have contributed in various ways to advice for teachers about the use of various lexico-grammatical choice in the pursuit of classroom goals. It was proposed that previous approaches to the analysis of classroom discourse which drew upon ‘systematic observation’ and ‘insightful observation’ along with ‘early linguistic studies’ were not adequate to meet the needs of this study. However, it was also proposed that some current work on lexico-grammar which took a more dynamic perspective on language choice as the interaction of two sets of functionally oriented systems within the discourse did offer considerable promise. In particular, it was proposed to adopt a model of analysis proposed by Christie (1989, 1994).

Christie’s model of analysis was then outlined in considerable detail (section 3.3) along with the translation of her model into the specific format employed in this study. Chapters 4 and 5 which follow will elaborate (where necessary) upon the description provided in chapter 3 as the analysis proceeds. The macrogeneric structure for the teaching sequence (concentrated encounter) under study was proposed. The analysis in chapter 4 will consider scaffolding formats from the initial (Task Orientation) stage of the macrogenre. Two sets of transcripts were identified for analysis from the Task Orientation stage of the Macrogenre (MTO). These were a set of Early Task Orientation formats along with a further set that occurred towards the end of the stage (termed Late Task Orientation - LTO). Chapter 5 will then consider the final Task stage of the Macrogenre (MT).
4 ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE IN THE TASK ORIENTATION OF A CONCENTRATED ENCOUNTER MACROGENRE

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

This chapter will explore language choices across format sets for the Task Orientation stage of the concentrated encounter macrogenre that is the focus of this study. The relationship between the sample texts analysed and the overall structure of the macrogenre was outlined in chapter 3 (section 3.3.2). Figure 3.1 in chapter 3 illustrated the progressive development of pedagogic discourse across the whole of the macrogenre. Figure 4.1, below, presents an extract from Figure 3.1 and illustrates potential development in the Task Orientation element of the macrogenre. It locates the scaffolding formats (ie. ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 & LTO2) to be discussed in this chapter.

![Figure 4.1](image)

Progressive development of control in the scaffolding of oral text in the Task Orientation of the macrogenre (MTO)

This figure shows that the Task Orientation of the macrogenre (MTO) is represented by transcripts ETO1 and ETO2 recorded at the beginning of the Task Orientation with LTO1 and LTO2 recorded towards the end of the Task Orientation element.

As chapter 3 (section 3.3.2) has pointed out, scaffolding formats were programmed to provide suitable contexts for the teacher and children to negotiate orally the construction of explanation texts appropriate to academic/literate discourses. This provided a first level of scaffolding that set a base for a second scaffolding sequence to do with the Task element of the macrogenre. This second scaffolding sequence was focused upon negotiating the actual process of writing an explanation text (discussed later in chapter 5 of this study). The formats were recursive across the macrogenre. This recursion of formats provided a socio-historical context which
allowed for inter-subjectivity concerning appropriate educational assumptions and understandings between teacher and children to be built up over time.

A fundamental goal, over the course of the Task Orientation, was to start moving the children toward more extended responses and initiations in their attempts to engage with the instructional field. This move represented an attempt to initiate, in as supportive a manner as possible, the beginnings of a mode shift from oral conversation towards the kind of extended and topic focused language use encountered in written text. It was expected that the children would require considerable support in learning to construct the language of the instructional register. That is, the children would possess little prior knowledge about either chicken embryo development or about how a procedural explanation should be staged. Furthermore, it was expected that the children would require support to engage with aspects of the regulative register, specifically those to do with the construction of written text and the construction of learning generally in mainstream classrooms. The teacher, therefore, set out deliberately to build a regulative register that was facilitative (refer chapter 3, section 3.3.5 & 3.3.6). That is, she attempted to employ negotiation strategies that made explicit and visible to the children the sets of assumptions underlying teacher expectations about the negotiation of learning.

Like all teachers, the teacher in this study sought to achieve a degree of pedagogic control over the direction and focus of negotiation in each scaffolding format. Unlike many early childhood teachers, this teacher was not satisfied to promote interaction simply to generate 'talk' in a permissive and non goal directed manner (eg. refer chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.2; also Frances Christie 1989, 1991). However, in achieving her language goals, she did not resort to a simplistic direct instruction model of the kind referred to earlier in this study (chapter 2, sections 2.1.1 & 2.4.1; see also more detailed discussion in appendix 1, sections 2.2.3 & 2.2.4).

Instead, she pursued a teaching approach that emphasised the role of scaffolding in classroom interaction across concentrated encounter macrogenres (see chapter 2, section 2.4.3). As scaffolded learning negotiation progressed over time, participant roles for both teacher and children continually changed and adjusted as children gained control over the discourse that was being promoted. It is within such a perspective towards classroom interaction as a socio-historical process that the actions of the teacher studied in this macrogenre need to be considered. As a result the pedagogic discourse of this teacher cannot be fitted neatly into the dichotomy of teacher directed versus child directed methodologies that is commonly drawn in the field of education (eg. refer chapter 3, section 3.2.2).

The main purpose of the analysis across chapters 4 and 5 is to provide a description of the pedagogic strategies the teacher employed to orchestrate the construction and flow of the facilitative discourse in which she engaged the children. The analysis in this chapter will identify significant features of individual teacher strategies as they were employed in shaping
the flow of discourse in the Task Orientation element of the macrogenre. In particular, choices within the Theme and Transitivity systems (refer chapter 3, section 3.3.4) will be examined over all four formats representative of the Task Orientation element.

The analysis will propose that comparison of the strategies employed by the teacher and children across the Early Task Orientation and Late Task Orientation Formats reveals very clear shifts in negotiation roles, particularly, in the extent to which the participants assumed interactional control within the discourse. In the pedagogic process that unfolded within the macrogenre, the teacher scaffolded the children's ability to assume control over language choices necessary for constructing the procedural explanation in question. Furthermore, as part of the process, the teacher also managed to scaffold the children's ability to control and respond to 'display' questions as a means through which such texts are characteristically built up and interrogated by teachers working with children in mainstream educational discourses.

Early Task Orientation Formats ETO1 & ETO2 will be considered first in section 4.2. Late Task Orientation Formats LTO1 and LTO2 will be considered in section 4.3. The discussion will extract from the complete transcripts of each Format that are given in volume two of this study (appendix 4).

4.2 LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY IN EARLY TASK ORIENTATION FORMATS

This section will explore strategies employed by the teacher under study to orchestrate learning in situations where very little inter-subjectivity concerning task focus existed between herself and the children. The instructional field explored in both Early Task Orientation Formats (ETO1 & ETO2) was unfamiliar to the children before they started this unit of work in the classroom. The first Early Task Orientation Format (ETO1) was set around direct observation and discussion of the manner in which the various components of the incubator functioned to provide a suitable environment for the hatching of the eggs. The second Early Task Orientation Format involved the children and teacher in discussing the development of an embryo to the stage of hatching as they turned the pages to look at illustrations of each step in the embryo's development. The oral texts produced in negotiation between teacher and children in each of these formats were different. However, as chapter 5 will reveal, various aspects of both texts combined to construct the jointly negotiated written text produced in the Task Element of the macrogenre.

In terms of the overall macrogeneric structure, these formats represented the beginnings of the teacher's attempts to support and expand the children's ability to construct explanations about the phenomena in question. Because the children possessed so little information about the instructional field, they could contribute little in these early formats. This was reflected in the low percentage of clauses they contributed to the discourse relative to the teacher. The
extent of the children's initiation is illustrated in the following Table 4.1 which shows the percentage of the total discourse contributed by the children in Formats ETO1 and ETO2.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional role of clause</th>
<th>ETO1</th>
<th>ETO2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses to teacher questions</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>10.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint construction clauses</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child initiations</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage of clauses produced by children in each format</td>
<td>16.57</td>
<td>19.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, frequency is expressed as a percentage of the total number of clauses produced by both teacher and children for each format. The first row gives the percentage of clauses produced by children in an attempt to answer a question posed by the teacher. The second row is concerned with clauses that were constructed jointly between the teacher and children. In addition to instances in which the teacher directly elicited completion of a clause (ie. cued elicitation) it also includes instances in which children volunteered responses spontaneously to complete a statement by the teacher. The third row is concerned with what have been termed 'initiations'. Initiations represent instances in which children attempted to introduce, as focus for discussion, new topics or new aspects of topics that were not directly requested in teacher questions. Table 4.1 shows that the children contributed only 16.57% and 19.22% of the total clauses produced by all speakers in each of formats ETO1 and ETO2 respectively. And of these amounts, most clauses produced by children occurred in response to teacher posed questions (10.06% for ETO1 and 10.38% for ETO2).

The situation represented by this table is one that would draw negative reactions from proponents of 'progressive', child centred approaches that shaped insightful observation analyses (chapter 3, section 3.2.3). However, while the teacher in this study frequently engaged in child centred discussion, especially where the function of the discussion was of a social nature, her purpose was different here. This teacher wished to lead the children into control over a particular kind of 'literate' discourse that was proposed earlier in this study as fundamental to educational success in mainstream schooling (refer chapter 1, section 1.5). As the introduction to this chapter pointed out the teacher was not interested in merely provoking 'talk' that simply reflected what the children already knew. Such 'talk' with Aboriginal children (in fact, with any children) where the children possess little inter-subjectivity with the teacher concerning what constitutes 'task focused' interaction has a strong propensity to produce an educationally pointless and even farcical interchange (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.3).

It is proposed here that before the teacher could allow the children a high degree of interactional control within educational discourse, she needed, first, to provide the children with
the fundamental understandings and resources that would allow them to negotiate in a 'task focused' manner within that discourse. Thus, as the analysis that follows will demonstrate, a substantial body of the clauses produced by the teacher in the discourse was concerned with modelling for the children particular language resources and associated strategies for their use in the negotiation of learning.

The analysis across the two formats ETO1 and ETO2 will attempt to explain the strategies the teacher used to orchestrate both the discourse staging and the participation of the children. Each format will be discussed in turn, Format ETO1 will be outlined over sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, while Format ETO2 will be discussed over sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4.

4.2.1 FORMAT ETO1 - THE OPENING PHASE

Format ETO1 commenced with a brief ‘Opening Phase’ (Christie 1989) which served an orienting function within the Format. This Opening Phase constituted the first of what can be described as teacher initiated Phases within the discourse. The term ‘teacher initiated Phases’ will be employed in this discussion to refer to instances where the teacher initiates shifts in the overall staging of the pedagogic focus for the Format. For example, settling and focusing attention prior to beginning or shifting focus to another instructional field topic. These shifts are clearly marked in the teacher’s grammatical choices. In the discussion that follows, the term ‘Phase’ can be taken to refer to ‘teacher initiated Phase’ and the terms will be used interchangeably. Any variation to this determination will be discussed at the time it applies.

It will be proposed that it was a particular strategy of this teacher, at certain times within the macrogenre, to initiate Phases in a highly systematic manner. She employed this systematic and explicit discourse staging to ensure that the instructional focus she was attempting to negotiate was explicit and commonly held by all children. Within each Phase, it was possible for further shifts in topic focus to be negotiated. However, these secondary shifts dealt with related sub-topics encompassed within the more global realm specified by the Phase. The extent of explicit teacher initiation of Phases and of topic shifts within Phases was dependent upon the level of inter-subjectivity concerning a particular task focus that existed within the group.

Educationally, the Opening Phase of this format was typical of much classroom discourse. Frances Christie (1989, 1991), for example, found that the teachers she studied customarily began lessons with attempts to achieve a link with past joint experience. Edwards and Mercer (1987) also observed that teachers attempted to build continuity with past school activity in this particular section of lessons. It is useful to note in passing that the teacher involved in this study had already given considerable time to preparing the children directly for participation in this format. Moreover, it was a particular feature of this teacher’s pedagogy that she continually drew reference to previous activity across the whole of the Format whenever possible and appropriate.
In classroom teaching activities prior to the beginning of the Formats, the teacher and the children had discussed how they would obtain the chickens. Furthermore, the teacher had already commenced more broadly conceived exploration of the instructional field that would continue in addition to the more focused concentration achieved in the concentrated encounter Formats. The first format (ETO1) to be discussed here is simply the first instance of the scaffolding routine that the teacher and children negotiated and developed as they observed and speculated upon the development of chicken embryos in the incubator over the 21 day gestation period.

The opening Phase through which the teacher attempted to build links to this prior discussion is set out below.

**First Phase: Opening**

0001 T: Yesterday afternoon... the lady [[who has got these chooks that Mrs Price rang up and asked if we could some... have some of her chook eggs... some of her hen's eggs]]

0002 and she sent them into the school yesterday afternoon

0003 so what I did

0004 I came down to the Language Unit

0005 and I put them straight into the incubator

0006 And so this is um... today we'll have a little look at [[what's going to happen to these eggs]]

In this Opening Phase of the lesson, the regulative register was foregrounded in part through the choice of monologue by the teacher but also through the nature of her choices within the Theme and Transitivity systems. In this Phase, the teacher first clarified activities that set the scene for the current lesson. The teacher then shifted from past to future tense as she explicitly announced the instructional field focus for the format. An analysis of Theme choices for this extract that provides further information on the teacher’s choice of language resources is set out in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THEME</td>
<td>RHEME</td>
<td>THEME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RHEME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0001</td>
<td>yesterday afternoon</td>
<td>the lady [[who has got these chooks that Mrs Price rang up and asked if we could some... have some of her chook eggs... some of her hen's eggs]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0002</td>
<td>and she sent them into the school yesterday afternoon</td>
<td>I did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0003</td>
<td>so I came down to the Language Unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0004</td>
<td>and I put them straight into the incubator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0005</td>
<td>and today we'll have a little look at [[what's going to happen to these eggs]]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0006</td>
<td>so</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the Theme system, the teacher recounted background events to set the lesson context via the use of Structural (ie. and, so) and Structural + Conjunctive Adjunct relationships (ie. and so). This sequencing of past events was further emphasised in choices for Marked
Topical Theme, in clauses 0001 and 0006 which foregrounded time relationships *(yesterday afternoon and today)* as a point of departure for clauses. Marked Topical Theme refers to a Topical Theme choice which is not simultaneously the Subject of the clause (refer prior discussion in chapter 3, section 3.3.4.2). This use of Marked Topical Theme also foregrounded the distinction the teacher wished to draw between past and proposed activity. Other instances of Topical Theme choices had to do with people (eg. *I, she*) involved in the past activity. No choices within Theme had to do with the instructional register.

The Structural chosen in Textual Theme above (*and, and so, so*) can also be considered through the perspective of the simultaneous role they played in the Conjunction system (refer chapter 3, section 3.3.4.4). Within the Conjunction system, the use of *so* to express consequential relationships between clauses indicates that the teacher was particularly concerned to establish explicitly the logical status of the links between past and present activity and not with relationships existent in the instructional field. That is, *the lady brought the eggs, so (consequently) I put them in the fridge and so (consequently) we’ll have a look.*

Analysis of choices for opening Phase clauses in the Transitivity system gives a compatible picture to that provided by the Theme system analysis which demonstrates a strong foregrounding of the regulative register. Within the Transitivity system, the choice of processes and participant relationships indicated that the teacher was focusing largely on providing background for the proposed discussion and was not engaging in any exploration of the instructional field itself (ie. ‘how the incubator works to hatch eggs’. Instead, the topic for the initial clauses (0001 to 0005) in the teacher monologue was realised in material processes to do with the activities involved in obtaining the eggs (eg. *rang, sent, came, put, etc*.). For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0002</th>
<th>Material and she</th>
<th>sent</th>
<th>them into the school</th>
<th>yesterday afternoon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro Goal</td>
<td>Circumstance: location: place</td>
<td>Circumstance: location: time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0005</th>
<th>Material and I</th>
<th>put</th>
<th>them straight into the incubator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro Goal</td>
<td>Circumstance: manner</td>
<td>Circumstance: location: place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant choices for Actor were realised through referents for ‘teacher’ or the ‘lady’ who supplied the eggs (eg. *I, she*). Material Process choices were concerned with the actions of these people (eg. *sent, put*). These realised the regulative field while the instructional field was realised only through reference to *them* as a minor participant, Goal on two occasions and within one Circumstance (ie. *into the incubator*).

Clause 0006 which followed, foregrounded the regulative register to move the focus away from ‘background preparation ’to direct the children into the instructional field. This shift in focus was promoted via a change from Material to Behavioural process choice.
In clause 0006, the regulative shift to we as Behaver suggests a joint exploration of the topic field in contrast to the focus on teacher as Actor realised through earlier material Process choices. Both Behavioural Process (‘ll have) and Range (a little look) were concerned with the activity to which the teacher was directing the children. The instructional register was simply announced in the Circumstance (i.e. what's going to happen to these eggs).

Thus, an examination of language choices indicates that, in the Opening Phase, the teacher’s choices were concerned with the past behaviour of the teacher and others which provided a context and a point of departure for the following discussion. The regulative register was strongly foregrounded and convergence with the instructional field involved simply nomination field components.

4.2.2 FORMAT ETO1 - THE SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT PHASES

Once the discourse moved past the Opening Phase, the teacher engaged the children more directly and explicitly within the instructional field. Thus, there was a considerable amount of convergence (see chapter 3, section 3.3.6.3) between the regulative and instructional registers. The orchestration of the pedagogic discourse by the teacher in this Second Phase and subsequent Phases was still, however, highly focused and structured. The organisation she imposed upon the instructional field was staged around pre-planned topic shifts within the instructional field which she initiated and controlled through explicit regulative register choices.

In the discussion of the second and subsequent Phases of Format ETO1 which follows, analysis will be considered first from the perspective of the language choices employed by the teacher to establish explicit teacher initiated Phases within the discourse (section 4.2.2.1). The discussion will then move on to consider both how the teacher established secondary shifts in the instructional field focus within Phases and how she worked to support the engagement of the children around those instructional field shifts (section 4.2.2.2).

4.2.2.1 Teacher’s role in the initiation of discourse Phases (Format ETO1)

Following the Opening Phase discussed above, the teacher initiated second, third and fourth Phases. Each Phase initiation defined a specific area of the instructional field for development in the ensuing discussion.

The Second Phase was concerned with discussion of the manner in which temperature was regulated in the incubator (instructional field). The teacher signalled the shift into this Phase explicitly via the regulative choice of the Continuative right as a Textual Theme choice. The teacher’s discourse in the initiating section of the Second Phase of the format is analysed for Theme below in Table 4.3.
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

Table 4.3
Teacher Theme choices for clauses 0007 to 0013 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0007 right</td>
<td>Cont. before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0008 I</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0009 and</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0010 we</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0011 do finite</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0012 do finite</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0013 do finite</td>
<td>what number Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspection of the above table reveals that there were two different Thematic choice patterns both of which foregrounded strongly the regulative register. For illustration purposes, each pattern is separated from the others by a shaded line in the above table. The first pattern involving a teacher monologue strongly foregrounded the regulative register and ran from clause 0007 to clause 0010. Here the teacher took control of all choices in Theme. Within Textual Theme, choices were realised by Structurals (ie. before, and) which helped to tie the monologue together as an explicitly coherent text. There were no choices for Interpersonal Theme. Topical Theme choices featured at first the teacher (ie. I) but changed to we as an inclusive referent for the teacher and children. The change from the teacher as Topical or Experiential Theme (ie. Mrs Price, I) to the use of we was a deliberate attempt to invite joint ownership of the activity. This intent was underlined by the self correction the teacher made within clauses 0008/9.

0008 T: I had to turn on the incubator
0009 and let it... and we had to let it warm up

The second thematic pattern (0011 - 0013) identified in Table 4.3 saw a change to regulative choices in Interpersonal Theme as the teacher structured the question she wished to pose. A further point of note is that the teacher chose a non specific you as the Topical Theme focus. That is, she did not single out a particular child. Rather, the choice of this referent invited participation from anyone in the group. The choice to promote and accept participation from all children at any time was one strategy this teacher employed to contribute to the building of a facilitative discourse. This issue will be developed further later in this chapter (section 4.2.2.1).

A further important scaffolding strategy evident in the analysis above (clauses 0007-0010) depends upon the use of hypotactic clauses in Theme position to build preformulation within a
clause complex in the manner described in chapter 3 (section 3.3.4.3). If the teacher had not wished to preformulate, she could have simply asked a question, for example, *What was the temperature we had to get it to before we could put the eggs in?* Instead, she foregrounded the dependent clause (*Right before Mrs Price put them in here*) to commence an extended preformulation,

```
Right before Mrs Price put them in here
I had to turn on the incubator
and we had to let it warm up
We had to get it to the right temperature
```

before she asked the question,

```
Do you remember the temperature [[that we had to get it to before we could put the eggs in]]?
```

In this instance, as the teacher shifted into a new Phase, she used preformulation to ensure all the children could engage with her shift in focus. She was, therefore, concerned to orient the task focus of the children carefully at that point. In other circumstances where she was confident that the children were already sufficiently task focused, she could vary her scaffolding input in this regard as she did in moving the children into the third phase of the format.

Analysis of Transitivity choices employed by the teacher between clauses 0007 and 0013 complemented the foregrounding of the teacher’s regulative register choices in Theme. In addition, the nature of her choices pointed to the means by which the teacher monologue promoted links between the instructional field and past shared experiences of that field as she and the children explored the working of the incubator. These choices are set out in Table 4.4 below.

| Table 4.4 |
| Teacher Transitivity choices for clauses 0007 to 0013 in Task Orientation Format ETO1 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0007</th>
<th>Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right before Mrs Price put them in here</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0008</td>
<td>Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to turn on the incubator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0009</td>
<td>Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and we had to let it warm up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0010</td>
<td>Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had to get it to the right temperature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0011</td>
<td>Mental: cognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you remember the temperature [[that we had to get it to before we could put the eggs in]]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0012</td>
<td>Mental: cognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0013</td>
<td>Relational: Intensive: Identifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what number it was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Token</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>A hundred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to achieve this explicit link between the instructional field and past joint experience in the first segment (0007-0010), regulative register choices were allocated the primary participant role of Actor which was realised by either the teacher (Mrs Price, I) or the teacher and the children (we). The instructional language choices in the Transitivity system were for Material Processes that identified actions to do with making the incubator function. Other reference to the instructional register was constructed through secondary participants. That is, items in the secondary participant role of Goal realised either the eggs or the incubator and Circumstances were either of location: place (in here) or extent (to the right temperature). Convergence here recounts and announces instructional field processes through the prior activity of teacher and children.

However, in the next segment from the Second Phase identified in Table 4.4 above (ie clauses 0011-0013), the teacher emphasised the regulative register even more explicitly to identify and recall prior common knowledge as a point of departure for her question. Here, the teacher employed Mental Processes of cognition to direct her question explicitly back onto prior joint experience (ie. do you remember, do you know) instead of simply asking the children a question like, What temperature does it have to get to?. This action (use of mental processes prior to the actual question), in effect, created another level of preformulation. Thus, because the teacher could rely upon the existence of a level of inter-subjectivity here, she could avoid questions that appeared, at least from the children's perspective, to derive 'as if by magic' out of the teacher's head (refer to earlier discussion of the role of questions in scaffolding in chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1).

The third teacher initiated Phase within the format attempted to draw upon a further aspect of prior shared experience to that from which the Second Phase was drawn. Once again, movement into this Phase foregrounded the regulative register through a Continuative choice (all right) in Textual Theme (clause 0051). Here, because the teacher was obtaining a useful level of response, she increased the interactive challenge facing the children by moving directly into a question without preformulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0051</td>
<td>all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0052</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struct. / C. temp.</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0054</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example, the interclausal relationship between the initiating clause (0051) and the following clause (0052) was a congruent one. That is, the head clause was placed before the dependent clause signalling that the teacher chose to forego her option to provide scaffolding through the introduction of a hypotactic clause as Theme. However, reference to past shared
experience was made explicit in the Transitivity system. To realise this strategy, the teacher employed a Mental Process of cognition together with a Material Process in the same clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: cognition / Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All right, what else do we have to remember to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Pro Sensor Pro Pro Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mental: cognition) (Material)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the choice of the Mental Process (*i.e.* remember) explicitly signalled a link between this new Phase topic and prior experience. In addition, the choice of what else to realise the participant function of Goal linked the question back referentially as an extension of the question posed in the Second Phase initiation. Once again the major discourse participants were realised inclusively through we. This initiation served as a starting point for an exploration of the process of humidity regulation in the incubator and this topic occupied the discourse until the teacher chose to initiate an explicit shift into a Fourth Phase within the format.

**The movement into the teacher initiated Fourth Phase** of the format was accomplished through a similar foregrounding of the regulative register similar to that the teacher employed in her initiation of the Third Phase (above).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>what else WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher's opening elicitation in clause 0090 foregrounded the Continuative *all right* as a Textual Theme choice and she also chose to foreground ‘what else’ as both an Interpersonal and a Topical Theme choice. It is useful to note that at this point that the children did not respond immediately to this initiation and the teacher was required to reframe the question in order to clarify her focus for the children. The teacher’s ‘reframe’ illustrated another scaffolding strategy. The manner in which she reframed the question will be discussed later in section 4.2.2.2.3 because it led to the initiation of a secondary focus within the instructional field for the Phase.

The three teacher initiated Phases subsequent to the Opening Phase which have been discussed above (ie. the second, third and fourth Phases in Format ETO1) provided an explicit and superordinate pedagogic staging of the format within which the teacher led the children through a specific set of explanations. These explanations were, namely, concerned with temperature regulation, humidity regulation and the functions of heat distribution and exercise provided by mechanical components (*fan* and *arm*) respectively. The following section 4.2.2.2 will examine the manner in which the teacher orchestrated ‘secondary’ topic shifts within each Phase.
4.2.2.2 Teacher's role in the initiation and development of secondary shifts in instructional field focus within Phases (Format ETO1)

Within each of the teacher initiated Phases outlined in the previous section (4.2.2.1), the teacher initiated a number of secondary topic focus shifts in the instructional field. Thus, in the Second Phase, for example, the teacher was concerned with exploration of the components that signalled the state of operation (especially temperature regulation) of the incubator. Her first secondary focus was upon the identification of the appropriate operating temperature for the incubator. Her next secondary focus was upon the regulating function of the thermostat lights (red/green) and her third secondary focus was upon the indicating function of the off/on light (green).

Her key regulative strategy for building these shifts in focus was to ask questions. That is, her regulative register choices were realised through Mood choice for the interrogative. In making this choice it was the teacher who took the participant role of wanting to know. Because she already knew the answers she was, in fact, asking the children to participate in displaying what they knew as a starting point for negotiation. This approach to learning negotiation is fundamental to the operation of most classroom discourse and such questions are commonly referred to as 'display questions'. Discussion in chapter 1 (section 1.5.3.2) of this study has proposed that display questions are also fundamental to the process of gaining control over academic/literate discourse.

However, display questions typically cause considerable difficulty when teachers attempt to use them to promote learning with Aboriginal children (chapter 2, sections 2.3.3 & 2.4.2). It is important, therefore, for the purposes of this study to explore the manner in which this teacher attempted to engage the children within this strategy. Figure 4.2 on the following page lists the key display questions employed by the teacher for each Phase of Format ETO1.

The first point to note with regard to the teacher's discourse in this format is that she did not simply ask these questions one after the other. They were deeply integrated into the rest of her discourse. Thus, it is not possible to separate the strategies the teacher employed for establishing shifts in the instructional field focus from the strategies she employed to support the children's engagement with that field overall. For, while the questions listed in Figure 4.2 did identify the key focus of the shifts she was seeking, they did not necessarily represent the point at which movement towards the new instructional field focus commenced. Often the shift towards a new aspect of the instructional field originated in what will be called later a reconceptualisation of a previous response. Consequently, it was how the teacher integrated these questions within the flow of the discourse that was important for revealing the nature of her pedagogy. This issue will be developed in section 4.2.2.2.1 which follows immediately after Figure 4.2.
### Figure 4.2
Phases in Format ETO1 with questions employed to shift discourse focus within each Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Secondary shifts in instructional field focus (questions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Phase: Opening</strong></td>
<td>This orienting Phase consisted of teacher monologue with no questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Phase: Topic focus:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature regulation in the incubator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--&gt;1</td>
<td>0011 Uh, Do you remember the.. the.. the temperature [[that we had to get it to before we could put the eggs in?]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0012 Do you know what number it was?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0025 When that red light goes off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0026 What does that tell us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0037 what does this green light here do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third Phase: Topic focus:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humidity regulation in the incubator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--&gt;1</td>
<td>0051 All right, what else do we have to remember to do before we put these eggs in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0052 why we had to do that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0058 Wonder what happens to the eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0059 if they get really dry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0066 Yeah, what happens to the eggs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0067 What does that thermometer tell us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fourth Phase: Topic focus:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function of mechanical components in incubator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--&gt;1</td>
<td>0080 All right, what else is...what else is working in the incubator?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0081 What else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0082 What's going...Makes a turning movement with her hand in air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0083 Round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0096 What does that little fan do at the top?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0097 What's this black thing here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0108 And what does that arm do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>0114 See this little thing here, Dannie?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>0128 What's happening?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>0147 What's happening now?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.2.2.2.1 Teacher initiation and development of instructional field shifts within the Second Phase (Format ETO1)

The careful manner in which the teacher in Format ETO1 went about building display questions into the flow of the discourse has already been introduced partially in the discussion of her initiation of the Second Phase of the format in the previous section (section 4.2.2.1). In order to support the children within the kind of academic discourse that employed display questions, this teacher was careful to direct display questions toward shared common experience. Furthermore, in order to maximise 'task focus', she typically built a preformulating 'buffer' before the questions in which she attempted to ensure that the context from which the
question arose was clear and commonly held by as many participants as possible. This discussion will, in part, examine the manner in which she extended that ‘buffer’ around questioning to include what will be referred to as a ‘reconceptualisation’. Thus a typical questioning sequence could be represented as:

```
  preformulation
     ↓
  question/response
     ↓
  acceptance
     ↓
  reconceptualisation
```

This sequence indicates that before she asked a question, this teacher often constructed verbally the context from which the question was to arise. Then, following the question, she was especially careful to provide feedback that, whenever possible, accepted the child’s response or partial response as legitimate. She could maximise her ability to accept because of her manner of preformulating/reformulating and because of the level of common knowledge she promoted generally. Next, she attempted to provide explicit and accessible models of instructional field knowledge along with the language resources necessary to extend the current performance of the children.

The outline of the manner in which the teacher employed questions within her discourse presented above could be characterised within the commonly employed model of Initiation^Response^Follow-up (IRF) sequence (eg. Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; see chapter 3, section 3.2.3). However, to employ such a description would miss fundamental features important to the shaping of this teacher’s discourse. It is not so much that the teacher concerned employed a series of discourse moves that could be described as an IRF sequence, rather it was the manner in which she marshalled and selected language resources to construct such sequences that provided the most significant insights into her pedagogic rationale. Some critical insights into the realisation of her pedagogic strategies are apparent in patterns of interaction revealed in her language choices within the Theme and Transitivity systems. Earlier discussion (section 4.2.2.1) has already considered the first aspect of the pattern of language choices the teacher employed at the beginning of Phase Two (ie. clauses 007-0013). However, the following discussion will extend consideration of Theme and Transitivity across clauses 0007 to 0020 in order to provide a more complete representation of the whole of the questioning sequence she employed. Table 4.5 gives an analysis of Theme choices in the teacher’s discourse for the whole of the questioning sequence under consideration.
The above table reveals that there are, in fact, four different Thematic choice patterns within the extract which conform to the questioning sequence introduced above. The first pattern runs from clause 0007 to clause 0010 and was discussed earlier. It was found to be characteristic of teacher monologue. Moreover, Mood choice for monologue was reflected in Theme through teacher control of all Theme choices (especially in choices for Textual Theme). It was proposed that through choice for hypotactic clause as Theme, the teacher had considerable scope to vary the extent to which she provided scaffolding for the children in the preformulation step of the sequence (refer section 4.2.2.1). Moreover, the use of *we* as Topical Theme was proposed as one indication of a concern to sustain joint ownership of the activity. Note that this first preformulation step strongly foregrounded the regulative register to locate the instructional field in past activity.

The second thematic pattern (0011-0013) saw a shift to choices in Interpersonal Theme as the teacher structured the question she wished to pose. One point concerning the role of the regulative register in maintaining joint engagement also arose from the manner in which the teacher posed her question. This was that the teacher chose a non-specific *you* as the

### Table 4.5
Teacher Theme choices for clauses 0007 to 0020 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>preformulation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0007 right Cont. before Struc./C. temp.</td>
<td>Mrs Price Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0008 I Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0009 and we Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0010 we Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>question</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0011 do finite Top.</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0012 do finite Top.</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0013 what Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>acceptance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0015 yeah Cont.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>reconceptualisation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0016 and Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0017 see Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0018 that Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0019 that Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0020 and Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>the temperature Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Topical Theme focus. That is, she did not single out a particular child but made it clear that the option to respond was open to all. The creation of an interactive climate that would encourage the children to speak freely was deemed to be important from the very start of the research at Traeger Park. This seemingly simple approach of opening up questions through the use of a non specific you, (along with other related interpersonal choices) was quite powerful in encouraging participation especially in the early Task Orientation formats. Moreover, because children were not placed in a position that highlighted their 'failure to know', the strategy opened up significant possibilities for learning negotiation that were not possible when teachers, for example, employed vocatives in Interpersonal Theme and elsewhere in the clause to single out individual children (see chapter 2, section 2.3.3). The strategy is furthermore consistent with the emphasis placed on such concerns in the KEEP program in Hawaii (Tharp and Galimore 1988).

In the third thematic pattern When a child did respond, the teacher’s acceptance and reinforcement of that child’s response (acceptance-clause 0015) created a strong interpersonal inducement at a social level for both that child and other children to attempt to respond in the future. One regulative choice for Textual Theme, that of yeah as a Continuative through which the teacher assumed a responding role (clause 0015) was a particular characteristic of this teacher’s regulative register in the early stages of the Task Orientation element of the concentrated encounter macrogenre. Here, yeah functioned as more than just an acknowledgment that the child had provided a correct response. Yeah, in effect, became a point of departure for the expansion of the child’s response by the teacher in the reconceptualisation (fourth thematic pattern).

The fourth thematic pattern (0016 - 0020) which, however, was not discussed earlier involved a shift back to teacher monologue in order to expand upon the child’s response. Monologue was indicated through teacher control of Theme choices in which she drew heavily upon Structurals in Textual Theme (ie. and). Note, however, that the monologue was located very strongly as a direct expansion of the instructional field. Thus, Textual Theme choices for Structurals occurred in accord with Topical Theme choices that drew upon the instructional field. That is, Topical Theme choice was concerned with temperature along with suitable referents for appropriate parts of the incubator (ie. that). Part way through the short monologue, the teacher shifted briefly to the regulative register to reinforce explicitly the children’s focus towards the instructional field via the choice of the imperative see as Experiential Theme in clause 0017. This kind of interaction provided an important means through this teacher could work to make explicit, for the rest of the group, the rationale behind the answer provided by one child.

Consideration of the Transitivity choices involved in the discourse segment bounded by clauses 0007 and 0020 both supports and extends the developing picture that arises from
discussion of Theme choices. The four sets of choices represented in the Theme analysis (Table 4.5) are set out in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6
Teacher Transitivity choices for clauses 0007 to 0020 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clauses</th>
<th>Transitivity</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Circumstance: location: place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0007</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Right before</td>
<td>Mrs Price</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>them</td>
<td>in here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0008</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>had to turn on</td>
<td>the incubator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0009</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>and we</td>
<td>had to let</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>warm up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0010</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>We</td>
<td>had to get</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>to the right temperature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0011</td>
<td>Mental: cognition</td>
<td>Do you remember</td>
<td>the temperature</td>
<td>[that we had to get it to before we could put the eggs in]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0012</td>
<td>Mental: cognition</td>
<td>Do you know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0013</td>
<td>Relational / Intensive / Identifying</td>
<td>what number</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0014</td>
<td>Relational / Intensive / Attributive</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>the temperature</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>almost a hundred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As earlier discussion (section 4.2.2.1) has dealt with the first sections of the above analysis (clauses 0007-0010) the discussion below will concentrate on the final two stages (clauses 0015-0020) in which the teacher provided acceptance and reconceptualisation following the child's response.

Given that the teacher's display question (0011-0013) attempted to encourage the children to recall past negotiation, these latter steps (0015-0020) served a critical scaffolding function within the discourse. In 0015, the teacher provided a positive response to one child's answer. However, as prior discussion of Theme has pointed out, the teacher then embarked on a reconceptualisation of that response in a manner that was distinctive of her discourse.
generally in Early Task Orientation Formats. In this instance, the segment in question (0016-0020) contained a series of Relational Process clauses (0016, 0019, 0020) as the teacher explicitly pointed to the thermometer and the temperature level in order to propose it as a common technical vocabulary for all the members of the group.

She also employed a Mental Process clause (0017) followed by a Material Process clause (0018) to direct and focus the children's attention onto the appropriate parts of the incubator and then point out how the measurement was indicated.

Through this expansion of the child's response, the teacher was attempting to make explicit models of the language choices in the instructional field available for all of the children to bring forward next time she probed them to 'remember'.

More information on the nature of the display questioning strategies that this teacher employed in early Task Orientation formats will be illustrated as discussion in this chapter develops. Further insight, for example, can be drawn from the next section within this particular Phase of Format ETO1 (clauses 0021 - 0035) in which the teacher continued the exploration of temperature regulation in the incubator.

preformation
0021 You see this little red light?  
0022 It’s gone off  
0023 Look  
0024 just just about to go off  
0025 When that red light goes off

question/response  
0026 What does that tell us?  
0027 A: It’s cold

acceptance  
0028 T: Yeah, it’s the right temperature isn’t it?  
0029 And when that comes on  
0030 it means  
0031 it’s getting a little bit ...  
0032 A: Cold A and J look at each other - both giggle briefly because of the correction and some other children join with them

0033 T: Yeah, a little bit cold  
0034 That’s right  
0035 and so the light comes on again
This section repeated the four part structure identified in the previous extract (0007 to 0021). That is, the teacher moved first to ensure that the instructional field context from which the question arose was clear and commonly held by as many participants as possible (0021 - 0025). Then, following her question (0026), she was very careful to provide feedback that, first of all, accepted the child’s response as legitimate (0028). The teacher then reconceptualised the child’s response (0029 - 0035). Table 4.7 below provides an analysis of teacher choices in Theme for the questioning sequence under consideration. Table 4.7 is then followed by table 4.8 which provides an analysis of teacher Transitivity choices for the same segment of text.

Table 4.7
Teacher Theme choices for clauses 0021 to 0035 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preformulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0021</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0022</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0023</td>
<td>look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0024</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./C. temp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0025</td>
<td>that red light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0026</td>
<td>yeah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceptance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0028</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reconceptualisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0029</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>when Conj. Adjunct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0030</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0031</td>
<td>if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0033</td>
<td>yeah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0034</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0035</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>so Conj. Adjunct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.8
Teacher Transitivity choices for clauses 0021 to 0035 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preformulation</th>
<th>0021 Mental: perception</th>
<th>You see this little red light?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0022 Material</td>
<td>It's gone off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0023 Behavioural</td>
<td>Look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0024 just just about to go off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0025 Material</td>
<td>When that red light goes off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>0026 Verbal</td>
<td>What does that tell us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0027 A: It's cold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0028 Relational/ Intensive/ Attributive</td>
<td>Yeah, it's the right temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0029 Material</td>
<td>And when that comes on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0030 Mental: cognition</td>
<td>it means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0031 Relational/ Intensive/ Attributive</td>
<td>it’s getting a little bit...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0032 A: Cold</td>
<td>A and J look at each other - both giggle briefly because of the correction and some other children join with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0033 T: Yeah, a little bit cold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0034 Relational/ Intensive/ Attributive</td>
<td>that's right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0035 Material</td>
<td>and so the light comes on again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above tables 4.7 and 4.8 show that the first section of this extract, 0021-0024 does differ from the teacher monologue employed prior to the teacher question in the first extract discussed earlier (clauses 0007-0010). However, in clauses 0021 to 0024 the teacher used the different functional choices in order to achieve a similar educational purpose of orienting the children towards the context from which the question arose. Here, Theme choices were all for Topical Theme (ie. you, it, look) with no choices for Textual and Interpersonal Theme. This section foregrounded the children and their behaviour as point of departure for clauses via the second person referent you and the imperative look. Within the Transitivity system, Mental, Material and Behavioural Process clauses directed children's focus towards the behaviour of the red light. In this instance, therefore, the teacher was attempting to establish
a suitable context for the upcoming question through directing group focus onto ongoing observable phenomena. She then pointed out that it had gone off. Next the light flickered back on and she encouraged the children to watch it go off again. When she held the children's attention, she was ready to ask her question which once more focused upon seeking information provided in a previous Format.

When the teacher did ask the question, she constructed the dependent or hypotactic clause 0025 (when that red light goes off) as Marked Theme to the clause 0026 (what does that tell us).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>when that red light goes off</td>
<td>what does that tell us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effect of moving clause 0025 into marked Theme position in its relationship with 0026 was to create, as Christie (1989:414) has pointed out, a summary clause (preformulation) which brought together and focused the preceding discussion prior to the question. This language strategy added to the explicit development of the context out of which the question arose.

Furthermore, when the teacher did ask the question, she explicitly signalled it as available for any child to answer. This time she did so not by selecting you as a general referent for all children as an Experiential Theme choice but by selecting us as a referent for teacher and children as Receiver in a Verbal Process clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Sayer</th>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Receiver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does that tell us?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In moving into the third and fourth sections (acceptance/reconceptualisation) of the questioning sequence (0028-0035), the teacher again employed language choices again which mirrored, in functional intent, those discussed for the corresponding section of the previous questioning extract (0015-0020). That is, she sought to legitimise the child's response and to extend models of information and language resources.

The teacher reconceptualisation (0021-0035) was largely monologic and significant Theme choices were for Continuatives in Textual Theme (and, and when) along with Topical Theme choices to do with the incubator parts (the light) and appropriate referents (it, that). Transitivity choices were largely for Relational Intensive Processes (eg. is) which identified attributes of the incubator components in focus. These were employed in association with Material Process clauses which dealt with the actions of the light (comes on) in the working incubator.

The picture presented through the above choices was again one of the teacher accepting a child's response and then extending its relationship to the instructional field. However, from an educational perspective this reconceptualisation produced a significant event that added to the
description of the facilitative nature of the regulative register that was being constructed by the
teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre.

The educational point at issue here occurred because the teacher was not simply responding
to a correct response from a child as was the case in the previously discussed 'elaboration'
section contained by clauses 0015-0020. Consideration of clauses 0021-0035 in this new
extract indicates that the child had, in fact, given a wrong answer. The transcript for 0021-
0035 has already been provided earlier. However, the relevant section is repeated below to
clarify the specific point being made here.

0025 When that red light goes off
0026 What does that tell us?
0027 A: It's cold (NB: THIS ANSWER IS NOT CORRECT)
0028 T: Yeah, it's the right temperature isn't it?
0029 And when that comes on
0030 it means
0031 it's getting a little bit ...
0032 A: Cold A and J look at each other - both giggle briefly because of the
0033 correction and some other children join with them
0034 T: Yeah, a little bit cold
0035 That's right
0036 and so the light comes on again

The above interaction illustrates an important aspect of the manner in which this teacher
employed the Continuative yeah as a regulative register choice. In the above extract (line
0027), the child's response was actually wrong. When the light went off, it meant that the
incubator had reached the required level of warmth (ie. it's the right temperature). When the
light came on, it meant that the temperature was too low (ie. it's cold) and that the heating
element had switched on to raise the temperature to the required level. However, even though
the child appeared confused, the teacher gave credit for the fact that the child at least focused
on temperature and she responded affirmatively with yeah. She then reframed the child's
response and added the regulative Mood tag, isn't it in order to refer the child back to the
assumption of shared common knowledge. She then drew the child into another attempt
which allowed the child to self correct her original response. Because of the fine level of inter-
subjectivity that existed, the child was able to use the teacher's strategy as a means of
reconstructing her own response. The teacher was not simply imposing an arbitrary
correction. In this regard it is important to note that the teacher's ability to employ this whole
strategy in a manner that was accepted naturally by the child depended very much on the
notion that the questions that she asked were encouraging the child to draw upon a suitable
level of common knowledge.

The manner in which this teacher employed yeah or yes as a language resource within her
regulative register represented a significant factor in the Task Orientation Element. It is,
therefore, useful to explore other potential response options that teachers typically employ
instead of yeah in situations where the child's response leads to dissonance of one kind or
another following teacher initiated display questions.
One common regulative register choice that teachers frequently make in such circumstances is for the Continuative *well* in Textual Theme either as an independent choice or in concert with *yeah/yes* (ie. *yes well*...). This response is one that is examined by Schiffrin (1987). Among the functions for *well* that she discusses, Schiffrin (1987) comments that it frequently ‘*signals moves that are in some way dispreferred*’ (Schiffrin 1987:102). For example, *Pomerantz* (1984) finds that *well* prefaces disagreements, alternating in this environment with *yes but* and *silence*. *Owen* (1983) adds that *well* can precede an answer in which a presupposition of a prior question is cancelled, as well as non-compliance with a request, or rejection of an offer. (Schiffrin 1987:102)

The following example is taken from Christie (1991) and represents one common use of *well* in the classroom texts that she has studied (refer also Christie 1989).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T:</th>
<th>...Who knows some other Australian animals that only eat plants? Joel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joel:</td>
<td>Kangaroos and cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T:</td>
<td>Yes, <em>well</em> cows are a kind of Australian animal <em>I suppose</em>. But Kangaroos certainly are.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Christie 1991:209)

In the above interaction from Christie (1991), the teacher and children were discussing 'wombats' and the teacher sought to extend the conversation to classify other animals that are herbivores. Joel, however, did not pick up the hidden assumption in the teacher's question that by *Australian animal* she meant *native Australian animal*. Two points can be made with respect to this. Firstly, the teacher in the lesson text sampled from Christie (1991) never did make the rationale for her qualification of the child's response explicit for the children. Moreover, examination of the transcripts for the writing lessons reported by Christie (1989, 1991) reveals that the early childhood teachers she studied often responded in this way. That is, they rarely explained for the children the reasons why the children had 'missed the point' of the question. In contexts where a suitable level of inter-subjectivity concerning the teacher's agenda for task focus exists, children are often able to respond to such indirect challenges. However, if very little inter-subjectivity exists, then the teacher's purpose is rendered largely invisible and inaccessible to the learners.

Secondly, *well*, in the manner it is used here, is not a sufficiently supportive response when children are reacting largely on a socially motivated level and where they are not task focused at an intra-personal level. This is because, in addition to signalling dissonance, *well* signals a teacher dispreference for the child's response which is readily interpreted at a social level. The difficulty which arises is that using *well* in this way when there is little inter-subjectivity regarding task focus means children do not have the intra-personal resources to resolve the dissonance easily. The only message that is clearly available for them to interpret is the social sanction implicit in the teacher's response. Consequently, unless children possess considerable confidence in their ability to function as proficient learners and to respond in mainstream educational discourse, teacher behaviour of this kind actively discourages risk taking and productive engagement on the part of the children.
As a result of the above considerations, the teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre was very selective concerning her use of *well* in response to wrong or incomplete responses on the part of the children. However, as discussion of later transcripts will reveal, she did use *well* in certain circumstances, especially in responding to questions or comments initiated by the children. She did not, however, use it in reaction to children's efforts to respond to her questions that sought the display of knowledge.

The teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre was well aware that Aboriginal children frequently do not pay close attention to the exact wording of a question. Thus, the child's response of *it's cold* in clause 0027 of the extract from Format ETO1 could have occurred for a variety of reasons including the fact that the child 'over predicted' the teacher's question. That is, the child was not attending closely to the exact wording of the question and was not oriented towards reflecting sufficiently upon the precise details of the problem that the teacher had posed.

Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms often appear to teachers to be simply 'guessing' without reflection. This is usually constructed by teachers as a problem of 'attending' or 'listening' dysfunction at a level of skill development. That is, it is often assumed that Aboriginal children somehow lack the ability to 'listen' or 'attend' in some global sense. However, even a very short observation of Aboriginal children outside of the classroom demonstrates that such interpretations are patently erroneous. Rather, the issue is one that derives from earlier discussion in chapter 1 (section 1.5.3.3) and chapter 2 (section 2.4.2) which discussed issues to do with academic ‘task focus’ and attending to ‘what the words mean exactly’ by Aboriginal children.

Consequently, the teacher's acceptance of the child's response and her subsequent interaction between clauses 0021 and 0035 represented more than an attempt to correct an isolated errant response. The teacher was attempting to scaffold the children into a reconceptualisation of the manner in which they processed the discourse itself. Reconceptualisation as a feature of adult-child discourse is discussed at length by Cazden (1988:110 -118). In short, it involves interacting with a child's response in such a way that supports a shift in the 'frame of reference' through which the child responds to the adult's initiation. Cazden (1988) elaborates her explanation by drawing upon the efforts of parents expanding the first utterances of very young children reported by Brown and Bellugi (1964:143).

The existence of expansions has been widely documented in the speech of Western middle-class caregivers, and has focused on their possible contribution to the child's acquisition of grammar. But in that first article, Brown and Bellugi wrote, "It seems to us that a mother in expanding speech may be teaching more than grammar; she may be teaching something like a world-view." In these early conversations, children learn not only "how" to mean but "what" to mean as well. (Cazden 1988:112)
This aspect of early language development in literate environments has been explored in earlier chapters of this study (refer chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1). However, the notion of 'reconceptualising' the child's response is also important for understanding the interaction reported in clauses (0028-0035). In expanding upon the child's response, the teacher was attempting to support the child in reconceptualising more than merely what constitutes appropriate content or how that content should be expressed. The teacher was also attempting to reconceptualise the orientation the child characteristically took as a participant within the discourse towards one which paid close attention to 'what the words actually mean'. In the set of clauses (0028-0032) the teacher engaged with the child in resolving the dissonance.

0028  T:  Yeah, it's the right temperature isn't it?
0029  And when that comes on
0030  if means
0031  it's getting a little bit ...
0032  A:  Cold

To do this, she kept her monologue within the confines of the instructional field and reframed the question so that it did actually lead to the answer the child gave. It is significant also that in clause 0031 the teacher did not ask a direct question. Instead, she sought a response to a 'cued elicitation'. That is, she began the statement and paused as an invitation for any child who wished to complete the statement. This allowed her to invite joint construction instead of placing direct responsibility on the children to find an answer to a discrete question. If the children had not been able to answer, the teacher had the option of completing the statement herself and even explaining further in a way that maintained the flow of the discourse.

An important point about the questioning strategy employed by the teacher in Format ETO1 was that questions were not used as a means to interrogate children in order to 'find out what they know'. Questions were used as a means of engaging the children within the teacher's discourse. This distinction involves a significant issue because it sustains an initial social dimension underlying the children's engagement. For children who do not possess the specific member's resources for participating in mainstream classroom discourse, achieving this social dimension is a fundamental prerequisite for developing intra-personal control in the discourse (see chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2).

The final teacher-initiated shift in instructional field focus in the second Phase of Format ETO1 centred upon temperature regulation in the incubator. This questioning sequence was contained within clauses 0036 to 0050. This section was in most respects similar in structure to the two preceding sections (0007-0020 & 0021-0035) that have been discussed above. It also separated into four sections which are identified in the extract below.
Although the above extract bears considerable similarity to previous sections involving display questions, a number of language choices are worthy of note. The first is that the teacher now moved much more quickly into the question. She simply employed an elliptical clause (0036) as a preformulation to focus the children's attention.

0036 And (look at) this green light here

The teacher did not discuss the function of the green light in the detail she employed for the red light in the previous questioning sequence (0021-0025). This was because she knew from past activity that the children were quite clear about the function of the green light which was less complex than that of the red light. If they had not been, she could easily have elaborated explicitly on this function while simultaneously switching the incubator on and off and encouraging the children to try it out also. The teacher's adjustment, in this respect, represented a process of continual modification within her regulative register in response to the extent to which the children were prepared to take over interactive control. Because the instructional field in each format was visited frequently by the teacher and children, a high level of inter-subjectivity was built up and interaction attempts on by the children were easily read and interpreted on later occasions. Thus, the teacher was enabled to orchestrate a 'handover' process which could respond to and support children's attempts to take control.

A further point worth noting here relates to the children's response to the teacher's choice of remember as Experiential Theme in 0045.

0045 Remember
0046 we had to plug the incubator in there   Points to electric socket on floor
0047 J: Yeah
0048 A: Yeah
0049 T: That's worked by electricity
0050 J: Yes

Earlier discussion has considered the manner in which this teacher employed Mental Processes of cognition (eg. remember) as Transitivity system choices in order to refer children back to previously established common knowledge. The children's 'backchannelling' behaviour
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

(ie. yeah/yes in clauses 0048 & 0050) represented an explicit acceptance of this challenge by them. ‘Backchannelling’ constitutes the use of Continuatives such as yeah reactively to affirm that the hearer is following and agreeing with what the speaker is saying. Cazden (1988: 64-66) quotes research by Meier (1985) which proposed that backchannelling, when it occurred spontaneously in children's classroom discourse, was highly significant. This was because, over time, it signalled the building of a secure basis for genuine dialogue between teacher and children. Furthermore, backchannelling provided for a more equal role relationship that allowed the children to take a more effective part in evaluating and commenting upon the discourse itself.

These (backchannellings) are metacommunicative utterances - they comment on the discourse itself, and in so doing, they are implicitly evaluative. To backchannell another's utterances requires that one perceive oneself as entitled to make a metalinguistic 'comment' on how well the conversation is proceeding. (Meier 1985, cited in Cazden 1988:66) (italics added)

Sinclair and Brazil (1982) also comment on this same phenomenon which they refer to as ‘engagement’ although it will be referred to as backchannelling throughout this study. They comment that,

In the classroom, the use of engagement is rare. When the teacher makes a statement, there is no chorus of mhm, and any instances would be interpreted as insolent, since the pupils would more or less be granting the teacher the right to continue. The teacher has the floor, however, all the time, and does not need any confirmation of his control over the discourse or support in his efforts to continue. (Sinclair & Brazil 1982:57)

It is, therefore, a significant comment on the nature of the teaching/learning negotiation promoted by the teacher in this study that the children should feel free to respond to her discourse moves with backchannelling strategies. It is, however, even more important to consider what circumstances allowed backchannelling to occur. At an immediate level there was the teacher's acceptance and positive encouragement of the children's backchannelling responses. However, at an even more fundamental level, backchannelling was promoted by the children's ability to access inter-subjectively held common experience developed in earlier discussions as a means for validating the information presented in current discussion. Thus, even in the context of Format ETO1 (early in the macrogenre), the responses of the children indicated how the teacher's strategy of encouraging children to reflect back onto prior joint experience helped to encourage active and sometimes critical participation on their part. This kind of participation by children will be observed in a far more developed sense when the Late Task Orientation Formats LTO1 and LTO2 are considered later in this chapter (section 4.2).

In this Early Task Orientation Format, backchannelling provided an indication of emerging development of the principle amongst participants within the discourse that aspects of any current interaction could be evaluated in terms of past knowledge or experience. This meant, in fact, that the teacher’s behaviour was promoting an attitude of critical evaluation and challenge which could address as arbiter, resources beyond the teacher’s authority in any current discussion (eg. see sections 4.2.4; 4.3.4 & 5.4.3).
4.2.2.2.2 Teacher initiation of development of instructional field focus in the Third Phase (Format ETO1)

As discussion has already pointed out at the beginning of section 4.2.2.2, the teacher built shifts in instructional field focus around a series of questions. In the Third Phase of Format ETO1, the manner in which she integrated questions into the flow of the discourse continued in much the same fashion as it had during the Second Phase. Above all, the teacher paid considerable attention to accepting and then reconceptualising the children's responses. An example of this process is found between clauses 0050 and 0056 below. Here, the child's response to the display question in clauses 0050-0051 faltered because the child was unsure. By repeating the child's response in a manner that cued the child to complete the statement, the teacher let the child know that her response was acceptable (0053) and encouraged her to continue. Once the child had responded, the teacher accepted, then built upon the partial response.

0051 T: All right, what else do we have to remember to do
0052 before we put these eggs in?
0053 J: We have to...
0054 T: What do we have to...
0055 J: put water
0056 T: Yeah, good girl
0057 we had to fill the bottom of the incubator up with water

Again, it was important that this reconceptualisation tapped explicitly into past experience. Moreover, because of the inter-subjectivity inherent in this past experience, the teacher had no difficulty understanding and responding to an incomplete response. In fact, the teacher here could have just as easily responded as she did with clauses 0055 and 0056 to an even more limited response such as put or water. Moreover, the teacher could have responded in this way to a non-verbal cue from the child such as pointing to the bottom of the incubator.

What is also notable here is the manner in which teacher questions made use of the reconceptualisation of the children's responses as a staging point for the next question. Teacher questions appeared to evolve quite naturally out of the teacher monologue in which they were implanted (ie. reconceptualisation(r)^preformulation(p)^question(q)). One example of this is given below for clauses 0056 and 0067. This aspect of the teacher's pedagogic discourse is fundamental for scaffolding children's control of the discourse. It will be developed further as discussion proceeds throughout this study (eg sections 4.2.2.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.3.2.1 & 4.3.2.2).
In this instance, the teacher monologue between questions served to make explicit the teacher's thinking process underlying the questions. It was as if the teacher was modelling the thinking process for interrogating the instructional field here for the benefit of the children. This was highlighted in clause 0058 through the teacher's explicit use of the Mental Process wonder to project the question in clause 0059.

This projection served a number of purposes. First, the participant structure in the Material Process clause identified a prior relationship between teacher/children (we =Actor) and an activity to do with the instructional field (realised as Goal via the referent that). Thus, the teacher was encouraging the children to reflect upon and bring forward past experience into the current discussion. In this sense, she was modelling how to interrogate and reflect on that past experience. The effect of reflection was further highlighted through the rhetorical manner in which the teacher employed the Continuative yeah, as a Textual Theme choice in response to her own statement (clause 0066). Second, the teacher's use of projection to construct a rhetorical question as preformulation (0058-59) prior to her direct question (0060) constituted an invitation for the children to initiate spontaneously in the discourse. The child who responded took up this cue and provided her answer (0061) before the teacher could complete her direct question.

In this teacher's discourse, reconceptualising monologues provided for the modelling of register choices not produced spontaneously by the children. In Phase 3 of Format ETO1, it was especially within the reconceptualising monologues that the teacher modelled a range of Textual Theme choices for building extended explanations. The teacher made use of Additive, Temporal, Consequential and Causal Conjunctions to realise the role of Structural in Textual Theme position. A Theme analysis for all clauses produced by the teacher which contained
Structurals in this Phase of Format ETO1 is listed in Table 4.9 below to illustrate this range of choice.

### Table 4.9
Theme analysis of teacher produced clauses containing Structurals in Phase 3 of Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>Struc./ C. temp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>Struc./ C. condit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>Struc./ C. condit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>Struc./ C. condit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>Struc./ C. add</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table reveals that the most frequent occurrence for Structurals in this Phase is realised through the choice of causal (6) and conditional Conjunctions (5). Temporal and additive Conjunctions were employed once each bringing the overall number of conjunctions to 13.

A further and related pedagogic point for comment has to do with the function that this teacher frequently assigned to the use of the Continuative now as a regulative register choice in Textual Theme position. This teacher regularly employed the Continuative now as a means of explicitly signalling points that moved the logical development of the discourse forward. These developmental shifts often occurred within her reconceptualisations of children’s responses. Unlike other Continuatives such as all right, right and ok, the Continuative now (clause 0084 - above) was not typically used on its own in Task Orientation formats by this teacher to mark off a separate Phase in the discourse. Schiffrin (1987) points out that, in everyday conversation, now can represent a language resource through which speakers emphasise the visibility of the logical progression they are developing in expository interaction. It is for this function that now was employed by the teacher in clause 0085. When it was employed in this way, now represented a regulative register choice to signal the start of a clause promoting aspects of the instructional register. This relationship between the two registers is illustrated
in the Transitivity system for the clause because it is here that aspects of the 'content' of the instructional register are realised. This is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>now if it goes down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Circumstance: location: place

In the above example, the teacher used a Material Process clause to construct the instructional register. This was constructed through the choice of Actor (it) as a referent for the thermometer level, along with the Process goes and in the Circumstance down such that the whole of the participant structure for the clause realised the instructional register. Now, in this particular instance, functioned to signal visibly the shift in logical reasoning that occurred as she moved from her previous statement. As a result, it explicitly signalled, for the children, the opening up of an important set of logical relationships within the instructional field.

This use of now to signal logical progression explicitly is significant when it is considered in relation to the findings of Frances Christie (1989, 1991) concerning the use of Continuatives in the early childhood writing lessons she studied. In the Task Orientation elements of the Early Childhood writing curriculum genres she observed, Christie found that Continuatives were infrequent once the teacher had initiated discussion as the vast majority of Continuatives were employed at the very beginning or at the end to close discussion. Of the relatively few Continuatives that did occur in what Christie referred to as the ‘body’ of the discussion, the Continuative yeah (to accept responses) was the most frequent although now also occurred in the ‘body’ of the texts from time to time. However, only one of Christie's early childhood teachers gave the 'logical' function for now any use. Her other teachers did use now to stage sequential progression within the classroom discourse but they did so in educationally 'pedestrian' ways that essentially expressed arbitrary rather than logical relationships between shifts in instructional field focus. For example, one of Christie's teachers who was discussing different kinds of uniforms with the children prior to writing about them simply used now as a signal to move to the next item of clothing. The following extract from Christie (1989) illustrates this approach.

T: What else would he wear?
Diana: Slacks
T: Yes, he would
Stephen: Grey slacks
T: Yes I think they are grey.
Well, so that's a train driver's uniform
Now let's look at this one.
Who wears this kind of uniform? (she displays it) (Christie 1989:832) (bold type added)

In the transcript from which the above example is taken there appeared to be no real focus for discussion about each item. Consequently, the strategy used by the teacher in drawing together the contents of the previous discussion before moving on was, to say the least, perfunctory (ie. Well so that's a train driver's uniform). When she moved into the new instructional topic, the teacher did not employ now as a Continuative in order to advance the logical development of the instructional field in the manner of the teacher in Format TO1.
discussed previously. Instead, the teacher in Christie's 1989 study simply directed the students' attention towards a new item displayed to them. The 'development' of the instructional field was simply a shift to a new topic focus. This is evident upon consideration of the Transitivity choices she employed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>let's look at this one.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the clause above, the instructional register was merely introduced by presenting the topic for discussion in Range (this one) following a Behavioural Process look at. As a result, the teacher's next question of *Who wears this kind of uniform?* was not well connected to any purposeful development within the instructional field.

Discussion of further formats in the Task Orientation element of the concentrated encounter macrogenre will reveal that the teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre did at times use now to express a simple sequential progression of activity. However, her most frequent choice for the Continuative now was to make explicit organisational and logical structure inherent within the 'content' of the instructional field. Moreover, this use of now was in association with the use of Conjunction referred to earlier in Table 4.9.

In contrast, Christie (1989, 1991) found that the teachers she studied provided virtually no linguistic resources for the development of logical progression even though they had ostensibly set out to prepare the children to write factual texts as the outcome of their lessons. Christie proposed that this state of affairs was due largely to the fact that the teachers she studied possessed little awareness of linguistic nature of the texts they expected their children to produce. Moreover, she argued that the absence of these logical resources reflected the lack of 'depth' in the treatment of the instructional field. Although, in a later study in an upper primary classroom, Christie (1994) illustrated how awareness and modelling of resources for the construction of logical relationships of this kind contributed strongly to the ability of the children to produce texts appropriate to the demands of late primary schooling. It would seem that Aboriginal children who progressed through schooling without consideration of their need to acquire such competencies would be severely disadvantaged in their attempts to cope with the demands for the use of such resources in their later schooling.

A final observation that is appropriate in Phase 3 concerns the teacher's use of inclusive reference. This strategy has been highlighted on previous occasions and its role in constructing joint participation has been indicated (eg. sections 4.2.2.1 & 4.2.2.2.1). While it is acknowledged that most teachers resort to the use of we, the teacher in this study appeared particularly conscious of the need to emphasise explicitly the notion of joint construction throughout the interaction here. For example, Material Process clauses were used to reconstruct past experience with the inclusive referent we in the role of Actor.
Furthermore, the use of *we* as an inclusive referent for teacher and children figured heavily in the teacher's discourse not only as Actor in Material Process clauses such as those above but also as Behaver in Behavioural Process clauses when the teacher attempted to focus children's attention.

The inclusive referent for teacher and children was also carried in the use of *us* as the Receiver in Verbal Process clauses. For example,

In this Phase (0051 - 0089), the teacher employed such referents in 16 clauses or almost half of the 38 clauses in the whole Phase. The effect of such choices was to add to the emphasis on the joint participation of both teacher and children in the educational enterprise that was being negotiated. The maintenance of her status as a joint participant in the activity with the children was of fundamental importance to her ability to scaffold their participation and development.

4.2.2.2.3 Teacher initiation and development of instructional field focus in the Fourth Phase (Format ETO1)

The strategies the teacher employed for establishing shifts in instructional field focus within this fourth Phase were similar to those discussed for earlier Phases within the body of the discussion. The teacher still maintained control over the determination of secondary topic shifts within the Phase. For example, at the beginning of the previous Phase (Phase 3-clauses 0051-0057), the teacher received a response from a child which, while it was incomplete, allowed the teacher to accept and move directly into the discussion. Her strategy for supporting and developing the response from this child was discussed earlier (section 4.2.2.2.2). In moving into Phase 4, the teacher encountered a situation in which there was, initially, not even an attempted response from the children to her initial probe. Her strategy, when the children did not respond was to quickly reframe the level of difficulty of the question and offer the children a clue to a suitable response.
In this manner she demonstrated for the children a suitable topic choice in response to her question. As a scaffolding strategy, her response presumed that contexts would occur in the future, which would allow the children to draw upon that demonstration in formulating a more spontaneous response to the opening question. These two response patterns from the teacher provided examples of teacher responses to different levels of discourse control on the part of the children she was teaching. They illustrate, moreover, that this teacher was always ready to inform the children when she perceived they did not know something. While such a statement may seem merely a truism, earlier discussion in chapter 2 (sections 2.3.3 & 2.4.2) illustrated that teachers working with Aboriginal children would frequently pursue questioning to an often ridiculous extent, well past the point when it was clear that the context was non productive.

The manner in which this teacher responded when children were not familiar with aspects of the instructional field is illustrated particularly in this fourth phase. This can be seen in the extent of the reconceptualisation the teacher engaged in following a response by two children (0109) to her request for an explanation (0108). All of this reconceptualisation was directed specifically towards Dannie(Dan - D), a child who had not been present for any of the prior classroom activities to do with hatching chickens. Also within the reconceptualisations, the teacher continued to accept and encourage contributions from other children, incorporating them within the discourse rather than regarding them as interruptions to her dyadic interaction with Dannie. These child initiation episodes are boxed in the text given below. The immediate discussion will concentrate upon the manner in which the teacher used the reconceptualisations to increase understanding of the instructional field.

| acceptance  | 0106 | T: | An arm |
| EQ: | T: | that's right |
| question/response  | 0108 | And what does that arm do? |
| EQ: | J/A: | It makes the exercise for the eggs |
| reconceptualisation  | 0110 | T: | See Dannie |
| EQ: | T: | T turns to Dannie who has missed previous lessons |
| 0111 | Mrs Price will turn it around this way love |
| 0112 | M: | It make... |
| EQ: | T: | (unclear statement) |
| 0113 | See this little thing here? |
| 0114 | See this little thing here, Dannie? |
| 0115 | D: | Yes |
| 0116 | T: | That's [[what we call an arm]] |
| EQ: | 0117 | And we'll see... |
| 0118 | A: | It... |
| 0119 | J: | It makes it exercise |
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

preformulation
0120 T: You watch
0121 and see what happens
0122 when we press this
0124 Just have a little look
0125 Normally this arm works on its own
0126 Mrs Price doesn't have to press the button every time
Presses button to activate the incubator arm
0127 Just have a... just...you have a look

question/response
0128 What's happening?
0129 J: The eggs are rolling

acceptance
0130 T: Yeah.

reconceptualisation
Jan says
0131 that the little chicks inside...
0132 J will have exercise
0133 T: Yeah, getting exercise
0134 See
0135 and it moves around this way
0136 See
0137 the eggs just...just moving a little bit over this way
0138 Just turning a little bit

M: (comment to teacher inaudible on tape)
Points to incubator
0139 T: That's right initiation
0140 'cause it'll keep going acceptance
0142 and you watch [what happens then ]
0143 Just come around this way

0144 J: Going the other way initiation
0145 T: Yeah, that's right acceptance
0148 Going the...
0149 J: other way

question
0146 What's happening now?

acceptance
0147 That's right, Jan
0148 Going the...
0149 J: other way

reconceptualisation
0150 T: Yeah, going the other way
0151 That's right:
0152 and so the little eggs are going this way
0153 and then they go back that way
0154 Now, cause that... that... those little chicks inside the
eggs there they need exercise
0155 because if they don't have exercise
0156 they could be born...

0157 J: They'll come out crippled initiation
0158 T: Yeah, they could have a little crippled leg acceptance
0159 so that they can't walk properly
0160 or something might be wrong with their head
0161 so we have to give them exercise
0162 That's right:
0163 so it's stopped

0164 Now, that'll have a little rest for a while
0165 and then that arm will come back this way
0166 and move it around that way
0167 So even when though... even when we're home
0168 or we're out somewhere
0169 this keeps working
0170 We don't have to keep pressing that button
0071 to give the little chicks exercise
At the beginning of the first reconceptualisation/preformulation in the transcript above (0110-0127), the teacher's Experiential Theme choices were realised in *see* and *you*. These Theme choices coincided with the building of Interrogative and Imperative Mood as the teacher focused the child's attention towards the topic. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0114</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0127</td>
<td>just</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitivity analysis reveals a significant number of Behavioural and Mental Process clauses (regulative register choices) through which the teacher was directing the child's visual focus (0110, 0113, 0114). Phenomenon or Range was typically concerned with the arm (ie. *this little thing here*). For example,

```
0114
see
this little thing here, Dannie?
```

Most of the other Experiential Theme choices foregrounded the *arm* which rotated the eggs in the incubator. The arm and its function was then commented on as Rheme. Two examples are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0116</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0125</td>
<td>normally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through the language choices outlined above, the teacher worked hard to establish a common focus for discussion. When the teacher had the child's focus she explicitly identified *this little thing* as an *arm* using a Relational Process clause. In this clause the regulative register choice what we call explicitly demarcated commonality.

```
0116
Relational: Intensive: Identifying
that 's [(what we call an arm)]
```

Then, having established identification, the teacher drew the child into an observation of how the arm worked (0117-0127). Again she employed a significant number of Behavioural and Mental Process clauses (0120, 0121, 0124, 0127) to direct focus onto the ongoing action of the arm.

Consequently, by the time she reached her question of *What's happening?* in clause 0128, the question was heavily scaffolded. No matter how Dannie (D) responded to the question she was able to accept and capitalise upon that response. Even if the child had simply pointed or, in fact, even if he had just watched the arm moving, she could say something like, *Yeah, it's moving etc.* As it was, another event occurred which is very common in classroom discourse
with Aboriginal children. That is, another child answered on behalf of the child the teacher had singled out for attention.

In the literature on classroom discourse with Aboriginal children, the answering of questions directed at others is often seen by teachers as a problem (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.3). This teacher's response revealed a completely different mind set on this issue, one that was fundamental to her scaffolding strategies. Instead of ignoring the other child's contribution and refocussing her demands on the target child or, worse, chastising the child who responded, the teacher made a considerable effort to include the offered response as a valid component of jointly constructed discourse.

Moreover, in the above extract, it is significant that the teacher adopted as point of departure for her reconceptualisation the comment it makes it exercise that was offered by Jan (J) back in clause 0119 (refer larger transcript earlier, clauses 0106-0171). Thus Jan was encouraged not only to supply the answer, but to take part in the reconceptualisation as well (clauses 0131-0132). This aspect to do with initiations by children will be developed further in section 4.2.4.

One major reason why this teacher could accept offered responses from other children in this way derives from an earlier statement in this study concerning her attitude to questioning (eg. section 4.2.2.2). This teacher was not blinkered by the notion that questioning should constitute an interrogation and evaluation of the cognitive capacity of individual children. She realised that display questioning needed to be established as a social process first before it could have any role as a task focused strategy for 'challenging' children to 'think the problem through' in a manner appropriate to mainstream educational discourse. Moreover, she was secure in the knowledge that she and the children were engaged in a sequence of recursive routines that would be developed over the course of the macrogenre. Consequently, models provided in one instance would be available to be brought forward by other children in a later recursion of the format.

The discussion above also touches upon another related issue in the orchestration of the discourse across the macrogenre. This teacher was not confounded or defeated when children were unable to respond within the discourse. When children were unable to respond, she (like parents scaffolding young children in literate contexts) simply assumed the
responsibility of responding on their behalf (refer chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1). In the above transcript, one child assumed more responsibility than the others for responding. Again, this did not unduly worry the teacher for she knew that this particular discussion constituted one step in the building common knowledge that would be available for others to bring forward in later sessions. Her strategies that have been discussed so far were directed towards enabling the children to engage in later sessions. The teacher's extensive reconceptualisation in the fourth Phase of Format ETO1 provides an indication of the kind of strategy she would employ if there were no children in the group who were able to provide responses to the extent that one child (Jan) did.

A further point of note in the set of reconceptualisations considered above concerns the use of vocatives. Earlier in this chapter (section 4.2.1), it was noted that this teacher typically asked questions in a manner that invited responses from the group as a whole and that she did not, in early Task Orientation formats, single out individual children as 'targets' for questions. In this phase, however, the teacher's reconceptualisation provided an instance in which she did employ vocatives to single out individual children for attention. However, her concentration upon individual children in these circumstances was consistent with her earlier inclusive approach to participation within the discourse. In this Phase, while the teacher did employ vocatives, she did not employ them to mark children as targets for direct questioning in the manner that is typically described by researchers reporting on classroom discourse involving Aboriginal children (eg. chapter 2, section 2.3.3). Instead, she employed vocatives to draw children into supported participation.

One final point of observation concerning the teacher's reconceptualisation is worthy of further comment. This point concerns the use of the Continuative now to signal explicitly, via its role as Textual Theme choice, a shift in the development of the instructional field. The use of the Continuative now for this purpose was raised earlier (section 4.2.2.2.2) in discussing the third Phase of this format. In the previous instance, the teacher also foregrounded logical relationships strongly within instructional field progression by means of Textual Theme choices for Structurals which concurrently realised logical relations between clauses in significant sections of the teacher's reconceptualisation.

Here, in the example drawn from the fourth Phase, the teacher engaged in a quite extensive reconceptualisation following the child's response of the eggs are rolling in clause 0129. The teacher's reconceptualisation was extended through clauses 0129 to 0171 and the foregrounding of now as Textual Theme contributed strongly to the mode of organisation of the discourse. The teacher used now in line 0154 to signal a movement into consideration of the purpose and consequence of the cycle. Finally, in 0164 she moved the discourse into consideration of the continuous nature of the cycle and it's consequences. Her use of choices in Theme is illustrated in the following analysis (Table 4.10).
### Table 4.10
Teacher Theme choices for clauses 0150 to 0171 in Task Orientation Format ETO1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0150 yeah</td>
<td>going the other way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0151 Cont.</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0152 and</td>
<td>the little eggs Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0153 and</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0154 now Cont.</td>
<td>that...that... those little chicks there Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0155 because</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0156</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0158 yeah Cont.</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0159 so that</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0160 or</td>
<td>something Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0161 so</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0162</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0163 so</td>
<td>if Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0164 now Cont.</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0165 and</td>
<td>that arm Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0166 and</td>
<td>move it around that way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0167 so</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0168 or</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0169</td>
<td>this Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0170 we Top.</td>
<td>don't have to keep pressing that button</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0171</td>
<td>to give the little chicks exercise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above analysis, Structurals, especially those concerned with the progression of causal relationships (ie. because, so), play a major role in establishing the mode of organisation of the discourse along with the Continuative now. Also significant in establishing the mode of organisation of the discourse is the fact that a large number of Topical Theme choices were concerned directly with the realisation of the instructional field (eg. the little chicks inside the eggs there, they, that arm, that). The only other Topical Theme choice was for we. Moreover, when we did occur, inspection of the Transitivity relationships indicated that we was constructed as a participant in terms of its relation to the instructional field. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>so</th>
<th>we</th>
<th>have to give</th>
<th>them</th>
<th>exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, we was constructed in the participant role of Actor in relation to the little chickens (ie. The) as Recipient with exercise as Range. Thus, the above considerations to do with both the regulative and instructional registers indicate that a significant degree of logical progression within the instructional field was being constructed and explicitly staged through regulative register choices for teacher monologue and the choice of now in Textual Theme position.

4.2.3 FORMAT ETO2 - TEACHER’S ROLE IN THE INITIATION OF DISCOURSE PHASES

Format ETO2 is the second example of the Early Task Orientation Format texts. As the following discussion will reveal, this format illustrates most of the teacher regulative register strategies already discussed in the analysis of Format ETO1. Consequently, separate Phases in the text will not be dealt with individually in sequence in the manner of Format ETO1. Instead, discussion will draw examples simultaneously across the whole of the text.

Format ETO2, like Format ETO1 discussed above, was focused on the joint construction of an oral explanation text. This early Task Orientation format used teacher and student discussion of the book 'Egg to Chick' (Millicent E. Selsam, 1972) as a context for building an explanation text about how a fertile egg develops from an embryo into a chicken. The book contained clear illustrations that represented various stages of embryo development over the gestation period of 21 days. This text organisation provided a time sequence model around which the explanation of the phenomenon could be scaffolded by the teacher. ETO2 represented an example of discussion that accompanied exploration of this text in the early stages of the macrogenre. Format ETO2 was recorded on the same day as Format ETO1. The same group of children were involved and the working context was essentially the same as it was for Format ETO1. In fact, the teacher and children moved directly into Format ETO2 as Format ETO1 ended. Format ETO2 commenced when the teacher moved the children away from discussion about the incubator towards discussion about the book 'Egg to Chick' which was displayed on another table near the incubator.
The teacher signalled her initiation into this Opening Phase via the choice of a Continuative, *Ok* as a Textual Theme choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0172</td>
<td><em>Ok</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>so</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Struc./C. caus.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>we</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Top.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>'ll have a little... have a little look at our science book</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was employed within a Behavioural Process clause (0172) to initiate the move into the new instructional field which was referred to indirectly through reference to an information resource (*our science book* in a minor role as Circumstance).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This clause constructed a very brief general introduction to the Format and realised the role of Behaver through the choice of *we* to refer to the teacher and children. The rest of the Phase initiations, however, presented a strong focus on Interpersonal and Experiential Theme choices to do with the instructional field itself (eg. *what, this, he*). This is shown in Table 4.11 below.

**Table 4.11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme analysis for initiating clauses through which the teacher moved the children into new Phases within Format ETO2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0173</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0188</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0266</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0267</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0268</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

206
Phase 7  Development at day 3

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0285</td>
<td>all right</td>
<td>on Saturday the third day, day number three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont. so</td>
<td>our little chick should start to look like this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus</td>
<td>this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 8  Development at day 5

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0310</td>
<td>all right</td>
<td>(he) is getting a little bit bigger?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont. and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. add. then</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conj. Adjunct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 9  Development at day 7

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0319</td>
<td>right</td>
<td>'s getting old, day thirteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 10 Development at days 13/16/19

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0347</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>he's getting old, day thirteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont. so</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 11  Hatching out on day 21

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0396</td>
<td>all right</td>
<td>'s happening on twenty one days?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont. so</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Textual Theme choices continued the pattern established in Format ETO1 of employing Continuatives to signal shifts into new Phases within the instructional field. Also notable was the teacher's frequent (regulative) foregrounding of the causal Conjunction so as choice of Structural in Textual Theme in order to establish a logical progression in the shift from Phase to Phase. Table 4.11, above, also indicates that the teacher established significantly more Phases in Format ETO2 than she did in Format ETO1. This increase was driven in part by the fact that the teacher was leading the children through the book and initiating new Phases at points she considered significant in the text. It is noticeable that she did not establish a new Phase for every step in development represented in the text. She did this because she did not wish to overload the children with detail, especially at this early stage in the macrogenre.

A Transitivity analysis reveals more about the teacher's strategies as she led the children through the text. Most of the Transitivity choices she employed were for clauses containing Relational Processes. For example,

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0187</td>
<td>Relational: Circumstantial: Attributive</td>
<td>All right and (what is) inside here...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrier Pro Attribute: Circumstance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0285</td>
<td>Relational: Circumstantial: Attributive</td>
<td>All right so on Saturday the third day, day number three, our little chick should start to look like this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circumstance: Carrier Pro Attribute: Circumstance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0319</td>
<td>Relational: Intensive: Attributive</td>
<td>Right (he 's getting a little bit bigger?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrier Pro Attribute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In general, these choices supported a strategy in which the teacher encouraged the children to identify a specific point of reference in the text. She did this in a variety of ways, for example, by asking the children to identify illustrations (eg. 0211 Now who've we got here?), by identifying illustrations herself (eg. All right this is an incubator) or commenting (eg. 0347 Ok so he's getting old, day thirteen). Even when she employed processes other than Relational ones, the questions she asked focused the children in rather straightforward ways on pictorial events in the text. Once she had drawn this focus via what were relatively undemanding focus clauses, she then sought to develop an expansion around that point.

4.2.4 FORMAT ETO2 - TEACHER’S ROLE IN THE INITIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SHIFTS IN INSTRUCTIONAL FIELD FOCUS WITHIN PHASES

The potential for expanding the initial focus on text illustrations is demonstrated, for example, in Phase 4 (Clause 0211ff). Here, the teacher used the kind of extended questioning sequence that she employed throughout Format ETO1. In earlier discussion concerning Format ETO1 (sections 4.2.2.2.2 & 4.2.2.2.3), it was pointed out that the teacher’s reconceptualisation of one response was typically developed as the context out of which the next question arose. In the instance considered below, the teacher asked essentially three questions which could, if the teacher had not been intent on scaffolding, have been asked one after the other without preformulation or reconceptualisation. For illustrative purposes, an abridged version of the questioning sequence the teacher employed is set out below. This abridged version omits all preformulation and reconceptualisation employed by the teacher.

**Question 1**

0211 T: Now, who've we got here?
0212 Cn: Mother hen
0213 T: Yeah, we got mother hen haven't we

**Question 2**

0223 T: But have we got mother hen? *we’ is heavily stressed to emphasise contrast
0224 J/A: No
0225 J: We got a incubator
0226 T: Good girl
0227 we've got an incubator

**Question 3**

0244 T: What does our incubator do then?
0245 We haven't got mother hen
0246 To turn the eggs
0247 What does... what do we... what happens with our eggs?
0248 What turns our eggs?
0249 J: Um, the arm
0241 T: That's right
Once again, the above sequence of questions fits very neatly the perfunctory IRF sequence (Initiation^Response^Follow-up) which has been discussed previously in this study (section 4.2.2.2.1 also, chapter 3, section 3.2.3). However, the teacher in the concentrated encounter did not construct her discourse in this way. She continued to use strategies first encountered in discussion of earlier Phases. As earlier discussion in sections 4.2.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2.2 has already indicated, her reconceptualisations of the children’s responses sought to provide scaffolding which enabled all of the children to sustain contact with the questioning sequence in the discourse, not just the child who could supply the answer. Moreover, her reconceptualisations allowed her to construct a quality of understanding with the children about instructional field issues which extended well beyond that which is represented in the basic questioning structure given above. An analysis of patterns of choice in Theme and Transitivity provides useful information on the nature of the extension process that occurred in this Phase.

The initial question in the Fourth Phase of ETO2 (clause 0211) placed very little demand on the children. It simply asked the children to identify the picture of mother hen that the teacher was showing them. All of the children answered for the answer was well established as common knowledge within the group.

**Question 1**

0211 **Now, who’ve we got here?**
0212 Cn: **Mother hen**

In her reconceptualisation of the children’s response, the teacher then began to make explicit what she considered to count as significant instructional field knowledge about mother hen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0213</td>
<td>yeah</td>
<td><strong>we</strong> Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>got</strong> mother hen, haven’t we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0214</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td>lays eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0215</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td>wants to hatch out some chickens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0216</td>
<td></td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td>has to sit on these eggs not all of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0217</td>
<td></td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td>can hop off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0218</td>
<td>and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0219</td>
<td>and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>get some food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0220</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td>comes back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0221</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>she Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘s got to keep the chicks warm <strong>doesn’t</strong> she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0222</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>got to keep them warm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the instructional register was initially foregrounded in Theme as the teacher explained the process through which the mother hen maintained the temperature of the eggs in her nest. The mode of organisation of the instructional field explanation was signalled explicitly through
the use of Structurals in Textual Theme. Topical Theme choices concentrated upon *she* as referent for *mother hen* which was therefore strongly foregrounded as the point of departure for almost all clauses. In the Transitivity system, all participant and process choices realised the instructional field. Thus, choices for Material Processes which realised the actions of caring for the eggs figured strongly, for example, *has to sit, can hop, go, get, *'s got to keep*, and the role of Actor was realised invariably through *she*. Choices for Goal (eg. *some food*) and Circumstance (eg. *on these eggs*) also realised the intended instructional field. The regulative register was present at a very minimal level, realised only through the Mood choice by the teacher for monologue.

It was, therefore, against the background of this detailed explanation that the teacher asked her second question.

**Question 2**

0223  *But have we got* mother hen?  *'we' is heavily stressed to emphasise contrast*
0224  J/A:  *No*
0225  J:  *We got a incubator*

The fact that the question arose out of an explicit background context, made it possible for the teacher to draw out and make explicit important contrasts between the actions of the mother hen and the functioning of the incubator in her next reconceptualisation. In the first part (0227-0231), she contrasted temperature maintenance in the incubator with the previous information about mother hen's temperature maintenance. The rest of the reconceptualisation was concerned with how the mother hen turned and 'exercised' the eggs.
This reconceptualisation built primarily the instructional field in a similar manner to the one described previously. Textual Theme employed Structure which simultaneously realised the role of Conjunctions to do with the instructional field. Topical Theme identified the mother hen. In the Transitivity system, all participant and process choices again realised the instructional field which focused upon the behaviour of the mother hen via material process clauses. For example,

In clause 0235 the contrast was drawn through the use of too to establish a reference to the parallel function between the hen and the incubator.

Moreover, once again the reconceptualisation set the context for the next question.

And, this question led the teacher into a reconceptualisation that revisited an explanation about how the arm worked that was modelled extensively in the Fourth Phase of format ETO1 only a short time before (refer Format ETO1: Fourth Phase, clauses 0106-0171, Section 4.2.2.2.3).
Again the pattern of choices in Theme was similar. Furthermore, the teacher made explicit the contrast she was trying to draw in the thematic structure of clause 0249.

The net effect of the whole of the Fourth Phase of Format ETO2 discussed above is that the teacher had taken a one word response from the children (ie. 0212 Cn: Mother hen) and reconceptualised it as an extended explanation. First, she constructed a model explanation of how the mother hen kept the eggs warm. This was then contrasted with the process through which the incubator maintained temperature. Following this, the teacher drew a contrast between the manner in which the mother hen and the incubator provided ‘exercise’ for the eggs.

The pattern of interaction whereby the teacher established and contextualised a focus for discussion, then employed a question to focus the children and, finally, extensively recontextualised the children’s response (as discussed previously in sections 4.2.2.2.2 & 4.2.2.2.3), accounted for most of the interaction within Format ETO2. This can readily be established by inspection of the text surrounding most questions in this Format (eg. especially questions identified by the following clauses 0203, 0211, 0223, 0248, 0286, 0300, 0323, 0329, 0380, 0354, 0390, 0405, 0424). In this regard, therefore, Format ETO2 repeated the fundamental discourse structure identified in discussion of Format ETO1 earlier (section 4.2.2).

In ETO2, however, a shift in discourse role that the teacher was attempting to promote within the children started to gain momentum. In discussion of Format ETO1 (sections 4.2.1 & 4.2.2.2.1), it was pointed out that it was the teacher who controlled most of the language choices, especially those in the Theme system which established the mode of organisation of the discourse. However, fundamental to much of the teacher interaction strategy was a strong readiness to accept and promote initiations concerning shared knowledge from the children. For example, in situations where children answered on behalf of others, the teacher made a concerted effort to accept such initiations for inclusion as jointly constructed discourse. More generally, she addressed questions in a manner that invited response from any child and not just a particular child targeted by her. Nor did she leave children floundering when they attempted to answer and only produced a partial response. Because she was encouraging the children to draw upon shared experience and knowledge, she was able to
accept, affirm and recontextualise children's efforts in a wholly unthreatening and natural manner. This ability to find 'something right' in what the children said was often applied even when children offered seemingly incorrect responses (how and under what circumstances she was prepared to challenge responses will be explored with respect to later macrogenre formats). The outcome of such encouragement was that even in these Early Task Orientation Formats, the more assured children were encouraged to start initiating in a task focused manner within the discourse. While this occurred more frequently in Format ETO2, there were three occasions in Format ETO1 (ie. section 4.2.2.2.3 - clauses 0319; 0144-0145; 0187-0163). Furthermore, the manner in which the teacher accepted and incorporated children's responses into the discourse further contributed to an atmosphere of strong legitimisation and approval for spontaneous offerings by the children. The following set of examples are from Format ETO1.

Child initiations are in [underlined bold italics].

Very often the context for spontaneous interaction on the part of the children was offered within the teacher's reconceptualisations of children's responses. Thus, what was originally set as teacher monologue was starting to be regarded by the children as a frame within which they could participate in dialogue. The following example occurred in Format ETO2.

By responding in the supportive manner she did, the teacher allowed the children the discourse space in which they could begin to become co-participants within the discourse. They were
not trapped into a rigid role as merely reactants to teacher directions and questions. In these kinds of situation the children were making decisions to take control of language choices in Theme, for example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHE</td>
<td>might step on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struct./ C. add.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initiations of this kind constituted a small step towards accepting greater responsibility for control of the discourse. Furthermore, it represented a case in which child control was in accord with the kind of task focus that the teacher wished to encourage within the discourse.

In this format also, a further set of incidents occurred within the discourse which reveals the beginnings of a propensity to challenge the teacher. Such challenge reveals the extent to which the discourse was coming to be regarded by the children as a joint construct. The extract is given below and once again child initiations are represented in *underlined bold italics*.

0363 T: Day nineteen,      *T turns page*
0364 look
0365 all... all the yolk’s nearly gone
0366 A: **Sixteen**
0367 T: **Oh sorry**, day sixteen
0368 M: Smiles broadly - *is amused by teacher's error*
0369 T: **We’ve got more feathers**
0370 Here’s the blood vessels
0371 M: **Look**, all going into that little belly button part there
0372 T: **That’s right**
0373 it takes the blood in.
0374 *T turns page*
0375 Ooh, Almost ready to be born
0376 Ooh, It's ...  *T turns page*
0377 T: **Yeah, nineteen days**  *T turns page*
0378 A: **Twenty one**
0379 M **Twenty one**
0380 T: Twenty one
0381 and what's happening?
0382 J: **Should be twenty and twenty one**
0383 T: Well, they don't show us every day
0384 M They just show us about every third day
0385 T: well we know
0386 J: **what he’s doing**

**Phase 11 Hatching out on day 21**

0387 A: **Twenty one days**
0388 Thought *T was going to say twenty and attempts to correct her*
0389 T: What should he...
0390 J: He's, um, gonna get out
0391 T: **Yeah, is that... is this very easy to go peck, peck for the little chick inside?**

In the above extract, the teacher was directly challenged by children in clauses 0366, 0377 and 0378. These initiations indicated that the children were predicting the sequential development of the text. In each instance, the challenge or prediction was completely task-
focused, indicating the extent to which the teacher had been successful in making explicit the manner in which she expected the discourse to unfold.

It is, in fact, a rather unusual occurrence for Aboriginal children to possess the confidence to challenge teachers in a manner that can be regarded as task-focused within mainstream educational discourse. That some of the children here were prepared to do so reflected positively upon the extent to which this teacher had already begun to succeed in encouraging them to assume a confident and authoritative role in the construction of the discourse. The fact that such indications were beginning to emerge at such an early stage in this early Task Orientation Format provides a hint of the possibilities available in Late Task Orientation and Task Formats when the children concerned had become more familiar with the Format. It is appropriate, therefore, to move on to discussion of Format LTO2 which is an example of a late Task Orientation Format recorded at a time when the group of children concerned had developed considerable understanding of the process of development of a chicken embryo into a hatched chicken.

However, before moving into this discussion, it is useful to examine two events in the course of Format ETO2 which provided instances in which the teacher appeared to have departed from some of the pedagogic strategies that have been identified as typical of her scaffolding behaviour in earlier discussion. The first point of discussion was the challenge made to the teacher in clause 0381 above. This is worthy of further comment because it impinges over earlier discussion concerning the use of the reactive continuative well by teachers to signal dissonance between children's responses to display questions and expectations teachers hold for appropriate response (see section 4.2.2.2.1). Discussion regarding the use of well pointed out that this teacher attempted to avoid the use of this item, preferring instead to accept and reconceptualise partial and even incorrect responses. She was able to do this because display questions that she proposed focused upon common knowledge.

It is certainly true that the teacher could have responded effectively to the child here by employing the Continuative Yeah/yes as a choice in Textual Theme. For example, she could have said something like, Yes, that's right there should be twenty and twenty one but...(followed by explanation). In considering the effect of her actual response (clauses 0382-0385) it is useful to make a number of points. Here well occurred in response to a child initiation within the discourse which made an assertion with regard to the topic at hand and not in response to a teacher solicited display question. Moreover, the child was attempting to reinitiate discussion of an issue the teacher and the children had discussed in previous work with the construction of a number line and the teacher was concerned to maintain group focus upon steps in the development of an embryo. In the above instance, she did not wish to move away from that focus into a detailed explanation beyond the one she gave. The issue of whether the teacher should have encouraged or not encouraged the development of the child's
response in this particular instance is moot. Her response in part illustrates the fact that teachers are required to make decisions such as this instantaneously as they negotiate learning with their children. It is not easy to see immediately the precise relevance of a point raised by the child or to instantaneously perceive how a response might be exploited to its optimum effect. As a consequence, situations such as the one considered here serve to accentuate the importance of working from an underlying body of common knowledge in interpreting and responding efficiently and supportively to what children say.

In a similar vein, it is not easy to specify exactly why the teacher responded with no to a child's attempt at identifying the white of the egg in the diagram the teacher and children were discussing.

```
0187    All right, and inside here...
0188    What do you think
0189    this is here (unclear)
0190    A: Water (quietly)
0191    J: The yolk
0192    T: This part here love
0193    A: Water sac
0194    T: No, this is the...
0195    J white
0196    T: The white
0197    that's right
0198    and then this is the...
0200    J/A: the yolk
```

Inspection of the videotape for this section reveals that the teacher was responding to Jan (J) and was not aware of the responses offered by Alice (A). The teacher knew that Jan did really know the answer and would be able to respond to a direct challenge. Because of the teacher's concentration upon interaction with Jan she missed an opportunity offered by Alice's response to draw an important distinction between the white and the water sac. The fact that she did not respond to Alice did not appear to inhibit Alice from attempting a further response later.

In a situation where the teacher allows considerable latitude concerning who can respond in any one instant, such minor communication miscues are bound to occur from time to time. However, it would seem that once a suitably positive frame for interaction is set, one or two instances of miscommunication can be tolerated within the discourse and do not cause major difficulties. This situation is in direct contrast to the kind of gross miscommunication embodied in examples provided by Malcolm (1982) and Harkins (1994) (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.3) as well as the examples encountered in early observation of teaching at Traeger Park discussed in chapter 2 (sections 2.4.1 & 2.4.2).

### 4.2.5 SUMMARY - TEACHER ROLE IN THE EARLY TASK ORIENTATION FORMATS

In the early Task orientation formats under study here, the teacher assumed a prominent role in directly shaping the nature of the pedagogic discourse. The regulative register was
foregrounded and made explicit in order to build a set or teacher initiated Phases which provided a framework for a systematic promotion of children's engagement with the instructional register. Within these teacher initiated Phases the teacher also assumed responsibility for shifts from one topic to the next. Topic shifts within Phases were focused almost exclusively upon questions that probed the instructional field. However, these questions, in circumstances where the teacher felt she could not assume a high level of task focus on the part of the children were scaffolded through the use of preformulating moves. These preformulating moves focused the children upon prior common experience as a means for accessing the task focus intended by the teacher. Where little prior experience could be assumed and little inter-subjectivity existed, the teacher was content to promote attention focus (eg. 'looking at') or 'naming' on the part of the child as the basis from which she was prepared to provide extended reconceptualisations to do with the instructional field for the child.

As a rule, the teacher accepted, and positively reinforced, responses made by the children. A key element in her capacity to respond appropriately to children's offerings was the existence of inter-subjectivity built up even at this early stage of the macrogenre through involvement with the children in prior related activities to do with the instructional field. Once she had accepted the children's responses, the teacher consistently took the opportunity to reconceptualise and extend them as a means through which information could be rendered common to all group participants. In these activities the teacher initiated a considerable degree of convergence between regulative and instructional registers. When convergence occurred, the regulative register directly promoted engagement with the instructional register. In specific segments of the discourse, especially with response reconceptualisations to do with display questions, the regulative register was often backgrounded as Mood choice for teacher monologue only while the instructional register was foregrounded and dominant in choices within the systems of Theme and Transitivity.

Along with her positive acceptance of children's responses and her generalisation of common knowledge for all children through reconceptualisations, the teacher promoted an interaction context which did not target individual children but instead sought responses to whoever wished to respond at the time. Teacher reconceptualisations of children's responses also provided a context for children to initiate spontaneously. This behaviour which typically drew upon prior common knowledge to do with the instructional register was encouraged by the teacher.

It is proposed here that these kinds of interaction strategies provided the circumstances in which the children could learn to take control of the discourse in a task-focused manner in the late Task Orientation formats that will be discussed in the next part of this chapter (section 4.3).
4.3 LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY IN LATE TASK ORIENTATION FORMATS

This section will explore pedagogic strategies employed by the teacher under study to orchestrate learning in a context where a considerable amount of common knowledge could be assumed by all participants. Within this context, the high level of inter-subjectivity allowed the children to take a significant amount of interactive control within the discourse. Furthermore, the teacher was able to employ strategies that supported the children as they attempted to initiate and sustain discourse control. The extent to which the children assumed responsibility for initiating discourse moves in the Late Task Orientation Formats becomes apparent when a comparison is made with the two Early Task Orientation Formats that were considered in the previous section 4.2. Table 4.12 compares the frequency of clauses produced by children in the two Early Task Orientation Formats (ETO1 & ETO2) with the frequency of clauses produced by children in the two Late Task Orientation Format (LTO1 & LTO2) in three different interactive contexts within each format. This table extends the comparison made between Formats ETO1 and ETO2 in earlier discussion (refer Table 4.1, section 4.2).

Table 4.12
Comparison between responses to questions, joint constructions and initiations produced by children across four Task Orientation formats (ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 & LTO2) expressed as a percentage of the total number of clauses in each format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional role of clause</th>
<th>ETO1</th>
<th>ETO2</th>
<th>LTO1</th>
<th>LTO2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses to teacher questions</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>10.38</td>
<td>10.18</td>
<td>6.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint construction clauses</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>6.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Initiations</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>33.09</td>
<td>42.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage of clauses produced by children in each format</td>
<td>16.57</td>
<td>19.22</td>
<td>46.91</td>
<td>56.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, frequency is expressed as a percentage of the total number of clauses produced by both teacher and children for each format. The first row gives the percentage of clauses produced by children in an attempt to answer a question posed by the teacher. The second row is concerned with the instances of clauses which were constructed jointly between the teacher and children. The third row is concerned with what have been termed 'child initiations'.

Table 4.12 shows that there was a marked increase in the percentage of clauses which realised initiations by the children in the Late Task Orientation Formats (LTO1 = 33.09% & LTO2 = 42.55%) compared to (ETO1 = 3.55% & ETO2 = 5.38%). The analysis in this section will demonstrate that this increase in the percentage of child initiated interaction in the late Task Orientation Format (LTO1) occurred because the children within the Late Task Orientation Format had internalised language resources provided by the teacher in Early Task Orientation Formats. These resources were provided within direct models modelled in Early
Task Orientation Formats. In particular, teacher reconceptualisations of children's responses were important to the provision of language resources.

It is proposed, therefore, that the ability of the children to initiate interaction in the Late Task Orientation Formats was due to the high level of inter-subjectivity that had been built up between teacher and children over the course of the macrogenre. However, to state that the children were allowed to take interactional control within the discourse provides an incomplete picture of the pedagogic process that was being enacted within Formats LTO1 and LTO2. Consideration of the transcript for these formats shows that the teacher was not simply allowing the children to 'talk' in some unfocused manner. She was still playing an important role in the overall orchestration of the discourse. She monitored its development and ensured that even though she was prepared to cede considerable interactional control to the children, the ceding of that interactional control was consistent with the maintenance of the pedagogic control that she sought within the format. The following discussion will consider aspects of each of the two Late Task Orientation Formats in turn (LTO1 in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2; LTO2 in sections 4.3.3 and 4.3.4).

4.3.1 FORMAT LTO1 - THE OPENING PHASE

One point of note with regard to the discussion of Table 4.12 was that discourse roles assumed by the teacher and children did not remain consistent across Format LTO1. Notably, the Opening Phase of the format did not involve any interactional control on the part of the children. Although the Opening Phase was relatively brief, the regulative register was strongly foregrounded as entry into that Phase was signalled explicitly by the teacher.

As is the case with the Opening Phase in the Early Task Orientation Format ETO1, the purpose of the Opening Phase in this later format was to contextualise the current activity within past (shared) experience. Like the Opening Phase in the Early Task Orientation Format ETO1, the Opening Phase on LTO1 constituted a monologue which served, first, as a summary of the relationship between past experience and, second, to establish a suitable point of departure for the following discourse.

To understand what the teacher was doing in this Opening Phase, it is useful to contextualise the discussion in terms of activity prior to this particular format. Throughout the course of the macrogenre, the teacher and children had spent considerable time conceptualising the 21 day gestation period required for the development of a chicken embryo as a numerical progression which developed over time. This was necessary because children in their first year of school could not be assumed to possess sufficient understanding of number sequence from 1 to 21.

Each day the teacher and children, as a part of the process of observing and discussing the eggs they intended to hatch in the incubator, identified the current date and progressively built up a number line on a notice board in the room. This activity constituted, in fact, another
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

scaffolding format available to the teacher. However, the 'number line' format was not like those discussed here in that it did not have as its immediate goal, the joint construction of an explanation text. In this 'number line' activity, the teacher assisted the children to identify the current day and to decide what number it represented in the time frame of their own personal observational sequence (eg. day 19). The teacher then assisted the children to identify the appropriate numerals on cards and to add those cards to the number line they were building. Once the numerals were on the notice board, a picture of the corresponding stage of embryo development was usually pinned above the appropriately numbered day. The pictures of developmental stages were copies of those used in the text 'Egg to Chick' which was the main focus for discussion in Format LTO1.

In the Opening Phase of Format LTO1, the teacher wished to establish a parallel between the earlier 'number line' work and the sequence of illustrations in the book, 'Egg to Chick' that she intended to discuss with the children. First, the teacher located the current day in the sequence that was represented in the book. Because the current day was Monday, she reminded the children that two days must be skipped to account for the weekend. This point had already been discussed in the earlier activity. The Opening Phase of Format LTO1 is set out below.

0001 Right. Now we'll have a look at our...our...

0002 Control Naomi would you like to come over here please dear?
0003 We don't need another chair thank you
0004 Pop the chair down
0005 That's right
0006 Come
0007 and sit over here
    This last statement is delivered in a gentle conciliatory tone
0008 N: Look
0009 Jenny's on a chair Mrs Price
0010 T: Yeah Jenny can sit on the floor too
0011 D: Jenny you gotta sit on the floor
0012 T: Come
0013 and sit on the floor too please Jenny
0014 That's right

0015 Ok, so day nineteen
0016 Now let's have a look at our little science book Holds up science book
0017 and find out
0018 where we're up to
0019 Now that was on Friday (Shows children page with day 16 on it
0020 because that was day sixteen
0021 S: This one Points to 16 on the number line set up on the notice board
0022 T: Now we haven't got seventeen, eighteen
0023 What's the next day [[it shows us]]?
0024 N: Nineteen
0025 T: Day nineteen

Entry into the discussion required the teacher to digress briefly into a short ‘Control’ segment (0002 - 0014). It is of particular significance that the teacher did not employ Continuatives to signal her shift into a Control segment across any of the formats considered in this chapter. Thus, segments to do with the control of behaviour were not explicitly marked out as
significant shifts of focus from the ongoing learning interaction. Instead, explicit staging of the discourse retained its priority upon promoting development of the instructional register directly. This reflected the teacher’s concern to focus discourse organisation around the instructional field rather than around episodes of behavioural control.

Throughout the opening Phase, the teacher maintained control over all Theme choices within the discourse. Moreover, an analysis of Theme choices made by the teacher reveals a strong emphasis on building Textual Theme. The following Table 4.13 presents an analysis for the first part of this Opening Phase (clauses 0001-0018). The segment identified as Control (clauses 0002 - 0014) is omitted from the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0001</td>
<td>right now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont. Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0151 - 0163 Control omitted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0015</td>
<td>Ok so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0016</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0017</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./ C. add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0018</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the beginning of the Phase, the teacher employed a cluster of Continuatives and associated Structurals in Textual Theme position (ie. right now, ok so, now) to provide an explicit signal for entry into the new Phase. Clause 0116 contained the first use of the Continuative now which was the only continuative employed past the initial two clauses in the Phase. Earlier in this study (section 4.2.2.2.2), discussion pointed out two potential functions for now as a Textual Theme choice in classroom discourse. The first function considered was the use of ‘now’ to signal a shift into a new topic. Initially, in this Opening Phase, now was employed in this role and it accompanied a Behavioural Process clause which simply directed the move to a new topic focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now let’s have a look at our science book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Behaver Pro Range Circumstance: location: place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of this behaviour was then developed through the selection of a Mental Process clause concerned with cognition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: cognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and (let’s find out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Sensor Pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>//0167 where we’re up to/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>//projected clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both of these clauses realised predominantly the operation of the regulative register. They were orienting in function in that they focused and identified the activity associated with this Opening Phase. However, from the perspective of building scaffolding in the discourse, it is notable that the teacher considered it necessary to lead the children beyond just announcing the next focus for group attention. Accordingly, she continued on to model (clauses 0019, 0020 & 0022) the inferential steps involved in the process of ‘finding out’ the correct day.

0019 **Now** that was on Friday (Shows children page with day 16 on it
0020 because that was day sixteen
0021 S: This one Points to 16 on the number line set up on the notice board
0022 T: **Now we haven't got** seventeen, eighteen

Having prepared the children by means of this orientation she then asked her question,

0023 *What's the next day [[it shows *us*]]?*

Thus, the last part of the Opening Phase, which will be discussed below, illustrates one aspect of the manner in which this teacher was attempting to make her discourse explicit. Because the children were in their first year of school and because they did not have well developed understandings about literacy, she could not assume that the children would easily *find out where we're up to* as she requested in the first part of the opening Phase (clause 0018). Consequently, in the second part of the opening Phase (clauses 0019-0026), the teacher modelled the reasoning process involved in finding out, *where we're up to in our science book*. This modelling was realised particularly through the manner in which the teacher employed *now* as a Continuative to stage points of development in the logical progression of the text. She also made use of Structurals, to realise Textual Themes. These items simultaneously acted as Conjunctions which constructed explicit logical relationships between the clauses. This is illustrated in an analysis of teacher choices for Theme in the second part of the opening Phase which is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0019 now</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0020 because</td>
<td>Struc. / C. caus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0021 S: This one</td>
<td>Points to 16 on the number line set up on the notice board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0022 now</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0023 what</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0024 N: Nineteen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0025 and</td>
<td>Struc. / C. add.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this part of the Opening Phase, the teacher related the book illustrations of chicken embryo development to the work that the children had been engaged in with the number line prior to
In the number line work, teacher and children had located the present date within the number line representing the gestation period of 21 days. Thus, the discussion about the book illustrations was carefully set by the teacher as a natural progression from the earlier number work. Her choices within the Transitivity system illustrate how she realised an equivalence relationship between the sequence of illustrations in the book and the prior number line activity.

In the clauses analysed above, the teacher employed a series of relational process clauses to draw the correspondence between the days (eg. Friday), the numerical sequence equivalent (eg. day sixteen) and the book illustration (eg. that). Throughout the clauses, the book illustration was assigned the primary participant role of Carrier or Token while days and numerical equivalents were realised as Attribute and Value. Because of the level of inter-subjectivity that had already been built up between teacher and children prior to the opening Phase of the Format, the teacher could present very concisely the relationship between the sequence of events in the instructional field and those in the book. This became the point of focus for the proposed discussion in this format.

### 4.3.2 FORMAT LTO1 - THE SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT PHASES

Once the teacher moved the children into the discussion following the Opening Phase, she was able to effect a radical change in the manner in which she built her regulative register within the discourse. In analysis of Early Task Orientation Formats it was found that the teacher made considerable use of Continuatives such as all right, right, now, ok which she employed proactively to direct explicit topic shifts at regular intervals across the each of the format texts ETO1 and ETO2. These highly explicit topic shifts were considered to mark highly visible teacher initiated Phases within the formats (refer sections 4.2.1 & 4.2.2).

In the later Task Orientation format (LTO1) examined here, the teacher did not proceed in this manner. Over the course of the macrogenre, the teacher and children had built considerable inter-subjectivity concerning what constituted an appropriate task focus within the instructional field. The children were beginning to build an understanding of both what the teacher considered a relevant topic for exploration and what constituted relevant development of such
topics within the discourse. Because of this inter-subjectivity, the children began to demonstrate a willingness to initiate exploration of suitable (i.e. ‘task focused’) topics within the instructional field. The teacher, therefore, was not so concerned to build the exploration of the instructional field around teacher initiated Phases which were explicitly signalled within the discourse in the manner that she had employed in the Early Task Orientation Formats ETO1 and ETO2.

In order to explore the manner in which the teacher attempted to orchestrate discourse within this format, it is important to interpret teacher moves in concert with the strategies employed by the children as they bid for shifts in instructional field focus throughout the discourse. The following discussion will, therefore, first consider strategies the children employed to initiate topic shifts in the discourse. Following consideration of the children’s initiating strategies (section 4.3.2.1), the discussion will then turn to consideration of the discourse orchestration strategies employed by the teacher in this format (section 4.3.2.2).

4.3.2.1 The children’s role in the orchestration of shifts in instructional field focus (Format LTO1)

As earlier discussion of Table 4.12 (above) has indicated, for most of the time in this Format, topic shifts were initiated by the children. It is these ‘initiations’ to do with spontaneous efforts at topic development that are considered in the following discussion. The discussion is not concerned with responses to teacher questions or other co-operative strategies such as joint construction of clauses between teacher and children as they negotiated explanations of various phenomena within the discourse. These latter strategies to do with responses to teacher questions and joint construction of clauses will be explored later in section 4.3.2.2.3.

One noticeable feature of children’s initiating bids was that, while the children frequently made choices in Textual Theme, they did not attempt to orchestrate the progression of the discourse by employing Continuatives in Textual Theme to demarcate new Phases as the teacher had in Early Task Orientation formats. It was most noticeable, however, that the children’s initiating bids invariably conformed to a basic ‘ground rule’ that bids for shifts in instructional field focus should arise logically out of the current discussion and should represent a task focused progression of the discourse. As a result of this orientation, the strategies they employed in their attempts to move the negotiation forward were somewhat remarkable when considered in the light of previous descriptions of classroom interactions between Aboriginal children and teachers (eg. Malcolm 1982, Harkins 1994, Walker 1981, M.Christie 1984). The initiating strategies employed by the children in Format LTO1 have been grouped for discussion here under the following notional sets:

- expanding
- indicating
- projecting
- questioning
The following discussion will consider each strategy set in turn.

4.3.2.1.1 Expanding

Expanding (in conjunction with projecting) is identified by Halliday (1994:219-220) as a mechanism concerned with building logico-semantic relation between clauses within a clause complex. In 'expansion' the secondary clause expands upon the primary clause by elaborating it, extending it, or enhancing it. In Format LTO1, such was the concern of the children with sustaining a continuous progression of a commonly held task focus within the discourse, that a significant proportion of the children's initiation bids could be located within an adaptation of Halliday's notion of expansion.

In applying the concept of expansion to this study it has been necessary to make adjustment because the discussion given by Halliday (1994) deals specifically with 'expansion' within continuous monologic discourse. In the discussion below, the concept of expansion has been applied to a situation of 'joint' construction of a commonly held text. Moreover, allowance has been made for joint text negotiation in a highly dialogic mode with, at times, a number of children attempting to talk simultaneously or interrupting the teacher or each other. This means that clause relations established across dialogic interaction were not always temporally sequential in the transcript. However, despite such differences, it is proposed that the interpretation applied is consistent within the broad intent of Halliday's concept. The notion is also consistent with Vygotsky’s view that,

Mental activity can be attributed to two or more people who are acting cooperatively and that the organisation and means of this mental activity is comparable to that of the individual who is acting alone. Minick (1987:21)

The different kinds of 'expansion' identified by Halliday (1994) are set out briefly below.

4. **Extension** represents attempts to expand the previous discussion typically by adding some new element or offering an alternative or an exception (eg. and...; but...)

5. **Enhancement** represents attempts to qualify the ongoing discussion through some circumstantial feature of time, place, cause or condition (eg. because...; if...; when...).

6. **Elaboration** involves restating in other words, commenting, specifying in greater detail, or exemplifying (eg. T: You don't have to turn it over - C: You just leave it).

In Format LTO1, there is a relationship between the children's attempts to sustain their roles within the joint construction process by means of expansion strategies and patterns of language choices which realise Theme and Transitivity across the Textual, Interpersonal and Experiential metafunctions. The following discussion will include consideration of choice patterns across each of these aspects of Theme. Moreover, Transitivity relationships will drawn upon to examine relationships between relational and instructional registers. Each different realisation of expansion proposed by Halliday (ie extension, enhancement and elaboration) will be considered in turn below.
4.3.2.1.2 Extension

The first set of bid strategies that will be examined here are those which employed 'extension' as point of departure for initiating topic shifts within the discourse. The following brief extract which contextualises clause 0043 illustrates the typical manner in which the children initiated extensions within the flow of the discourse.

| 0038 | T:  | And what can you tell me... |
| 0039 | Na: | What can you tell me about the yolk? |
| 0040 | Na: | It's all gone |
| 0041 | D:  | It's gone |
| 0042 | Na: | It's all gone |
| 0043 | D:  | And he's in a water sac |
| 0044 | T:  | And he's in a water sac |

In clause 0043 the child built upon the previous discussion about the yolk by offering related information about the water sac. The information was relevant to the previous discussion because as the yolk disappears in the egg the water sac grows in size. This was an understanding developed over previous discussions within the Format.

Another related strategy employed by the children was to use the additive Conjunction and simply to nominate an item within the instructional field. In these circumstances, Transitivity relationships were not made explicit. For example.

| 0126 | Na: | And...and the electricity |
| 0127 | J:  | Look the electricity |
| 0128 | T:  | Good girl |
| 0129 | Na: | What does the electricity do? |
| 0130 | Na: | That keeps, that keeps the work |
| 0131 | T:  | It keeps the incubator working |
| 0132 | T:  | Good girl |

The advantage of this strategy to the children was that it could be employed to control initiation even when the child required support to produce the whole of the clause effectively. Here, The teacher's response was to accept Natalie's (Na) initial bid (0126), encourage her to attempt the production of a clause (0130 -That keeps, that keeps the work) and eventually provide a reconceptualisation of her response (0131 -It keeps the incubator working) as a model for her to draw upon in future formats.

Table 4.15 below contains an analysis of Theme for children’s initiating clauses which attempted to build extension into the flow of the discourse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0043 and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0048 and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0044 and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.15
Analysis of Theme choices for children's initiating bids which employed Textual Theme to build extension within discourse (Format LTO1)
Textual Theme choices here were all realised through the Structural and. The children made bids for topic progression by attempting to add more information about the instructional field to the discourse. In doing so, they made use of Transitivity choices for Material and Relational processes. In this Format, Material Process choices had to do with actions associated with the instructional field. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Transitivity</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Circumstance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0138</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>the electricity</td>
<td>makes</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actor: Pro</td>
<td>Goal: Pro</td>
<td>Circumstance: manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here all Process and Participant choices realised the instructional register. Transitivity choices for Relational Process clauses similarly realised the instructional field exclusively within their participant structure (eg. clause 0043 below) or the relationship between the children and the instructional field (eg. clause 0265 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Transitivity</th>
<th>Possessor: Pro</th>
<th>Attribute: Circumstance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0043</td>
<td>Relational / Intensive / Attributive</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>in a water sac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0267</td>
<td>Relational / Possessive / Attributive</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>don't have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The children's consistent choice of the Structural and as an element within Theme appeared to represent an attempt on their part to signal explicitly that the information they were offering in the subsequent clause was relevant as a progression of the ongoing discussion. Moreover, the generally high degree of relevance of the Transitivity choices they made to the ongoing development of the instructional register tended to confirm the validity of their attempts. It is proposed, therefore, that a significant level of educational task focus acceptable to the
teacher's purpose was being achieved without the need for the teacher to employ the regulative register to orchestrate the process.

4.3.2.1.3 Enhancement

The other major set of choices in Textual Theme which occurred in this format was to do with the introduction of 'enhancement' into the discourse as a bid strategy to achieve shifts in instructional field focus. In almost all instances of enhancement, the children employed *if* as the choice of Structural in Textual Theme (there was one instance of *when*). A further characteristic of initiating bids which realised enhancement was that the children in this format invariably employed Hypotactic clauses in Theme position within clause complexes to foreground the topic focus of their initiation bid.

The following Table 4.16 provides an analysis of Theme relationships where children employed enhancement to initiate bids for shifts in topic focus within the instructional field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>if he tried to peck that...that egg</td>
<td>the water would burst like a balloon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if the orange light comes on</td>
<td>it's little bit cold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if you were to put water in Mrs Price...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if you put...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if mother hen kicks it</td>
<td>the little chicks can't feel it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when you put the water in</td>
<td>it stops it drying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if the water weren't in</td>
<td>the little chickens would die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if you want to put water in the middle...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This use of Hypotactic clause in Theme position is interesting, not only because it realised initiations which sought to determine topic focus within the instructional field. It seemed that the choice of the Hypotactic clause as Theme allowed the children to set 'given' information (ie. the topic of the previous discussion) as the point of departure from which to introduce 'new' information. This allowed them to present their initiation bid as belonging within and appropriate to the ongoing accepted 'task focus' of the group. Moreover, as discussion of the text that was eventually negotiated as the written product of the macrogenre will show (see chapter 5, section 5.2), the ability to vary choices for Theme in this way is also a useful feature in texts representative of the explanation genre.

It is notable, also, that there is no evidence from studies of the language of Alice Springs Aboriginal children that they would habitually employ such strategies in contexts in which they usually communicate (eg. Sharpe 1976, 1977(a), 1977(b); Harkins 1994). Nor is there evidence from studies of Traeger Park children in classroom interaction just prior to the commencement of the teaching activities described here (eg. Walker 1982) that Aboriginal children employed such potentially literate resources in the school context. It is useful to note further in passing that the children also employed Hypotactic clause as Theme of this kind in response to teacher questions. For example,
It is proposed that much of the competence the children displayed in the Late Task Orientation Formats was drawn largely from models introduced by the teacher in earlier formats. This was specifically so for many language choices (especially those appropriate to the construction of explicit and extended written text - refer Hammond 1990) which were consciously introduced and promoted by the teacher. It is, for example, useful to consider the first clause complex presented earlier in Table 4.16 earlier.

If he tried to peck that...that egg the water would burst like a balloon

This clause complex was produced spontaneously by a child in the Late Task Orientation format LTO1. However, reference to a format from the early stages of the macrogenre (ie. ETO2) below reveals the following teacher reconceptualisation.

In the extract above, the teacher was attempting to reconceptualise a child’s response to her question about why a chicken is wet when it first hatches (clause 0405). The teacher, as she employed a following question (clauses 0413/0414), jointly constructed a clause complex relationship that actively promoted the development of control over Hypotactic clause as Theme.

This discussion is characteristic of the kind of discourse that the teacher entered into systematically with all groups in formats as the macrogenre developed over time.

A further, related, point is that early antecedents of another language choice to do with the use of the Circumstance of Manner in clause 0049 (ie. the water would burst like a balloon) can also be seen in the text of the extract (above 0405-0421). This occurred in the Early Task Orientation format (ETO2). There are also further instances, even in the limited number (two)
Early Task Orientation Formats sampled in this study, of direct models provided in teacher reconceptualisations that had clearly been taken up by the children in the building of their own linguistic resources in this Late Task Orientation format. The following interaction occurred in the Early Task Orientation format ETO2 at the beginning of the macrogenre.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SPEAKER</th>
<th>MESSAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0329</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>Yeah, what do we notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0330</td>
<td></td>
<td>he's getting around him?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0331</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>Um...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0332</td>
<td>A:</td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0333</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>Wa... Wa...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0334</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>Yes, that's right,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0335</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>Water sac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0336</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>A water sac,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0337</td>
<td></td>
<td>that's right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0338</td>
<td></td>
<td>And the water sac's like a little bag [[that he floats around in]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0339</td>
<td></td>
<td>So if mother he... mother hen was looking after the eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0340</td>
<td></td>
<td>she might accidentally knock the egg off the nest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0341</td>
<td></td>
<td>or she might kick it with her foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0342</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>or she might step on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0343</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>Or she might step on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0344</td>
<td></td>
<td>that's right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0345</td>
<td></td>
<td>So that little water sac stops the little chicken [[from getting hurt]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0346</td>
<td></td>
<td>He just floats around in the water sac</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It requires little imagination to propose that teacher reconceptualisations (boxed above) of children's responses in Early Task Orientation Formats should have provided antecedents for the kind of spontaneous initiation represented in clauses 0226 - 0228 (below) which occurred in the Late Task Orientation Format LTO1 being explored here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0226</td>
<td>if mother hen kicks it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0227</td>
<td>it's going...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0228</td>
<td>the little chicks can't feel it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all of the above sets of language choices for expansion discussed in the above section, the regulative register was largely invisible within the discourse. And, when it did appear it constructed a secondary responding role for the teacher. The children took control of initiation of new topic focuses. However, the initiations still maintained a suitable task focus within the instructional field.

4.3.2.1.4 Elaboration

The next strategy considered here drew upon choices in Experiential Theme to produce a type of 'elaboration'. Halliday (1994:225) proposes that,

In elaboration, one clause elaborates on the meaning of another by further specifying or describing it. The secondary clause does not introduce a new element into the picture but rather provides a further characterisation of one that is already there, restating it, clarifying it, refining it, or adding a descriptive attribute or comment. The thing that is elaborated may be the primary clause as a whole, or it may be just some part of it. (Halliday 1994:225)

Elaboration is interesting in classroom discourse because it often reflects a conscious and spontaneous concern with defining or categorising explicitly the ideas and concepts that are being discussed. The following brief examples show this process.
Here Sylvia’s elaborations employed Material Process choices in an attempt to specify more carefully the automatic nature of the movement of the incubator arm in response to another child’s statement. For example,

```
Material
you         don't have to turn      it            over                           with your finger
Actor       Pro                               Goal      Circumstance:             Circumstance:             location: place             manner
```

Also, the participant choice for Actor was for a ‘generalised’ you (ie. you = one ) adding to the strength of categorisation implied in the statement.

Once again, it is possible to identify antecedent interactions for this language behaviour in Early Task Orientation formats. For example, the kind of prior interaction from which child initiations such as those above were drawn were illustrated in the first Early Task Orientation Format (ETO1). The following extract spoken by the teacher dealt with the same issue.

```
T: Now, that’ll have a little rest for a while
and then that arm will come back this way
and move it around that way
So even when though... even when we’re home
or we’re out somewhere
this keeps working
We don’t have to keep pressing that button
to give the little chicks exercise
```

Apart from the examples discussed above, other elaborating initiations all had to do with the one instructional field topic and represented the recurrence of a similar pattern of language choice. Examples of this strategy are set out below in Table 4.17.

**Table 4.17**

Analysis of children’s initiations which foregrounded inclusive discourse participants as Topical Theme (Format LTO1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0140</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0144</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0145</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0202</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0203</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0224</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

231
This latter group of clauses are notable in that they all addressed a parallel relationship that the teacher had drawn continually with the children throughout the macrogenre (eg. refer section 4.2.4). The parallel drawn concerned the manner in which nurturing actions of the hen were replicated mechanically within the incubator. Thus, for example, when certain topics were explored concerning the incubator it was possible for the children to raise the comment that the topic was 'equivalent to' the nurturing actions of the hen. These clauses all employed Relational Process choices to realise this parallel relationship. For example,

| Relational / Possessive / Attributive | we | don't have | a mother hen | in the incubator |
| Carrier | Pro | Attribute | Circumstance: location: place |

The following extract shows how one child responded to a statement about 'mother hen' made by another during a discussion about the working of the incubator.

0196 T: 'Cause the little chick has to be kept moving in the egg
0197 so he doesn't get all like...
0198 Cn: Yeah
0199 T: He needs a little bit of exercise in there
0200 J: An he don't die
0201 cause the mother hen...
0202 S: We don't have a mother hen
0203 We have an incubator
0204 J: An he's not hurt in the....inside....inside the egg
0206 T: That's right
0206 We have an incubator
0207 That's right
0208 That's the water....That's the water sac
0209 The water sac stops the little chick from [getting hurt ]
0210 If it gets knocked  (Responding to Jenny)

Here, teacher and children had been discussing the working of the incubator. The child concerned, Sylvia (S), pointed out that the appropriate field at that point was to do with the incubator and not mother hen. However, after acknowledging Sylvia's point, the teacher continued to develop issues raised by Jenny. Sylvia bided her time. Then, in clause 0224, she repeated the elaboration as a point of reference from which she could then make use of an expansion to initiate a shift into the parallel instructional field exploration from the perspective of mother hen's behaviour.

What is particularly interesting from a language development viewpoint is the manner in which Sylvia managed to incorporate the essence of the reconceptualisation provided by the teacher (0205-0210) in response to an initiation by Jenny (0204) into this later restatement.
"Cause the little chick has to be kept moving in the egg
So he doesn't get all like ...
Yeah
He needs a little bit of exercise in there
An he don't die
Cause the mother hen ...
We don't have a mother hen
We have an incubator
An he's not hurt in the .... Inside .... inside the egg
That's right
We have an incub...
That's right
That's the water ..... That's the water sac
The water sac stops the little chick from [getting hurt] RECONCEPTUALISATION
That gets knocked (Responding to Jenny)
We don't have motherhen
Yeah We don't
If mother hen kicks it
It's going....
The little chicks can't feel it
Yeah. Why?
Because they're in the water sac
Yes, because they're in the water sac

Here in this Late Task Orientation Transcript, Sylvia successfully transformed the teacher's reconceptualisation to do with the mechanical incubator into an explanation of incubation process associated with 'mother hen'. It is useful also here to return to a transcript discussed earlier (section 4.3.2.1.3 – clauses 0329-0346) which was taken from the Early Task Orientation Format ETO2. A brief segment of teacher reconceptualisation from that extract is presented again below. Key phrases are marked with **underlined bold italic script**.

A water sac,
that's right
And the water sac's like a little bag [[that he floats around in ]] 
So if mother he... mother hen was looking after the eggs
she might accidentally knock the egg off the nest
or she might kick it with her foot
or she might step on it
Or she might step on it
that's right
So that little water sac stops the little chicken [[from getting hurt ]]
He just floats around in the water sac

From this Early Task Orientation format extract immediately above, it is possible the see within interaction from an early stage of the macrogenre, a framework of language resource
models which were also available to Sylvia to enhance her ability to act on the teacher's model provided in the Late Task Orientation format (0224-0230). It is useful to note also that, once again with elaboration strategies, children's initiations focused predominantly upon the instructional register requiring minimal recourse to the regulative register on the part of the teacher.

4.3.2.1.5 Indicating

The term 'indicating' has been employed here to identify a set of initiating strategies the children employed in circumstances where it was possible for them to point out physical representations (e.g. concrete objects, models, illustrations) associated with the ongoing discourse. As a general principle within the development of the macrogenre, the teacher attempted to make use of representations as an initial focus for discussion whenever she could profitably do so and the existence of physical representations allowed for considerable scope in scaffolding strategies in the early stages of development. For example, previous discussion of Early Task Orientation formats (e.g. section 4.2.2.2.3) has illustrated how the teacher manipulated the interaction such that she could respond to instances of 'pointing out' or even 'looking at' objects by children without the oral English competence to respond verbally.

Especially in Late Task Orientation formats, 'indicating' or 'pointing out' by the children was typically accompanied by verbalisation. In many cases the children produced a complete clause. However, because of the importance of indicating as a specific discourse participation strategy fostered by the teacher, all initiations which involved reference to the presence of a discourse topic as a concrete representation have been included in this category.

It is important to note that the teacher still responded to non-verbal and partially verbalised attempts by the children to initiate within the discourse. In particular, the teacher was eager to respond to and build upon any instance where indicating supplemented attempts to introduce new information into the discourse. For example, in the following extract Natalie (Na) attempted to initiate a discussion about the thermometer which was the central part of an apparatus for regulating humidity in the incubator. The thermometer indicated when water had to be added to maintain a constant humidity level. Natalie started to produce a clause which she could not complete and the teacher used the fact that Sylvia (S) (who also could not add verbally to Natalie's attempt) was pointing to the thermometer as a staging point for assisting with the explanation.

0146 If, if you want to put water in the middle...
0147 T: Yeah. You tell me...
       To Sylvia who is over by the incubator pointing at the thermometer
       The T moves over to sit beside the incubator with Sylvia. The other children all
       cluster around them.
0148 You were going to tell me something about that
0149 Naomi has already said something about that
0150 What's that?
Discussion of the teacher's responding behaviour in scaffolding this particular event will be developed more fully later in section 4.3.2.2.3 which deals with teacher responding behaviour.

However, despite the teacher's concern to respond to indicating in circumstances such as those above, there were some indicating initiations by children in Late Task Orientation formats which she did not reinforce or develop. This latter group of initiating strategies typically included verbalisation either of a full clause or a nominal group. A particularly significant feature however was that these initiation bids simply located a physical representation which was the focus of the discussion. No new information was added in any other sense. The strategy typically employed Marked Theme within the clause (ie. here it is instead of it is here). Other congruent realisations (eg. it's the same) also occurred but less frequently. Examples are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0072 here Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>he is there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0074 here Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>it is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0075 here Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>he is here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0265 there Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>'s the heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0035 it Top.</td>
<td>'s the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0037 it Top.</td>
<td>'s the same as that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0057 here Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>'s a little egg tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0101 there Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>'s one and a nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0263 there Mkld/ Top.</td>
<td>'s a heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these examples, the children employed Relational Processes which were Attributive. For example,

0057 Relational / Intensive / Attributive
Attribute: Circumstance
Process: carrier

0263 Relational / Intensive / Attributive
Attribute: Circumstance
Process: carrier

0035 Relational / Intensive / Attributive
Attribute: Circumstance
Process: carrier

The teacher's typical response to this 'pointing out' strategy (now that considerable intersubjectivity had been developed between herself and the children) was quite different to that...
which she had employed in Early Task Orientation formats. She clearly sought more than a simple statement such as *Here’s a little egg tooth*. And, while the teacher did not openly discourage this behaviour, she frequently did not develop these initiations on the part of the children. She typically chose, instead, to follow up more ambitious attempts to develop the discourse. For example,

```
0054  N:  He’s getting a little tooth
0055  T:  Yes, he’s getting a little egg tooth
0056  Good girl
0057  D:  Here…Here’s a little egg tooth  Points to illustration in book
0058  J:  And that helps him
0059  T:  That helps him to...
0060  That’s right…
0061  That helps him to peck out of the…?
0062  N:  Egg
```

Here the teacher chose to respond to the initiations of Naomi (N-clause 0054) and Jenny (J-clause 0058) rather than to the simple indicating of a visual representation provided by David (D-clause 0057). It appeared that this action on the part of the teacher frequently represented a conscious attempt by her to actively lift the requirements for what counted as an appropriate response when she felt the step was easily within the children's grasp. Moreover, in the past she may have responded to indicating of this kind as an opportunity to provide a teacher reconceptualisation. Now, when she was faced with a number of competing initiation bids in conjunction with this type of low level indicating strategy she was content to minimise extended teacher interruptions and interference while the discourse was progressing constructively.

Another, similar kind of indicating strategy involved an imperative mood choice on the part of the children and the choice of *look* in Topical Theme position. The choice by the children to take a directing role was regulative in character and seemed to constitute a strategy for explicitly directing behaviour as a starting point for introducing relevance through a following expansion strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0066</td>
<td>look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc. / C.caus.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
0083
0084  look | nineteenth days | Top.
0099  look | here | Top.
0100  one and a nine |
0127  look | the electricity | Top.
```
In each of the above examples, the children followed the strategy with an identification of the instructional field topic they were attempting to introduce. The strategy was not supported by the teacher at this stage of the macrogenre. Once again, the teacher typically looked for and rewarded responses which moved past simple identification at this stage and which attempted to add new information to the ongoing discussion. For example,

0126 Na: And...and the electricity
0127 J: Look the electricity Points to plug in wall. Mispronounces word as ‘electricitity’
0128 T: Good girl
0129 What does the electricity do?  
0130 Na: That keeps, that keeps the work  
0131 T: It keeps the incubator working
0132 Good girl

Here, the teacher elected to respond to the attempted verbalisation produced by Natalie (Na) rather than the simple pointing out strategy of Jenny (J).

4.3.2.1.6 Projecting

Projection, along with expansion (already discussed above, section 4.3.2.1.1) is another linguistic resource identified by Halliday (1994:219) for building logico-semantic relations between a primary and secondary member of a clause complex. In projection the secondary clause is projected through the primary clause to exist as either a locution or idea. Projection, therefore, as it applies here represents attempts by children to present initiating contributions through the wording or thinking of a participant (eg. I said...; he thinks...; I know...).

In the Late Task Orientation format LTO1 under consideration here, the children offered essentially one kind of projection strategy. This involved them in typically foregrounding themselves as topic for the teacher's attention and as point of departure for discussion.

Table 4.20
Analysis of children's Theme choices which realise 'projection' (Format LTO1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0050</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0135</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0136</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0245</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0255</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0256</td>
<td>I Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consideration of choices within the Transitivity system showed that process choices centred around the Mental Processes know in the first instance. For example,

**Mental: cognition**

| I | know |
| Sensor | Pro |
Through their choices in Theme and Transitivity in this format the children employed projection to draw attention not just to themselves but to themselves as possessors of knowledge that was open to display. It also represented a direct engagement with the regulative register on the part of the children. As such, the strategy was indicative of the confidence that had been built over the course of the macrogenre with the children who employed it. Sometimes the projected clause was implicit in the discourse. However, frequently these Mental Process clauses explicitly projected another clause. When this occurred, Transitivity choices typically engaged with the instructional field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: cognition</th>
<th>I know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensor Pro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational / Intensive / Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>where it is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute Carrier Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through the projected clause, the children specified the topic around which they were seeking to focus the instructional field shift. A significant feature of this strategy was that the children were actively seeking a follow up display question from the teacher. One projection following clause 0245 was particularly interesting because it specifically challenged the teacher's management of the topics covered within the format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: cognition</th>
<th>I know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensor Pro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: cognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what you missed out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenon Sensor Pro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the Process choice for the projected clause was for a Mental Process. The process *missed out* realised a mental act of forgetting or omitting and, as such, it represented an example of a metacomment to do with the regulative register which was dominant across both clauses 0245 and 0246. That is, the child used her own knowledge as a point of departure for commenting on the teacher's lesson organisation. This represented another instance of 'correction' (refer to earlier discussion in section 4.2.4) and was a strong indicator of the degree of inter-subjectivity concerning educational task focus that had been built within the group.

4.3.2.1.7 Questioning

There is only one example of a context in which the children employed an Interpersonal Theme choice in order to establish a point of departure for a shift in instructional field focus in Format LTO1. This example is given below.
This event is interesting because it represented an instance in which the child assumed the interpersonal role of information seeker to pursue a question that was of interest to him. As such, it represented a departure from the approach adopted by the children in other situations in this format where they attempted to initiate instructional field shifts. In these other situations, the children were clearly engaged in building the format as a joint construction in which they brought together knowledge and understandings that had previously been built as common knowledge between the teacher and themselves.

4.3.2.2 The teacher’s role in the orchestration of shifts in instructional field focus (Format LTO1)

The teacher’s role within the Format under consideration here relied upon the children’s initiation behaviour. Within the context of that behaviour, the teacher’s role was principally to shape, sustain and extend the level of the children’s engagement with the instructional field. Consequently, as the introduction to section 4.5.2.1 has pointed out, the teacher was still involved in considerable orchestration within the discourse even though the children maintained a high level of interactional control. Her orchestrations can be clustered into three sets of strategic purposes.

1. First, she intervened directly to orchestrate the development of topic shifts children were already attempting to initiate within the discourse.
2. Second, she initiated topic focus shifts on her own cognisance.
3. Third, she continued to develop and reconceptualise interaction around shifts once they were initiated.

It is important to note that this third category of teacher response which involved following and extending initiations introduced by the children was the dominant feature of the discourse. However, consideration of the first two categories of teacher response also contributes important dimensions of the orchestration process she employed. The following discussion will deal with each category in turn.

4.3.2.2.1 Direct teacher intervention which supported specific child initiated shifts (Format LTO1)

As she worked to support shifts in instructional field focus which were initiated by the children, the teacher at certain times employed Continuatives as a Textual Theme choice. These regulative register choices often marked points at which the teacher was going to intervene directly in the manner in which the discourse was being staged. However, this consideration
did not always hold. At one point, when she already held close attention from all children, she
did omit the choice of Continuative. In all instances, however, the teacher’s aim was not to
initiate teacher directed Phases of the kind she had employed consistently in Early Task
Orientation formats but to foreground and highlight strongly, the salience of particular child
initiations for the attention of the whole group.

In her concern to support children’s initiating bids the teacher employed two distinguishable
strategies each of which involved her in making Theme choices for different sets of
Continuatives. The first strategy involved drawing group attention to initiation bids made by
individual children. This strategy made use of Continuatives such as all right, right and righto
which in Early Task Orientation Formats were employed in a proactive manner to help signal
explicitly that a shift in topic focus was about to occur. In the second orchestration strategy,
the teacher made use of the Continuative’s well and oh to help signal an explicit shift in
instructional field focus in response to a very direct request or challenge on the part of a child.
Each strategy will be discussed in turn below.

In employing the first strategy, the teacher frequently acted as an intermediary in order to
refine and maximise the task focus achieved as the children took interactional control within
the discourse. In this role, she could ensure that specific initiatives appropriate to the
instructional register were not lost as a focus for discussion. The following example is typical.

| Table 4.22 |
| Analysis of teacher choices in Theme in Format LTO1 (clauses 0163-0166) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0163</td>
<td>all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0164</td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0165</td>
<td>righto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0166</td>
<td>listen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the teacher, through her choice of Continuatives as Textual Theme choice, initiated a
clearly defined point of departure for a new Phase within the discourse. However, it was a
qualitatively different Phase initiation from that initiated by the teacher in the Early Task
Orientation Formats (ie. ETO1 and ETO2) in that it was established in response to a bid for
instructional field shift on the part of a child.
You were going to tell me something about that
Naomi has already said something about that
S: A thermometer
T: Good girl
It's a thermometer and that tells us what?
Na: If you put...
S: It tells us
D: If you put water in...were to put water in...
N/Na: When you put the water in it stops it drying
S: If you were to put water in Mrs Price...

All the children are trying to talk to the T at the one time

T: All right. Just hang on
David was saying something about the water
Righto Let's listen...
Listen to David
Natalie
What were you saying about the water?

In this extract, all of the children were attempting to initiate at once. The teacher picked out one child's response and signalled that as the focus for the following discussion.

The teacher, however, did not always employ Continuatives to help focus attention on bids from children. In one instance, when she had fewer competing bids for her attention and when she judged the children were paying close attention, she omitted the choice of Continuative in Textual Theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did finite</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can finite</td>
<td>what Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David voc.</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because Struc. / C.caus.</td>
<td>Jenny Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.23
Analysis of teacher choices in Theme in Format LTO1 (clauses 0102-0107)

Here, the regulative register still dominated. Language choices in Theme, for example, foregrounded the regulative register through (a) the choice of finite in Interpersonal Theme to direct questions, (b) the choice of vocatives in Interpersonal Theme and (c) the choice of you and Jenny as Topical Theme choice to focus upon the children. However, the lack of the Textual Theme choice for Continuative meant the shift was not as explicitly demarcated. Because of the absence of this strong level of explicit signalling, the topic shift within the instructional field was accomplished as a relatively more natural progression of the ongoing discussion.
The emphasis upon the regulative register in such interactions was also realised through Transitivity choices. Interventions by the teacher to draw attention to bids made by individual children typically made strong use of Behavioural and Verbal Process clauses to realise principally the operation of the regulative register. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>righto</th>
<th>let</th>
<th>'s</th>
<th>listen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>David</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>listen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>David</th>
<th>was saying</th>
<th>something</th>
<th>about</th>
<th>the water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
<td>Circumstance: Matter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Can</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>say</th>
<th>that</th>
<th>again</th>
<th>Jenny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The function of such process choices was not to focus attention directly onto the content of the instructional field as the teacher had done in early Task Orientation formats. Instead, the teacher focused attending behaviour upon what other children had said about the instructional field. This was realised rather indirectly via Verbiage (eg. something, that) and Circumstance (eg. about the water).

It is also useful to note in passing that the teacher was now employing vocatives to focus interaction upon individual children. Moreover, she was employing you as a Topical Theme choice to focus in some instances upon individual children rather than the group in general. However, she only did so when the context did not place the children in the position of 'guessing what was in the teacher's head' (refer chapter 4, section 4.2.2.1, also, chapter 2, sections 2.4.2 & 2.4.3.2.1).

The second strategy through which the teacher provided support for shifts in the instructional field initiated by the children occurred in contexts where she was responding to a direct request from the children to open discussion on a particular aspect of the instructional field. Here, her choice for Continuative was realised through well. As was the case with the previous strategy discussed, her ability to employ this strategy was dependent upon the existence of a suitable level of inter-subjectivity. That is, she was dependent upon the ability of the children to offer and develop topics which were suitably task focused.

An example of this use of well is given in the following extract from Format LTO1. This extract gives a number of instances of the use of well which is accompanied at times by another Continuative oh.
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

Table 4.24
Analysis of teacher choices in Theme in Format LTO1 (clauses 0235-0253)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0235</td>
<td>Oh</td>
<td>what</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
<td>'s the yolk in there for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0236</td>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0247</td>
<td>Oh</td>
<td>what</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
<td>did I miss?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0250</td>
<td>Oh</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>'d better get someone to show me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0253</td>
<td>all right</td>
<td></td>
<td>you</td>
<td>find it in the book for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher's use of well in these circumstances represented a particularly significant indication of the strength of the inter-subjectivity that existed between teacher and children in the format. Well in the context that it was employed here signalled a different meaning to that considered in earlier discussion (refer section 4.3.2).

In the earlier discussion, it was proposed that teachers commonly employed well to signal dissonance in response to a wrong or partial answer to a teacher posed question. In the context addressed above, instead of signalling unresolved dissonance, well represented an explicit acknowledgment to the children that inter-subjectivity existed. That is, an explicit recognition that what the children were offering within the interaction was something that had...
been commonly established and was recognised by all as a significant instructional field topic. Schifferin (1987) identifies this function for well in interaction and quotes Labov and Fanshel (1977) on this point.

Labov and Fanshel suggest that well can also shift talk toward already shared topics of mutual concern, not just during pre-closure, but throughout conversation. (Schifferin 1987:102)

The use of oh as a Textual Theme choice in combination with well in transactions such as the extract above was also related to the building of common knowledge and is therefore worth comment here. Schifferin (1987) argues that oh is vitally concerned with the recognition of the relevance of information provided by the previous speaker and with a reorientation on the part of the respondent. In the above interaction oh clearly marked the teacher's acceptance of the child's bid for topic selection, essentially in the sense of yes I forgot that bit. Its combination with well (eg. oh well) first recognised the informational relevance of the child's contribution through oh. It then signalled a shift in instructional field focus within the discourse (via well) through which mutually held understandings about the instructional field could be explored and articulated. In essence, while this shift of focus was realised explicitly within the discourse, it did not represent an attempt by the teacher to stage the discourse proactively on her own behalf. Her use of well was reactive in this sense and served to legitimise, at a group level, the shift in instructional field focus proposed by one child.

When the teacher wished to add a proactive dimension to the topic shift she typically employed a choice such as all right, righto, right or ok. An example of this can be found in clause 0253 which is analysed for Theme immediately above. In this clause, the teacher foregrounded all right as a textual Theme choice along with well because she wished to reorganise classroom activity in order to structure the discussion around the exploration of the text book. Thus, she produced clause 0253 which asked the children to find the answer in the book for her (ie. all right well you find it in the book for me) instead of a more direct request to simply tell her about the blood vessels (eg. well what can you tell me about the blood vessels). Her action introduced a teacher initiated Phase into the discourse as she attempted to modify the potential in the child's response for her own purposes.

0253  All right. Well You find it in the book for me
0254  and um oh let me see
0255  What about Natalie coming to show me

Even so, in common with the previously mentioned strategy of drawing attention to what individual children had said, this new teacher initiated Phase in the discourse needs to be distinguished from the kind of teacher initiated Phases which occurred in the Early Task Orientation Formats ETO1 and ETO2. In this later Task Orientation format, the initiation of a new instructional Phase was clearly designed to support an instructional field topic shift that was introduced by the children.
4.3.2.2 Teacher strategies for initiating shifts on her own cognisance (Format LTO1)

In the discourse which followed the Opening Phase, the most explicitly signalled shifts initiated by the teacher upon her own cognisance were employed purely to close the format in order to move onto the next teaching activity (ie. format). In the Late Task Orientation format (LTO1) under consideration here, the teacher attempted to signal closure on three occasions. However, on two of these occasions she did not complete the move and allowed the children to continue when they showed evidence of assuming interactional control.

The first attempted closing move on the part of the teacher occurred in clause 0211 and the surrounding discussion is set out below.

0207 T: That's right
0208 T: That's the water.....That's the water sac
0209 T: The water sac stops the little chick from [[getting hurt ]]
0210 D: if it gets knocked Responding to Jenny
0211 T: All right
0212 D: Where the shell will go Mrs Price
0213 T: What love?
0214 D: Where the shell will go?

Inspection of the videotape indicates that the teacher, at this point, was ready to move the children to the next activity. However, when a child asked a question she readily responded to the child. A little later, the teacher employed the Continuative well as a Textual Theme choice in a further attempt to initiate a close of the discussion. Like the previous attempt, her second attempt at closure was also one that was open to considerable negotiation. This open nature was carried explicitly in the choice of the Material Process shuffle to represent the intended action along with the choice of well as the Textual Theme choice and it was recognised as such by the children.

0233 T: Well let's shuffle over...

Attempting to move to the next activity
0254 S: Hey and the yolk
0235 T: Oh, well what's the yolk in there for?

The use of well in the sense it was employed in the example above is common in negotiation as Schifferin (1987) points out.

At more global levels of conversational organization, well (along with okay and so) is used as a pre-closing device, offering its recipient a chance to reinstate an earlier or unexpanded topic, or to open another round of talk, prior to conversational closure. (Schlegloff and Sacks1973) (Schifferin 1987:102)

However, when the teacher decided definitely to close the present Format (Format LT01) and move into a new one (Format LT02) she choose decisively and her Textual Theme choice was for the Continuative all right which she repeated.

0289 T: All right. All right, let's come over
0290 T: and have a look at our little book David
Thus, even in instances where she did intend eventually to initiate an explicit shift to close the discussion the teacher was ready to concede interactional control if the children showed evidence of wishing to continue.

The above use of an explicit discourse staging strategy is obviously a special instance. It needs to be considered quite apart from other teacher initiations to do with structuring topic focus shifts in the exploration of the instructional field itself. The teacher, in fact, initiated very few instructional field shifts on her own behalf in the body of the discussion. When she did so, she typically employed statements and questions which she attempted to incorporate as part of the ongoing discussion. Moreover, these moves were employed early in the interaction as she attempted to initiate discussion with the children.

The first occurrence of the teacher’s strategy of using statements and open questioning occurred immediately following the Opening Phase in Format LT01. The teacher moved the children into the next topic focus without disturbing the ongoing flow of the interaction. She did this by simply directing the children’s attention and allowing space for them to comment (clause 0027). Again, in clauses 0033-0034 she employed a similar strategy. The teacher expected that the children would comment and expand upon her statements and they did so.

As strategies for shifting topic focus within the instructional field, these strategies relied on considerable task focused support from the children. The first example (clause 0027) employed a Behavioural Process.

The non specific nature of the regulative choice set an ‘open’ agenda for response and allowed for comment on any aspect of the illustration in question. The second example (clause 0033/34), employed a Material Process.
Here, the instructional field was not made explicit in the clause. The teacher simply referred to a past action on her part. The implicit assumption was that the children would again offer comments that were appropriate to the development of the instructional field.

Furthermore, consideration of the choices that the teacher made in Textual Theme in these two instances illustrates textual choices she made in order to orchestrate these topic focus shifts as part of the ongoing discussion.

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<th>THEME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0027 and</td>
<td>have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc. / C. add.</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0033 and</td>
<td>Mrs Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0034 Struc. / C. add.</td>
<td>Top</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instead of signalling an explicit topic shift via the use of a Continuative, the teacher employed a Structural, realised as an additive Conjunction, to build the topic shift as merely a progression in the flow of the discourse.

The teacher’s final attempt to initiate a shift on her own behalf in the instructional field focus in this format occurred a little further into the text. Here, the teacher used a question to shift the topic focus from one that she decided was digressing from the particular pedagogic focus that she wished to maintain. This strategy appears to have occurred as an adjustment to reframe her prior, more open approach in clause 0033/0034. When the children responded to the teacher’s comment on the picture in clauses 0033/0034, they fixated on the fact that the picture was the same as the one in the book. While talking about similarity can be proposed as educationally useful, it did, in this context constitute a digression from the exploration of the stages of embryo development in which teacher and children were currently engaged. Consequently, the teacher intervened to move the focus of discussion to a more appropriate area of the instructional field. Once again, it was very easy for her to reframe the children’s focus in a subtle manner by posing a question to which she knew they could respond (0038/0039)

| 0035 D: | Uh oh It's the same |
| 0036 T: | The same yeah... |
| 0037 Na: | Uh oh It's the same as that |
| 0038 T: | And what can you tell me... |
| 0039 Na: | What can you tell me about the yolk? |
| 0040 Na: | It's all gone |
| 0041 D: | It's gone |
| 0042 Na: | It's all gone |

In the above example, the teacher built the question into the flow of the discourse through the use of a Structural in Textual Theme position. This choice also simultaneously realised the role of an additive conjunction in the Conjunction system in the manner the teacher had adopted previously for clauses 0027 and 0033/0034.
In this instance, the teacher employed a Verbal Process to construct what is traditionally referred to as an 'open' question. That is, a question which allows considerable scope for children to select from a range of answers. Participant choices within the Transitivity system contributed to the open nature of the question.

The non-specific nature of the question was realised principally in the relationship established between Verbiage and Circumstance (i.e. what - about the yolk) in 0038/0039. These choices, while they provided a general focus for attention, allowed considerable scope for responses on the part of the children.

The teacher-initiated shifts in instructional field focus represented by clauses 0027, 0033/0034 and 0038/0039 indicated a departure from the heavily scaffolded approaches to posing questions adopted by the teacher in Early Task Orientation Formats (e.g. refer section, 4.2.2.1). In all of the above clauses, the teacher's expectations about suitable instructional field choices were rendered, to a large extent, implicit within the teacher's discourse. The initiations expected the children to draw from their own resources to choose 'task focused' responses and presumed a considerable level of inter-subjectivity. They were so effective for this teacher of Aboriginal children because of the high level of common knowledge that had already been built up between the teacher and the children over the course of the macrogenre.

When the children replied, the teacher could be relatively certain that the children's responses would be appropriate to the goals of the activity as she saw them. Previous discussion in this study (see chapter 2, sections 2.3.3, 2.4.1 & 2.4.2) has indicated that achieving a suitable level of inter-subjectivity concerning 'task focus' is often a serious difficulty in educational discourse between Aboriginal children and their teachers in mainstream classrooms.

In Format LTO1, inter-subjectivity between teacher and children was such that even the strategy of employing questions to change topic focus within the instructional field was used sparingly. There was one other use in clauses 0068/0069. However, in general, the teacher allowed the children to select the topic focus for discussion within this Format.

### 4.3.2.2.3 Teacher strategies for extending children's engagement and control over the instructional field (Format LTO1)

The third set of teacher strategies proposed in section 4.5.2.4 for the orchestration of the discourse will be considered in this section. The discussion will focus upon the manner in which the teacher developed the capacity of the children to produce extended texts. This was
especially important because, through this process, she was able to provide the children with the kind of language resources appropriate for writing an explanation text later in the Task Element of the macrogenre. In the Early Task Orientation Formats, it was the teacher who provided the extended explanations for the children. She did this as she focused their attention on the task at hand and provided model explanations for them and as she recontextualised question responses provided by the children. Furthermore, as she went about the provision of models, she employed a range of strategies, which both encouraged and supported the children in their attempts to engage with her discourse. When she employed questions, for example, she typically provided an explicit statement of the context out of which the question arose. Moreover, in almost every instance she accepted children's responses and then sought to involve them within an extensive reconceptualisation sequence that developed their response.

In the Late Task Orientation Format (LTO1) under consideration here, the teacher still worked to achieve such ends. For example, the following extract shows her reaction as a child responded to her initiation in clause 0027.

```
0027 N: And have a look at our little chick now
0028 T: It's getting bigger
0029 N: with long feathers
0030 T: With long feathers.
0031 T: Good girl
```

Here the teacher accepted the child's response and probed for extension. This resulted in the child extending her original clause (0028) to *It's getting bigger with long feathers*. An inspection of the Transitivity choices involved reveals that the teacher had encouraged the child to add an additional Circumstance to the participant structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational / Circumstantial / Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>it's getting bigger</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quite apart from the fact that the teacher's intervention was encouraging the child to produce a clause which drew resources important to literate discourse, this example of what has been termed previously as cued elicitation raises a further issue. This is, “What was it that made the teacher assume that the child would have more to offer than the perfectly reasonable response of *it's getting bigger*?” The answer to this, once again, lies in the level of inter-subjectivity that had been brought forward from other formats within the macrogenre. For example, the text of a shared reading book that the teacher and children had been working on in another format for the past ten days reveals a clue to the teacher's seeming intuition about the correct timing of the probe. In the part of this book which deals with the state of embryo development at the point being discussed above, there is the following text that the teacher and children had read and discussed frequently.

```
Now the chicken had grown longer feathers and it had eaten most of the yolk and white inside the egg
(from the class reading text 'A New Chicken' - given in appendix 5)
```
One other area in which she was enabled to be more challenging in her approach to interaction was in the use of interrogatives which employ a Wh element to signal a direct question. For example,

<table>
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<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc. / C. add.</td>
<td>Wh/Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this Late Task Orientation Format the existence of a high level of inter-subjectivity allowed the teacher to adopt a more challenging stance in her questioning behaviour. This was evident in the previous example but was also apparent in a number of situations where the children initiated in an attempt to shift instructional field focus within the discourse. Apart from one instance in which the teacher employed a Wh question to initiate a shift in Topic focus on her own behalf, all other Wh questions followed up children's initiations which sought a shift of focus in the instructional field. Examples of teacher questions of this kind occur in the following teacher produced clauses (listed by clause number in underlined bold italics). The child initiation which precipitated the teacher's question is given before the slash-(/): 0050-0052/0053; 0058/0059; 0111/0115; 0126/0129; 0146/0147-0155; 0169-0170/0171; 0176/0178; 0234/0235; 0245-0246/0247; 0257-0259/0260; 0263-0264/0268-0279. Some representative examples are given below.

0050 N: I know
0051 what he's getting
0052 when he's hatched
0053 T: What?

0257 J: I know
0258 I know
0259 where it is
0260 T: Where's the blood vessels?

0111 N/Na: And the thermometer
0115 T: And what does the thermometer tell... tell us?

0234 S: Hey and the yolk
0235 T: Oh, well what's the yolk in there for?

0126 Na: And...and the electricity
0127 J: Look the electricity
Points to plug in wall. Mispronounces word as 'electricity'
0128 T: Good girl
0129 T: What does the electricity do?

0146 Na If, if you want to put water in the middle...
0147 T: Yeah, You tell me...
To Sylvia who is over by the incubator pointing at the thermometer
The T moves over to sit beside the incubator with Sylvia. The other children all cluster around them.
0148 You were going to tell me something about that
0149 Naomi has already said something about that
0150 What's that?
0151 S: A thermometer
In considering the above examples, it is useful to note the teacher's variation in response within the final example given (clauses 0148-0155) when the child appeared to be having difficulty articulating what she wished to say. The child knew that the level of the thermometer reading tells you when to add water to the incubator so as to maintain the level of humidity. Furthermore, she knew that this process prevents the eggs from drying out and as a consequence the chicks are prevented from dying. In response, the teacher took the child back to something she could do easily as a starting point for structuring a suitable response. Thus she first employed a Relational Process clause to establish identity.

The teacher typically responded to instances where children pointed or gesticulated in order to supplement their response to the challenge posed by explicit articulation by first encouraging them to identify the object of their focus. She was then in a position to support their further expansions. This strategy bore a remarkable resemblance to the responses of parents in bedtime story readings within literate contexts (refer chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2.1, also Gray 1990 in appendix 2). In these contexts, parents were observed first to encourage identifying behaviour. They then engaged the children in 'naming' (eg. That's a horsie) As children gained control of naming, this ability was used as a starting point for building extended explanations and comments.

In the example under consideration here, the teacher, having achieved an identifying focus to which the child could respond, then posed a more demanding question given in the extract above (0155 and that tells us what?). The child had difficulty responding,

```
0155 and that tells us what?
0156 Na: If you put...
0157 S: It tells us
0158 how the um.....and the um
```

However, because the teacher presided over a discourse that allowed scope for others to volunteer information she could work with the whole group to build an appropriate response. The child did not become isolated as she struggled with her problem. The first support came from Natalie (Na) in clause 0156 above who contributed the beginnings of a response which signalled the possibility of a reply that employed a hypotactic clause as Theme. This lead was taken up by David (D) who constructed a suitable dependent clause (clause 0159, below).

```
0159 D: If you put water in.....were to put water in...
0160 N/Na:When you put the water in
0161 it stops it drying
0162 S: If you were to put water in Mrs Price...
```

*All the children are trying to talk to the T at the one time*
Naomi (N) and Natalie (Na) offered a variation on the structure. However, Sylvia was able to take up David's response. At this point, the children were all trying to talk at once and the teacher was forced to refocus the discussion. She selected David's model that Sylvia had taken up and used it as the basis for building a jointly constructed reconceptualisation for her question in clause 0155 presented earlier.

Sylvia (S) closed the reconceptualisation (clause 0177) by volunteering an 'extension' (and this the incubator in the middle). By this statement, she meant that you put the water in the middle of the incubator. This attempt at articulating a response to an interaction between Natalie (Na) and the teacher earlier in clause 0171 underlines further the persistence employed by Sylvia throughout the above extract in her attempts to develop and control the language resources required for effective participation in the discourse.

The teacher question in clause 0155 (and that tells us what?) which first prompted Sylvia to articulate the information, provided an impetus for progression and movement of the discourse forward into the semantic space formerly occupied in the Early Task Orientation formats by the teacher's reconceptualisation of the child's response. What occurred in this instance happened frequently across this format. Thus, teacher reconceptualisations which had consisted mostly of teacher monologue in the Early Task Orientation formats were starting to become joint negotiations of an explanation about phenomena identified within the instructional field. Very often the explanation continued across a number of child initiation/teacher questioning events of the kind listed above.

The following set of events, in fact, was initiated by a teacher question which sought to establish a teacher initiated shift in the instructional field. The interaction soon established its own momentum as the children freely contributed.
Analysis of Discourse in the Task Orientation

Teacher initiation

0039 What can you tell me about the yolk?
0040 Na: It's all gone
0041 D: It's gone
0042 Na: It's all gone

Child initiation

0043 D: And he's in a water sac
0044 T: And he's in a water sac

Child initiation

0045 N: If he tried to peck that...that egg
0046 the water would burst like a balloon
0047 T: That's right
0048 The water bursts, right
0049 The water sac bursts like a balloon

Child initiation

0050 N: I know
0051 what he's getting
0052 when he's hatched
0053 T: What?
0054 N: He's getting a little tooth
0055 T: Yes, he's getting a little egg tooth
0056 Good girl

Child initiation

0057 D: Here....Here's a little egg tooth Points to illustration in book

Child initiation

0058 J: And that helps him
0059 T: That helps him to...
0060 That's right...
0061 That helps him [[to peck out of the...??]]
0062 N: Egg
0063 D: Shell
0064 J: Egg
0065 T: Yes. Good girl.

Inspection of the teacher's choices in Theme within the above extract illustrates that the teacher adopted very much a 'reacting' or 'following' role in this section of the discourse. She made few choices for Textual Theme.

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<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
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<tr>
<td>0044 and Struc. / C. add.</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0055 yes Cont.</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0055 yes Cont.</td>
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The choice of the Structural *and* in 0044 was simply a repetition of the child's choice in clause 0043. The use of the Continuative *yes* also reflected responding behaviour on the part of the teacher. Choices for Interpersonal Theme are identified below.

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<td>0039</td>
<td>what</td>
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<td>0053</td>
<td>what?</td>
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The teacher made two choices of *Wh* items to realise Interpersonal Theme. However only one of these represented an initiation to change instructional field focus (Clause 0039). This clause provided the opening question for the extract. Clause 0053 was a reaction to a child
initiation. Topical Theme choices (below) simply referred back primarily to aspects of the instructional field introduced previously the children’s discourse.

<table>
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<td>0044</td>
<td>and Struc. / C. add.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0047</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0048</td>
<td>the water Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0049</td>
<td>the water sac Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0055</td>
<td>yes Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0059</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0060</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
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<tr>
<td>0061</td>
<td>that Top.</td>
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</table>

They did this in two ways, through evaluating the child’s statement (eg. that's right) or through repeating a Topical Theme introduced in the previous statement by a child (eg. D: And he's in a water sac - T: And he's in a water sac). Both of these choices had the role of confirming the legitimacy of the children's responses.

Transitivity relationships were typically for Relational Attributive Processes when she referred to children's statements, eg.

0047

\[
\text{Relational / Intensive / Attributive} \\
\text{that} \quad \text{'s} \quad \text{right} \\
\text{Carrier} \quad \text{Pro} \quad \text{Attribute}
\]

When she dealt with the instructional field directly, Processes were either Relational to specify relationships between things in the instructional field, eg.

0044

\[
\text{Relational / Circumstantial / Attributive} \\
\text{and} \quad \text{he} \quad \text{'s} \quad \text{in a water sac} \\
\text{Carrier} \quad \text{Pro} \quad \text{Attribute: Circumstance}
\]

or Material to realise the actions of participants in the instructional field.

0049

\[
\text{Material} \\
\text{The water sac} \quad \text{bursts} \quad \text{like a balloon} \\
\text{Actor} \quad \text{Pro} \quad \text{Circumstance: manner}
\]

All of these participant structures typically repeated or provided reconceptualisations of participant structures already introduced by the children.

An analysis of children's choices in Theme for this same segment of text demonstrates a high level of concern on their part for building textuality within the discourse of the kind that was discussed earlier (eg. section 4.3.2.1) in reference to their initiating strategies. This analysis is given in Table 4.25 below.
### Table 4.25
Analysis of teacher choices in Theme in Format LTO1 (clauses 0041-0064)

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<th>THEME</th>
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<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
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<td>0041</td>
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<tr>
<td>0042</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0043 and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>he</td>
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<tr>
<td>0044 if Struc./ C. condit.</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0045</td>
<td>the water</td>
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<tr>
<td>0050</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>0051</td>
<td>what</td>
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<tr>
<td>0052 when Struc./ C. temp.</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0054</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0057 and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>here Mkd./ Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0058</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0062</td>
<td>egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0063</td>
<td>shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0064</td>
<td>egg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here choices of Structurals within Textual Theme (realised simultaneously as Conjunctions) promoted the children's attempts to engage in the joint construction of a text that was both extended and textually coherent. Transitivity choices, like those of the teacher outlined previously also realised engagement with the instructional field as the focus for building the textual coherence of their negotiation. The children's commitment towards the building of the mode of organisation of the discourse becomes clearer if all repetition, and most teacher intervention (except where the teacher adds crucial information as part of joint construction) is separated out. The left hand column in the transcript below contains the core of the explanation that was being constructed in the interaction.

| 0040 | Na: | It's all gone |
| 0043 | D: | And he's in a water sac |
| 0045 | N: | If he tried to peck that...that egg the water would burst like a balloon |
| 0050 | N: | I know |
| 0051 | what he's getting |
| 0052 | when he's hatched |
| 0054 | N: | He's getting a little tooth |
| 0057 | D: | Here....Here's a little egg tooth |
| 0041 | D: | It's gone |
| 0042 | Na: | It's all gone |
| 0044 | T: | And he's in a water sac |
| 0047 | T: | That's right |
| 0048 | T: | The water bursts |
| 0049 | Right the water sac bursts like a balloon |
| 0053 | T: | What? |
| 0055 | T: | Yes, he's getting a little egg tooth |
| 0056 | Good girl |
Points to illustration in book

0058  J:  And that helps him

0059  T:   That helps him to...

0060  T:   That's right...

0061  T:   That helps him ...

0062  N:  Egg /0063  D:  Shell

0064  J:  Egg

0065  T:   Yes. Good girl.

If the left hand column is read on its own without reference to the clauses separated out into the right hand column it is possible to gain a sense of the level of joint construction that is indicated in the previous discussion of Theme and Transitivity choices. An even longer example of joint construction can be found between clauses 0182 and 0210.

0182  J:  And the arm....The arm goes over the screen

0183  S:  You don't have to turn it over with your finger

0185  S:  You just leave it

0186  and... (unclear)

0187  N:  The arm goes over to the screen

0189  T:   The arm goes over to the screen

0190  S:  slowly

0191  J:  And then it come back

0192  T:   The arm goes over to the screen

0192  T:   and then it comes back

0193  T:   again

0193  T:   and the little egg turns like that

0195  J:  And it comes back

0196  T:   'Cause the little chick has to be kept moving in the egg

0197  so he doesn't get all like...

0198  Cn:   Yeah

0199  T:   He needs a little bit of exercise in there

0200  J:  An he don't die

0201  cause the mother hen...

0202  S:  We don't have a mother hen

0203  We have an incubator

0204  J:  An he's not hurt in the....inside....inside the egg

0205  T:   That's right

0206  We have an incub...

Responding to Sylvia

0207  T:   That's right

0207  (That's the water...)

This joint construction of explanations between teacher and children is perhaps the most fundamentally important outcome of the teacher's orchestrations across the whole of the macrogenre. It provided the base from which the teacher could work with the children as they moved into the Task Specification and Task elements within the macrogenre. This goal was pursued further across the other Late Task Orientation Format (LTO2) which will be considered in the following discussion.
4.3.3 FORMAT LTO2 - TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE INITIATION OF DISCOURSE PHASES

Format LTO2 was recorded on day 19 and presents interaction around the book 'A New Chicken' that was specially written and made into a 'big book'. A copy of this text is provided in appendix 5). The text was written with a dual purpose in mind. First, the text was written to provide a model which could introduce the children to the language choices that would normally be made in the construction of a written and monologic (as opposed to an oral, primarily dialogic) explanation of embryo development. In this regard, it represented an attempt to reinforce further the Mode shift towards literate resources already commenced (particularly through teacher reconceptualisations) in the earlier formats.

The structure of this text with its high level of repetition betrayed the second purpose for its construction. The high level of repetition was intended to provide a repetitive frame that would allow the children to partake in shared reading activities with the teacher. The children at this stage of their development had very little reading experience for they were in the first term of their first year at school. None of the children were capable of an 'independent' reading of the text. The significance of the book 'A New Chicken' was that its repetitive structure allowed the children to engage actively with the construction of the language model provided as they attempted to read the book with the teacher. Thus, while the text was somewhat simplified compared to that in the published book, 'Egg to Chick', it did provide a model for a high level of active engagement with some language features associated with procedural explanation texts. Moreover, it was also a model that provided a significant bridge into work with more fully developed procedural explanations in the children's future education.

Most importantly, because 'A New Chicken' was readily accessible at the limited level of reading competence possessed by the children, it could become the focus for teaching about other aspects of literacy development. Consequently, as well as providing a vehicle for active engagement with language choices associated with written text, the book was able to be employed by the teacher to provide a context for the beginnings of explorations about the nature of the orthographic system. A strong orientation towards the manner in which this system could be employed in writing activity was considered essential to the ability of the children to engage effectively in the writing activity associated with the joint construction in the Task element of the macrogenre.

The shared reading activity that was the focus of this format was introduced about half way through the period in which the children were observing the eggs (day 11). From that time it became a daily part of the teaching program. In this format, the instructional field was similar in many respects to that constructed in the joint oral explanations of embryo development pursued in ETO2 and LTO1 discussed previously. For example, the topic focus was the same - describing developmental progress at different stages of embryo growth. One major
difference here was that the progression through the pedagogic discourse was paced, not so much by explicit verbal staging on the part of the teacher but, rather, by the momentum of following and reading along as the pages were turned in the book. Thus the teacher employed Continuatives merely to initiate activity at the start of the format. She introduced a brief orienting phase in which she focused the children on the title of the book and the 21 day gestation period covered by the text.

After this brief orientation she directed the children into joint reading activity.

Finally, she then marked the close of the activity in the Format.

The following discussion in section 4.3.4 will, therefore, consider orchestration strategies employed more generally by the teacher within the joint reading activity which constituted central teaching phase and occupied most of the Format.

4.3.4 FORMAT LTO2 - TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE INITIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL FIELD FOCUS WITHIN PHASES

Teacher initiation within the main joint reading Phase can be considered broadly along two dimensions. The first dimension had to do with initiating and carrying forward the reading activity itself. The teacher's strategy in this was to begin reading and to encourage the children to read along with her. At points she employed a strategy that is often called 'oral cloze'. This strategy involved encouraging the children to read with the teacher and once they were doing this the teacher stopped and let the children carry on alone. The following extract contained some incidences of 'oral cloze'. When teacher or children say actual book text as they read, this is marked in **underlined bold italics**.

---

**T: All right. All right, let's come over and have a look at our little book David**

After this brief orientation she directed the children into joint reading activity.

**T: All right. Let's read**

Finally, she then marked the close of the activity in the Format.

**T: All right. Ok, Naomi you can ...**

The following discussion in section 4.3.4 will, therefore, consider orchestration strategies employed more generally by the teacher within the joint reading activity which constituted central teaching phase and occupied most of the Format.

4.3.4 FORMAT LTO2 - TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE INITIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL FIELD FOCUS WITHIN PHASES

Teacher initiation within the main joint reading Phase can be considered broadly along two dimensions. The first dimension had to do with initiating and carrying forward the reading activity itself. The teacher's strategy in this was to begin reading and to encourage the children to read along with her. At points she employed a strategy that is often called 'oral cloze'. This strategy involved encouraging the children to read with the teacher and once they were doing this the teacher stopped and let the children carry on alone. The following extract contained some incidences of 'oral cloze'. When teacher or children say actual book text as they read, this is marked in **underlined bold italics**.

---

**T/Cn: The hen sat on the egg for five days**

Sylvia says 'five more days' emphasising 'more' and anticipating a following page.

**Na: The little chicken**

**T/Cn: The little chicken grew bigger.**

**It grew a tiny...**

**S: Beak**

**T: Yes it did**

**but we didn't write that down in the story**

**Na: But we didn't say that**

**T: It grew a tiny head**

**T/Cn: A tiny heart, tiny...**
In the above extract the teacher worked with the children via 'oral cloze' to jointly negotiate the following segment of text,

_The hen sat on the egg for five days._
_The little chicken grew bigger._
_It grew a tiny head, a tiny heart, tiny ears, tiny wings and tiny legs_

The interaction in the extract, however, represented a very active involvement on the part of both teacher and children. The teacher succeeded well in making the children's engagement with the text far more than just a ritual chanting of the words (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.1). An important tool that helped her to achieve this end was the level of common knowledge that she had built up with the children from prior formats. The children brought to the reading activity the knowledge that they had gained from formats such as Format ETO2, for example. This prior knowledge allowed them to 'predict' actively the meaning that was being constructed rather than just 'chant' following the teacher. Thus when Sylvia predicted _beak_ following the teacher's oral cloze in clause 0328 (ie. _It grew a tiny..._), the teacher could acknowledge the correctness of the prediction while explaining that it was not included in the particular text they were reading (0329–0334). A further example occurred between clauses 0349 and 0355. This kind of interaction allowed the teacher to promote such omitted items discovered over the course of the macrogenre as something that the children might like to write when they produced their own book about chickens. This was an issue that she took up at another point when the children expressed the need to be listed as authors.

D: Hey, you forgot to write 'the authors'
J: I said that
T: Well we didn't write this book
Mr Gray wrote this little story for us
but when we write our story about the new chicken
we can put the authors on the front page

What is also a significant indicator of active engagement is the fact that the children, on a number of occasions, were making predictions about the development of the text. These predictions were over and above those the teacher elicited directly via 'oral cloze'. For example,
A further indicator of the nature of the children's engagement with the construction of the text at far more than a 'ritual' level was the manner in which one child, Natalie (Na), reacted to the teacher's protestations that the word beak was not in the actual text. She very promptly pointed out to the teacher that it was in the illustration on the page with the clear implication that it therefore should have been in the book.

0330 T: Yes it did
0331 but we didn't write that down in the story
0332 You're quite right
0333 it did grow a tiny beak
0334 but we didn't say that
0335 Na: It's there
            Stands up and points to the beak of the embryo in the book illustration

It is also notable that the child's challenge opened the way for the teacher to draw a clear distinction between what was actually said in the book and what might or could have been said. In earlier discussion (chapter 1, section 1.5.3.3 & chapter 2, section 2.3.3), it has been proposed that the development of an awareness of the possible distinction between what is actually said and what is meant is an important artefact of the development of control over 'literate or decontextualised' discourse. The issue of the manner in which inter-subjectivity of task focus between teacher and children might promote this awareness will be taken up further in chapter 5, section 5.3.4.3.

A further important function for which this teacher employed 'oral cloze' was to begin to focus the children's attention onto the nature of the orthography itself. One extract gives an indication of how the teacher went about introducing orthographic knowledge.

0366 T/Cn: The hen sat on the egg for five MORE days
            All emphasise the word 'more'

Here, the teacher and children emphasised the word more as she read with the children. She frequently used emphasis of this kind to generate focus upon a particular word. She then typically discussed the word with the children, for example, she might help them point out the word and then draw their attention to some of its grapho-phonetic features. Oral cloze also frequently provided a context for such discussion. In this instance, the teacher had used the word more on an earlier occasion to point out the letter m and its associated phonetic representation. Now her continued emphasis reaped its reward as Sylvia pointed out the sound relationship.

0367 S: /m/
            Points to letter 'm' in 'more' and says /m/ sound
0368 T: Good girl. More. /m/
0369 That's that /m/ sound
0370 Good girl

The teacher could then reinforce Sylvia's observation. Very soon afterwards the word occurred again and all of the other children became involved.

0374 T/Cn: The hen sat on the egg for five more days
            All children emphasise the word 'more'
0375 S: 'More'
This discussion continued for a considerable time (from clause 0380 to 0413) as the children all speculated on the distinctive features of the letter m.

A further example of the work the teacher was doing with the orthography occurred following the teacher's use of oral cloze in clause 0424.

Here the children predicted wrongly in both of the oral clozes the teacher had set (0424 & 0427). However, in earlier sessions within the format, the teacher had already explored egg using similar strategies to those she was using for more. She and the children had also spent time attempting to write egg in earlier sessions. She could, therefore, encourage the children to check their predictions with the actual text in the book to resolve the confusion as well as add to the reading strategies she was building with the children. Moreover, once again, she was promoting the adoption of a generalised concern regarding what the written text actually said.

The second dimension of teacher initiation that occurred in this format had to do with teacher questions. While the teacher rarely used questions, she was more challenging than she had been in the Early Task Orientation Formats in the manner in which she employed them. The previous example in clause 0430 illustrates this. Furthermore, the rest of the questions were contained within two small sections of the Format. The first of these occurred at the beginning of the Format and is given below.
and mother hen sat on eggs for five days

T: But not just five days

How many days altogether?

Na: Nineteen

T: More than nineteen

N: Ten

T: Twenty...?

S: Twenty one

Na: Twenty one

T: Twenty one days

An examination of the Theme choices made by the teacher over this extract illustrates just how direct the teacher's questioning was.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a new chicken</td>
<td>a new chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. temp.</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how long</td>
<td>how long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WH/top.</td>
<td>WH/top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>not just five days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struc./C. adver.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many</td>
<td>days altogether?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WH/top.</td>
<td>more than nineteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twenty...?</td>
<td>twenty one days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows a very different pattern of theme choices from those surrounding questions in the Early Task Orientation Formats. Here the teacher simply linked a series of questions one after the other as she pressed for a response that her past experience told her the children already knew. The children, for their part, either misunderstood or did not fully listen to the teacher's original question (refer earlier discussion on listening chapter 1, section 1.5.3.3 & chapter 2, section 2.3.3). The fact that the teacher ended with the response she expected (ie. 21 days) does not remove the perception of the fine line that is typically drawn between success and failure in such a direct approach to questioning with Aboriginal children. Above all, the sequence highlights the importance of the existence of shared knowledge to the resolution of miscommunication. This issue will be developed further in the following chapter (chapter 5, sections 5.4.2.1, 5.4.2.2 & 5.4.3).

4.4 SUMMARY - LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY ACROSS EARLY AND LATE TASK ORIENTATION FORMATS

This chapter has explored the development of aspects of both teacher’s and children's discourse roles across Early and Late Task Orientation Formats (ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 & LTO2). Early Task Orientation Formats were found to comprise teaching/learning contexts which were carefully staged and directed by the teacher. The Formats were staged overall in
terms of teacher directed Phases which were signalled throughout the discourse via the choice of a small number of Continuatives to realise the role of Structurals in Textual Theme position. The Continuatives were, right, all right, righto, ok and (less frequently) now. Teacher initiated Phases occurred when the teacher signalled a significant point of departure in the staging of the discourse. Within teacher initiated Phases, the teacher also orchestrated most of what were termed secondary or related shifts in instructional field focus. These secondary shifts served to focus attention upon specific aspects of the overall Phase topic.

Investigation of the percentage of clauses produced by the children in each of the Early Task Orientation Formats revealed that they had produced a relatively small proportion of the overall number of clauses in the texts. They produced approximately 20 per cent of all clauses and only approximately 3 to 5 per cent of those could be characterised as 'initiations' in which they spoke unprompted by the teacher in any way.

A key strategy employed by the teacher involved orchestrating children's involvement around a number of display questions. However, the circumstances surrounding the teacher's questions were carefully orchestrated. The questions that she asked were, first of all, questions that encouraged the children to draw their responses from models of language choices that had been previously introduced as common knowledge. Moreover, she employed language choices that made the link between current and past experience explicit (eg. use of Mental Process remember). Second, the questions she asked were heavily contextualised within the discourse. That is, the instructional field circumstances out of which the questions arose were made explicit. These were often presented in a manner that allowed the teacher to scaffold (via preformulation) the children towards appropriate responses (eg. use of Marked Theme to build hypotactic clause relationships).

When children responded to the teacher's questions she, above all, accepted their responses. She typically did this even when the answers were wrong or incomplete. It was proposed that this reaction on the teacher's part was made possible by the level of inter-subjectivity that was being built between the teacher and children regarding 'task focus' within the discourse. In order to encourage the children to engage with her discourse the teacher employed strategies which attempted to construct the discourse as one that was open to negotiation. A primary strategy in this regard was that the teacher did not single out individual children as a focus for her display questions. Rather, she invited and accepted responses on a voluntary basis from any child in the group. This meant that she was willing to accept children responding on behalf of others whenever it occurred.

Having accepted the children's responses as legitimate, the teacher typically engaged in extensive reconceptualisations of the children's responses. It was proposed that these reconceptualisations provided models of language choices available for the children to 'bring forward' on their own behalf in later recursions of the format. It was noted that the extended
nature of the reconceptualisations allowed scope for the teacher to model a range of resources appropriate to 'literate' discourse including the explicit realisation of causal - conditional relations between various objects and events in the instructional field.

Reconceptualisations also provided a context for orientating children towards further, often more demanding questions. It was noted also that the teacher's questions in the Early Task Orientation Formats were often quite undemanding in that they sought, for example, identification of objects or 'facts' (eg. What else do we have to do?). However, such questions often provided for a reconceptualisation out of which the teacher could propose a more demanding question (eg. Wonder why we had to do that?)

If the teacher considered that children could not answer questions, she supplied for them the necessary information drawn from the instructional field. Moreover, in circumstances where children had limited instructional field knowledge, any questions that she did ask employed Relational Processes and were heavily scaffolded such that even if the child looked or pointed in the right direction the teacher could respond positively and then reconceptualise and develop the child's response.

In the Late Task Orientation Formats, the role that the teacher adopted within the discourse changed dramatically as did the roles assumed by the children. These formats employed fewer teacher initiated Phases and those that did occur did so in order to facilitate attempts by the children to take interactional control within the discourse. The majority of secondary shifts in instructional field focus were initiated by the children. This is illustrated by the change in the percentage of clauses produced by the children in the Late Task Orientation Formats. In these formats the children produced a far higher percentage of the clauses (approximately 47% for LTO1 and 56% for LTO2). Virtually all of the increase over the Early Task Orientation Format totals was accounted for by the increase in initiations by the children (ie. from 3 to 5 percent to 33 to 43 percent).

In the circumstances of the Late Task Orientation Formats, where the children possessed a high level of inter-subjectivity concerning task focus with the teacher and where they were content to initiate within the discourse, the teacher's orchestration strategies took on a different character. The teacher employed a number of strategies which promoted the ability of the children to initiate within the discourse. The teacher acted as an intermediary in order to establish group focus around various initiations produced by the children. She frequently initiated a Phase which took as its point of departure an appropriate child initiation within the discourse by employing Continuatives of the kind she had used in Early Task Orientation Formats to signal her own teacher initiated Phases. Thus, Phases when they did occur were initiated on behalf of specific children to help them establish their contributions as central points within the discourse. The teacher initiated no Phases on her own behalf.
In addition, the teacher initiated very few secondary shifts on her own behalf. When she did, she typically integrated them into the flow of the discourse as a kind of 'extension' of previous interaction (eg. and have a look at our little chick now / and what can you tell me about the yolk?). In the body of the discourse she typically exploited initiations by the children as a basis for building extended explanations. She did continue to accept and to reconceptualise these initiations as she had responses in Early Task Orientation Formats when children required support to articulate their ideas effectively. However, she also treated initiations as establishing points from which she could challenge the children to expand their explanations (eg. S: If the mother hen kicks it, the little chicks can't feel it - T: Yeah, Why?). Discussion of the strategies employed by the children to initiate within the discourse highlighted the extent to which they were collaborating with the teacher in the construction of highly coherent extended texts which were appropriate to the construction of written explanation texts of the kind they would be required to construct jointly with the teacher in the final Task stage of the macrogenre. The following chapter 5 will, therefore, explore the language choice and pedagogy employed in the course of achieving that end.
5 ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION AND TASK OF A CONCENTRATED ENCOUNTER MACROGENRE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore pedagogic discourse in scaffolding Formats sampled from the Task Specification and Task Elements of the concentrated encounter macrogenre that is the focus of this study. As consideration of Late Task Orientation Formats in chapter 4 has illustrated, the children were already capable of negotiating extended oral explanations about how an embryo develops into a hatched chicken. In the Task Specification (TS) and Task (T) Elements discussed in this chapter, the teacher exploited already established inter-subjectivity to do with both the regulative and instructional fields to engage the children in the joint construction of a written text on this topic.

In scaffolding the children into the production of a written text, however, the teacher was promoting a qualitatively significant shift in discourse requirements over that which existed in earlier oral interaction. The move into extension of the instructional field was analogous to the notion of 'upping the ante' (Bruner 1983) in scaffolding formats. Consequently, the teacher was required to assume a higher degree of interactional control than she had in the Late Task Orientation Formats examined in chapter 4. This movement from oral to written discourse can be illustrated visually in the following diagram.

![Figure 5.1](Progressive development of control in the scaffolding of written text)

In the above figure, the progression of the macrogenre over time is represented along the horizontal axis. The Task Orientation (previously discussed in chapter 4) which pursued control over an orally negotiated text is represented in the left hand shaded box within the figure. Movement into the Task Specification and Task elements is represented as an unshaded box which builds upon the previously negotiated oral explanation.
The change in teacher orchestration as the teacher moved the children into the Task Specification and Task Elements of the macrogenre was necessary because the children were incapable at the time of producing a coherent written text without the explicit scaffolding support of the teacher. The children's difficulties existed on two levels. The first level of difficulty concerned the degree of understanding and control they possessed over the orthographic system. As the discussion of LTO2 in chapter 4 (section 4.3.4) has revealed, the children were in the very earliest stages of identifying introductory letter sound relationships (eg. consonant m = sound /m/). They were still in the process of identifying distinctive feature patterns which allowed for the discrimination of letters. Consequently, the teacher was required to model both the necessary orthographic knowledge along with the manner in which that knowledge was employed in the construction of written text. The strategies employed by the teacher to model this process will be developed during discussion of the Task Specification and Task Elements in this chapter.

The second level of difficulty faced by the children was concerned with selecting and organising appropriate language choices in a manner that would produce a suitable written product text. In the two formats (ie. TS & T) which are the subject of discussion in this chapter, the teacher now had to focus the children even more carefully upon language choices appropriate for written as opposed to oral text (eg. Halliday 1985a, Hammond 1990, Halliday & Martin 1993). As the following discussion will illustrate (section 5.2), the teacher in this study was able to attempt the joint construction of a written text that was more coherent than a 'class story' of the kind that is common in many early childhood classrooms.

In the typical manifestation of a 'class story' the teacher elicits 'sentences' from the children and writes them up exactly as the children produce them. Teachers generally engage in the production of this type of 'class story' in the belief that they are maximising the children's interactive control within the educational discourse. The process of eliciting a sentence from each child is assumed to ensure the children take 'ownership' of the product. However, this assumption is open to question because the children truly own only the individual sentences they produce. Even more importantly, during the production of their 'sentences' children engage only marginally in building what Halliday (1994:334) refers to as texture within the overall text product. This is because the task of providing individual sentences in a manner that realises textual coherence within the overall 'text' being constructed requires a considerable level of competence in the production of literate discourse. Thus, the 'text' which is the outcome of such endeavours is typically little more than a collection of separate clauses tied together with only the most superficial adherence to the same topic focus. 'Class stories' produced in this way are of little use subsequently as a teaching/learning resource within the classroom. Children very quickly forget the content which is inherently idiosyncratic and unpredictable. Moreover, the product text inevitably presents a very poor model of effectively staged cohesive text for the children to internalise. The need to move Aboriginal children
towards engagement with more challenging and educationally profitable text models was discussed in chapter 2 (sections 2.3.3 & 2.4.3.1).

The teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre studied here could achieve a more advanced text because in the Task Orientation of the macrogenre she had already built such a high level of inter-subjectivity concerning both the nature of the instructional field and the manner in which it could be constructed. Her ‘challenge’ was to involve the children in the construction of a written text which could be identified by them as one to which they had genuinely contributed but which also provided suitable model resources from which further teaching about the construction of literate discourse could be pursued. In future lessons, the teacher proposed to use the negotiated text that was to be the outcome of joint construction within the Task Element as a ‘shared reading book’. In these future lessons, she could engage the children in activities designed to further expand their knowledge about the system of language choices appropriate to the construction of explanation texts.

The teacher in this study was conscious, therefore, of the kinds of language choices she wished to bring to the children’s awareness from the very start of the macrogenre. Now, as she prepared them for the actual task of producing a written text, her focus on the language requirements for constructing the written explanation that was her goal assumed an even sharper focus. For this reason, it is useful to commence this discussion with an analysis of the final written text jointly negotiated by the group. The analysis pursued in this chapter, therefore, will explore the linguistic structure of the jointly negotiated written text (section 5.2) before moving into an analysis of the immediate classroom discourse through which it was constructed in the Task Specification (section 5.3) and Task (section 5.4) Elements of the macrogenre.

5.2 LANGUAGE CHOICE IN THE JOINTLY NEGOTIATED WRITTEN TEXT

The target genre that the teacher wished to move the children towards was ‘explanation’. Explanations are so called because their function is to offer an explanation for a phenomenon (Martin 1990). In this instance the written text set as goal for joint writing activity could be characterised more precisely as a ‘sequential explanation’ text. Veel (1997) gives the following characterisation of the social purpose of a sequential explanation.

To explain how something occurs or is produced – usually observable sequences of activities which take place on a regular basis. (Veel 1997:172)

Sequential explanations detail a sequence of developmental changes (temporally or spatially) in a phenomenon such as those which occur as an embryo develops into a hatched chicken. However, a sequential explanation does not attempt to explain or develop causal processes which might drive the process of change. Thus, the choice by the teacher to move the children toward the writing of sequential explanations represented an early step into engagement with language resources appropriate to scientific explanations, in particular, and to scientific discourse, in general, for children in their first year of schooling.
It is still important to note, however, that movement into the construction of texts such as sequential explanations do require children to employ patterns of language choices that are very different from those that they employ in other contexts (eg. Martin 1985, 1990, Hammond 1990). It would be very rare for any children in their first year of schooling to be capable of producing, without assistance, an extended written sequential explanation text of the kind the teacher set out to negotiate with the children in the Task Element.

Overall, the written text produced as an outcome of the concentrated encounter macrogenre can be regarded as a successful negotiation of a sequential explanation with the children concerned. The text was negotiated in three separate lessons over the course of three days. The amount of text produced on each day is indicated on the transcript below (ie. day 1 = clauses 01-08; day 2 = clauses 09-18; day 3 = clauses 19-25).

Day one--------
01 We didn't have a mother hen
02 so we used an incubator
03 to keep the eggs warm
04 The incubator has a thermometer [[that tells us [[how hot the eggs are]]]]
05 The orange light comes on every time [[the eggs start to get cold ]]]
06 When the arm turns over
07 it moves the eggs around
08 to give the little chicks exercise

Day two--------
09 First, we switched on the electricity
10 and put the eggs in
11 The little chick looked like a dot
12 It stays in the egg for twenty one days
13 His food is the yolk
14 The little chick grows a little bit bigger
15 He grows a tiny head, a tiny heart, tiny eyes and tiny blood vessels
15 Then he grows tiny ears, tiny wings and tiny legs
17 Next he grows a tiny tail and a tiny beak
18 Then he grows tiny feathers and an egg tooth

Day three------
19 While the little chicken is in the egg
20 it is floating in a water sac
21 When it is twenty one days
22 The little chick cracks open the egg with his egg tooth
23 It's hard work
24 At last the chicken is out
25 He is all wet and weak and wobbly
25 When he dries out
27 he is soft and fluffy
Analysis of discourse in the Task specification and Task

Inspection of the above text reveals that, while it is essentially a sequential explanation, it does contain some minor features which are characteristic of a ‘procedural recount’ (Veel 1997) and which may be considered ‘transitional’ and not representative of a fully mature realisation of the genre. As such, the text constituted a developmental step in the process of moving the children towards control over scientific explanations. The following discussion will consider both mature and transitional language choices in the text above. Language choices representative of the sequential explanation genre will be considered first in section 5.2.1. The discussion will then move on to identify and discuss language choices representative of the ‘transitional’ nature of the text in section 5.2.2.

5.2.1 SIGNIFICANT GENERIC FEATURES IN THE NEGOTIATED WRITTEN TEXT

Overall, the negotiated written text provided a generally coherent synthesis of the various text models developed over the formats within the Task Orientation Element of the macrogenre. For example, the written text exhibited an effective pattern of temporal Conjunctions which worked well to sustain an explicit sequence of logico-semantic relationships within the text. In the case of this explanation these were structured on a temporal frame of reference (i.e. event 1^ event 2^ ... etc.). The temporal relations made explicit throughout the written text produced in the macrogenre under study are listed below.

05  *When* the arm turns over
09  *First*, we switched on the electricity
15  *Then* he grows tiny ears, tiny wings and tiny legs
17  *Next* he grows a tiny tail and a tiny beak
18  *Then* he grows tiny feathers and an egg tooth
19  *While* the little chicken is in the egg
21  *When* it is twenty one days
24  *At last* the chicken is out
25  *When* he dries out

In addition, the text consistently employed simple present tense as a means of dealing factually with the instructional field. For example,

12  *It stays* in the egg for twenty one days
13  *His food* is the yolk
15  *The little chick grows* a little bit bigger
16  *He grows* a tiny head, a tiny heart, tiny eyes and tiny blood vessels
17  *Then he grows* tiny ears, tiny wings and tiny legs
18  *Next he grows* a tiny tail and a tiny beak
19  *While the little chicken is* in the egg
20  *It is* floating in a water sac
21  *When it is* twenty one days
22  *The little chick cracks* open the egg with his egg tooth
23  *It’s hard work*
24  *At last the chicken is out*
25  *He is* all wet and weak and wobbly
26  *When he dries* out
27  *he is* soft and fluffy

A further feature which occurred in the section negotiated on the first day was the explicit attention to the function of the various instructional field participants. This was achieved
through the use of non-Finite enhancing clauses set in a dependency relationship with another clause. For example,

02  so we used an incubator
03  to keep the eggs warm.  (non-Finite Enhancing)
07  it moves the eggs around
08  to give the little chicks exercise  (non-Finite Enhancing)

Explicit development of the function of the various instructional field participants was also achieved through the use of the double embedding [[that tells us [[how hot the eggs are]]]] as a Qualifier for thermometer in order to build an extended nominal group in which the function of the thermometer was explicitly defined. A similar strategy was employed explicitly to qualify every time in the following clause The orange light comes on every time [[the eggs start to get cold]].

Another instance of language choice which added a level of linguistic sophistication was the manner in which Hypotactic clauses placed in marked Theme position were used to build textuality. This is especially important to the writing completed on the third day. For example,

21  When it is twenty one days
22  The little chick cracks open the egg with his egg tooth

Instead of the more usual (or unmarked) relationship in which the modifying clause follows the head clause. For example,

The little chick cracks open the egg with his egg tooth
When it is twenty one days.

The relationships developed through the use of this strategy in the negotiated text are illustrated in the figure below.

The relationships illustrated in the above figure realise a type of cohesive development that is important to scientific explanation texts. What occurs is a process of Thematic Progression as information introduced in one section of the text as new information in Rheme is picked up and made Theme or point of departure for further development in later parts of the text. In the
figure above, clause 19 links back to information provided in Rheme within clause 12 (stays in the egg) which is then built upon through the addition of further new information in clause 20 (it is floating in a water sac). Similarly, clause 21 picks up and thematises other information introduced as new in clause 12 (twenty one days) to which further new information is added in clause 22. Again, between clauses 24, 25 and 25 a similar set of relationships exists, however, here it is two taxonomically related items (wet - dry) which are linked between Rheme in clause 24 and Theme in clause 25. In this text it is the choice of the Hypotactic clause in marked Theme position that allows these relationships to be constructed in the text.

Eggins (1994:304) points out that this language resource of marked Theme allows for the effective development of cumulative information in certain kinds of written text. She adds that the use of this cohesive strategy is prevalent in the construction of written text and relatively rare in everyday oral conversation. As was mentioned above, the strategy is often employed in the building of scientific explanation texts. The following Figure 5.3 analyses an extract taken from a science text written for secondary school pupils. The extract below is part of an explanation of sound as a compression wave that can be heard.

**Figure 5.3**

Thematic progression resulting from manipulation of hypotactic clause relationships in secondary school science text (Heffernan & Learmouth, 1982:127)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 If we look at how a tuning fork produces sound</td>
<td>2 we can learn just what sound is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 by looking closely at one of the prongs</td>
<td>4 you can see that it is moving to and fro (vibrating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 as the prong moves outwards</td>
<td>6 it squashes, or compresses the surrounding air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 when the prong of the tuning fork moves back again</td>
<td>13 the rebounding air particles move back into the space that is left</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figure above illustrates how the information that the tuning fork prong is moving to and fro is first introduced as new information in Rheme (clause 4). This information is then thematised to realise points of departure (clauses 5 and 12) for extensive development of the explanation.

There is one instance in the negotiated text where the use of Hypotactic clause in marked Theme position is not as successful in building cohesion within the text in the manner described above. This is in the marked thematic relationship developed between clauses 05 and 07 in the negotiated text. An extract containing these clauses is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04 The incubator has a thermometer [[that tells us [[how hot the eggs are]]]]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 The orange light comes on every time [[the eggs start to get cold]]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 When the arm turns over it moves the eggs around</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, the Hypotactic clause in marked Theme position (05 when the arm turns over) has no cataphoric relationship (prior cohesive link) with information introduced earlier in the text. The existence of the arm must be presumed and the reference is exophoric (outside the text). The text would be more cohesive if this aspect was addressed. For example,

**THEME**
The incubator

**RHEME**
also has an arm that gives the chicks exercise

06 When the arm turns over

07 it moves the eggs around

However, despite this problem (along with some other ‘transitional’ features which will be discussed in the following section 5.2.2), it is proposed that the language resources modelled within the written product text constituted a significant advance over those which individual children could produce if left to their own resources. Therefore, as a text model arising from scaffolded interaction between an adult and children, the negotiated text managed to satisfy criteria for performance 'in the zone of proximal development' (Bruner 1986:73, Vygotsky 1978:86). It is within this perspective that it becomes useful to extend discussion to explore language choices which were of a more ‘transitional’ nature and not representative of a mature sequential explanation text. In particular, discussion of these transitional features provides useful information about the contextual constraints which surrounded the negotiation process.

**5.2.2 ‘TRANSITIONAL’ FEATURES EMPLOYED IN THE NEGOTIATED WRITTEN TEXT**

The text's transitional nature can be seen particularly in the utilisation of short segments to recount personal experience which initiated the writing on each of the first two days. These two short segments within the text can be seen as representative of procedural recount (Veel 1997) rather than sequential explanation. The two segments are set out below.

01 We didn't have a mother hen
02 so we used an incubator
03 to keep the eggs warm

09 First, we switched on the electricity
10 and put the eggs in

These two segments made use of past tense (ie. didn't have; used; switched; put ) to recount and locate personal experience in past time instead of the simple present that is typical of sequential explanation. One other example of an inappropriate tense choice was in the clause, *The little chick looked like a little dot/ It stays in the egg....* This latter inconsistency was caused by the difficulty in negotiating a shift from the recounting of personal experience to language choices more appropriate to the construction of factual text. For example,

09 First, we switched on the electricity
10 and put the eggs in
11 The little chick looked like a little dot.
12 It stays in the egg for twenty one days.
Analysis of discourse in the Task specification and Task

A further characteristic of personal recount was evident in the assigning of the role of Actor in Material Process clauses to the children rather than to participants taken from the instructional field. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>02</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>so</th>
<th>we</th>
<th>used</th>
<th>an incubator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>09</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>first</th>
<th>we</th>
<th>switched on</th>
<th>the electricity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circumstance: location: time</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>and (we)*</th>
<th>put the eggs in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Actor)*</td>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Circumstance: location: place |

*Clauses containing ellipsis - Ellipsed section in ( ) and in italics - eg. (we)

A similar realisation of the children in the functional role of Carrier was employed in the one Relational Process clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>01</th>
<th>Relational: Possessive: Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>didn't have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pronoun we also realised the Topical Theme choice as point of departure for each clause. This is illustrated in Table 5.1 below which gives the analysis of Theme for clauses which constitute the procedural recount segments of the jointly negotiated text.

Table 5.1

| Theme analysis for clauses from Recount segments in the jointly negotiated text |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| THEME | Textual | Interpersonal | Experiential | RHEME |
| 01 | we | Top. | didn't have a mother hen |
| 02 | so Struc./ C. caus. | we | Top. | used an incubator [to keep the eggs warm] |
| 09 | First Conj. Adjunct | we | Top. | switched on the electricity |
| 10 | and Struc./ C. add. | | | put the eggs in. |

As Martin (1985, 1992) has demonstrated, language choices involving personal participants such as those mentioned above are not characteristic of explanations in science. Their occurrence in the negotiated written text, however, was to a large degree an artefact of the manner in which the teacher had prepared the children during the Task Orientation stage of the macrogenre.

In preparing the children for the writing of the negotiated text, the teacher had to make a judgement about the extent to which she could develop an awareness of appropriate register choices for sequential explanations prior to joint negotiation of the text. Because the children possessed extremely limited reading competence, they had very little experience sitting and listening to the reading of text especially formal written explanations about scientific topics. In such situations, the teacher knew that they were not oriented towards listening closely to the words as she read detailed and extended text. She knew that instead of sitting quietly and listening, the children would quickly become distracted.
Because the children here were not oriented towards attending to and engaging with the reading of written text, it was decided to pay particular attention to the development of oral explanations which did not involve direct recourse to written text models. Formats ETO1, ETO2 and LTO1 all provided examples of such contexts. In these formats, even though books often played a role as a focal point for discussion, it was the illustrations and not the written text that provided most of the input to the oral interaction. Information about the illustrations was not accessed directly from reading of the text. Rather, the teacher 'told' the children about what the text said. However, in working from the illustrations rather than the written text itself, the teacher was still careful to model and encourage rehearsal of linguistic featured appropriate for the written mode. In format LTO2, the teacher did introduce a text model as a 'shared book' but this model provided only a limited introduction to the language choices the teacher and children would have to employ during joint writing in the Task Element.

By engaging the children at the level that she did, the teacher was beginning the process of socialising the children into paying considered attention to extended text. Her strategy was to emulate scaffolding techniques employed by parents who engage their children in story reading events in highly literate homes. These parents spend considerable time engaging their children in discussion about text illustrations and the motivations of principal characters prior to expecting them to sit and listen to the words (eg. 4 and Snow 1983; Wells 1982). After the teacher had started in this way with a strong emphasis on 'talking' rather than 'reading' as a source of information, she then introduced the shared reading book 'A New Chicken' (which had been presented earlier about half way through the macrogenre (see chapter 4 sections 4.3.3 & 4.3.4). As was the case with the oral discussion of text illustrations, this written text provided a simple though incomplete model from which appropriate language resources could later be appropriated by the children in the negotiation of the jointly constructed text.

The macrogenre discussed in this study, therefore, illustrates an instructional sequence that attempted to accommodate to children in the very early stages of literacy development. On future occasions, as children's ability to attend to extended discourse increased and as their reading competence developed, the teacher would be in a position to engage the children more directly in written text models from the very beginning of a macrogenre. Teaching in later macrogenres could then logically progress to involving the children in the actual deconstruction of model written texts so as to draw even more explicit attention to the manner in which various literate resources work to build factual texts in science.

One other issue in the construction of the negotiated text here has added significance for teachers working with Aboriginal children. This issue has to do with the maintenance of consistent and appropriate pronominal choices throughout the written text. In the text negotiated between teacher and children here, the reference for the chicken shifted from the
gender neutral model of it which was provided in the shared reading text 'A New Chicken'
explored in Format LTO2 (refer chapter 5, sections 4.3.3 & 4.3.4) to the masculine he/his
at various stages of the jointly negotiated written text. This is illustrated in the reference chain
for chicken throughout the negotiated text which is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>(Reference chain for 'chicken/s')</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>the little chicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>the little chick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>the little chick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>the little chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>the little chick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>the chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most appropriate pronoun choice for a scientific explanation in this instance would be to
use it/its instead of he/his consistently throughout the whole of the text. At this early stage
of the children's development, it might be observed that the teacher's choice not to pursue this
issue with the children does not constitute a major difficulty. The text being considered was,
after all, one that was attempting to achieve a transition towards factual writing genres. One
could also add that teachers very often employ the personal pronoun to personalise things in
their discussions with young children. The teacher was, moreover, cognisant of the fact
observed repeatedly at the program at Traeger Park that as children became effective readers,
the grapho-phonetic competencies they developed provided a self-sustaining mechanism through
which language form anomalies could be resolved by the children themselves (eg. refer to later
discussion concerning 'self-correction' in section 5.3.4). However, such observations do
presume that at some later stage the children will encounter and respond to consistent
pronoun choices in the texts they are expected to read.

In the case of the Aboriginal children under consideration in this study, however, there was an
additional factor that is worth pursuing because it raises some important questions to do with
modelling language choices with Aboriginal children. The particular language choice under
consideration (ie. pronominal reference) touches upon an issue to do with Aboriginal English in
general. In negotiating the text, the teacher was aware of literature that pointed out that many
of the children she was working with did not always distinguish between the pronoun forms he,
she and it in their everyday conversation. As Sharpe (1976), commenting on the language of
Aboriginal children attending the school in this study (Traeger Park) put it,

For some children some of the time, distinction is not always made consistently in the
gender of the 3rd person singular pronoun, and 'e, 'im, 'is (sometimes he, him, his) are
used at times for she, her, hers, and for it, its.
Moreover, Kaldor and Malcolm (1982:85) point out that in the speech of Aboriginal children he (e) tends to be used as a general form. Harkins (1994:50) takes the distinction further and argues that for the Alice Springs Aboriginal children she studied, this pronominal form is truly a gender neutral form and is best represented by ee and not he. This awareness provided an additional reason why the teacher under study here did not pursue the issue of maintaining a consistent pro form to represent the chicken. She was careful to avoid challenging differences in language form when there was any possibility that the children might interpret her requests as arbitrary. Thus, it might be supposed that the matter should be pursued no further in discussion here as the teacher's behaviour can be argued to be substantially in line with recommended educational practice.

However, consideration of the interaction between teacher and children around the use of pronouns to refer to the 'chicken' across the macrogenre raises some important issues. These are to do with, firstly, assumptions that are frequently made about the language knowledge possessed by Aboriginal children and, secondly, the nature and consistency of language models presented to children by teachers.

In fact, inspection of the transcript for the Early and Late Task Orientation Formats indicates that the issue of whether children could or could not make consistent language choices for it as opposed to he (or e or ee) may be more complex than the above literature implies. It is possible that when teachers operate on such assumptions they may be seriously underestimating the language capacity of the children concerned. Furthermore, the capacity of the children to make correct choices may not be some fixed level of 'knowing' or 'not knowing'. Rather, the children's capacity for making language choices may be highly flexible depending upon the models and interactive circumstances that the teacher builds into the lesson.

Inspection of the transcripts for the Early and Late Task Orientation Formats indicates that none of the children on any occasion experienced difficulty in adopting and employing models for he, she and it appropriately in negotiation with the teacher when it occurred within the context of the concentrated encounter scaffolding Formats. The following brief interaction was taken from Format LTO2 and occurred between the teacher and two children who would normally be considered to be speakers of Aboriginal English.

0433 D: The hen...
0434 I said
0435 It's going to happen now
That is, the egg will hatch soon
0436 S: The mother hen kicked it
0437 and she feels it
0438 T: She can feel some little eggs ![moving underneath ]
0439 Little...Little chicks trying to get out of the egg
In clauses 0434 and 0439, these children clearly used the pronominal forms 'she' and 'it' appropriately. In fact, inspection of the clauses produced by the teacher throughout the macrogenre illustrates quite clearly that the teacher, herself, did not employ 'it' consistently to refer to the chicken. Instead, she switched constantly between 'he' and 'it', using 'he' more frequently overall. This suggests that a major factor underlying the variation in the final text may have been that the teacher did not promote consistent usage prior to engaging with the children in the writing activity. In fact, in the following example which occurred only a few clauses later than the one above, the teacher actually moved a child away from the use of 'it' to 'he' during her (the teacher's) reconceptualisation of the child's initiation.

0463  T: Now I wonder
0464  why he's all wet
0465  D: Because he was in the water sac
0466  T: Yes. In the water sac
0467  N: it's the same
0468  Look
0469  this is the same
0470  Comparing cut-out to the illustration in the book
0471  T: That's the same
0472  That's right
0473  We'll put that up on the board
0474  when he looks like, when he's hatched out
0475  and looks like that

In this example, the teacher modelled he in clause 0460 and her model was picked up by the child in clause 0465. Then, in clause 0467 another child used it to refer to the chicken in an illustration. However, when the teacher reconceptualised that child's response in clause 0472, she reinterpreted the pronominal form as he.

Consequently, while it has been proposed that the variation which occurred in the final negotiated text did not constitute an issue likely to seriously affect the literacy development of the children concerned, the circumstances described above bear consideration. It could be proposed that had the teacher paid more scrupulous attention to the manner of her negotiation during the Task Orientation Formats she could have achieved more in the final negotiation of the written text than she did. She could have placed the children in an effective position to deal with the issue of making more systematic choices of pronouns appropriate to the text in question. In fact, in the process of formative evaluation and development that accompanied the teaching program, this particular event contributed evidence to a fundamental realisation. This was that it was very important for teachers to have a clear picture of the language resources that were appropriate to the texts that they would eventually negotiate in writing with their children. Furthermore, it was important to keep those resources in mind during discussion and reading prior to writing so as to maximise the children's engagement with them.

Thus, the above discussion highlights issues for consideration by teachers attempting to scaffold access to various register choices in the education of Aboriginal children. First, it
highlights the need for teachers to be aware of the competence of individual children and not simply to lump them together as speakers of 'Aboriginal English'. Similarly, it challenges the assumption which teachers often make that Aboriginal children will inevitably experience confusion in areas where differences exist between Aboriginal English and so called 'Standard English'. All of the children in the two examples given above would be considered by most teachers listening to them in the playground and other informal settings around the school to be speakers of Aboriginal English. However, the unproblematic performance of the children in the Formats under consideration here suggests that the contexts of situation in which Aboriginal children are expected to employ 'standard' forms should be scrutinised very carefully. 'Difficulties' experienced by the children may be more often than not an artefact of the teaching context itself. These considerations highlight the point that teachers working in scaffolding formats should develop a strong understanding of the nature of the outcome texts they set as educational goals. Moreover, even where teachers do have an understanding of the nature of the proposed written text product, register choices appropriate to the target genre should be modelled appropriately throughout the Task Orientation and subsequent Elements of the macrogenre.

As a final comment upon the depth of register engagement achieved by the teacher and children in the construction of the negotiated written text, it is useful to compare the jointly constructed text of these kindergarten/grade 1 Aboriginal children with the individual writing of grade 3 non-Aboriginal children in a mainstream classroom discussed by Frances Christie (1989) (refer chapter 3, sections 3.3.1 & 3.3.2). The significance of this comparison lies in the fact that the teacher studied by Christie conducted a conventional writing lesson (i.e. TO^TS^T) based upon the text ‘Egg to Chick’ (Milicent E. Selsam 1972) which was also employed in the concentrated encounter macrogenre discussed in this study (refer discussion of LTO1 – chapter 4, sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.2.1, & 4.3.2.2). Christie gives the following three texts as characteristic of the best writing produced across the class (spelling and punctuation errors have been corrected).

(a)
Once upon a time a hen lay an egg.
Inside the egg a chicken was being born.
The chick eats the yolk.
It makes a little hole.
Now the chick is making a big crack.

(b)
This is how a chicken grows.
First a mother hen lays eggs.
Then the chicken inside gets bigger.
Then the chicken starts to crack a dotted line around the shell.
Then the chick pushes out
And when the chicken is out
it was all wet.
And when it has dried
It gets yellow and fluffy.
Christie pointed out that only one of the texts (b) produced by the class exhibited any recognition that the task required the production of a scientific explanation. Further, all texts demonstrated an extremely limited range of register choice. She proposed that this limited outcome was related directly to the absence of considered engagement with appropriate register choices within the class writing program.

The rest of this chapter will now pursue an examination of the Task Specification and Task elements which constituted the immediate context for the negotiation process through which the teacher in this study achieved engagement with appropriate register choices. This discussion will be continued, initially, with regard to the Task Specification Element of the macrogenre (section 5.3) and, later, with regard to the Task Element itself (section 5.4).

5.3 LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY IN THE TASK SPECIFICATION FORMAT

5.3.1 INTRODUCTION

In moving to the Task Specification Element, the teacher held as her overall purpose to re-orient the children to the writing task they had been involved in over the past two days. As part of this re-orientation process, she wished to review and discuss the text that the group had negotiated to date in order to set a point of commencement for the continuation of the negotiated writing.

Within the Task Specification Element, the role played by the teacher moved away from the largely reactive role she adopted in the Late Task Orientation formats discussed in chapter 4. In the Task Specification format under consideration here, the teacher returned to an emphasis on building explicit teacher directed Phases to frame the pedagogic direction of the activity. It was at this point that the regulative register came into play although as further discussion will indicate, the discourse in this and the rest of Task Specification and Task was marked by a very successful convergence of the two registers. Put simply, this meant the children engaged both with how to write a literate text (regulative register) and with the actual information about which to write (instructional register).

The resumption of a stronger directing/initiating role by the teacher in the Task Specification Format resulted in a fall in child initiations relative to the level of child initiations that had occurred in the Late Task Orientation Formats. This change is illustrated in the following Table 5.2 which gives a comparison of functionally different types of child-produced clauses.
across all of the Formats discussed in this study to date. That is, ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 and LTO2.

Table 5.2
Comparison between responses to questions, joint constructions and initiations produced by children across Task Orientation (ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 & LTO2), and Task Specification (TS) Formats expressed as a percentage of the total number of clauses in each format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional role of clause</th>
<th>ETO1</th>
<th>ETO2</th>
<th>LTO1</th>
<th>LTO2</th>
<th>TS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses to teacher questions</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>10.38</td>
<td>10.18</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>7.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint construction clauses</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>9.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child initiations</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>33.09</td>
<td>42.55</td>
<td>19.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage of clauses produced by children in each format</td>
<td>15.57</td>
<td>19.22</td>
<td>45.91</td>
<td>55.37</td>
<td>35.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table 5.2 shows that the Task Specification Format (TS) in concert with LTO2 produced a moderate fall in responses to teacher questions along with a roughly equivalent rise in joint construction clauses relative to Formats ETO1, ETO2 and LTO1. These movements were consistent with the occurrence of a significant amount of shared reading activity between teacher and children in each of the Formats LTO2 and TS. Once again, however, the largest movement was accounted for by the percentage of initiations produced by the children. Child initiations within the discourse, which had risen markedly from 3.55 and 5.38 percent in ETO1 and ETO2 to 33.09 and 42.55 percent in LTO1 and LTO2, fell in frequency to 19.21 percent of the total number of clauses in the Task Specification Format under consideration here. These shifts in the extent to which the children initiated across the Formats in question are demonstrated visually by the following Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4
Frequency of initiating clauses produced by children in Formats ETO1, ETO2, LTO1, LTO2 and TS. (expressed as a percentage of total number of clauses in each format)

This figure illustrates that the percentage of initiating clauses by children in the Early Task Orientation Formats was so low as to be relatively insignificant. As discussion in chapter 5 has pointed out, the large rises in frequency of initiations by children occurred primarily as a
result of the children and teacher building a high level of inter-subjectivity in the construction of the instructional field. Moreover, the functional purpose of the children's initiations were notable. In the Late Task Orientation Formats, the children's initiations were employed to a considerable degree in the joint construction of cohesive oral texts to do with the instructional field. In the Task Specification Format, the percentage of children's initiating clauses relative to the overall number of clauses fell to between 40 and 50 per cent below the levels occurring in LTO1 and LTO2. One major causal factor involved here was that the teacher quite naturally assumed more responsibility in the Task Specification for shaping the children's orientation towards a task focus that was appropriate for productive engagement in the Task Element.

In both the Early and Late Task Orientation Formats, the teacher had been concerned primarily with the staging of a temporal progression through the instructional field to do with the development of embryos and the hatching of chickens. However, in the Task Specification Format under investigation here, the teacher increased dramatically her concern with a particular realisation of the regulative register in order to point them towards learning about the writing activity in the task which was soon to follow. This realisation of the regulative register had to do making explicit for the children strategies and understandings involved in the 'writing down' of the jointly constructed text. Learning 'how' to write for children so young is as much a matter of learning to handle the orthographic and handwriting systems as it is to learn how to stage the organisation of texts appropriately and to create the relatively long systems of interconnecting clauses which constitute the grammar of successful instance of the target explanation. The ability to marshal and control the operation of these literate resources to do with the orthographic and grammatical systems occurs when the appropriate aspects of the regulative register become internalised within the child and come to govern their actions in the process of writing.

At this point in the children's development, the teacher's concern with making 'how to write' explicit for the children extended beyond sound-symbol relationships to deal with what have been referred to as 'concepts about print' (eg. Clay 1979) as well as other conventions to do with text features such as tables of contents, chapters, also editing conventions and concepts such as rough drafts, proof marks etc. As the children grow older of course, the issues of print concepts, spelling and handwriting become less compelling because the lessons of the early years will have dealt with these. Although, other strategic processes and understandings to do with areas such as researching content, taking notes and organising information move in to assume greater relative importance. Entry to the literate behaviour of the culture depends upon mastering fundamental understandings of this kind which need always to be learned with respect to a particular body or field of information (ie. instructional field) - in this case the life cycles of chickens. The choice of the field helps to provide the particular words that the children learn to read and write. The word tooth, for example, (refer section 5.4.2.3.3) was
one selected for discussion. In learning to spell such a word, the task partly involves learning an aspect of the spelling system, control of which will change the children the children's behaviour (regulative field). It also simultaneously involves learning an aspect of the topic or instructional information that is concern in the whole macrogenre (instructional field).

It is useful to note that the teacher had already begun to foreground aspects of the regulative register to do with written text as she and the children read shared texts such as A New Chicken earlier in the Late Task Orientation Format LTO2. The teacher had promoted this engagement as she drew the children's attention to grapho-phonetic relationships and other understandings associated with written text in the manner of the following extracts which have been discussed earlier in chapter 5 (section 5.4.3). For example,

0330  Yes it did
0331  but we didn't write that down in the story
0332  You're quite right
0333  it did grow a tiny beak
0334  but we didn't say that
0335  It's there

Stands up and points to the beak of the embryo in the book illustration

0336  T/Cn : The hen sat on the egg for five more days
0337  All children emphasise the word 'more'
0338  'More'
0339  Points to word
0340  T: There's that word again [[that we were talking about ]], 'More'
0341  Good girl
0342  Na: I can see another /m/
0343  T: Can you?
0344  Where?

Both of these extracts, in fact, demonstrate successful convergence of the regulative and instructional registers. However, it is the regulative register that is foregrounded most strongly. In the first example above (0330-0335), the teacher drew the children's attention to the fact that they needed to pay close attention to the wording of the written text. In the second example (0337-0340), the teacher engaged with the children in speculation concerning the manner in which grapho-phonetic relationships contribute to the construction of words - a speculation process set in motion intentionally by the teacher. This latter negotiation also served to orient the children towards paying careful attention to what the words actually say. As earlier discussion has pointed out, this aspect of the regulative register now assumed a more immediate relevance and impetus within the discourse. A major goal, therefore, for the teacher in the Task Specification was to move the children to a point where they were oriented towards ‘writing behaviour’ in order to ensure their close attention to the process of writing in the Task Element. Further, as earlier discussion has pointed out, the teacher needed to employ teacher initiated Phases in order to stage the discourse around these issues.

The manner in which the teacher sought to realise her goals within the Task Specification becomes apparent from an informal outline of the progression of the format. The format opened with what will be called a Preliminary Discussion, which, because it was initiated by
the children, did not constitute a teacher initiated Phase. As the children had been writing the
text with the teacher for the past two days, they simply commenced discussion about the
instructional field as soon as they moved into the corner of the room where the writing activity
was set up. The teacher joined with them and attempted to focus the discussion by means of
questions. The teacher’s objective at this point was to begin by making a connection back to
the general instructional field about which she and the children had been writing. In particular,
she wished to foreground the original purpose for writing which was to write their own version
of the development of an embryo. And, as part of that focus, she wished to draw attention to
the fact that the children were progressively representing a 21 day developmental sequence.
She also wished to foreground the fact that, unlike the book *A New Chicken* which they had
read continually in the Task Orientation Element, they were discussing development in an
incubator. However, she found it difficult within this unstructured discourse to focus the
initiations of the children who all tried to speak at once and who also offered a variety of topics
for discussion. Her response was to initiate a more formal entry into a Phase (Phase 1) which
used the book, *A New Chicken* as a means of reframing group focus upon the 21 day
sequence and the use of the incubator instead of a ‘mother hen’.

She then shifted group focus towards consideration of the status of the ‘draft’ text the group
had been writing for the past two days. She also pointed to its ultimate transformation into a
‘good copy’ as a chapter in a book they had been writing (Phases 2, 3 and 4). The next step
was to read the section of the text that had already been composed in order to orient the
children towards the point at which they would start writing on the day in question (Phase 5).
Phase 5 was, however, interrupted by the teacher to demonstrate an editing matter that had
arisen during the writing on the previous day (Phase 5). She then returned the children to
completing the reading of the partially written text (Phase 7). Phase 7 also contained a final
section in which the teacher allowed the children to raise some spontaneous comments to do
with orthographic and print concept issues. In the final Phase (Phase 8), the teacher closed
discussion prior to writing and announced the shift into the Task (ie. writing activity) Element.

In moving the children through these Phases within the Task Specification, the teacher
foregrounded the regulative register as the dominant feature in a significant number of clauses
in order to accomplish various pedagogic functions. For example, she foregrounded the
regulative register to direct the children into learning activity.

All right so let’s read [[what we’ve said]]

Another purpose, discussed earlier, was to make the processes involved in writing explicit for
the children (ie. ‘showing children how to write’), for example,

All right so we wrote up our story
and this is [[what we called a rough copy ]] isn’t it

The teacher also employed the regulative register to establish behavioural control to organise
the children in readiness for a shift into a new Phase, for example,
Within the realm of behavioural control she also attempted to refocus individual children whose attention had wandered from the group task focus.

An interesting feature of the Task Specification was that the question of behavioural control, particularly control over children who were not attending to the teacher’s task focus, arose more often than it did in any other format sampled from the macrogenre. While it is proposed that the principles that underlay the teacher’s approach to behavioural control were consistent with those employed in other formats, it is helpful to examine her responses in a situation where she was possibly under more pressure to ensure the children attended closely. Consequently, before commencing a discussion of the manner in which the teacher scaffolded progression through the various discourse Phases, it is useful to draw out the teacher’s approach to behavioural control as a general issue for discussion. Discussion in the following section will, therefore, discuss the teacher’s approach to behavioural control within the Task Specification (section 5.3.2).

Having covered teacher concerns in this area, the analysis will return to consideration of the manner in which the teacher initiated shifts in the discourse between teacher initiated Phases (section 5.3.3) and within individual Phases (section 5.3.4). In dealing with teacher-initiated shifts in focus between and within Phases, the analysis will pay particular attention to the manner in which the teacher attended to her concerns with, on one hand, orienting the children towards constructing the relatively long systems of interconnecting clauses which constitute the grammar of a successful instance of the target genre. On the other hand, she was also concerned to promote development of control of the orthographic system, along with other print and writing conventions.

The final section of the analysis of the Task Specification format will then explore initiations made by the children in the discourse (section 5.3.5). In particular, this section will explore strategies employed by the children to initiate shifts in instructional field focus as they sought to engage successfully with the task focus being promoted by the teacher.

5.3.2 TEACHER STRATEGIES FOR REFOCUSING CHILDREN’S ATTENDING BEHAVIOUR ACROSS THE TASK SPECIFICATION FORMAT

Discussion in the previous chapter (chapter 4) has pointed continually to teacher strategies around, for example, teacher questioning and acceptance of the children’s responses as ‘correct’, acceptance of initiation by any child rather than nominating specific children, emphasis on maintaining joint participation and positive attention to children who were not familiar with aspects of the instructional field. This activity on the part of the teacher could be argued to constitute a proactive approach which continually sought to sustain the children’s
attention upon a common task focus within the instructional field. This approach to
behavioural control was, in effect, carried largely through convergence of the instructional and
regulative registers in the pedagogic discourse.

The teacher rarely had to step outside of her promotion of an ongoing focus within the
instructional field to employ sustained application of the regulative register in addressing
behaviour as a topic in isolation from the instructional field. To engage in excursions into
explicit ‘reactive control’ of this kind, especially through defining them as specific Phases
within the discourse, risked destruction of continuity and further degradation (even ritualisation)
of interaction on the part of the children. Once the teacher had moved the children past the
initial organising and settling activity into the Task Orientation formats proper, she was
prepared to tolerate considerable fluctuations in attending behaviour because she knew that
the children were learning to attend to teaching activities of the kind she was pursuing,
moreover, the important aspects at hand would be covered again in later formats. This
strategy allowed children ‘behavioural space’ in which to ‘learn to attend’.

However, as discussion has already indicated, problems of ‘control’ where the teacher had to
respond to ‘off task’ behaviour to explicitly redirect children into the ongoing task focus
became more of an issue with the Task Specification format. The teacher was more
concerned to maximise task focus in the Task Specification for a number of reasons. First,
the Task Specification and Task Elements represented the culmination of all of her earlier
preparation in the Task Orientation Element of the macrogenre. The Task Specification
represented the point at which this earlier preparation was drawn upon to establish a common
focus towards the Task. If the children were not oriented well in the Task Specification, they
might find it difficult to attend constructively to writing in the Task Element. Second, the
children now knew quite a lot about the instructional field but knew relatively little about how to
write an explanation within that field. Thus, the potential for the children to initiate shifts into
what they considered to be appropriate activities but which, however, led them away from the
task focus being promoted by the teacher was relatively high. Third, the task focus itself,
which required attention to the process of constructing a specific written text genre, had
become more demanding because it now drew more precisely upon regulative field knowledge.

It is appropriate, therefore, to take this point in the analysis to explore more fully the principles
underlying the teacher’s strategies for explicit redirection of the children’s in task behaviour.

Strategies through which the teacher attempted to refocus behaviour are interesting because
they provide insight into the tenor she adopted in her attempts at behavioural control overall
throughout the macrogenre. In previous discussion (eg. refer chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.3 and
chapter 2, section 2.3.3), it was pointed out that the teacher under consideration here did not
attempt to employ the commonly used behavioural control strategy of targeting display
questions to individual children. She especially never directed such questions individually to
non attending children nor did she target questions to children she thought might not be understanding. Instead, when she did wish to draw the attention of a particular child, she typically appealed to the child directly. However, in addressing the child directly, she did not interpret lapses in attention on the part of the children as laziness or as wilful refusals to take part. Rather, she attempted to respond to non attending behaviours as phenomena which would occur naturally with children who had not fully developed an orientation to literate discourse: That is, a literate discourse which predisposed them to attend and listen in classroom learning tasks in a fully task focused manner.

While she worked hard to steer the direction of the discourse in a manner that she considered profitable, her responses to deviant behaviour and attention were still relatively flexible. When she did intervene explicitly to redirect a child's attention, she directed her efforts towards encouraging the child to resume joint participation. That is, to join with herself and the others in doing the task together. Thus, most importantly, the tenor of her approach was one that sought the children's inclusion in the group. She attempted to avoid promoting exclusion through admonishing them. An analysis of Theme choices for clauses involved in redirecting behaviour is given in Table 5.4 below. Sets of related moves are separated by shaded lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0018 All right Cont. Ok. Cont. well Cont.</td>
<td>just Modal Adjunct</td>
<td>sit Top.</td>
<td>down here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0019</td>
<td></td>
<td>come on Top.</td>
<td>David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0105 all right Cont. David Voc.</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
<td>come over here</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0106 and Struc./ C. add. help Top.</td>
<td>us read now dear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0109 right Cont. Melissa Voc.</td>
<td>come on Top.</td>
<td>love</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0134</td>
<td></td>
<td>help me read this page love</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0196</td>
<td></td>
<td>help read too please love?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0224</td>
<td></td>
<td>put the book up now please love?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0225</td>
<td></td>
<td>thank you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of discourse in the Task specification and Task

In the above table, the regulative register dominated all clauses. There was a high concentration of choices in Interpersonal Theme. A number of choices were realised largely through Vocatives (ie. Melissa, David) and thus established individual children as points of focus for the clause. The choices for Finite (eg could, can) and Modal Adjuncts (eg. just), on the other hand, worked to thematise Mood system choices for low Modality. The net effect of the choices for Finite, for example, was to reduce the intensity of a Mood choice for a command to that of a question thus softening the nature of the teacher’s directing discourse.

Transitivity analysis shows the teacher made use of only two types of process, Material and Behavioural. These are set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0226</th>
<th>and</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>come a bit closer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struc./C. add.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0227</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0228</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>help us read this one?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0018</th>
<th><strong>Material</strong></th>
<th>All right OK</th>
<th>sit</th>
<th>down here</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0019</td>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>Come on</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>over here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0105</td>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>All right</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0106</td>
<td><strong>Behavioural: Reading</strong></td>
<td>and</td>
<td>help</td>
<td>us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Behave</td>
<td>-cess</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0109</td>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>come on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0134</td>
<td><strong>Behavioural: Reading</strong></td>
<td>David</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>-ce-</td>
<td>Behave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0196</td>
<td><strong>Behavioural: Reading</strong></td>
<td>David</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Behave</td>
<td>-cess</td>
<td>Circumstance: Manner: Comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0224</td>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>Melissa and David</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>-cess</td>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0225</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0226</td>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>you</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>a bit closer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0227</td>
<td>very good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0228</td>
<td><strong>Behavioural: Reading</strong></td>
<td>could</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>-ce-</td>
<td>Behave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teacher employed Material Process clauses mostly to draw the children towards her through choices such as *sit* and *come*, which occurred mostly in conjunction with Circumstances of Place, for example, *a bit closer, over here*. In one instance, she directed two children to put something away (clause 0224). However, she immediately followed this clause with a Material Process clause that sought to move them into the group (clause 0226).

Most importantly, when a Material Process clause occurred, it was typically followed by a Behavioural Process clause which sought to re-establish the children as joint participants in the activity of reading through an unvarying choice of the process *help* often in conjunction with *you* in the Participant role of *Initiator* for that activity (e.g. clauses 0106, 0228). Thus, the children who were ‘off task’ were continually being positioned not as deviant from the group but as potentially positive contributors to the group. This represented one instance of the teacher attempting to capitalise upon the Vygotskyian notion discussed earlier (Chapter 2, section 2.4.3.2) that learning needed to progress from a socially oriented inter-personal focus in the first instance.

On other occasions, the teacher employed the Process *come on* which realised an imperative Mood choice carrying low modulation (Halliday 1994:355) by virtue of the intonation employed by the teacher. As such, it constituted a ritualised appeal for co-operation rather than a direct command and, again, drew the children concerned towards group inclusion. Another choice which emphasised inclusion was the teacher’s continual use of the diminutive vocative *love* when she attempted to direct children’s behaviour. For example,

```
David could you help read too please love
```

Other choices which exploited the Mood system in order to emphasise positive group inclusion for ‘off task’ children were the use of the politeness Mood Tags *thank you* and *please*.

Further insight into the nature of the teacher’s approach to behavioural control can be found by reference to instances in which she chose not to respond. When, for example, Naomi (N) stood up and walked across to get another book the teacher did not censure her for violating a procedural constraint such as sitting and listening or asking for permission. The teacher was sensitive enough to realise that Naomi was trying to pre-empt and actually assist in the lesson. Her interaction, therefore, addressed Naomi’s concern and not her failure to comply with traditional classroom procedure.

0088  T:  and chapter /th/...
0089  N:  Three
       Naomi sees that there is no chapter three in their book and goes to get a copy that has been compiled by another group
0090  Cn: Three
0091  T:  Three
0092  Yeah chapter...
0093  T:  We haven't got chapter three in that one either
0094  N:  Naomi we haven't got chapter three in that one love
0095  N:  Hey?
0096  T:  Just leave it there
0097  N:  We haven't got chapter three
Naomi (N) returned to the group. However, another child, David (D), became interested in the book that Naomi discarded. He picked it up and sat slightly apart from the group leafing through it. Very soon he was joined by Melissa (M). At the beginning of the next Phase (Phase 5), the teacher attempted to refocus these two children towards the joint reading activity.

All right David you come over here and help us read now dear. All right let’s see what we’ve put so far. Right Melissa come on love.

The two children briefly returned to the group and joined in reading. However, in a little while, David drifted apart from the group and back to the book. The teacher attempted to draw him back again as she moved the children into Phase 7.

0196 T: David could you help read too please love?

When he did not respond she did not halt the educational activity to insist that he return to the group. Shortly afterward, David spontaneously announced that he had read the book.

0213 D: Mrs Price I read this. David has been sitting with the book from the other group that Naomi collected - He has been working through it, pointing to and saying each word in turn quietly to himself. It is not possible to tell to what extent his reading is accurate. However, it is certainly systematic.

This statement immediately attracted Melissa back to his side. A little later, the teacher attempted to draw them back into the group again.

0224 T: Melissa and David could you put the book up now please love?
0225 D: Thank you and you come a bit closer.
0227 D: Mrs Price I read that
0228 T: Very good
0229 Could you help us read this one?

This was now the third time the teacher had approached David on the issue, yet the tenor of her request did not change. David felt no threat and was happy to comment on his ‘reading’ to the teacher (clause 0227). The teacher’s response to his statement was positive and she cleverly reframed his comment into a request to engage in the current reading activity (clauses 0228-0229).

The actions of Naomi, David and Melissa in the above interactions illustrate an important observation that arose repeatedly throughout the teaching program at Traeger Park. This was that the Aboriginal children mostly entered into learning activity with good will and the intention to take part. Much of the 'off task' behaviour was like that described above. For the three children above, the tasks that they engaged with were not simply to waste time. They saw them as arising out of the ongoing task and did not see themselves as breaking any 'rules' in pursuing them. The 'rules' they did break were, on one hand, to do with sitting quietly and
seeking permission in a procedural sense and, on the other hand, those to do with the staying within the boundaries of 'task focus' as it was defined by the teacher. The central issue here was that the children were not always able to define the boundaries of 'task focused' interaction in the manner assumed by the teacher. In instances when they did not define boundaries effectively, such as in the examples above, any admonition to sit up and pay attention had every chance of being interpreted an a response for ritual with a resultant impetus for confusion and alienation of the children whose attention had waned. Children who are confused and resentful because they don't understand why they are being censured in classrooms are difficult to bring back into task focus and eventually disengage completely. The approach adopted by the teacher in this study was one that attempted, as much as possible, to respond to and reinforce positive task focused activity and to carefully consider and reflect upon any inclination to censure.

This issue provided a further rationale behind the manner in which this teacher encouraged children to volunteer freely within the discourse, not insisting on strict turn taking and encouraging children to respond on behalf of others. Moreover, her flexibility as she attempted to initiate a new Phase can be seen in the following example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Reading prior text (interrupted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0065</td>
<td>T: All right so let's read [[what we've said]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0066</td>
<td>and we can finish our...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0067</td>
<td>J: That...That says...That says Ricky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0068</td>
<td>T: Yeah well that...I put Ricky up there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0069</td>
<td>because that... I knew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0070</td>
<td>whose group it was</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Literacy concept: Book chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0071</td>
<td>T: Ok When we start... when we finish writing this story....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0072</td>
<td>D: Richie's sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0073</td>
<td>N: Melissa bloody hell Melissa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0074</td>
<td>Don't touch me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Melissa touches Naomi on the ankle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0075</td>
<td>T: And Mrs Williams puts it in our... in our um science book...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0076</td>
<td>This is our science book here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stands up and gets the partly completed book for completed texts about chickens - in creating this current text teacher and children are writing chapter three of their book of experiments about eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0077</td>
<td>This is chapter one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0078</td>
<td>Remember</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above interaction both Jenny (J) (clause 0067) and David (D) (clause 0072) volunteered information that they considered relevant. Naomi (N) (clause 0073-0074) felt justified in stopping Melissa's interference with her ability to attend to what the teacher was going to do. In this latter instance, the teacher knew that intervening in the heat of the moment was not the best time to give Naomi more socially controlled responses for dealing with others. Nor was it time to censure Melissa as Naomi had already stopped Melissa's behaviour. This teacher chose carefully when to intervene and did so only when it was unavoidable in order not to emphasise the ritual of behavioural control over the more important goal of sustaining the continuity of task focus within the group.
In chapter 4 of this study which dealt with the Task Orientation Element within the macrogenre, much discussion centred upon the manner in which the teacher promoted engagement with the particular task focus that was of concern at the time. In the Task Orientation Element she relied strongly upon proactive strategies to encourage the children to work jointly with her. In the Task Specification she continued these strategies. However, there were some situations within the Task Specification where the teacher was required to operate reactively to deal with children who were not attending to her task focus. Analysis of her discourse moves to refocus the attention of these children illustrated an inter-personal tenor which continued to encourage and to promote joint engagement in the activity at hand rather than seeking to challenge or isolate the child concerned. This approach was important to her overall ability to remain engaged with the children in joint socially focused activity. As such, it illustrates the manner in which both proactive and reactive aspects of pedagogic control must remain in balance in order to operate effectively with children who for some reason or another are ‘out of step’ with the topic focus adopted in the learning activity. The need to balance both proactive and reactive strategies so that both promote inclusion of children in the group is a consideration which underlines teacher orchestration of child behaviour in Task Orientation formats (chapter 4) as well as in the Task Specification and Task formats in this chapter. The following discussion will now move to consideration of the manner in which the teacher orchestrated shifts into teacher initiated Phases (section 5.3.3).

5.3.3 TEACHER’S ROLE IN THE INITIATION OF DISCOURSE PHASES

As previous discussion in the introduction (section 5.3.1) has pointed out, the Task Specification format commenced with a ‘Preliminary Discussion’ which was initiated by the children. Explicit teacher staging of the discourse began as the teacher attempted to reframe formally the focus of the discussion by instituting an explicit teacher initiated Phase which is referred to within the following discussion as Phase 1. Because the Preliminary Discussion was not part of the overall staging of the discourse the analysis in this section (ie. 5.3.3) will commence with Phase 1. Consideration of the teacher orchestration behaviour in the Preliminary Discussion will be explored later in section 5.3.4 which looks at teacher initiating behaviour within Phases. The initiating clause complexes for Phase 1, along with each subsequent teacher initiated Phase within the Task Specification Format, are set out in Table 5.4 below. Table 5.4 provides a Theme analysis of these initiating clause complexes. A complete transcript is available in appendix 4.
Table 5.4
Theme analysis for initiating clauses through which the teacher instituted teacher initiated Phases within Format TS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Identification of instructional field focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0018</td>
<td>all right Cont. Ok Cont. well Cont.</td>
<td>just Modal Adjunct sit Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0019</td>
<td></td>
<td>come on Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0020</td>
<td>David Voc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Literacy concept: Rough draft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0057</td>
<td>all right Cont. so Struc./C.caus.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0058</td>
<td>and Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>this Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>what Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Reading prior text (interrupted)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0055</td>
<td>all right Cont. so Struc./C.caus.</td>
<td>let’s Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>what Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>Literacy concept: Book chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0071</td>
<td>Ok Cont. when Struc./C.temp.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0075</td>
<td>and Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>Mrs Williams Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0076</td>
<td>this Top.</td>
<td>is our science book here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>Reading prior negotiated text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0104</td>
<td>all right... Cont.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0105</td>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>David Voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0106</td>
<td>and Struc./C. add.</td>
<td>help Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0107</td>
<td>right Cont.</td>
<td>let’s Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0108</td>
<td>what Top.</td>
<td>we’ve put so far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0109</td>
<td>All right Cont.</td>
<td>Melissa Voc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0120</td>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>let’s Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0122</td>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>let’s Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>what Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From an educational perspective, these Teacher initiated shifts in the discourse reflect a desire on the part of the teacher to engage with the children in reviewing what she and the children had written over the past two sessions. She also wished to orient the children towards writing activity through promoting engagement with print concepts and the orthography in particular. The above Table 5.4 indicates that the teacher initiated eight distinct pedagogic Phases within the Task Specification Format. In all of these, the regulative register dominated strongly. As was the case with the Early Task Orientation Formats ETO1 and ETO2, the shift from one Phase to the next was signalled explicitly through a choice from a restricted set of Continuatives (right, all right and ok) to occupy Textual Theme position within initiating clauses. It should be noted that the above instances of the use of these Continuatives, while constituting the majority of occurrences, did not account for all usage of Continuatives within the Task Specification Format under study here. It will be proposed that these other occurrences did not initiate teacher directed Phases within the discourse. The other occurrences will be discussed further in section 5.3.4 which will explore the teacher's role in orchestrating shifts in instructional field focus within each Phase.

One notable point in the above analysis is that Topical Theme choice for the Phase initiating clauses above was dominated by reference to the joint participants. That is, the teacher and children were represented by the use of we or let's in Topical Theme position. These choices occurred as the teacher attempted to build the regulative field as one that involved a process of joint negotiation - a way of doing things that did not simply throw all responsibility back onto the children (refer chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.2). For example,
In the clauses above, *we* and ‘*us*’ realised the participant roles of *Sayer* and *Actor* in Verbal and Material Process clauses.

A similar focus upon joint activity was also carried through the teacher's use of Possessive Deictic elements (*ie. our*) to build nominal groups which realised participant roles and Circumstances within the Transitivity system. Examples are given below.

In these examples, the teacher referred specifically to ‘*our*’ story and ‘*our*’ science book and each choice represented one marker of her pedagogic intent to sustain a role for herself within the ‘doing of the task’ with the children. One minor point to note in passing here is that the teacher used the rather loose terminology of *story* to refer to what was an *Explanation*. It was found to be less confusing to use more specific terminology, for example, *Narratives, Recounts, Procedures, Reports* and *Explanations* and this convention was later adopted generally in the teaching program at the school.

The teacher's effort to build solidarity with the children in a shared enterprise and thus maintain her status as a joint participant was further emphasised through choices within the Transitivity system in which previous joint activity was used to define a proposed activity focus. For example,
In the above examples, previous joint activity was realised through a projected clause (0104) or as an embedded clause within a Relational Process clause (0059) or Behavioural Process clause (0065). Joint participation was also canvassed through the use of the Mood tag isn’t it in clause 0058.

In fact, one Phase initiation presented earlier in Table 5.4 (ie. Phase 5) suggests a useful discourse strategy for moving children into new activity from the perspective of past joint experience. In simple operational terms, the teacher initiated entry into a new Phase within the discourse by, first, asking the children to recall an antecedent activity that they were involved in. She then reminded them of the rationale for the activity. Finally, this explicit consideration of earlier interaction and its rationale became the basis for moving into current learning activity.

Inspection of the Transitivity system for this complex (clauses 0174-0179 in Table 5.4) shows that this ‘rationale’ is realised through Mental and Verbal Processes.

**Step 1: Reference to previous activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0174</th>
<th>Material: Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro- Sensor -cess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2: Rationale for previous activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0175</th>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro: affect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0176</th>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we wanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro: affect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 3: Direction into current activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0177</th>
<th>Material: Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro- Actor -cess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above clause complex, the teacher referred to a previous activity which was expressed by means of a Material Process clause (clause 0174). She then made explicit the rationale for that past activity (clause 0175/0176). This rationale was also identified as information that was inter-subjectively held through the choice of we as Sensor in the Mental Process clause. This previous activity and previously held inter-subjective information then became the basis for directing the children into current activity via a Material Process clause (clause 0177).

Overall, shifts in lesson focus were systematically and deliberately instituted by the teacher. The regulative register was predominant in her discourse as she shifted group focus from an initial generalised concern with the instructional field towards discussion of print and writing concepts appropriate to constructing the text. She also engaged the children in rereading the
text they had written to date in order to prepare them for the writing activity in the current format. The following discussion will examine her strategies as she orchestrated interaction within each of the above teacher initiated Phases.

5.3.4 The teacher’s role in orchestrating instructional field shifts within Phases

Within discourse Phases in this Format, the teacher varied the manner in which she attempted to orchestrate instructional field shifts. The following discussion will, therefore, consider each Phase (including the Preliminary Discussion) in the sequence in which it occurred.

5.3.4.1. Preliminary Discussion and Phase 1 in the Task Specification Format

The Preliminary Discussion opened with an informal interaction which arose spontaneously as the group of four children moved into the corner of the room where the writing easel had been set up. The easel had attached to it large sheets of paper on which previous writing of the negotiated text was recorded with a thick marker pen. The start of the children's opening discussion was not recorded and the transcript began with the first contribution to the interaction by the teacher.

The teacher's major strategy in the Task Specification was to engage the children in a joint reading of what they had written on the previous days. Through this activity she could revise this previously written text with the children and prepare them to continue from the point they had stopped at the previous day. This would constitute a preparation or 'orientation' for the writing activity to follow. However, as the children were still emergent readers, she had, first, to 'orient' them towards the reading activity itself. Orientation activities with readers prepare them for constructive engagement in the reading task by reviewing and recalling, prior to reading, the content (amongst other things) of the text to be read. The text the children and the teacher were about to read commenced with the following lines (full text given earlier, section 5.2).

01 We didn't have a mother hen
02 so we used an incubator

Consequently, the teacher's initial orchestrations attempted to draw this information from the children in order to establish a confident point of entry into the reading of the text. Her first attempt to bring this aspect of the text into commonly held conscious focus was employed in the Preliminary Discussion. Because the teacher could see the high level of the children's interest, she simply asked questions in the flow of the discourse without the kind of preformulating scaffold (refer chapter 4, section 4.3.3.3) that she had employed in the Early Task Orientation Formats. She received an appropriate response from one child, Jenny (J). However, her attempt to build upon this response in order to orient the children further was interrupted by children picking up on other focuses and contributing initiations of their own.
The following analysis of Theme shows the clauses in which this occurred. The children's clauses are shaded to distinguish them from those produced by the teacher.

Table 5.5
Theme analysis for clauses between 0001 - 0009 produced by both teacher and children at the beginning of the Preliminary Discussion within Format TS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0001</td>
<td>did</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0003</td>
<td>did</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0004</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0005</td>
<td>yeah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0006</td>
<td>so</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0007</td>
<td>you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0008</td>
<td>he</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0009</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

illustrates the dialogic nature of the opening interaction between teacher and children in which the regulative and instructional registers converge although it is the regulative register which is mostly foregrounded as Theme. The following extract gives more of this interaction and illustrates the difficulty faced by the teacher as the children all responded at the same time to initiate different focuses for discussion.

0003 T: Did we have Mother...Did we have mother hen [[sitting on the eggs]]?
0004 J: No we have the incubator
Jenny is opening an explanation text, ‘Egg to Chick’ to support her discussion with the teacher

0005 T: Yeah we had the incubator
0006 So we're writing up

0007 M: You got an /a/
Melissa points out a letter 'a' in the text which the children and T had jointly constructed yesterday and which is on display. She refers to it as the long ‘a’ sound as in 'father'.

0008 N: He starts off as a little dot
Naomi makes a comment about an illustration in ‘Egg to Chick’ which shows the embryo as a little ‘dot’ inside the egg. She points to the illustration in the book Jenny is holding.

0009 T: Yes
Teacher is responding to Melissa’s observation in clause 0007
0010 Naomi you get the other book about our new chicken
This is the book ‘A New Chicken’ that the children read with the teacher in LTO2

It is important to note that the competing initiations (0007 and 0008) drew upon information relevant to the instructional and regulative fields in general. For example, clause 0008 did comment directly on content actually in the writing the teacher and children had written on the previous day. In addition, simultaneously with these other initiations, one child was by then starting to 'read' the negotiated text.

0011 J: We don't have the mother hen
0012 we use the mother hen... um the incubator
Jenny is pointing to the first line of the already written text and attempting to 'read'. Line is: We didn't have a mother hen so we used an incubator
Thus, although all of the children were responding constructively to the situation as individuals, the teacher decided to reframe the activity in order to set the children towards a more coherent and commonly held group focus. Consequently, she brought the children together and orchestrated a movement into Phase 1. However, the teacher chose not to employ (for example) the strategy of constructing a preformulating context from which the question could arise in the way she often did in Early Task Orientation Formats (refer chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.2.1 & 4.2.4). Instead, she moved directly into questioning.

Earlier discussion of Late Task Orientation Formats (4.3.2.4.4) has indicated that this teacher tended to move into more challenging question patterns of this kind as she became more confident of the level of inter-subjectivity that existed between herself and the children. It was noted at that time such presumption did not always result in seamless and unproblematic communication. However, it was also noted that the teacher's ability to appeal to prior commonly held experience typically provided a 'bridge' that allowed the communication to move back on course and continue. Thus the communication mismatches that did occur did not become the kind of irresolvable impasses of the kind discussed above in relation to IRF moves (eg. Chapter 2, section 2.3.3 & chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.3). It was the flexibility afforded by this process that allowed the teacher to keep pushing the children towards a participation level which more and more assumed a high level of member's resources appropriate to academic or literate discourse. Here, the obvious enthusiasm and task focus demonstrated by the children as they spontaneously initiated the Preliminary Discussion encouraged the teacher to adopt a more challenging questioning strategy by the teacher as she moved the children into Phase 1.

In the light of the above comments, therefore, it is important to note that the questioning sequence pursued by the teacher in Phase 1 did result in some confusion that required an appeal to prior experience to effect resolution. The confusion occurred because the teacher, in setting up the shift into Phase 1, unwittingly created the potential for her questions to be interpreted in very different ways by herself and the children. The resultant interaction, therefore, provided useful insights into typical difficulties encountered by teachers and Aboriginal children in classroom interaction. In particular, it provides a situation where alternative discourse options, particularly those employed by this teacher in earlier Formats to scaffold the children's participation in display questions might be discussed.

Before pursuing the discussion further, however, it is useful to note that an almost identical interaction occurred early in Format LTO2 which was discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.3.4). At the point of that discussion, it was indicated that the issues briefly mentioned at that time would be extended in this section of chapter 5. The two interaction transcripts, one from LTO2 and the other from TS are listed beside each other for comparison purposes here.
The puzzle for the teacher was that she asked in both instances what seemed to her, an unambiguous question which sought the length of time (21 days) that the chicken remained in the egg. This teacher had spent considerable time developing the children's understanding of the time it takes for the chicken to develop in the egg. She knew that the children knew that the gestation period was 21 days. The problem was that the children, in framing an answer to her question, did not respond to 'what the words said'. Rather, they responded in terms of their interpretation of what they assumed the teacher 'meant'. This issue has been discussed in length in chapter 1 and chapter 2 (sections 1.5.3.3 & 2.2.4.2) where it was pointed out that responding in terms of 'what the words said' was an artefact of acquiring member's resources for control over literate or 'decontextualised' (Wertsch 1990) discourse. Moreover, this distinction between ways of responding in learning contexts was proposed in later discussion (chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.1) to account for exaggerated assumptions about 'poor listening competence' in Aboriginal children that are often made by teachers.

In building their interpretation of what the teacher 'meant', the children had responded to the context presented by the teacher with considerable perception although it was an interpretation that did not pay close attention to the exact wording of the teacher's questions. Unfortunately, also it was a perception that was not pre-empted by the teacher. The miscue occurred because the context for each of the transcripts presented above was centred around the book *A New Chicken* which featured in Format LTO2 as a shared reading text. Throughout the course of the macrogenre, the children read this book frequently with the teacher who continually encouraged them to predict what was to come next in the text. In each of the two contexts which provided the above transcripts, the teacher had opened the book at the start.
The developmental sequence represented in the text was divided into segments of five days. It contained, therefore, sentences such as the following, *The hen sat on the egg for five days; the hen sat on the nest for five more days; etc.* Thus, when the teacher opened the book and held it up as if to read, the children quite naturally assumed from the context that she required them to predict what was going to happen in that text. In effect, they reconstructed the teacher question as ‘How many days does the chicken stay in the egg in the first section of the book’ and not ‘How long altogether’ as the teacher had intended. Their answers in this reconstructed context, therefore, made perfect sense. Likewise, the child who responded ‘nineteen’ (clause 0301) in response to the teacher’s question in Format LTO2, responded as she did because day 19 was the day they were discussing at the moment. She read the question as something like, ‘How many days has the chicken been in the egg’.

This text provides a rare instance in the negotiation between teacher and children in this macrogenre where there is any semblance of the type of miscommunication attributed to the question ‘chaining’ raised by Malcolm 1982 (eg. Chapter 2, section 2.3.3 & chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.3). Here the teacher is forced into this pattern because inter-subjectivity with the children breaks down. The episode provides an insight into the circumstances which push teachers into the interaction patterns identified by Malcolm (1982). Furthermore, in order to consider the scaffolding strategies available to the teacher which might allow her to redress misinterpretation of her question, it is useful to view a Theme analysis of clauses produced by the teacher and children. The following table gives an analysis for the sequence taken from the Task Specification Format.
Analysis of discourse in the Task specification and Task

Table 5.7
Theme analysis for clauses between 0021 - 0042 produced by both teacher and children during teacher questioning sequence in Phase 1 within Format TS (P=preformulation; Q=question; r=response; A=accept; R=reconceptualisation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Textual</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interpersonal</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>0021</th>
<th>who</th>
<th>were we talking about here?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0022</td>
<td>who</td>
<td>was sitting on the eggs here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>0023</td>
<td></td>
<td>mother hen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>0024</td>
<td>yeah cont.</td>
<td>was sitting on the eggs was'nt she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0025</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>was sitting on the eggs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: there was no reconceptualisation/preformulation following previous question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>0026</th>
<th>and Struc./C. add.</th>
<th>how long</th>
<th>did mother hen sit on the eggs for?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>0027</td>
<td></td>
<td>five</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0028</td>
<td></td>
<td>five days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: again no reconceptualisation/preformulation following previous question — this time no acceptance either

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>0029</th>
<th>all together how long</th>
<th>did she sit?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>0030</td>
<td></td>
<td>five days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: again no reconceptualisation/preformulation following previous question — again no acceptance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>0031</th>
<th>how many days all together</th>
<th>was she sitting on the eggs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>0032</td>
<td></td>
<td>five days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: again no acceptance/reconceptualisation following previous question — mainly because T does not see why children are saying ‘five’ However, she next appeals to common knowledge in an attempt to rebuild inter-subjectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>0033</th>
<th>remember</th>
<th>when we...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0034</td>
<td>remember</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>0035</td>
<td>when Struc./C. temp.</td>
<td>we top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>0036</td>
<td></td>
<td>did we count up?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0037</td>
<td>how many</td>
<td>one two three...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0038</td>
<td>WH / top.</td>
<td>twenty...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0039</td>
<td></td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0040</td>
<td></td>
<td>twenty one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>0041</td>
<td>yeah cont.</td>
<td>we top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td>0042</td>
<td>but cont.</td>
<td>we top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>didn’t have a mother hen...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table illustrates that the text under consideration consisted of 5 segments identified on the left of the Theme table. In this section of the discourse, the teacher controlled all choices in Theme and each segment was framed around regular choices for Wh items in Interpersonal
Theme. In the first segment, the children responded according to the teacher's expectations. She accepted their response through the choice of the continuative *yeah* in Textual Theme and reaffirmed it by thematising the children's choice (*mother hen, she*) as Topical Theme in her Feedback move (clauses 0024 & 0025).

A problem arose following the second question (clause 0025), the children responded in a way that the teacher had not expected (*ie. five instead of twenty one days*). Unfortunately, because the teacher did not realise fully the implications behind why the children said *five* days at the time, she was not able to accept that response and reconceptualise it in the manner she had in earlier interaction within the Task Orientation Formats discussed previously. Thus, she attempted to resolve the difficulty in segments 3 and 4. She attempted to rephrase the *Wh* element in an attempt to make it reflect more exactly, her original intent (*ie. from, how long → all together how long → how many days all together*).

However, as it had been for the teachers reported by Malcolm (1982), this strategy which required the children to change their communicative assumptions in response to repeated display questions was not an effective one. Olson (1994:124) presents evidence that children do not change communicative presumptions easily when challenged in this way and argues that a very common response is to insist on their first presumption. Thus, it was not enough to attempt to achieve a shift towards task focus merely through challenging the children via a sequence of questions. The teacher needed to employ different kinds of regulative choices in order to scaffold explicitly, appropriate shifts in the children's perspective.

One alternative option open to this teacher which she had demonstrated in earlier discussion was to first accept and then reconceptualise the children's response (*eg. refer chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.1*). This would have involved a reconceptualising move possibly along the following lines. However, it is important to note that this strategy requires inter-subjectivity with respect to the origin of the children's response (in this instance – why they said *five instead of twenty one*).

Step 1: 
Accept and reconceptualise the children's response: *that's right. The hen did sit on the eggs for five days at the start of our book, but then she stayed on the nest for five more days (show children page in book) then five more days (show) then five more (show) then five more (show) then one more day (show).*

Step 2: 
Relate to prior experience: *Remember when we put the strokes on the board to count them up. How many days all together did we count.*

Step 3: 
Return to original question: *So, how many days all together did she sit on the eggs?*

Judged in terms of the responding strategies employed by this teacher in the Early Task orientation Formats, this kind of response would have possibly been the most effective. This was principally because, as a first step, it addressed the source of the children's confusion (step 1 above - instructional register primarily foregrounded). It then appealed to a past activity the teacher and children had done using this same book (step 2 - regulative register...
foregrounded) before moving the children back into the teacher's original question (step 3 - convergence).

Inspection of the teacher's fifth and final questioning segment number 5 (clauses 0033-0042) shows that she did eventually respond by employing some of the above strategies to promote the regulative register more strongly. In fact, the teacher's eventual response to resolve the impasse commenced with step 2. However, because in this instance, the cause of the children's confusion was not immediately apparent to the teacher she was unable to reconceptualise the source of the children's confusion directly. Nevertheless, the fact that she could fall back onto prior common experience in clauses 0034, 0035 and 0035 (ie. step 2) helped her to establish some common communicative of intent later in the interaction sequence. That is,

Step 2: Relate to prior experience

0034 Remember

0035 when we put all the strokes on the board.

0035 How many did we count up.

As she had done on previous occasions (chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.1 & 4.2.2.2), the teacher explicitly signalled her request to bring forward past experience through the use of the Mental Process remember.

Here the Mental Process of Cognition remember projected past activity when we put all the strokes on the board in the participant role of Phenomenon. In employing this choice the teacher also made use of another scaffolding strategy that has been discussed earlier. This was the foregrounding of a hypotactic clause in order to build a particular kind of interclausal relationship (refer chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.1 & 4.2.2.2.1). That is,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0035</td>
<td>0035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when we put all the strokes on the board</td>
<td>how many did we count up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effect of foregrounding the hypotactic clause (ie. clause 0035) in its relationship with the head clause (0035) was to create a preformulating context for the interrogative which followed.

Through the use of these strategies, the teacher was able to resolve the dissonance within the questioning sequence to a reasonable degree. However, it is pertinent to point out that the overall move to focus the children upon a text other than the one the teacher was going to ask them to read introduced some unnecessary confusion for the children. At this point the teacher recognised the need to shift the focus more directly upon the appropriate text. To do this, she foregrounded the regulative register to promote a restatement of the instructional field.
content she wished to highlight. A Theme analysis for the text extract in which she did this is given below. Clauses produced by the children are shaded.

Table 5.8
Theme analysis for clauses from summary at end of Phase 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 0051</td>
<td>now Cont.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>didn't have a mother hen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0052</td>
<td>so Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wrote up our story about [[when we used...]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0053</td>
<td>what WH / Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>did we use instead of mother hen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0054</td>
<td></td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>used an incubator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 0055</td>
<td></td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>used an incubator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 0056</td>
<td>yes Cont.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table illustrates the teacher's choice of the Continuative now along with so, to realise the role of Structural in Textual Theme to focus directly upon the content of the initial clauses in the partially written text. However, she did not take this orientating activity beyond the identification of the starting point for the text. Consequently, despite the fact that the teacher did manage finally to set a common task focus, it is useful to speculate briefly on how the interaction prior to reading might have been organised to make it more effective. In this respect, it would seem, that a more direct orientation focus which took the negotiated text itself as point of departure for discussion could have been simpler and more effective than the teacher's original course. For example, the teacher could have started by drawing the children's attention directly to the text on the easel. She could then have pointed out some of the words they had written, for example, "look at what we wrote here, we wrote incubator." (or the children may identify the word). Having focused the children onto the word, the teacher could have probed the children to remember what had been said about the incubator. She could have worked through the whole text picking on significant words and phrases in this way and also encouraging the children to point out words they recognised (something that they were already showing an impetus to do). She could have then worked with the children to recall and expand the context in which the words were written. In this way, she could have oriented the children to the whole content of the text more thoroughly before she asked them to read. This kind of text orientation strategy has since been refined and articulated (Gray & Cowey 1997).

In Phases 2, 3 & 4 that follow, the teacher, emphasised the regulative register to bring about a different but nevertheless constructive focus upon writing strategies and purposes for writing the text. This discussion led into joint reading (Phase 5) and making corrections (Phase 6) to complete the Task Specification Element prior to engaging the children in the Task Element to do with continuing the writing. This shift is evident in the next set of teacher initiated Phases to be considered in section 5.3.4.2 below.
5.3.4.2 Phases 2, 3 and 4 in the Task Specification Format

These three Phases will be discussed together because they represented a concerted and explicit effort on the part of the teacher to orient the children towards engagement with aspects of the regulative field to do with the strategies necessary for the construction of written text. The nature of the shift was carried clearly in the language choices that the teacher employed. A typical example occurred at the beginning of Phase 2 where the teacher employed a Behavioural Process clause to refer to the activity of writing the negotiated text.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{0057} & \text{Behavioural: Writing} & \text{all right so we wrote up our story} \\
\text{0058} & \text{Relational: Intensive: Identifying} & \text{[what we called a rough copy]} & \text{isn't it} \\
\text{0059} & \text{Relational: Intensive: Identifying} & \text{what we called a rough copy} & \text{Token} \\
\end{array}
\]

In the above extract, the teacher employed a Behavioural Process clause to refer the children to the past activity in writing the negotiated text. Moreover, the teacher focused exclusively upon regulative register choices to do with the text itself (ie. our story; what we called a rough copy, this; what; it) to occupy significant participant roles in order to build content associated with the regulative field.

The teacher also foregrounded the regulative register as she preformulated and recontextualised children’s responses. Her strategy here was interesting because it involved a variation on earlier scaffolding strategies to do with the development of the instructional field that were discussed at length in chapter 4 (eg. refer sections 4.2.2.2.1 & 4.2.2.2.3). However, this time, instead of reconceptualising instructional field knowledge, she reconceptualised in terms of the regulative field.

0057 T: All right so we wrote up our story
0058 and this is [[what we called a rough copy]] isn't it
0059 C: Yes

Following the child’s response of yes in 0059 above, the teacher constructed a monologue which expanded upon the child’s answer. A Theme analysis of the teacher's reconceptualisation is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>remember</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0061</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>can scratch out</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0062</td>
<td>Struc./C. caus.</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>crossed out</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0063</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>didn't want to say that</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0064</td>
<td>Struc./C. caus.</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>wanted to say something different</td>
<td>top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Theme analysis shows the teacher's foregrounding of Structural in Textual Theme position. She made this explicit choice in order to draw out an underlying rationale for using a 'rough copy' as a basis for redrafting text in the writing activity in which she and the children were involved. Her use of explicit scaffolding strategies to do with the regulative field illustrates her concern with modelling ways of learning as well the 'content' to be learned.

Following the above monologue in Phase 2, the teacher then moved to start the children reading the negotiated draft they had written on previous days (Phase 3). This shift into the reading of the text potentially promoted a strong focus upon the instructional field. However, one child interrupted her and instituted a bid for a shift in focus.

In response to this initiation by the child, the teacher took advantage of an opportunity that allowed her to extend further the discussion of the regulative field. The child's pointing out of another child's name allowed a connection with the notion of authorship she had been fostering. For example, whenever the teacher jointly constructed a text with the children she encouraged them to sign their names as authors (see chapter 4, section 4.3.4, also, see future discussion of the Task Element in section 5.4 of this chapter). The teacher's response to the initiation interpreted it as a question in the form, "Why just Ricky's name, why not everyone's?". This response on her part was justified by the rising intonation on the child's initiation (clause 0067). The teacher's response itself was on two levels. First, she explained why only Ricky's name was on the page and not the names of all the group members.

She then took the opportunity to set the present task in the context of the overall authoring activity in which they were engaged. Consequently she initiated a new Phase (Phase 4) that was explicitly focused upon regulative field matters. The teacher and children had been building an information book ('science book') about eggs. The current explanation about the stages of embryo development was to be the third chapter in the book. The teacher, therefore, took the time to draw explicit attention to the nature of their book in order to indicate how the current writing activity would contribute to that book. The resulting teacher initiated Phase consisted largely of monologue on the part of the teacher. The significant feature of the monologue was her pointing out of the various chapters and their contents. The teacher invited the children contribute the chapter numbers within her monologue. For example,
At the very beginning of the interaction the teacher referred the children explicitly to prior joint experience via a Mental Process clause which projected a Relational Clause. This was a regulative strategy that she had employed frequently in Early Task Orientation Formats.

For the rest of the Phase then, Relational Process clauses dominated the interaction as the teacher took the opportunity to remind the children of the contents of each chapter in turn. These are listed below.

These Relational Process clauses made up roughly half of the clauses in this Phase. Thus, the teacher used this opportunity to draw explicit reference to chapters in factual texts as important features of the regulative field knowledge she was attempting to promote. And, as her appeal to past experience indicated, this was clearly not the first time she had pointed this feature out. Having taken the children into this opportunistic excursion to explore the regulative field, the teacher then returned to her focus on reading the text.
5.3.4.3 Phases 5, 6 and 7 in the Task Specification Format

In Phase 5, the teacher finally shifted the focus to a joint reading of the previously negotiated text. Once into the reading activity, her primary focus in the discourse shifted to a concern to promote a review of the instructional field. She orchestrated this joint reading in much the same way that she had when she read the book *A New Chicken* with the children in Late Task Orientation Format LTO2. She made extensive use of what was referred to as 'oral cloze' in discussion of that Format (see chapter 4, section 5.3.4) in that she continually encouraged the children to read with her and then dropped out as they demonstrated the ability to carry on alone. The following extract shows this process. The wording of the negotiated text is identified in *underlined bold italics* as it was read in the transcript.

Because the children were reviewing the content of what they had written, the focus in the Phase was ostensibly upon the instructional field. However, the manner in which the teacher orchestrated the reading activity set in motion a number of 'tensions' which impinged sometimes implicitly and at other times explicitly upon concerns to do with the regulative field. Thus the reading activity entailed considerable convergence which served to promote the relation between what had been written and how it had been written.
One aspect of the regulative field that the teacher introduced had to do with the role grapho-
phonic relationships played in the identification of words. On a number of times when she
stopped reading with the children, she would provide them with the initial sound of the next
word, for example.

0135  T:  the /i/...
0136  Cn:  incubator

And, while she only used the strategy once in the joint reading extract above (0125-0157), she
used in on a number of occasions as she continued her reading with the children in Phase 7 a
little later, for example.

0199  T:  The little chick grows a little bit /b/...
0200  J:  bigger
0201  T:  Good girl Jenny
0202  T turns page  He grows a tiny ...  
0203  N:  Beak
0204  T:  /h/...
0205  J:  head
0202  T:  Next he grows a tiny /h/...
0203  N:  tail
0204  D:  tail

With this strategy, the teacher was extending an orientation towards the identification of
grapho-phonic elements as components of words. This represented a continuation of a
process that was discussed earlier in relation to joint reading in Format LTO2 where she
explicitly highlighted grapho-phonic elements (eg. /m/ in more - refer chapter 4, section 4.3.4;
see also section 5.3.1 in this chapter). In focusing attention on elements within words she
was attempting to lay a groundwork that she could call upon later when she was using the
completed text to teach reading. For example, one activity she would do later would be to
cover words in the text and ask the children to predict the sound/letter that it started with.

Another issue which was of concern in the development of the regulative field had to do with
the promotion of a conscious awareness on the part of the children that a discrimination could
be drawn between what was 'meant' and what was actually 'said'. This awareness lays the
basis for the development of a strong concern with appropriate wording choice in the
construction of written text. This issue has been discussed on a number of occasions in this
study. It was proposed that an awareness of this distinction constituted an important
members' resource for participation in decontextualised/literate discourse and that it played an
important role in the development of an academic 'task focus' within learners (refer chapter 1,
section 1.5.3.3, chapter 2, section 2.2.4.2 & chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.1). The issue was last
raised in prior discussion in this chapter (section 5.3.4). The interaction within this Phase (ie.
Phase 5) provides some insight concerning how such an orientation towards literate discourse
might be promoted and developed as part of the ongoing literate socialisation process in the
classroom.
Just how the development of the distinction between what is 'said/meant' was promoted in the format being considered here is set out below. The relation to an academic 'task focus' on the part of the children is also considered. At the end of the previous chapter (chapter 4, section 4.3.4) it was observed that a strong set of expectations concerning appropriate text content had been built up by the children over the course of the macrogenre. As the children read through the book *A New Chicken* with the teacher in the Late Task Orientation Format LTO2, these strong expectations led to situations in which the children predicted language choices that sometimes clashed with the actual wording of the text. It was pointed out that in dealing with these responses by the children, the teacher began to discuss and draw a distinction between what could constitute an appropriate meaning and what was actually in the text. It was proposed further that as the children gained control over grapho-phonic relationships, the clashes between predictions and actual text also pushed children towards drawing distinctions between what was actually 'said' and other possible realisations of meaning.

In the extracts provided below, it is possible to see children beginning to respond in a proactive manner as they addressed the specificity of meaning within the written text they were attempting to read. The teacher also worked to promote this development. The following extract is taken from Phase 5 and follows directly from the one given earlier (clauses 0125-0157).

0158  
0159  
0160  
0161  
0162  
0163  
0164  
0165  
0166  

The text the children were attempting to read in the above extract read as follows,  

*First, we switched on the...*

Naomi (N), however, 'read' in the first instance *incubator* instead of *electricity* (clause 0159). Her prediction, in effect, was relevant in terms of meaning but it was not what the text actually said. The teacher, as she had on other occasions (eg. refer chapter 4, section 4.3.4), accepted the child's response at the level of 'meaning' (0160 *we did...*) but was going to continue in order to point out that it was not exactly what was 'said'. However, Naomi self-corrected on her own volition and started to struggle with the pronunciation of the correct word *electricity*. 'Self corrections' such as these provide a strong indication of the extent to which the regulative field knowledge promoted by the teacher was being internalised by the children.

A little later, Naomi was involved in another self correction incident. The extract is given below. In this extract the children and teacher were attempting to read the following.  

*The little chick looked like a dot*
As she read, Naomi predicted little dot instead of dot. However, she quickly adjusted her response and joined in with the others to read the word as dot.

A further instance of the resolution of dissonance on this issue occurred for Naomi as the teacher and children continued to read together in Phase 7. This extract is given below. Clauses not relevant to the resolution of the distinction between what was said and what was meant have been omitted for clarity. The complete transcript can be found in appendix 4.

In the above extract, Naomi predicted the word beak and stuck with it past the teacher's first intervention to provide the initial sound /h/ as a prompt. The teacher then dealt with the problem explicitly (clauses 0214-0217). The teacher's intervention in these kinds of situation continued a familiar pattern. As she had so often in the macrogenre, she thematised the continuative yes in Textual Theme position (clause 0214) and accepted the meaning validity of the child's statement. Her next clause employed the Structural but in Textual Theme position as a point of departure for reconceptualising the child's statement (clause 0215). In this instance, the clause was ellipsed and the ellipsed section was added for the Theme analysis below. The ellipsed component is in italic script within brackets, eg. (that).
The teacher employed a similar pattern for example earlier in the Late Task Orientation Format LTO2 which was discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.3.4).

A very important point to note here is that the driving force behind the children's ability to grapple with this distinction between meaning and saying as well as the teacher's ability to respond in the supportive fashion that she did required the establishment of a high level of inter-subjectivity about what kinds of meanings could be constructed in the text.

It was this high level of inter-subjectivity that allowed the children to interrogate and predict within the text. Moreover, it was this awareness of possibilities within the text that created the tension and dissonance in the first place. For example, it allowed Naomi to ponder a correction to the text in the following interaction.

T: *The orange light...*
T/Cn: *comes on every time every time *the eggs start to get cold *
N: Little bit cold

*Shows good understanding of thermometer function in the incubator*

Here the teacher started reading (clause 0146) and all of the children joined with her (clause 0147). When they had finished the whole clause, Naomi commented to herself 'little bit cold' reflecting on the fact that the temperature only has to fall a small amount for the light to come on. This kind of ability to negotiate shades of meaning was essential to success of the whole process of drawing a distinction between what was 'said' and what was 'meant'.

About half way through reading what the she and children had written, the teacher was presented with another opportunity to initiate a new Phase (Phase 5, clauses 0174-0193) which focused upon the regulative field. At the end of the writing on the previous day, the children had offered the clause, *His food is the yolk*. This clause was, however, appropriate to an earlier part of the explanation. The teacher had, therefore, negotiated with the children to move the clause back to a more appropriate point in the text (ie. following clause 13 in the
negotiated text, see section 5.1) and they had marked the potential insertion point with an editing mark (ie.\(^\ast\)). Thus, when the children reached this insertion point in their reading the teacher decided to demonstrate the process of bringing the new clause forward to its appropriate place in the text. The manner in which the teacher did this once again demonstrated her commitment to making the regulative field explicit for the children.

As she made the correction to the text, the teacher engaged in a heavily staged monologue that attempted to delineate clearly each step that she carried out. The staging process she adopted was notable because it employed Continuatives such as right and all right to emphasise staging within Phases. This can be illustrated by a Theme analysis of the clauses produced by the teacher in this Phase. In Table 5.9 below, each step within the stage is marked off with a shaded line. Initiating Continuatives are in underlined.

### Table 5.9

**Theme analysis for teacher’s clauses within Phase 5 of Task Specification (TS) Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0174 right Cont. then Struc./ C. temp.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0175 because Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0176 we Top.</td>
<td>wanted to say something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0177 so Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td>lets Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0181 go.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0182 his food Top.</td>
<td>is the yolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0184 all right Cont. so Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0185 all right Cont. so Struc./ C. caus.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0186 shall finite</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0187 his food. Top.</td>
<td>is the yolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0191 all right Cont. now Cont. when Struc./ C. temp.</td>
<td>we Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0192 we Top.</td>
<td>’ll put that in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0193 that Top.</td>
<td>goes in there like that, all right, ok?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows four clearly definable steps within the Phase. Each step was explicitly marked at the outset by the teacher's use of Continuatives right and all right to set the point of departure for the initiating clause in each step. This use of these Continuatives reflected the depth of concern the teacher had with making the staging of the regulative field activity clear to the children. This concern with careful staging of the regulative register was also important to the teacher's role in the Task Element and will be encountered again in section 5.4 of this study.

The extent of the teacher's concern with making the strategy behind the manipulation of the text explicit was also suggested by her use of Causal and Temporal Conjunctive relations between clauses to realise Structurals in Textual Theme. Her choice of we as the major Topical Theme choice also suggests that her concern was with the actions of herself and the children (we) as active joint participants. This is confirmed in the choices she made within the Transitivity system. Moreover, all of the choices the teacher employed heavily foregrounded the regulative register to do with 'how' to write. The following discussion will consider the various Process choices the teacher made. Material Process clauses, for example, were concerned to elucidate activity involved in identifying and moving the clause within the text.

In Material Process clauses, Processes had to do with placement (ie. find, put, goes) and Circumstance was to do with Place (eg. in there) with one related Circumstance of Manner (ie. like that). Goals focused upon the mark (^) in the text (eg. the little mark) or the clause to be relocated (eg. that little piece, that). Behavioural Process clauses had to do with the act of writing.
Again, however, Behavioural Process clauses focused upon locating the clause wording within the text (clauses 0185, 0186) and the location of the negotiated text as a chapter within the book (clause 0191). The teacher's emphasis on aspects of the regulative field was also maintained in her use of Mental and Verbal Process clauses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0175</th>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
<th>wanted to say</th>
<th>something else there</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>because</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0176</th>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
<th>wanted to say</th>
<th>something else</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These Processes did not, in their turn, project the content of the clause directly but rather referred to it in third party terms (eg. *something else, this*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0181</th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>going to say</th>
<th>this</th>
<th>next,</th>
<th>Circumstance: Location: Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We're</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0182</th>
<th>Relational: intensive: Identifying</th>
<th>this</th>
<th>the yolk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His food is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Token</td>
<td></td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even in clause 0181 where the Verbiage was quoted directly, the function of the elaborating clause (0182) was simply to identify what the teacher meant by *this*. Likewise, the only other expression of the exact wording of the clause to be moved was as an accompaniment to the activity of writing (clause 0185-0190). For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0185</th>
<th>T:</th>
<th>All right so we'll write it in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0186</td>
<td>N:</td>
<td>Shall we write it in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0187</td>
<td></td>
<td>His food...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0188</td>
<td>N:</td>
<td>is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0189</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>is the...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0190</td>
<td>T/Cn:yolk</td>
<td>Teacher and children say the words as they are written by the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These language choices illustrate that the teacher's central concern in the above Phase 5 was not so much to negotiate the actual meaning to be written (ie. instructional register). This had been done on a previous day. Here, the teacher was primarily concerned to make explicit the circumstances surrounding physical manipulation of the text (ie. regulative register).

Following this shift into explicit concern with the regulative register (Phase 5), the teacher returned the children in Phase 7 to joint reading of the negotiated text in much the same way they had in Phase 5 prior to her interruption. Because of this and because some aspects of Phase 7 have been covered already in discussion of Phase 5, Phase 7 will not be discussed in detail. However, before moving on, it is important to focus on a further use of the Continuatives *all right, ok* and *right* within Phase 7 in circumstances where they were not employed to initiate new Phases by the teacher. In fact, the first instance of such use for Continuatives occurred within Phase 5 in clause 0193 which was presented in Table 5.9 (above) in this section. When this clause was analysed for Theme, *all right* and *ok* were placed in Rheme and not considered to have a role in Textual Theme as Continuatives.
This was because these instances of *all right* and *ok* functioned as Mood tags to signal interrogative intention on the part of the teacher. Such instances were clearly distinguishable in the discourse through the accompanying rise of tone to mark the question as opposed to a flat or falling tone when a textual function was intended. Here the choice of *all right* and *ok* marked a point in the discourse where the teacher sought confirmation that the children were following her initiation.

In Phase 7, the teacher again employed these choices twice in clauses 0241 and 0256 and their effect was to hand over control of initiation within the discourse to the children. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0238</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘Then he grows tiny’</td>
<td>0241</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘right?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0239</td>
<td>T/D:</td>
<td>‘feathers’</td>
<td>0242</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘egg tooth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0240</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘and an egg tooth’</td>
<td>0243</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘an egg tooth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0241</td>
<td>right?</td>
<td>‘You got’</td>
<td>0244</td>
<td>‘and an egg tooth’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0242</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘That’s a funny one isn’t it’</td>
<td>0245</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘and...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0243</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘and an egg tooth yeah’</td>
<td>0246</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘Miss Agg here’s a mistake here’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0244</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘David uses another teacher’s name in error’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0245</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Mrs Price I’ll line up’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0246</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘because I’m gonna be the leader’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0247</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Anticipates that the lesson is drawing to a close because they have reached the end of the previously written text’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0248</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Well we’re not going to line up just yet’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0249</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘I’m gonna be the leader’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0250</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘We’re gonna finish this story’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the example above the teacher continued reading to the end of the negotiated text. However, her functional purpose in selecting *right* following the end of the reading activity (clause 0241) was not to commence another teacher initiated Phase in the discourse. Instead, the teacher’s use of *right* as an interrogative tag opened a space in the discourse for the children to begin to initiate. Consequently, it was in this part of the Format that the children produced some of their most task focused initiations. Most importantly, these initiations were focused upon regulative field concerns. This issue will be developed further in section 5.3.5 (below) to do with child initiations in the Task Specification Element.

The final Phase (ie. Phase 8) was extremely brief and was initiated by the teacher to simply move the children into the Task Element that was to follow. Consequently, it was comprised of regulative register choices concerned with directing children. The text for this Phase is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0265</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘All right now we’ve nearly finished this story...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0266</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘No mistakes no mistakes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0267</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘No mistakes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0268</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘that’s right’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0269</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘Miss Agg here’s a mistake here’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0270</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘David uses another teacher’s name in error’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0271</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘Mrs Price I’ll line up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0272</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘because I’m gonna be the leader’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0273</td>
<td>J:</td>
<td>‘Anticipates that the lesson is drawing to a close because they have reached the end of the previously written text’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0274</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘Well we’re not going to line up just yet’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0275</td>
<td>D:</td>
<td>‘I’m gonna be the leader’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0276</td>
<td>T:</td>
<td>‘We’re gonna finish this story’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here the teacher had decided that the discussion about grapho-phonetic features she had fostered towards the end of Phase 7 had reached the point where, if continued, it may have distracted the children too much from the eventual task (refer section 5.3.5 which discusses these child initiations). She, therefore, instituted Phase 8 (above – clauses 0285-0294) to cut off discussion and simply announced entry into the Task Element.

Throughout the Task Specification Phases the teacher’s role had been to review and bring into immediate awareness for the children, the instructional field represented in the Text that had been negotiated to date. By focussing the children’s attention in these areas of the instructional field, she hoped to reinforce common experience of the instructional field from which future writing could progress. However, the preceding discussion has also revealed that the teacher had an additional concern to create an explicit awareness and engagement with specific aspects of the regulative register to do with how to compose and physically write a written text. To achieve these ends the teacher chose to stage the discourse around a series of teacher initiated Phases. The preceding discussion has covered at length the manner in which she went about this task. The following discussion (section 5.3.5) will explore the effect that the teacher’s orchestration of the discourse had upon the initiations produced by children within the Task Specification format.

5.3.5 CHILD INITIATIONS ACROSS THE TASK SPECIFICATION FORMAT

Child initiations across the Task Specification Format can be divided into two discrete sets according to the extent to which they constitute a direct engagement with the educational aspects of the task focus that the teacher was attempting to promote. Educational task focus is defined here as those aspects of the instructional and regulative fields intrinsic to the teacher’s pedagogic goals in the format. In this instance, the educational task focus can be identified with those language choices which directly address aspects of the instructional field to do with the development of a chicken embryo and the hatching of chickens. Educational task focus was also concerned with those language choices which addressed aspects of the regulative field to do with controlling orthographic and other writing process resources. It is useful to note that initiations which fall outside the above definition of educational focus would not necessarily be inappropriate within the pedagogic discourse. The notion of educational task focus does however, allow for consideration of the language choices which realise the cognitive concerns promoted by the teacher in the discourse.

In the Task Specification format, the set of child initiations which lay outside the educational task focus promoted by the teacher accounted for 19 of the total of 47 initiating clauses produced by the children. The other set of initiations contained those initiations which did engage directly with the educational task focus promoted by the teacher. The following figure (5.5) illustrates the range of choices available in each of these sets.
5.3.5.1 Child initiations that were not directly task focused

The language choices in the first set which were not directly task focused are of limited relevance to the present discussion and will not be examined in detail although some representative examples are given below. As figure 5.5 has indicated, they performed three broadly defined functions within the discourse.

(i) Requests for assistance as the children sought to carry out teacher instructions

0013  N:  Where Mrs Price?
0094  N:  Naomi we haven't got chapter three in that one love
0095  N:  Hey?

(ii) Comments and requests about issues and activities which, while they bore some relationship to the on going activity, were essentially peripheral to the overall group educational focus at the time.

Jenny identified the word as 'saying' Ricky - David commented,
0072  D:  Richie's sick
0110  N:  Can we have a film about us?
0111  T:  About what?
0112  N:  Us...us mob
0113  T:  A film about you mob?
0114  N:  Yeah
0115  T:  Doing what?
0116  N:  Um reading

David had been reading by himself away from the group. He interrupted discussion to tell the teacher.
0227  D:  Mrs Price I read that

(iii) Comments and requests which dealt with behavioural and procedural issues
0073  N:  Melissa bloody hell Melissa
0074  D:  Don't touch me
0047  D:  Mrs Price I feel sick
0290  J:  Mrs Price I'll line up
0291  J:  because I'm gonna be the leader
5.3.5.2 Child initiations that were directly task focused

The remainder of the children’s initiating clauses (28 clauses out of a total of 47) were tied more directly to the aspects of the instructional field and regulative fields that were appropriate to the teacher’s ongoing task focus.

**Instructional field focus:**

The smallest number of these (8 clauses) were focused upon the instructional field. Mostly, they represented attempts to pre-empt future learning interaction. For example, at the start of the TS Format, Jenny (J) predicted that the teacher would start reading the negotiated text as she had on previous days and began to read spontaneously.

J: *We don’t have* the mother hen

we use the mother hen... um the incubator

Jenny is pointing to the first line of the already written text and attempting to ‘read’. Line is: *We didn’t have a mother hen so we used an incubator*

The following example also shows children attempting to predict. This time they were attempting to pre-empt future discussion concerning the instructional field.

T: *Yeah we counted up* twenty one days *didn’t we*

But we didn’t have a mother hen....

J: Now the chick...now the chick get bigger

Jenny turns the pages of the book ‘Egg to chick’, anticipating the coming discussion

C?: Ten days

Ten days refers to the stage of development on the page Jenny has turned to

Other initiations commented upon ongoing interaction in the instructional field. For example,

N: *He starts off as a little dot*

Naomi makes a comment about an illustration in ‘Egg to Chick’ which shows the embryo as a little ‘dot’ inside the egg. She points to the illustration in the book Jenny is holding.

T: *The orange light...*

T/Cn: comes on every time every time [[the eggs start to get cold]]

N: Little bit cold

Shows good understanding of thermometer function in the incubator

**Regulative field focus:**

The orientation of the children towards the regulative field indicates that the teacher had developed a strong focus upon technical concerns to do with the task of writing (20 of 28 task focused clauses). The children’s initiations were, simultaneously, both displays of their own knowledge and requests for the teacher to display knowledge about the operation of the regulative register. In focusing their initiations upon the regulative field, the children used a set of related strategies all of which had the function of ‘pointing out’ grapho-phonetic relations (eg. identifying words or print features). One strategy was to Thematise look as Topical Theme in an exophoric ellipsed clause. For example,
As they had in Format LTO1 earlier (chapter 4, section 4.3.2.1), the children used this move as a kind of place marker to gain the attention of the teacher. They then attempted to follow up with a more specific statement. This strategy appeared to be employed when competition for interactive control was strong. It is notable that on both occasions in which it was used, other participants were talking and the child had, in fact, to compete with the teacher to take interactive control.

T: and...
T: That's a funny one isn't it
T: and an egg tooth yeah
D: Look
T: Now this little part here [[which we said his food is the yolk]]
T: we decided
T: that we were going to put back in this part of the story here, all right?
D: There's little white part there
T: What a little white part [[where I didn't write the letter properly]]
D: Yes
T: Well let's write it
T: There is that better?
D: Yeah

Other child initiation moves to do with the regulative field focused upon the teacher as Topical Theme choice. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0007</td>
<td>you top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0244</td>
<td>you top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0266</td>
<td>you top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0269</td>
<td>Mrs Price Voc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the focus was on the teacher as writer and, in various ways, these clauses interrogated orthographic aspects of what she had written (she had acted as scribe for much of the writing negotiation). These choices in Theme were reflected in Transitivity choices for Verbal and Behavioural Process clauses. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Sayer Process Verbiage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0244 Verbal</td>
<td>You got and an egg tooth'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>Behaver Process Range Circumstance: Location: Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0269 Behavioural</td>
<td>Mrs Price You 've made a mistake there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Verbal Process clauses, the Process got which typically realises a Relational Attributive function was used as a shell to carry the meaning said. The Verbiage referred to the alliteration carried in and an. The Behavioural Process clause also employed a lexically empty verb in made with the actual process carried in the noun mistake functioning as Range. In each of these types of clause, there was an expectation that the issues identified
by children's initiations would be 'explained' by the teacher and for the most part the teacher obliged this expectation. For example,

D: Mrs Price you've made a mistake there
J: And this says...
T: A mistake
D: What did I do wrong love
D: Do like this
Imitates a poorly formed letter on a blank part of the page
T: Oh I see
T: Yeah well you know
T: Why that looks like a mistake
T: because I've...I wrote that very quickly
T: I...as you told me
T: what to write
T: I wrote it very very quickly
T: and then when we write it in the book...in these books like this
T shows a the children's final big books
T: it will be done neatly won't it
J: See no mistakes nice and neat
J: No mistakes

This expectation that the teacher would respond to 'explain' motivated the children's initiations in most instances. This expectation accompanied other initiation patterns which employed Circumstantial elements to occupy Topical Theme position. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Agg</td>
<td>here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc.</td>
<td>Mkd./ Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Agg</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mkd./ Top.</td>
<td>s another little mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Agg</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mkd./ Top.</td>
<td>s little white part there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This choice had the effect of focusing directly upon the location of the grapho-phonic feature in the negotiated text. Within the Transitivity system, these choices were realised in Relational Process clauses such as the following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational: Intensive: Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Agg here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'s a mistake here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mkd./ Top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another set of initiation choices focused upon the grapho-phonic items themselves without explicit verbal reference to their location in the text. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential</td>
<td>Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>says Ricky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These clauses focused on the identification of words in the text and Transitivity relationships were realised through the choice of a Verbal Process. For example,
In one instance, a child's 'pointing out' action was realised as a direct question which foregrounded a Wh element in Interpersonal Theme giving direct realisation to the role of the participant 'wanting to know'. It is notable that this role had been assumed implicitly in the previously discussed initiations by children to do with orthographic focus.

By means of these interrogative 'pointing out' strategies, the children were evidently working through issues concerned with print concepts in a proactive manner. Their concern with the notion of 'mistake' was understandable as they explored the boundaries surrounding graphophonemic 'facts' (i.e. when does an attempt to write a letter stop being able to be recognised as a letter and become a mistake). However, their initiations also had a social dimension to them which suggested an additional function. As previous discussion above has mentioned, the children were challenging the teacher in a manner that made her provide explanations in response to their probes. In this sense, they were playing a questioning game with the teacher similar to those that many children engage in as they explore the generation of display questions in reading stories with parents in literate cultures. The following illustrative example was discussed by Gray (1990). In the example below, taken from Gray (1990), a three year old child was sharing in a discussion about a familiar story with her mother (P: = Parent; C: = Child).

P: What's that?
C: Horsie.
P: That's not a horsie, what is it?
C: That's a pony.
P: Nearly, what is it? (Laughs). It's a....
C: Ha-haw.
P: What goes he-haw?
C: A pony.
P: A donkey (emphasis)
C: A donkey, haw, he-haw, he-haw.

C: What's that thing there?
P: Ah, you know that's a horsie.
C: Yesss (Laughs).

(Gray 1990: 130-131)

The issue relevant to the discussion of the children's initiating behaviour in the Task Specification Format is that in the kinds of parent/child interaction illustrated above, the children frequently assume the role of the participant 'wanting to know' as part of the social context in which they are engaged. The teacher in the Task Specification Format, by providing space and encouragement for the children's initiations, was providing a social context which facilitated an important aspect of the children's development of member's resources.
appropriate to negotiation of learning in mainstream schooling. She was providing an interactive environment which facilitated their exploration and control over display questions in learning interactions and directly framing a shift from the social interactional plane (inter-personal) towards the intra-personal plane (Vygotsky 1978).

5.3.5 SUMMARY
Discussion of language choice in the Task Specification format (above) reveals a context in which the teacher explicitly staged the progression of the pedagogic discourse. That the teacher should stage the Task Specification is to be expected as it represents the point in the discourse in which teachers generally attempt to draw together the knowledge that they have made available to the children in the course of the Task Orientation (eg. Frances Christie 1989). In the Task Specification, teachers typically attempt to foreground for the children the manner in which they are to enter into the writing activity that is to follow.

What is, however, particularly significant in the behaviour of the teacher in this macrogenre is the extent to which she set out to construct the Task Specification as a joint negotiation concerning what was to occur in the Task Element. ‘Joint negotiation’ as it was employed by this teacher was focused upon the building of shared understandings about the instructional field and aspects of the regulative field to do with making explicit orthographic and other system processes underlying the construction of written text. Through this process of joint negotiation of common perceptions and expectations, the teacher was concerned to build a shared orientation for taking part in the joint writing to follow in the Task format.

Sustaining joint engagement throughout the Task Specification was important because the teacher intended to continue working jointly with the children to compose the text in the Task Element. She needed to sustain her role that had been developed throughout the Task Orientation Element of the macrogenre, as one who would share in the learning negotiation with the children. In this way she achieved a natural continuity in her role as she moved into the writing activity.

The following section 5.4, will explore the teacher’s behaviour in the Task Element of the macrogenre as she jointly composed the written text with the children. The format which comprised the Task Element considered below followed on immediately after the Task Specification which has been discussed above in this section (section 5.3).

5.4 LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY IN THE TASK FORMAT

5.4.1 INTRODUCTION
An important feature of the Task Format was that it represented a significant point in the macrogenre where the teacher could model the convergence of the regulative and instructional registers to construct written text. That is, how regulative field understandings to do with the
functioning of the orthography and other understandings about the building of written text contributed to the building of instructional field in the jointly negotiated written text. This issue will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter (section 5.4.2.3.3).

In order to locate the teacher's writing negotiation strategies within usual practice in Australian schools, it is useful to compare her approach with another commonly applied writing development strategy. This strategy is called 'modelled writing'. In modelled writing teachers write a model text in front of the children. The modelled text, however, is essentially the teacher's own composition and the children are expected to write their own versions at a later stage. Thus, a clear distinction is drawn between the 'teacher's text' and the 'children's texts'. This strategy is seen as a means of providing a 'demonstration' (eg. Cambourne & Turbill 1987) of how to go about the writing process.

When teachers write their own piece in front of their children, thinking aloud as they search for what they want to say and how to spell the words, and as they check the punctuation, they are demonstrating how drafts are written, how to edit, how to deal with unknown spellings, and how to use the environment to scrounge for words. (Cambourne & Turbill 1987:67)

While the intentions of teachers in setting up such models for children in classrooms is laudable, the difficulty for children who have no experience in the construction of cohesive text lies in the extent to which they can engage with, and take from, the model provided by the teacher. For Aboriginal children who are not task oriented towards literate discourse and who are not predisposed to listening closely to 'what the words say' (eg. refer section 5.3.4.1) engagement with and utilisation of the models provided by the teacher is extremely difficult. A further constraint that is typically set by teachers in many classrooms is an admonition for the children to 'use their own words'. That is, they are not to 'copy' language choices from the teacher's model. This constraint is crippling for children who do not already possess a strong repertoire of linguistic resources appropriate for the construction of written text.

In developing her pedagogy, the teacher in the concentrated encounter macrogenre aimed to provide a suitable basis for supporting engagement by the children in the production of a model text. A central principle behind her negotiation strategy was the assumption that for the children to engage and take from language models, they needed to share with her a reasonable understanding of the kinds of meanings that could be constructed. As previous discussion in this chapter (section 5.3.4.3) has proposed, a high level of inter-subjectivity concerning what the teacher was attempting to mean allowed learners to predict and interrogate within the learning activity.

Furthermore, the high level of inter-subjectivity that had been built between teacher and children over the course of the macrogenre allowed the teacher to orchestrate the discourse within this Format in a manner that would have not been possible had the inter-subjectivity not existed. As was the case with the previous Task Specification Format, the teacher constructed a discourse which was highly teacher directed. And, as it had in the Task
Analysis of discourse in the Task specification and Task

Specification Format, the assumption of a directing/initiating role by the teacher in the Task Format resulted in a fall in child initiations compared to that which occurred in the Late Task Orientation Formats. This change is illustrated in the following Table 5.10 which gives a comparison of different types of child initiations across all of the formats discussed in this study to date.

Table 5.10
Comparison between responses to questions, joint constructions and initiations produced by children across Task Orientation (ETO1, ETO2, LTO1 & LTO2), Task Specification (TS) and Task (T) formats expressed as a percentage of the total number of clauses in each format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional role of clause</th>
<th>ETO1</th>
<th>ETO2</th>
<th>LTO1</th>
<th>LTO2</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses to teacher questions</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>10.38</td>
<td>10.18</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint construction clauses</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Initiations</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>33.09</td>
<td>42.55</td>
<td>19.21</td>
<td>23.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage of clauses</td>
<td>15.57</td>
<td>19.22</td>
<td>45.91</td>
<td>55.37</td>
<td>35.24</td>
<td>45.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table 5.10 shows that Responses to teacher questions rose to its highest level over all of the formats considered previously in this study. This rise was a direct result of the manner in which the teacher set about to scaffold the negotiation of the text. This is discussed in detail in section 5.4.2. Joint construction of clauses between teacher and children in the Task Format remained at a similar level to that which occurred in the Task Specification Format. However, as discussion in section 5.4.2 will show, the ‘joint constructions’ were a result of the teacher's efforts to engage the children in joint construction of writing rather than reading as was the case with the Task Specification Format. Initiations by the children increased marginally from 19.21 percent to 23.29 percent. The nature of children's initiations will be discussed in more detail in section 5.4.3 of this chapter.

The following discussion will outline the manner in which the teacher set about orchestrating the staging of the discourse within the Task Format under consideration here (section 5.4.2). Section 5.4.3 will then briefly discuss initiations by children within the Task Format.

5.4.2 TEACHER INITIATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL FIELD SHIFTS IN THE TASK FORMAT

The staging of instructional field shifts within the Task format differed from that employed by the teacher in previous formats. For, while the teacher signalled shifts frequently through the choice of Continuatives in Textual Theme, she did not set up clearly distinguishable teacher initiated Phases analogous to those found, for example, in Formats ETO1, ETO2 and LTO1. Instead, in negotiating the text about chickens with the children, the teacher employed what will be referred to here as a three step strategy. Her first step (step 1) was to build a common
focus within the group about the content to be written in the next clause or clause complex in the text. That is, what meaning was to be constructed next? To access this, she did not ask the children to suggest possible meanings. Instead, she directed them towards meaning resources that were commonly held. Because she shared a high level of inter-subjectivity with the children, the teacher could do this simply by asking a question that focused the children onto that common knowledge. For example,

(a)

0305 T: All right now all this time [that the little chick's growing in the egg...]
0306 J: This says Mr Fuddle
Points to word 'feathers' - Is reading the word as Mr Fuddle because both start with 'f'. - Mr Fuddle is the title of a narrative text that is currently being scaffolded as a reading text in the class
0307 T: What's the... that's...what's he... what's he...
0308 N: Mrs Price...
0309 T: what's he floating in?
0310 J: Water sac
0311 Cn: A water sac

(b)

0515 T: Is it easy for the little chick to peck... peck out
0516 J: No
0517 M: What's that for there?
0518 T: Oh I just did some... put a pencil mark there love
0519 Is it easy for little chick to peck out?
0520 N/J/M: No
0521 D: Yes
0522 N: That... It's hard work

With reference to the above extracts, it is important to note that the text composition activity undertaken by the teacher and children in the Task Element was a challenging one that clearly extended the children beyond their levels of individual competence. In fact, the writing efforts of mainstream classroom children at the stage of literacy development of the Aboriginal children under consideration here are typically focused upon the generation of simple phrases and clauses. These are typically written under the children's drawings in pre-phonemic or early phonemic approximations to conventional orthography (eg. Temple, Nathan & Burris 1982, Cambourne & Turbill 1987). Consequently in the extracts above, the teacher posed questions to focus the children upon specific instructional field knowledge relevant to the explanation of the development of a chicken embryo. The children, in this instance, were suggesting other topics to do with the regulative field and not the instructional field focus sought by the teacher. Because the children were not able to adopt a suitable field focus for construction the written text, it was the teacher who needed to specify the appropriate field focus for progressing the text composition activity. It might be argued that the children’s focus upon the regulative field was task focused. However, in this writing activity, the nature of the teacher’s task focus had shifted to a new plane of development. What the teacher was attempting to do was show the children how the regulative and instructional registers converge in the process of writing. To achieve this requires more than random attention to isolated field ‘facts’. Instead, it requires a
selection and systematic utilisation of resources available in both the instructional and regulative fields towards the achievement of writing goals.

Once the teacher had drawn the children to an appropriate aspect of the instructional field (step 1 of her writing negotiation strategy), her next step (step 2) was to focus the children onto a consideration of how that field knowledge could be represented through language choices appropriate to written text. Two brief examples are given below.

All right so shall we say
that...the little chick's floating in the water sac
Well how am I going to write that?
What am I gonna write?

The teacher's final step (step 3) was to direct the focus of the children explicitly on the regulative register as she attempted to engage them in the task of physically writing the text. Because the children had such limited knowledge of letters and orthographic conventions, the teacher wrote a significant amount of the text for them. The children, for their part, were happy to share the writing with her. In fact, in one section of the Format under consideration here, the teacher started to ask a child to write (clause 0364). However, the children specifically asked the teacher to write it.

Shall we write something like that?
All right we'll let...
Mrs Price Mrs Price can you write that down please?
Can you write it down?
You want me to write it?

When the teacher asked the children to actually write, she selected only a small segment of text - usually one word at this early stage of literacy development. This was because the children often could not form letters and the process was very time consuming and required considerable effort by the children. If the teacher had tried to have the children 'write' every word, the momentum and focus on the process of composing the text would have been lost. And, as focus was lost, the children would have become bored.

A further advantage of selecting small segments for the children to write was that the written text still offered a suitable model for shared reading and discussion. If the children had written all of the words, it would have been very difficult to identify and discuss words and other text features such as letters, spacing etc. In a text where there was a judicial mix of teacher and child writing, the children's writing, no matter how non-standard, was always interpretable to all parties because it was embedded in text that was written clearly by the teacher.

There is one further point about teacher scaffolding of early writing by children in circumstances such as those described above that is worthy of comment here even though no examples of such scaffolding occur in the extract above. This point has to do with accepting the quality of the children's approximations. The teacher supported the children in their writing
task by assisting them to find models elsewhere in the text from which they could copy. This strategy is illustrated in a transcript presented in later discussion (section, 5.4.2.3.3). Even so, the children's responses typically contained all manner of approximations including invented and omitted letters. However, the teacher did not 'correct' or rewrite the children's attempts after they had been produced. Furthermore, if a child ever commented on the quality of another child's effort, the teacher's strategy was to point out that what was being produced was a 'rough draft'. Moreover, she would add that the child's effort was perfectly acceptable because he/she was a 'learning writer' and that was how he/she wrote now - this was allowed.

Consequently, even though the children were very concerned with accuracy of word formation as evidenced from discussion of the previous Task Specification (section 5.3.5) they had, by the time of this particular text negotiation, learned to confine their critical comments to the teacher's work. For example,

0517 M: What's that for there?
0518 T: Oh I just did some... put a pencil mark there love

Here the child was pointing out to the teacher that there was an inappropriate mark in her writing.

As the teacher moved the children through the above mentioned set of 3 steps involved in the writing negotiation process (ie. (1) deciding what to write about, (2) deciding how to 'say' it and (3) deciding how to 'write' it), she constructed a pedagogic discourse that was highly staged. This teacher directed staging of the discourse was reflected in the high frequency of Continuatives which occurred throughout the Task Format considered here. This is illustrated in the following table which shows the number of Continuatives within each of the three writing negotiation steps outlined above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuatives</th>
<th>Step 1 (deciding what to write)</th>
<th>Step 2 (deciding how to 'say' it)</th>
<th>Step 3 (deciding how to 'write' it)</th>
<th>Total (steps 1,2,3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all right/right</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ok</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (Continuatives)</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total No. of clauses (teacher)</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
<td><strong>155</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incidence Ratio (One continuative for every X teacher produced clauses)</strong></td>
<td><strong>1: 2.29</strong></td>
<td><strong>1: 5.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>1: 4.88</strong></td>
<td><strong>1: 4.45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first four rows of Table 5.11 give the number of Continuatives produced by the teacher across each step in the writing negotiation process described above. The total occurrence
over the whole of the Task format (T) is given in the last column. These first four rows show that the most frequent Continuative was *all right/right* and that most of these occurred as the teacher staged activity around the task of physically writing the text (step 3). The fifth row gives the total frequency of all Continuatives for each step with the overall frequency given in the final column of that row. This shows that, overall, 37 Continuatives were employed by the teacher. Again, most were employed in orchestration of writing activity. The sixth row gives the number of clauses produced by the teacher which were related to the orchestration of each step in the writing negotiation. This number omits teacher produced clauses to do with other focuses such as controlling behaviour, responding to initiations by children etc and accounts for approximately 80 percent of all clauses produced by the teacher in the Task Format. The sixth row shows that a major factor in the increased use of Continuatives in step 3 is that the teacher produced more clauses overall in that step. The seventh row, therefore, provides a ratio calculation which illustrates the relation between the number of Continuatives in each step and the number of task focused teacher produced clauses. This ratio calculation shows that the teacher employed a Continuative as a Textual Theme choice on average once every 2.29 clauses in orchestrating step 1, once every 5.4 clauses in step 2 and once every 4.88 clauses in orchestrating step 3. This gave an overall average occurrence across the format of one choice for a Continuative in Textual Theme every 4.45 teacher produced clauses. This represents an extremely high use of this language choice and provides some indication of the level of explicit staging of the pedagogy attempted by the teacher in this format.

In effect, the use of Continuatives in this Format was more in accord with the kind of within Phase staging discussed earlier in relation to Phase 5 in the Task Specification format in this chapter (section 5.3.4.3). At the level of Phase, the transcript seemed to represent one continuous Phase to do with negotiating the text. Even shifts between steps in the writing negotiation process were not consistently signalled via the use of Continuatives. The reasons for the choice to explicitly mark shifts via the use of Continuatives or to omit them were difficult to determine. In the main, however, it appeared that in some instances there existed sufficient concord and impetus for continuation on the part of the children and teacher. In such circumstances, the teacher did not employ Continuatives as a means of explicitly signalling the shift within the Phase. For example, in the following interaction the teacher shifts focus from the actual task of writing (step 3) to consideration of the content to be written (step 1) to consideration of language form (step 2) without the choice for a Continuative in Textual Theme.
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At other times, the teacher employed Continuatives to develop a second level of staging within an individual step. This was particularly so in step 3 to do with writing activity. In step 3, the teacher was continually moving the activity focus between physical activity and discussion about that activity. This issue will be developed further in section 5.4.2.3 which examines the teacher’s orchestrating behaviour in step 3 in more detail.

Because the teacher orchestrated discourse around sets of relatively short writing negotiation steps of the kind discussed above, the following discussion will look particularly at issues to do with orchestration of pedagogic discourse within each of the three steps in the writing negotiation process (sections 5.4.2.1, 5.4.2.2 & 5.4.2.3). This discussion of teacher orchestration will be followed by a brief discussion of initiations by children within the Task Format (section 5.4.3).

5.4.2.1 Teacher orchestration of discourse in step 1 (deciding what to write about)

Perhaps the most significant feature of the teacher’s orchestration of this first step in her writing negotiation process was that she was able to sustain the instructional field focus she sought with very little effort on her part. Because of the high level of inter-subjectivity she had build up with the children over the course of the macrogenre, she rarely had to resort to an explicit realisation of the regulative field (directing the children to remember past experiences for example). The following examples in Table 5.12 show Theme analyses for the first four discourse segments within the Task format in which the teacher attempted to orchestrate step
of her negotiation strategy (i.e. deciding what to write). Each segment is separated by a shaded line.

Table 5.12
Theme analysis for all teacher's clauses within the first four discourse segments which focused upon determining content (step1) in the Task Format (T)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0305</td>
<td>all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0309</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0309</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0317</td>
<td>all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0317</td>
<td>Cont. so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0317</td>
<td>Struc./ C. caus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0318</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0318</td>
<td>Struc./ C. project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0490</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0490</td>
<td>what...what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0515</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0515</td>
<td>finite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0519</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0519</td>
<td>finite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0519</td>
<td>Cont. what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0519</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0539</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0539</td>
<td>Struc./ C.temp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0539</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These examples show that Interpersonal Theme choices for Wh elements dominated most of the clause complexes that the teacher was required to produce in each of these segments. Thus, the teacher characteristically took the role of information seeker within the confines of the instructional field and the children typically responded as she expected. However, there was considerable convergence as the teacher sought information from within the instructional field. Regulative register choices for Continuatives were employed to assist in staging explicit shifts in the progression of the discourse. In one instance (clause 0317), the whole of the clause had to do with the regulative register. However, this clause served to project another clause to do wholly with the instructional register (clause 0318).

Transitivity choices for the above segments of discourse given in Table 5.12 were for Material and Relational Process clauses which exhibited strong convergence with the instructional field. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0515</th>
<th>Relational: Intensive: Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intensive)</td>
<td>easy [[for the little chick to peck out?]]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0515</th>
<th>Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td>the little chick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to peck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out</td>
<td>Circumstance: Location: Place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These choices were characteristic of virtually all Transitivity choices in discourse associated with this step 1 of the teacher's negotiating strategy. All teacher Transitivity choices to do with determining what to write about across this Format focused directly upon the instructional field.

There were, however, two points in the discourse where the children did not produce responses which were appropriate to the teacher's content seeking probes. In both of these instances, the teacher challenged the children's responses directly on the grounds of factual precision and in both instances she was able to resolve the issue constructively by drawing on commonly held experience. The following Table 5.13 gives Theme analyses for teacher produced clauses for each of the two text segments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0560</td>
<td>is Finite</td>
<td>he Top.</td>
<td>fluffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0561</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>he Top.</td>
<td>first comes out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0565</td>
<td>is Finite</td>
<td>he Top.</td>
<td>like that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0567</td>
<td>is Finite</td>
<td>he? Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0569</td>
<td>do Finite</td>
<td>you Top.</td>
<td>remember</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0570</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>the little chicks Top.</td>
<td>were hatching out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0571</td>
<td>did Finite</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
<td>just...come out of their shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0577</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>they Top.</td>
<td>were all lovely and fluffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0581</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td>some of the egg [that's cracked]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0583</td>
<td>what</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
<td>'s he like David</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Experiential</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0618</td>
<td>right</td>
<td>he Top.</td>
<td>'s all wet and weak and wobbly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0620</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>when WH / Top.</td>
<td>does he become fluffy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0621</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
<td>does he get lovely and fluffy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both of these examples of teacher discourse can be divided into two sections (indicated by the shaded lines in each example). In the first section of each example, the teacher was able to challenge directly the children's responses largely in terms of the instructional field. However, after providing the challenge to the children, the teacher was able to resolve the dissonance in exactly the same way each time through directing regulative register concerns to past experience. She thematised the finite do to construct a polar question which pushed the children back to commonly held prior knowledge. When viewed through the Transitivity system, this clause employed a Mental Process clause to project the common knowledge via Material and Relational Process clauses. These Mental Process clauses, because they projected Material and Relational Process clauses, redirected focus once more upon the instructional field.

The effective strategies available to the teacher for resolving dissonance successfully in the above manner coupled with the ability of the teacher to challenge the children generally within the discourse are not characteristic of reported classroom discourse involving Aboriginal children (eg. Malcolm 1982, 1987, 1991; Dwyer 1989; Harkins 1994; Folds 1987). Thus, once again, the data underlines the importance of the inter-subjective sharing of knowledge that had occurred over the course of the macrogenre in facilitating learning with these children. Because inter-subjectivity existed between teacher and children to do with instructional field issues concerning 'what' could be written about, the teacher was able to avoid confusion in the first step of her negotiating strategy and could achieve common focus with minimal need to scaffold the children's responses. Thus, in step 1 of the writing negotiation process, significant aspects of the regulative register had been rendered largely invisible and commonly held by participants in the discourse. This ease of negotiation also explains the very low
incidence of teacher produced clauses for step 1 reported in Table (5.9) presented earlier in section 5.4.2 of this chapter. This level of shared knowledge laid a firm groundwork for the teacher to move onto the concerns involved in her next two steps, steps where less prior intersubjectivity and shared understanding had been built. These two steps will be discussed in the following sections 5.4.2.2 and 5.4.2.3.

5.4.2.2 Teacher orchestration of discourse in step 2 (determining language form within text negotiation)

In moving into this second step of her text negotiation strategy, the teacher was required to employ a higher level of scaffolding support than she had in the first step which was merely aimed at identifying appropriate content. This was because, in asking the children to reflect on 'how' content was to be constructed through specific choices in language form, she was asking the children to draw distinctions between what is 'meant' in a general sense and how the message is to be 'said' (i.e., represented precisely as written text - e.g., Michaels & Collins 1984). This was an extremely difficult task for children who were only beginning to grasp early concepts associated with literacy. It was especially so in this instance because the distinctions to be drawn involved the manner in which specific language choices could contribute to the development of an extended and relatively complex written text.

The evolution of the teacher's scaffolding strategy for the children in the Task Format being discussed here can be seen in her first attempt to get the children to consider the determination of specific language choices to be written down. Having negotiated with the children for the selection of proposed content concerning the chicken floating in a water sac, the teacher summarised that fact and asked the children to consider exactly how it was to be formulated as 'written text'.

0317 All right so shall we say
0318 that...the little chick's floating in the water sac
0319 Well how am I going to write that?
0320 What am I gonna write?

The children had difficulty responding to this request so the teacher (clause 0322) re-read the previous sentence to provide a starting point from within the text.

0321 N: She's crying
   Referring to Melissa who is not very well today
0322 T: Then he grows tiny feathers and an egg tooth
   T re-reads last section of already written text

The children, however, did not pick up on this cue with one child addressing a control issue and another bidding to focus discussion on the identification of the words egg tooth.

0323 M: Mrs Price Mrs Price Mrs...Melissa she ... she's be a sook
0324 T: Shish come on
0325 J: That says 'egg tooth'

The teacher then attempted to refocus the children by asking them directly, reframing and repeating her earlier question. The children's responses demonstrated their difficulty in
engaging with the focus the teacher was seeking (clauses 0326-0363 below). Her reaction this time was similar to the manner in which she had functioned in the Early Task Orientation Format ETO1 (refer chapter 5, section 5.2.2.2.3). The staging of her response is marked on the extract in question below.

At the beginning of the interaction outlined above, teacher probing was directly interrogative in a manner that threw full responsibility for answering onto the children. This can be seen in a Theme analysis of teacher questions between clauses 0319 and 0329.
However, as the transcript presented earlier has illustrated the children found it difficult to provide the kind of response the teacher was seeking. Although, it is useful to note that the child who supplied the most complete response (clauses 0332-0333) was actually trying to respond to the teacher’s original question What are we going to say about the water sac? However, while he did manage to produce a coherent clause complex, his attempt to link his first clause to a second clause which encompassed reference to the water sac broke down. This was very evident on the video recording. He started the first clause (0332) When the little chick crack the egg open the...the egg confidently. However, he was forced to pause when he experienced difficulty in building a coherent link to a suitable reference to the water sac. He then completed the final clause (0333) the chick first comes out wet in a very quiet and subdued tone signalling that he realised his response was not as appropriate as he had intended.

In reacting to the child’s ‘off target’ response, the teacher employed a subtle shift in her scaffolding strategy. This can be seen in the Theme analysis of her clauses below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>0339</strong></td>
<td>but Struc./ C. adver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0343</strong></td>
<td>all right Cont. well (\text{Cont.})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0345</strong></td>
<td>do Finite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0356</strong></td>
<td>where WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0363</strong></td>
<td>shall WH / Top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0383</strong></td>
<td>do Finite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above analysis shows a distinct shift from reliance on Wh elements employed earlier in Interpersonal Theme towards a choice for the Finite do with you or we as Topical Theme choice to indicate that the teacher was taking the interpersonal role of offering information. These clauses, in effect, constructed the information the teacher suggested as a ‘commodity’ open to acceptance or rejection by the children. The overall interpersonal effect, therefore,
was one of suggesting and negotiating rather than 'telling'. Transitivity choices in these kinds of clauses were often for combined Mental (Affect)/ Verbal Process clauses which constructed the instructional field as verbiage available for the children to consider. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
<th>want to say</th>
<th>‘while the little chick’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>-cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
<th>want to say</th>
<th>‘when he dries/.....now’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>-cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-</td>
<td>Sensor</td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Material: Circumstance: Location: Time

Now, the shift from *Wh* questions to Finite *yes/no* questions of the kind outlined above can be argued to constitute a scaffolding move towards the provision of more support for the children. However, of equal importance is the manner in which the teacher scaffolded the actual shift itself from *Wh* to Finite questions. That is, the teacher did not just simply cease one question type and commence using another. Of critical importance to the whole enterprise were the two discourse staging moves identified earlier as *Acceptance^ Acceptance^ Reconceptualisation^ Preformulation^ and Joint construction of text (oral) - (both shaded on transcript earlier). Without these two move structures, the teacher's contribution to the segment of text would have dissolved into a chain of teacher questions reminiscent of those identified by Malcolm (1982:172-5) which were discussed earlier in this study (chapter 5, section 5.2.2.2.3). This can be illustrated if the teacher's contribution to the interaction is presented without the two staging moves.

0327 T: What are we going to say about the water sac?
0328 T: What are we going to say about the water sac?
0329 T: How are we gonna write that down?
0343 T: All right well what will we...what would you like to say?
0344 While...
0345 T: Do you want to say while the little chick...?
0346 T: Shall we write something like that?

Such a chain of unsupported questions might work satisfactorily when the children can adopt an appropriate task focus and answer the teacher's questions. However, in the situation being considered here they could not. Consequently, the two segments labelled *Acceptance^ Acceptance^ reconceptualisation^ Preformulation^ and Joint construction of text played a major role in preparing the children to engage successfully in the questions which followed them. By building in such 'buffers' between questions the teacher was able to provide a structure to sustain engagement. In this sense, her strategy was similar to that which she had applied on other occasions, especially in Early Task Orientation Formats (eg. refer chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.2.2 & 4.2.2.2.3). In this way the teacher avoided the type of unsupported questioning
chain that is typical in learning negotiation with aboriginal children identified by Malcolm (1982:172-5) (eg. chapter 2, section 2.3.3; chapter 4, section 4.2.2.2.3)

In closing discussion in this section, it is important to note that the segment of text discussed above was chosen because it provided an example of an adjustment towards a scaffolding strategy on the part of the teacher. In other teacher attempts to negotiate decisions on how to say a particular concept within the Task Format, the shift was towards the child independence end of the ‘teacher support/independent child control’ continuum. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>(deciding what to write about)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0515</td>
<td>T: Is it easy for the little chick to peck... peck out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0516</td>
<td>J: No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0517</td>
<td>M: What's that for there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0518</td>
<td>T: Oh I just did some... put a pencil mark there love</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>(deciding how to ‘say’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0522</td>
<td>N: That... It's hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0523</td>
<td>T: Do you want to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0524</td>
<td>it's hard work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0525</td>
<td>D: Yep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0526</td>
<td>N: Mrs Price...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0527</td>
<td>T: When it is twenty one days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0528</td>
<td>the little chick cracks the egg open with his egg tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0529</td>
<td>Teacher rereads text up to the point for the new clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0530</td>
<td>J: hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0531</td>
<td>T: Woops it's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0532</td>
<td>T/J: hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0533</td>
<td>J: work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0534</td>
<td>T: work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During step 1 above, one child produced a clause (0522) that was perfectly appropriate for the text. In moving into step 2, the teacher employed a Mental Process clause to project the Verbal Process clause just as she had done in the previous text when she was suggesting a clause beginning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0523</th>
<th>Mental: Affect / Verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you want to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>it's hard work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0524</th>
<th>Relational: Intensive: Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It... is hard work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, this time, the Verbiage in the Verbal Process clause had been provided completely by the children. This extract further illustrates how the teacher orchestrated her scaffolding involvement in response to advances in the competence of the children.

An interesting point here is that even though a child had generated an appropriate response, the teacher did not just write it down. Between clause 0527 and 0534 she explicitly set the target clause ‘it’s hard work’ in context with the preceding text. First, she read the immediate prior text (clauses 0527-0528) to the children. Then she encouraged them to work with her to reconstruct the target clause jointly once more (clauses 0529-0530) as she wrote it down.
She did this to ensure that the common knowledge which was held between herself and the one child was distributed as widely as possible as common knowledge for the whole group. In this sense, this strategy move on the part of the teacher paralleled her activities in the Early Task Orientation Formats (eg. ETO1 in particular). In these Early Task Orientation Formats, the teacher made constant use of what were termed 'reconceptualisations' of children's responses in order to enable all (not just the child who could supply the answer) to sustain contact with the questioning sequence (refer chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.2.1, 4.2.2.2.2 & 4.3.4). The next section of the discussion will consider teacher orchestrations within step 3 of the teacher's writing negotiation strategy.

5.4.2.3 Teacher orchestration of discourse in step 3 (deciding how to write)

In her attempts to scaffold the children through the actual writing process of writing the sentence negotiated in steps 1 and 2 onto the sheet of paper (step 3), the teacher employed a variety of discourse moves. Because of the range of functions associated with the shifts that the teacher initiated each time she moved the children into step 3 of her writing negotiation sequence, it is useful to identify these before moving on to consider language choices to do with register. The following discussion will, first, outline the range of functional moves employed by the teacher in step 3 (section 5.4.2.3.1). It will then consider language register choices in the teacher's discourse moves (section 5.4.2.3.2). The rest of the discussion in section 5.4.2.3. will explore a further issue of relevance to the teacher's scaffolding of writing activity in step 3 to do with convergence between the regulative and instructional registers (section 5.4.2.3.3).

5.4.2.3.1 Teacher discourse moves within writing activity

The following extract shows some of the discourse moves employed by the teacher in step 3 of the writing negotiation process.

```
0404 T: Who can help me write egg?        ---> Seeking engagement
     J: Jenny raises her hand
0405 T: egg
0406 How do we write that?        ---> Seeking information
0407 D: I know
0408 T: Can you help me?        ---> Seeking engagement
0409 D: I know
0410 T: What's the first letter?        ---> Seeking information
0411 D: I know
0412 N: I want to help
0413 I want to help (urgently)
0414 T: All right well go on        ---> Directing activity
0415 Do you want to help?        ---> Seeking engagement
0416 You see if you can write the word egg        ---> Directing activity
0417 I hands marker pen to Naomi
```
This extract shows three different pedagogic moves on the part of the teacher, seeking engagement, seeking information and directing activity. When she wanted to draw the children into negotiation, the teacher used a seeking engagement move and she used a directing activity move when she wished to direct their focus onto writing activity. Seeking information typically constituted a question that sought information concerning the instructional or regulative fields.

Another pedagogic move employed by the teacher was concerned with suggesting strategy. For example,

T: Do you want to see if you can find the word [that says egg] and have a look at it first
J: Yes

The other pedagogic move employed by the teacher involved a complex process that has been termed here commenting/cueing. As the teacher wrote, she typically commented as a means of engaging the children with her in joint construction. At the most fundamental level, the teacher invariably identified each word as she wrote it. Her comments of this kind, however, were rarely simply comments. They were paced carefully so that they provided cues for the children to contribute to the building of the text. The teacher also used her comments to provide information to the children which helped to sustain their engagement and informed them at the same time about aspects of the instructional field.

The above extract contains four commenting/cueing moves which are numbered 1 to 4. In the first move, the teacher provided a recapitulation of the preceding text to orient the children towards her first cue when she wrote the word it's. She said the word as she wrote it and then paused briefly for the children to supply the next word (move 2-commenting/cueing above). One child supplied hard work. This was a response that the teacher had developed as common knowledge in the first two steps of her writing negotiation sequence. The text of this prior development is given immediately below. However, it is not elaborated upon as it was discussed earlier in section 5.4.2.
To return to the previous extract (above, clauses 0527-0536), the teacher's third move (commenting/cueing above-clause 0531) was similar to move 2. She repeated it's and was joined by Jenny (J) in saying hard as she wrote it down. The teacher's exclamation of whoops indicated that she had encountered a problem. After she had written hard she had no more space left on the line. She then had to move down to the next line so she informed the children of this in her comment as she wrote the word work (move 4-commenting/cueing above-clauses 0535-0536).

The strategy of commenting/cueing illustrated above was the teacher's typical opening strategy as she negotiated step 3 of the writing process. When the children did not produce the following text spontaneously or in response to her cueing, the teacher then increased the amount of direct scaffolding she employed by shifting to a seeking information move or a suggesting strategy move. For example,

This example shows the teacher commenting/cueing as she wrote. As previous discussion has indicated, a useful feature of this commenting behaviour was that she could use this move to cue the children to provide items for her to write. In clause 0643 above, the teacher wrote he is and then paused expectantly. In this instance, she added a question (clauses 0644-0645) which probed more explicitly for the response she needed to continue.

Again, this scaffolding probe took the children back to prior preparation in earlier steps within the writing negotiation process. The earlier discussion which occurred immediately prior to the above commenting/cueing moves is given below. It gives the two steps the teacher led the children through before she moved them into step 3.
Here the focus emphasised by the teacher (picking up on an earlier child initiation-not given above) was fluffy. However, in response to the teacher’s information seeking move in the previous segment from step 3 (clauses 0640-0652), Naomi (N) had offered soft (clause 0648), a word that the children had encountered frequently as it was in the first line of their shared reading text, A New Chicken (ie. On the first day the hen laid her eggs in a soft nest - see discussion of LTO2, chapter 4, sections 4.3.3 and 4.3.4). The teacher accepted this and then cued the children further seeking fluffy as an additional response.

The following two sections 5.4.2.3.2 and 5.4.2.3.3 will explore the manner in which the teacher exploited the above discourse moves in orchestrating the teacher/child discourse in step 3 of her writing negotiation sequence.

5.4.2.3.2 Language register choices in the teacher’s discourse moves

As earlier discussion of Figure 5.9 (section 5.4.2) has pointed out, in step 3 of her writing negotiation sequence the teacher employed a considerable number shifts in discourse focus as she orchestrated quite complex movement between talking about and actually doing the writing task.
**Choices for Continuatives:**

These shifts often drew upon choices for Continuatives within Textual Theme. Table 5.14 below gives a Theme analysis for an illustrative set of discourse moves which covers the range moves outlined above. That is, commenting/cueing, directing activity, suggesting strategy, seeking information and seeking engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
<th>TEXTUAL</th>
<th>INTERPERSONAL</th>
<th>EXPERIENTIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>while Struc./ C. temp.</td>
<td>the little chicken</td>
<td>Cont.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>can see it through there</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ok Cont.</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>a look</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that word Top.</td>
<td>says</td>
<td>egg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>see</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if Struc./ C. condit.</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>can write</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont.</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>only want to write the word</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td>egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do Finite</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>think</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>could write that one</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this one here</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see Top.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egg here too</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all right Cont. now</td>
<td>where</td>
<td>are we going...</td>
<td>WH / Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right Cont.</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>gonna write your name now?</td>
<td>Top.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the examples given above as well as in the Task format proper, the overwhelming choice was for the Continuative *all right*. There was, however, a small incidence of the use of *ok, well* and *now* (frequency details were provided in Table 5.8 (section 5.4.2). As Table 5.14 (above) illustrates, the teacher was prepared to employ continuatives to initiate all of the different types of pedagogic moves she employed. However, they were most frequently used to make explicit the movement into physical activity of some kind. Thus, when the teacher moved into *directing activity* or once she moved to write something down as she was *commenting/cueing* she frequently signalled the shift by thematising a Continuative.

As earlier discussion (section 5.4.2) has pointed out generally, there were also many instances in which the initiation of new moves was not signalled explicitly through the use of a Continuative. As the earlier discussion proposed, the inclusion or omission of a continuative seemed to rest largely upon the teacher's perception of the degree of concordance of purpose that existed between herself and the children at the time.

**Choice of low modality probes:**

The other major Textual Theme choice made by the teacher was *if* in the role of Structural. This choice can also be considered for the simultaneous role it plays in building logico-semantic relations within the Conjunction system. The teacher employed this choice to allow children considerable flexibility in the course of her *directing activity* moves. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 0416 | if | you | see |
| 0417 | Struc./Condit | you | can write the word egg |
| 0433 | all right | see | Top. |
| 0444 | Struc./Condit | you | can write |

It is interesting to note that this Textual Theme choice for *if* occurred typically in parallel with a choice in Transitivity system for a Mental Process *see* which projected either a Material or Behavioural Process clause to do with writing activity. For example,

| 0416 | Mental: Cognition |
| 0417 | Behavioural: Writing |
| You | see |
| Sensor | Process |
| if | you | can write |
| Behaver | Process | Range | the word "egg" |

By setting her directions into activity via a projected clause in the above manner, instead of via a direct command such as *write the word egg*, the teacher gave prominence to the act of engagement rather than to the act of completing the task. Thus, the task was modified from *writing the word egg* to making an attempt to write it. Moreover, the use of the Finite *can*...
further contributed an emphasis on low modality or low obligation to respond (refer Halliday 1994: 82-92, 357).

The teacher made these language choices because she knew the child in question could not write the word *egg* if left to her own resources. A paramount objective for this teacher was to encourage the children to engage with her in the task. Once she could coax a child to take a risk (to engage), she was fully prepared to scaffold the child through the activity. What followed then was an extensive scaffolding episode in which the teacher worked with the child to work out how to write *egg* (this scaffolding process will be discussed in more detail later in section, 5.4.2.3.3, - also refer appendix 4, *Text for Task(T)*, clauses 0404-0489). After this scaffolding episode was completed and the teacher was sure that the child could easily do the task, the tenor of her discourse changed dramatically.

0484 Right you write the word [[that says egg ]] there to Naomi
0485 up here here
0486 J: I'll write a little one? meaning 'e'
0487 T: We’ll let ... we’ll let Naomi write the word [[that says egg ]]]

Here the teacher's instructions to Naomi were constructed as direct imperatives. There was no use of the Finite *can* and no choice for Mental Processes to focus upon 'attempting' because the teacher now knew that Naomi could do the task. Moreover, in an interesting twist that reflected further her confidence that Naomi had been effectively scaffolded, the teacher assigned the other children to monitor the correctness of Naomi's attempt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0488</th>
<th>Mental: Cognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensor</td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0489</th>
<th>Relational: Intensive: Attributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>Process (Intensive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, unlike her earlier use of *see* to project clauses which highlighted ‘attempting’, the Process was been used to carry an entirely different Mental Process function of *checking* rather than *attempt*. This discussion illustrates an aspect of the teacher's scaffolding. She paid considerable attention to varying the tenor of her moves which were concerned with *directing activity*. When she perceived that children were unsure she employed low modality language choices. When she felt that they knew what to do she employed higher modality language choices.

Other instances where the teacher employed low modality choices were in *suggesting strategies* and *seeking engagement*. When she suggested strategies, the teacher typically foregrounded Finites (eg. *can & do*) and consequently low modality as an Interpersonal Theme choice. She also employed the Conditional Conjunction *if* in the role of Structural within Textual Theme to effectively mirror the pattern of language choices she used in
**directing activity.** As was the case with the *directing activity* move, these choices allowed for some flexibility of engagement on the part of individual children. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>want to see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if cont.</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Struc./ C. add.</td>
<td>have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At other times, the teacher foregrounded *Wh* items as Interpersonal Theme choices as she posed her suggestions not as imperatives but as interrogatives which sought permission from the children. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if Struc./ C. condit.</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Or, she constructed the imperative via the foregrounding in Topical Theme position of the inclusive Subject *lets* which Halliday (1994:87) proposes implies a Finite element in its alternative form. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>RHEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let's</td>
<td>start a new page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In seeking engagement, the teacher again paid considerable attention to constructing the tenor of her moves in ways that resulted in low modality for her requests.
Here the teacher foregrounded Finites (can & do) as an interpersonal Theme choice in the manner of the previous examples. She also made use of Mental Processes as Transitivity system choices to project Behavioural and Material Process Clauses in the manner of previous examples discussed earlier above. When she made other choices in dealing with individual children, she posed questions which in alternate forms implied the choice of Finites in Interpersonal Theme.

In these instances, while the Interpersonal metafunction was not foregrounded in Theme, it was carried via the use of rising intonation across the clause. It is important to note that this careful attention to Interpersonal Tenor throughout the moves discussed above typically occurred in situations where the teacher was focusing on individual children. As such, the strategies she employed represented a continuation of her policy of not singling out individual children as 'targets' for display of knowledge. When children were unsure, she did not say, for example, write that but, in effect, something like see if you can write that or can you write that. In both of these latter kinds of probe she diffused any focus on individual displaying and opened the way for her scaffolding of a joint response.

Her scaffolding strategy was different in moves which were to do with commenting/cueing and seeking information. These moves typically did not employ or foreground language choices associated with modality. For example,

In these situations, the teacher was not addressing individual children directly. These moves on the part of the teacher were possible because she pointedly directed them to the whole
group and they were open to any child who chose to respond. By this strategy she continued to promote flexibility of engagement for the children.

5.4.2.3.3 Teacher strategies for integrating the regulative and instructional registers in the writing task

Perhaps the most significant feature of the writing process in step 3 was that it represented the climactic point at which the teacher sought to bring about a convergence between the instructional register to do with the content to be written and those aspects of the regulative register to do with operationalising that content as an orthographic representation. Moreover, she worked hard to engage the children with her in this process.

Typically, she ensured that the children were engaged with the building of the instructional field (ie. what to say and how to say it) as her first priority. When she had this process under way, she then promoted a selective engagement with the regulative register to do with how to write, always in the circumstances of constructing a text within the instructional field. The following extract illustrates the extent to which the teacher was committed to the development of this strategy in the joint construction of the text. In this extract the teacher had already negotiated step 1 (ie. determining what to write) and step 2 (ie. determining how to ‘say’) with the children. The clause they were going to write was, ‘While the little chick is in the egg’. The teacher was ready to move the children into step 3 of her writing negotiation process (ie. determining how to ‘write’) and was going to ask a child to assist when she was interrupted by a child who asked the teacher to do the writing. The teacher, therefore, began to write and as she did so she employed a series of commenting/cueing moves.
In the above extract, the teacher's commenting/cueing moves have been numbered to facilitate discussion. In the extract, the teacher started her writing with *while* (move 1). As she wrote the word, she said it aloud. Two children repeated it with her as she wrote. One child, however, attempted to initiate a shift in focus (clauses 0372-0373). Now, while the proposed shift was task focused to the extent that it fell within a general interpretation of the instructional field, it did not accord with the close shadowing of the writing that the teacher was attempting to set up. She ignored the initiation and continued with the writing of *the* (move 2). The child then attempted a different shift that involved a comment on the teacher's writing. The teacher acknowledged this without any elaboration.
Her next move (move 3), however, following these initiations was to recapitulate what she had written. This was a regular strategy that she employed to help sustain the task focus of the group throughout the writing negotiation. Once again, the child attempted an initiation (clauses 0379-0380) to which the teacher provided a low key and minimal response. Her main reaction once more was to recapitulate what had been written (move 4), pausing expectantly, as she had previously, for the children to contribute. When she did not receive a response, she adjusted her level of scaffolding support. Her next move was to suggest a strategy to the children for completing the phrase (0383). She asked,

\[0383\] T: Do you want to say ‘while the little chick or while the little chicken....?’

This strategy both scaffolded a response and encouraged the children to engage at the same time. This time when she wrote and said aloud While the little... (move 5) all of the children spontaneously added chicken. Now she had begun to achieve her objective. She had started all of the children working with her to predict what she was about to write next. She resisted another initiation similar to the earlier one following move 3;

\[0389\] N: Look
\[0390\] T: Shish
\[0391\] N: You’ve done...
\[0392\] you done over there
  Naomi Points to the ‘e’ on the end of ‘little’· Notices that now there are three words in a row ending with ‘e’

However, for the rest of the extract, the children fell in with her predicting the text as she wrote (moves 5 - 10).

In the above extract, even though the children offered somewhat divergent initiations which were broadly within the regulative field (eg. identifying the letter ‘e’ for example) the teacher did not lose track of her primary focus on building the joint construction of the instructional field. She knew that she could institute discussion of letter identification at any time she chose and that there would be plenty of time to capitalise on the children's growing interest in letter recognition. It was important, however, that the children did not lose contact with the process of jointly constructing the meaning of the text. By maintaining her focus, she provided a clear model of engagement which brought about the kind of convergence between the regulative and instructional fields she sought.

Once the teacher had the children working with her in the construction of the instructional field, she sought engagement for a new activity that picked up on the regulative field concern with the role of the letter ‘e’ in building words. This had been the subject of earlier initiations (clauses 0379-0380 & 0389-0392) by children in the extract.

\[0404\] T: Who can help me write egg?

The teacher then proceeded to scaffold the chosen child (who could not write the word without support) through the writing task by helping her to find a model to copy. In doing this, she moved between directing activity and suggesting strategies for the child to employ.
Naomi then started to write the word *egg*. However, her attempt at writing produced an ‘e’ so large that it filled the rest of the space on the line and she hesitated unsure of what to do. The teacher’s response at this time reveals much about the way the teacher carefully avoided the positioning of individual children as sole responders for questions in circumstances where she judged that they were likely to fail. Instead of directing a question at Naomi, the teacher suggested a strategy and directed it towards the group. The conscious nature of this shift in focus is evident in the teacher’s self correction of her next utterance.

This correction marked a deliberate change from addressing *Naomi* as major Participant (Sensor) in the Transitivity system to the group choice for *we* (Actor).
This shift to group focus was sustained in the immediately following interaction which is given below.

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All right now where are we going...
Wait a minute...
hang on...
we're writing a little story
Where are we going to write
when we get to the end of the line
----> Seeking information
N: No
T: While the little chicken is in the...
----> Commenting/cueing
D: Over there
Over there
J: There
T: Where?
See
----> Seeking information
M: Yeah there Naomi there
Points to spot in the centre of the remaining space where the word 'eggs' has been written on the page below and now can be seen faintly through the page they are writing on
D: Naomi there
T: So where do we go
----> Seeking information
D: Over that Naomi
All of the children have been pointing to the point where 'eggs' is visible through the page. Their suggestion is that Naomi should trace the word over the visible image

Control
T: Melissa I want you to come
and help too please
Come on
Come on
you come
and show us
where we're going to start
Reaches out to draw Melissa into the group
D: Naomi draw that egg
Still referring to the spot where 'eggs' is visible through the page. Their suggestion is that Naomi should trace the word over the visible image
T: That's right good girl
To Melissa who stands beside teacher
C?: statement is unclear
T: Wait a minute
While the little chicken is in the egg
J: egg
T: Now I can't write it there
There's no space
so where are we going to go?
D: Down here
Points to space where he has been encouraging Naomi to trace the word
T: Shows Melissa subtly where to point
M: Follows teacher and points to the same spot
T: There good girl To Melissa
Inspection of the above interaction sequence shows how the shift to a group focus allowed the teacher to probe the group quite robustly without threatening the child who had been isolated as the writer. It also opened the interaction to others to answer on her behalf – a strategy that many teachers of Aboriginal children do not accept (refer chapter 2, section 2.3.3).

It is notable that the teacher did not immediately attempt to scaffold the responses of the children. She repeated the problem over as her seeking information moves (0446-0451, 0454, 0463-0464, 0479-0481) above illustrate. The teacher probed in such a challenging way, first, because she was dealing with the whole group and not confronting an individual child and, second, because she was getting involvement and interested responses from the children. Her probing here represented an 'upping of the ante' (Bruner 1983) in circumstances where she felt the children could respond in a robust manner during the writing task. Eventually, however, she was prepared to provide a scaffold (clauses 0482-0483) which incidentally also provided a means of drawing Melissa, who was not feeling well on that day, into the group.

The teacher employed the strategy of shifting to a whole group focus to sustain group involvement again after the extract when, having identified a starting point at the beginning of the next line, she then asked Naomi to continue writing.

Thus, the shift back to Naomi as the active participant (Behaver) only occurred once the group as a whole had worked out what was to be done. The teacher could now challenge Naomi in her questioning, because the teacher knew that she had already scaffolded Naomi to do the task confidently. As previous discussion has pointed out, (section 5.4.3.2), the teacher could also give the other children a 'checking' role as a way of sustaining their involvement secure in the knowledge that Naomi now could do the task.

It is of note that the teacher in clause 0535, a little later in the Task Format encountered the same situation where she reached the end of the line. Her response was to explain to the children how to deal with the problem.

These two incidents concerning the development of print concepts illustrate how, within the macrogeneric structure in which she worked, the teacher could alternate between informing the children and then probing for transfer and generalisation by the children of that same
information to other situations. She could continue in this way until the understanding was well established as part of the inter-subjectivity of the group.

The above discussion considered a situation where the teacher engaged the children with orthographic and print concept issues through their own involvement in the physical activity of writing. At other times, the teacher involved the children with such print relationships as she wrote certain words. For example,

```
T: with what ... what does he crack the egg open  ---> Seeking information
D: Tooth
N: Egg tooth
M: tooth
T: Good
N: a beak
T: his...
D: egg
T: egg...
Cn: tooth
T: What's tooth start with?
J: /
N: /
M/D: /
T: /t/ .../t/  ---> Commenting/cueing
N: a /t/
T: two /o/s together a /t/ and a /h/  ---> Commenting/cueing
```

Here, once again, the teacher was able to build a joint negotiation of the writing with the children attempting to predict ahead even though the teacher was the one who was actually writing. This time, she promoted engagement further by seeking 'help' from the children concerning sound symbol correspondences involved in spelling (clause 0501). This strategy of encouraging children to 'compose' words was used selectively in order to balance out the involvement of the children in the composing task at both the level of instructional and regulative register choice.

5.4.3 INITIATION BY CHILDREN WITHIN THE TASK FORMAT

Throughout the Task Format, the children contributed initiations that focused upon a small range of functional purposes.

**Initiations not task focused:**

As was the case with the Task Specification Format, some (approximately 14 percent) of initiations by the children were not directly task focused in any real sense. Virtually all of these initiations dealt with procedural/behavioural issues.

```
D: Mrs Price Mrs Price Mrs...Melissa she ... she's be a sook
N: Amanda you have to go
     Naomi is making sure that she writes her name last and lets Melissa in front of her
N: David's gone out the door
T: That's all right
```
he's gone back to Mrs Heller
The rest of the initiations by the children were focused upon the task of writing the text in some way.

Bid to take part or seek help:
About 25 percent consisted of bids by different children to take part in the process.

0412 N: I want to help
0413 I want to help
0418 urgently

0474 D: Mrs Heller could I write it after egg?

J: Could I draw about another egg

These initiations, while they were to a certain extent task focused did not actually engage with issues to do with the task focus of the teacher.

Initiations to do with the regulative and instructional fields:
Of the remaining 60 percent, 25 percent focused on letters or word recognition,

0695 J: That says egg tooth

0379 D: Look what you did
0380 you done another one small one like that
David is referring to the 'e' on 'the' and the fact that the previous word 'while' also ended in 'e'

0517 M: What's that for there?
0518 T: Oh I just did some... put a pencil mark there love

Or, by giving directions to the teacher about the writing activity,

0373 D: I know
0374 how to write...
0375 T: the
0376 D: Mrs Price write slowly

The rest of the children's initiations (35 percent) had to do with the composing the content of the instructional field. For most of the time, the children were content to follow the lead set by the teacher as she scaffolded them through the writing process in the manner described in the precious section 5.4.2.3. In the light of this concordance, the children's initiations were interesting because they all derived from two specific interaction situations in which they chose to challenge the teacher on factual grounds to do with the composition of the instructional field. These interactions will be discussed in more detail here because they illustrate the potential effect of inter-subjectivity upon the ability of the children to take an active role in the negotiation process as well as the range of responses open to the teacher to challenge the children on similar grounds.

The following discussion elaborates upon the transcript of the first instance in which the children chose to challenge the teacher. The negotiation process commenced quite unremarkably with the teacher leading the children into the first step of the process.
This first step proceeded in the manner outlined in earlier discussion (section 5.4.2.1) and the teacher then moved on to the second step which, in the first instance at least, again proceeded in the manner outlined in section 5.4.2.2.

However, past this point the pattern was broken. The children had been checking with the illustrations in the book Egg to Chick that the teacher had introduced in step 1. However, they had not turned to the page that illustrated the wet chicken immediately after it had emerged from the egg. The illustration that the children had was of the fluffy yellow chicken after it had dried out. Jenny (J), therefore interrupted to assert quite strongly that the chicken was fluffy.

The teacher's response to her assertion issued a direct challenge.

She could do this because she was responding to an initiation from the children. Her response here was consistent with her extending behaviour in the Late Task Orientation Formats (eg. see LTO1, section 4.3.2.2.3 & LTO2, section 4.3.4). This earlier discussion proposed the importance of inter-subjectivity in allowing the teacher to, first, identify the appropriate time to challenge the children and, second, to know what kinds of probing questions to ask. Here, it was common knowledge that allowed the teacher to refer the children back to when he first comes out. (clause 0561)

The children were, however, fixated upon their presumption that the newly hatched chicken was fluffy, an issue to do with attending to what the words ‘actually say’ that was raised earlier (section 5.3.4.1, also chapter 1, section 1.5.3.3; chapter 2, section 2.2.4.2). Thus, they
did not 'hear' the second part of the teacher's probe when he first comes out and turned to the
book Egg to Chick to justify their earlier presumption.

0562  N:  Yes here
         Naomi shows book illustration to the teacher to prove her point.
         On this page the chick is fluffy but the picture is from a later stage
         than the one they are discussing now. That is, when the chick
         first emerges from the egg

0563  Cn:  Yes
0564  J:  He...he's dry
0565  T:  Is he like that?
0566  Cn:  yeah
0567  T:  Is he?
0568  N:  Yes

In the above segment, the teacher challenged the children twice (clauses 0565 & 0567) and
they maintained their position. Then, because she had shared discussion of the text many
times with the children, the teacher was able to increase the level of scaffolding she provided
by using one of her commonly employed strategies for resolving dissonance.

0569  T:  Do you remember
0570  when...when the little chicks were hatching out?
0571  Did they just...
0572  M:  No
0573  N:  It just got out
         Referring to the picture in the book 'Egg to chick'
0574  J:  Twenty one days
         Points to place where teacher has just written '21' in the draft text.
         She is seeking to justify her assertion. i.e. 'We are talking about
         the hatching time and that is when he is fluffy'
0575  Look
0576  There's...
         Points to 21 again
0577  T:  come out of their shell
0578  and they were all lovely and fluffy?
0579  N:  Look at this
         It shows... That's...
         Shows teacher a picture of a fluffy newly hatched chick

In the interaction above the teacher invoked a Mental Process clause centred around
remember to push the children back to prior common knowledge (refer chapter 4, sections
4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2.1 as well as chapter 5, sections 5.3.4.1 and 5.3.4.2.

0569  T:  Do you remember
0570  when...when the little chicks were hatching out?
0571  Did they just...
0572  T:  ...come out of their shell
0573  and they were all lovely and fluffy?

The above clause complex reconstructs the teacher's question which, in the transcript, was
interrupted by the children still defending strongly their position. The reconstructed clause
complex shows that the teacher also used a hypotactic clause in Marked Theme position in
order to orient the children to her question. Previous discussion has illustrated the use of
Mental Processes in conjunction with hypotactic clause as Theme (see chapter 5, section
5.3.4.1 & 5.3.4.2) in building scaffolding probes (see also chapter 4, sections 4.2.2.1 &
4.2.2.2.1). This scaffolding move on the part of the teacher did, however, work with two of
the children, Melissa (M) (clause 0572) and David (D) (clause 0582 in the extract immediately
below). In order to pursue her challenge to Naomi (N) and Jenny (J), the teacher was able to reframe her probe even more directly. Because both she and the children knew the book well the teacher could refer the children back to the appropriate illustration of the wet chicken. This she did in her next move.

0581 T: Find some of... some of the egg [[that's cracked ]]  
Teacher knows there is another picture of an earlier stage on the previous page where the chicken is all wet immediately after it has cracked the egg shell

0582 D: No responding to earlier teacher question (0569-0578)

0583 T: What's he like David

0584 D: He's all wet not fluffy

0585 T: He is all wet... T writes 'he is all wet'

0586 J: I said that

0587 N: Wait there Realises she has been looking at the wrong page and starts to turn back to an earlier one

0588 M: That's it right there Points to the right picture

0589 T: and... T writes 'and'

0590 N: He's wet 'ere Indicates the preceding page that shows the new emerging chick

In the above extract, the children opened up the book at the correct page and the teacher pursued the issue with David who explained that He's all wet not fluffy in clause 0584. Jenny also realised that this was what she had said at the very beginning (clause 0586). Thus, the teacher commenced to write. Naomi, however, had to confirm it once more for her own satisfaction (clause 0587). She took the book and again turned to the correct page. Satisfied, she announced He's wet 'ere (clause 0590).

This interaction is revealing for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most important of which is the indication that the teacher had, through the manner of her interaction throughout the course of the macrogenre, oriented the children strongly towards reliance on the book as a means of establishing a level of critical independence from the teacher. It mattered little that the children were proved incorrect ultimately. They were demonstrating the kind of orientation towards literate discourse that could be proposed as representative of the type of decontextualised perspective referred to earlier in this study (see chapter 1, section 1.5.3). The second reason is that, as other interaction in the macrogenre has demonstrated, this kind of persistent, confident negotiation of task focused issues is not reported in the literature as characteristic of Aboriginal children. In different circumstances, all of the children in the group under consideration here could have been made to conform to the stereotype of the shy retiring Aboriginal child who could not respond to display questions in the classroom. A third point is that the interaction presented above replicates the kind of idealised classroom discourse interaction that is often presented as an exemplar of progressivist teaching practice (eg. refer Lindfors 1987, p.385). However, it is proposed here that without the teacher direction and the build up of inter-subjectivity that occurred over the course of the macrogenre, the above interaction could not have occurred.
5.5 SUMMARY - LANGUAGE CHOICE AND PEDAGOGY ACROSS TASK SPECIFICATION AND TASK FORMATS

This chapter has reviewed pedagogic strategies employed by the teacher in Task Specification and Task Formats taken from the concentrated encounter macrogenre that is the focus of this study. Overall, the Task Specification Format considered here represented a carefully constructed orientation in which the teacher sought to prepare the children for participation in the writing activity of the Task Format.

In the Task Format, the teacher scaffolded the children in a deliberate and focused manner through the joint construction of the written text. An important feature of the analysis presented in this chapter is the powerful facilitating role played by the inter-subjectivity built up between the teacher and children over the course of the macrogenre. Most aspects of the scaffolding process employed by the teacher, for example, whether the teacher could ask a direct question or whether she needed to provide some kind of supporting cue, were tuned to the level of inter-subjectivity concerning task focus that existed between teacher and children. As had been the case in the previous chapter, the central issue was not so much whether the teacher could or could not employ a particular interactive strategy in some absolute sense. Rather, the central concern revolved around determining the circumstances in which particular pedagogic strategies could be employed.

The introduction to this chapter proposed that the aim of the joint negotiation activity in the Task Format was to engage the children constructively in the production of a text that was beyond the level at which the children could function if left to their own resources. It was proposed that the target text would provide a challenge both in terms of the language choices the children were required to make and the control of the orthographic competence necessary to physically construct a written text.

Section 5.2 discussed the structure of the negotiated text produced as the product of the macrogenre. It was proposed that the negotiated text was ‘transitional’ in the sense that it did not constitute a fully mature example of the sequential Explanation genre which the teacher sought to invoke. It was proposed that the transitional nature of the text was the outcome of a negotiation process that attempted to take account of the low level of literacy competence possessed by children at the very beginning of their schooling. Because the children concerned had not acquired an orientation towards sitting and listening attentively to extended readings of factual text, the teacher had adopted strategies in the Task Orientation Element of the macrogenre which involved discussion of illustrations and the oral explanation of the phenomena involved in the explanation she sought to develop. Once the children were engaging at this level, the teacher introduced a joint reading text about the process of a chicken embryo developing into a hatched chicken. However, the model text provided was
necessarily limited in scope. There was, therefore, no explicit analysis with the children of mature examples of model texts in the Task Orientation Format.

The point was made in discussion that the approach adopted was considered appropriate only at the early stage of development of the children in this study. As the children developed a more task focused orientation towards engagement with written text, and as they developed more effective reading skills, a more active reading and explicit analysis of the manner in which various generic forms were constructed could be pursued.

Section 5.3 explored the manner in which the teacher orchestrated the engagement of the children within the Task Specification Format. In this Format, the teacher moved away from the largely reactive role she had employed in the Late Task Orientation Formats that had been discussed in chapter 4. In the Task Specification Format the teacher staged the progression of the pedagogic discourse very carefully. To signal explicit shifts in pedagogic focus she employed a small range of Continuatives as Structurals within Textual Theme. An important aspect of discourse staging was the use of teacher initiated Phases to define clear boundaries between various areas of concern. The shift to more teacher directed staging of the discourse was occasioned by the teacher's need to build a focus for the children on the joint construction of the written text they were to continue writing in the Task Format.

In building this orientation the teacher had to balance the children's engagement with both the instructional field and aspects of the regulative field to do with the representation of the written text through the orthography and other organisational systems associated with the physical construction of written texts.

In her orchestration of the pedagogic discourse the teacher continued to employ many of the strategies she had introduced in earlier Formats. For example constructing participation through the use of referents we and us and through constant reference to past common experience in order to build a starting point for current learning activities.

In section 5.3.2 the teacher's strategies for refocusing the behaviour of 'off task' children were examined across both the task specification and task formats. It was notable that the teacher continued her past practice not attempting to achieve engagement through the targeting of display questions to individual children. While the teacher's attempts to refocus the task behaviour of children did address individuals, the teacher showed considerable flexibility and tolerance in the manner in which she encouraged 'off task' children to resume joint participation. Overall, the teacher's language choices worked to construct the children as participants within the discourse. She did not highlight the children's behaviour as deviant. The teacher also continued the flexible approach she had previously adopted towards turn taking behaviour. A fundamental assumption underlying the teacher's behaviour towards
procedural control was that children who became distracted did so, in the main, because they were not sufficiently attuned to the particular task focus the teacher was constructing.

Section 5.3.3 explored the strategies adopted by the teacher to orchestrate the discourse within Task Specification Phases. It was noted that the teacher, in circumstances where she expected from past experience that the children would be able to respond effectively, constructed more challenging probes without the benefit of scaffolding support. Thus the teacher, at times, persisted with a sequence of probing questions. Her ability to question in this challenging manner was sustained by the fact that any resultant communication breakdown could be repaired through reference to commonly held knowledge and experience.

The teacher also made use of reconceptualising strategies similar to those she had employed in Early Task Orientation Formats (ETO1 and ETO2). She employed these in order to make common for all children the logical and information underlying the responses of individual children.

The teacher constructed joint reading activity in the Task Specification format in much the same manner she had employed within the Task Orientation Element of the macrogenre. As she had previously, she employed ‘oral cloze’ strategies to highlight grapho-phonetic items in the text. It was proposed that in doing so the teacher was laying a groundwork for later activity concerned with the development of grapho-phonetic understandings.

An important feature of the joint reading activity was that it provided a direct context in which the teacher could scaffold the children to attend very closely to the actual wording of the text. It was proposed that the process of interaction set up between the children and the text continually challenged the children to draw distinctions between what was ‘meant’ in a generalised sense and the precision of what was actually ‘said’ in the text. It was further proposed that the ability of the children to draw such distinctions depended upon the high level of inter-subjectivity built up between the teacher and children in the course of the macrogenre.

In Phase 6 of the Task Specification format, the teacher focused upon the regulative field as she demonstrated how segments of the text could be manipulated in a ‘rough draft’. Discussion concerning Phase 6 also illustrated the high level of ‘within Phase’ staging employed by the teacher as she engaged the children in activities to do with the physical task of writing. This high level of staging was frequently marked explicitly by the choice of Continuatives in the role of Structurals in Textual Theme position was also apparent later in the Task Format. This was particularly so as the teacher engaged the children in the actual writing of the negotiated text.

Phase 7 of the Task Specification Format was remarkable for the manner in which the teacher signalled the opening up of interactive control for the children. She achieved this through the use of right/ all right as an interrogative tag and not as a Structural in Textual Theme.
Section 5.3.5 considered child initiations across the Task Specification Format. The children were found to initiate for a small range functional purposes that were peripherally related to the specific task focus of the teacher to do with requests for assistance, peripheral requests and comments and procedural/behavioural concerns. These functions accounted for 19 out of 47 initiations. However, the majority of the initiations (28) were directly in accord with the teaching focus pursued by the teacher and pointed out grapho-phonetic relationships to the teacher. It was proposed that this was a natural consequence of the children's developing awareness of regulative field issues. It was also noted that the context in which they engaged was a socially focused in the Vygotskian sense. As such, it involved exploration of display questioning strategies where the children initiated in order to promote teacher displays of information.

Section 5.4 considered language choice and pedagogy in the Task Format of the macrogenre. It was proposed that an important feature of this Format was that it provided a powerful context in which the teacher could model the convergence of the instructional and regulative registers in the composition of a written text product. In engaging the children with this model, the teacher relied on the level of inter-subjectivity concerning task focus that she had built up with the children over the course of the macrogenre.

The teacher's manner of engaging the children in the writing task differed from some earlier Formats in that she did not resort to the topic focused Phases as the basis for her staging of the discourse. Instead, the teacher staged the engagement of the children through sets of three 'steps' that constituted her negotiation process. First she focused the children on content to establish 'what' was to be written next (step 1). Next she negotiated with the children concerning concerning 'how' the content was to be expressed as written text (step 3). Finally, she negotiated the actual writing activity itself (step 3). She frequently, although not always, employed Continuatives as Structurals in Textual Theme position within clauses to signal explicitly her shift from one step to the next.

In instigating step 1, the teacher typically employed a direct question to do with the instructional field. This question was not directed to individual children (unless the teacher was sure they could respond) but to the group in general. In asking her initiating question, she focused upon aspects of the development of the chicken embryo that had been built as common knowledge in earlier formats within the macrogenre. This process allowed her to develop a cohesive schematic structure for the text that was beyond the individual competence of the children. It was, however, a structure which was readily recognised by the children as appropriate because it accorded with common knowledge that was held inter-subjectively by all members of the group. It was noted that the teacher experienced little difficulty in establishing this step in her negotiation process. It was proposed that the ease
with which the teacher could negotiate this first step laid a strong foundation for moving into steps 2 and 3 where the children possessed less competence.

Steps 2 and 3 required the children to focus with considerable precision in organising the instructional field concepts raised in step 1 into clauses suitable for written text. To scaffold the children through the negotiation in step 2, the teacher moved from asking direct questions to providing starting points from which clauses appropriate to written text could be constructed. In making suggestions for starting points for developing clauses, she constructed Finite yes/no questions which continually sought acceptance for her suggestions from the children.

Once the teacher had negotiated the form of the clause/clause complex that was to be written, she then scaffolded the children through the process of physically writing it. To do this, she employed a variety of functional moves that were termed, seeking engagement, seeking information, directing activity, suggesting strategy and commenting/cueing. As the teacher shifted between these moves, she once again frequently signalled her shift by means of a Continuative in Textual Theme. An underlying factor in her pedagogy in this step 3 was the emphasis the teacher placed on promoting engagement and assumed responsibility with the children for the actual task completion. In step 3, the teacher ensured that the children were predicting effectively within the instructional field before she extended engagement with the regulative field to do with the construction of the orthography. By doing this, she sought to ensure that the children could explore the role that grapho-phonic knowledge played in the construction of meaning and thus avoid the promotion of grapho-phonic knowledge in isolation.

Section 5.4.3 provided a brief description of initiations of the children in the Task Format. A small percentage (14%) of the children’s initiations were to do with procedural/behavioural matters. Others had to do with bidding by individual children to take part in writing activity (25%). The rest, (60%) of the children's initiations, focused upon issues raised within the task focus promoted by the teacher. All of this latter set of initiations occurred within two specific situations in which the children chose to challenge the teacher on factual grounds. It is notable that these challenges concerned the determination of step 1 in the negotiating process as this was the aspect which had been most fully developed in prior Formats. It was proposed that the challenges offered by the children were facilitated strongly by the build up of common knowledge over the course of the macrogenre. The interaction surrounding these challenges also demonstrated that the children were prepared to employ reliance on texts as an authority in mounting their arguments.
5.6 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This study has illustrated an approach to pedagogy which, it is proposed, has engaged the children concerned in purposeful, goal directed discourse focused upon mainstream educational goals. Discussion of the underlying rationale for this study takes as its point of departure a critical analysis of the assistance that is available to teachers from linguistic and linguistically related research in Australia. With respect to formal linguistics it has been proposed that, ultimately, this research has very little to offer teachers who wish to provide access and control over academic/literate discourses for Aboriginal children.

Following the work of Labov (1969) issues to do with the provision of control over academic/literate discourses have largely been ignored or trivialised by Australian researchers who have followed in his footsteps. Instead, research that has followed the Labovian perspective has constructed its own set of investigative issues to do primarily with reaffirming the logical equivalence of Aboriginal English with respect to standard English or of reaffirming the relevance of Aboriginal English in the lives of Aboriginal communities. To the limited extent that this research has addressed issues of access and engagement with mainstream social institutions and processes, it has explored notions to do with access for limited translation or ‘bridging’ purposes (Harkins 1994).

It was proposed that much of the difficulty faced by mainstream linguistic research in coming to terms with the requests of Aboriginal people has been the propensity for researchers to continually construct the question in terms of the difference between Aboriginal English and standard English. It was argued that to do so is to miss the distinction that exists between dialect and register (Hasan 1973) and, in turn, the understanding that register needs to be viewed within the context of situation in which it assumes a functional purpose. This perspective indicates that the acquisition of control over academic/literate discourses requires that teachers should concentrate their efforts upon the production of texts through which the register choices are made that ultimately realise the academic/literate discourse. In addition, there is a need to build access and control over the interactive, cognitive and affective processes through which text products are negotiated and interrogated (Halliday 1985b, 1994; Fairclough 1989; Bernstein 1990, 1996). Moreover, there is a need to ensure that the mediated negotiation that occurs in the pedagogic discourse of the classroom is relevant to eventual control over academic/literate discourses in the wider community.

Consequently the study explored research findings to do with the negotiation of learning between teachers and Aboriginal children in mainstream classrooms. These studies were considered in terms of the extent to which they reflected aspects of Bernstein’s formulation of pedagogic discourse as a recontextualising principle. It was proposed that while these studies provided useful information for teachers, particularly with respect to issues surrounding
behavioural control and inter-personal negotiation in general, they offered no adequate directions for addressing these inter-personal issues in a manner that led to a credible degree of control over academic/literate discourses. It was proposed that the fundamental issue in the breakdown of communication between Aboriginal children and their teachers was that they shared no inter-subjectivity (D’Andrade 1987) with respect to the assumptions underlying what counted for effective task focused negotiation and acceptable content focus within the academic/literate discourses. Moreover, it was proposed that much of what teachers attempted to negotiate in the name of academic/literate discourses was poorly focused at best and often totally irrelevant as a recontextualisation (Bernstein 1996) of academic literate discourses as they occurred in the wider community outside the classroom.

Accordingly, this study outlined a model for the development of control over academic/literate discourses that was developed by this author and implemented at Traeger Park School in Alice Springs, Australia. This program was focused upon assisting the children to control the production of key genres to do with academic/literate discourses. Central to the goals of the program was the need to support the children to gain control over written genres. It was proposed also that the development of control over the negotiation of academic/literate discourses required that teachers should socialise children into the various assumptions and ground rules (ie. member’s resources - Fairclough 1989) that were a necessary prerequisite to successful participation within academic/literate discourses.

It was proposed that this process of socialisation could be framed in terms of Vygotsky’s and Bruner’s respective concepts of zone of proximal development and scaffolding. Consequently, the program at Traeger Park School adopted the notion of concentrated encounter (Cazden 1977) as a means of defining a context within the confines of schooling where task focused negotiation of the type inherent in the notions of zone of proximal development and scaffolding could be promoted.

The analysis reported in this study has considered the nature of teacher/child interaction as levels of inter-subjectivity vary across one concentrated encounter macrogenre (Frances Christie 1994) that was implemented in early childhood grades. Analysis of this macrogenre has indicated a number of implications for teachers who wish to assist Aboriginal children to gain control over academic/literate discourses.

One fundamental issue has to do with the implementation of behavioural control in schools. This is perhaps the most radical of the recommendations that arise from this study largely because our school system typically insists upon orderly and focused behaviour from children even when they are not understanding. Often sitting still and ‘listening’, for example, are demanded from the outset as it is assumed by teachers that this behaviour is a necessary prerequisite for learning. However, in making this assumption teachers are assuming also that the children are already socialised into academic/literate discourses. The kernel of the conflict
lies in the fact that the children need to be socialised into academic/literate task focuses before they will see the point of much of the procedural behaviour that is taken as self evident by teachers. This does not mean that the only alternative option for teachers is to let the children do what they wish. The behaviour of the teacher in this study underlines the fundamental connection that exists between promoting learning and the achievement of an effective level of behavioural control in the classroom. Attempting to promote procedural control in classrooms in the absence of learning is merely an invitation to construct schooling as ritual.

It is not that this teacher does not ask for and act as if she expects focused attending behaviour on the part of the children that she teaches. However, she operates with the understanding that this listening and attending focus will arise primarily out of the inter-subjectivity that she develops with respect to the regulative (especially that which has to do with promoting mental engagement) and instructional fields. Consequently her orchestration of behavioural control functions with considerable flexibility and understanding. Because this study was conducted with small groups of children one objection that may be raised with respect to the above points is that this kind of teacher behaviour is not possible with whole class groups. At Traeger Park the small group work that occurred in the language unit was co-ordinated with the classroom program. The language unit provided a focus for classroom activity and the Formats reported in this study were mirrored in the classroom. Teachers found no difficulty in implementing these formats in the classroom. To a degree the language unit provided a context in which the teaching of the classroom could be even more intensively focused to include children at risk. And while the process of ensuring attention to these children was organised in this way at Traeger Park, the Formats analysed in this study highlight the need to achieve focused small group work with children at risk in addition to conducting whole class lessons. It is proposed that any circumstances which appear to preclude constructive and flexible responses of the kind outlined in this study with Aboriginal children represent fundamentally an indication of the need to review urgently the nature of the learning negotiation and organisational practices that are currently operating. As such, this issue opens up an area for further investigation that might arise out of this study to do with the application of principles employed by the teacher under consideration across a range of settings. Moreover, there is a need to further analyse the negotiation that occurs in different pedagogic discourses with respect to the findings of this study. There is also a need for more studies which attempt to replicate and expand upon the strategies outlined in this study.

In employing the pedagogy that she did, this teacher was able to ‘teach through’ the initial lack of task focus of the children until she achieved a level of inter-subjectivity that allowed the children to join with her effectively in the learning activity. It was not that she simply kept teaching and hoped that eventually the children would understand her. Rather this teacher had a very clear focus and understanding of the text goals that she eventually wished to achieve.
with the children. And, she constructed a context via the concentrated encounter macrogenre within which she could systematically build over time the orientation and engagement in the task that she required. In this respect her approach underlines the critical importance of adopting a socio-historical perspective on both the achievement of behavioural/procedural control and the development of academic/literate knowledge and understandings.

The fact that this teacher worked so constructively within this socio-historical perspective was instrumental in allowing her to listen carefully to what the children were saying. This careful listening was critical to her developing ability to preformulate and recontextualise children’s responses. What emerges is a picture of a teacher who was interested in what the children had to say as individuals. Moreover, the picture is one of a teacher who automatically and with justification assumed that the children would learn what she has to teach. In this sense the purpose and direction of this teacher’s pedagogy provides a striking contrast with the kind of ‘busywork’ activity identified by Michael Christie (1984) and Folds (1987) as so prevalent in Aboriginal classrooms.
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