Co-Authoring Classroom Texts: "Shifting Participant Roles in Writing Activity"
Author(s): Joanne Larson and Maryrita Maier
Reviewed work(s):
Published by: National Council of Teachers of English
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/40171482
Accessed: 09/08/2012 13:35

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.
Co-Authoring Classroom Texts:  
Shifting Participant Roles in Writing Activity

JOANNE LARSON  
University of Rochester

MARYRITA MAIER  
Sodus Primary School

This article presents an analysis of ethnographic data from a first grade classroom within which the social context for literacy learning allowed both the teacher and the students to come to know one another as interested and engaged partners in literacy learning. Using Goffman’s concept of the participation framework as a linguistic structure that organizes and is organized by talk and interaction, this article describes the role of the participation framework in mediating co-authorship in writing activity. Specifically, analysis of classroom discourse illustrates how the teacher and students shifted roles in the participation framework of writing activity among teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer to facilitate the co-construction of written texts. The purpose of this article is to show how one teacher explicitly modeled her own authorship processes and how students took up those processes in their own writing through shifts in participation roles.

Introduction

The problem of learning to write in school is a little like learning a sport (e.g., tennis) entirely with coaching and no actual play. It is all well and good for an expert instructor to teach the fine points of proper strokes and strategy and to make observations from the sidelines, but unless this instruction is supplemented by actual interaction with a real player on the other side of the net, it is likely to remain abstract, hypothetical, and unrealized.

—(Nystrand, 1997, p. 96)

Charlie ran in excitedly from playing outside, tore off his jacket, and exclaimed, “I know what I’m gonna write about today!” Later, after writing his story, he asked if we would listen to him read. He cleared his throat and said, “Let me put my reading voice on.” We smiled, marveling at the genuine joy he
expressed about being an author and wondered how this enthusiasm was constructed in this classroom.

As a researcher of interaction in elementary literacy activity, I (Larson) was fascinated by what I perceived to be Maryrita Maier and her students’ joint construction of a dynamic community of literacy learning. We started to work together because I wanted to take a close look at how Maier encouraged her students as authors and because Maier welcomed the opportunity to understand her practice better. Although I wrote the report that follows, I depended on Maier’s teaching expertise and reflective practice in my analysis. Our co-authorship reflects this interaction.

Maryrita Maier’s classroom was a place where the teacher and students were learning together as “real players.” I met Maier two years prior to the study described in this article after a colleague of mine recommended I visit her classroom due to her reputation as an excellent writing process teacher. Maier regularly conducted professional development workshops across the school districts in the area and was a sought-after consultant. Given recent basic skills, standardization, and accountability movements (Haberman, 1996) in New York state and across the U.S., her classroom was an excellent context in which to see how a writing process-oriented teacher addressed these issues.

Anyone entering Maier’s classroom would be immediately impressed by the number of books in the room, almost 6,000, collected over the course of her more than 22 years of teaching first grade in this school. During the course of this study, we calculated that she made books available for students through author and theme studies, guided reading, and read-alouds at a rate of 120 books per week. Students read alone, they read to one another, and they read to any person, adult, or child who spent time in their classroom. Writing time occurred every day for at least one-and-a-half hours. Students produced reams of complex texts that went far beyond what is commonly expected in first grade classrooms (Graves, 1991; NYS Department of Education, 1996). Maier’s students wrote lengthy chapter books, songs, poems, and memoirs and published these on a monthly basis at the much-celebrated Author’s Tea. At the last Author’s Tea of the year, students read their published stories in the school auditorium to invited guests. Each student received a bound parcel containing every story he or she had written during the year. On top of the parcel was a button that read, “I’m a published author!”

The purpose of this article is to show how one teacher explicitly modeled her own authorship processes and how students began to take up these processes in their own writing. I describe the afternoon writing time in detail and present data excerpts that show how both the teacher’s and the students’ texts were co-constructed in interaction. To analyze classroom interaction I draw on Goffman’s (1981) concept of participation framework as a linguistic structure that organizes and is organized by talk and interaction in

Co-Authoring Classroom Texts
classrooms and Bakhtin’s (1981) concept of the three-part utterance. As Bakhtin (1981) argues, each utterance is inherently dialogic as it implies an addressee. This analysis expands the participation framework from a three-part structure that includes speaker, hearer, and overhearer to include the mutually constituted roles of teacher, author, and co-author. Specifically, the analysis illustrates how the teacher’s and students’ roles in the participation framework of writing activity dynamically shifted among teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer in the joint construction of classroom texts and authorship processes. Thus, the focus of this analysis is on understanding the role of the participation framework in mediating co-authorship.

Theoretical Context
Sociocultural and sociohistorical learning theory informs literacy researchers’ understanding of the social processes of language and learning by describing the child as an active member of a constantly evolving community of learners in which literacy knowledge constructs and is constructed by larger cultural systems (Cole, 1996; Duranti, 1997; Dyson, 1997; Ochs, 1992; Rogoff, 1994; Street, 1995; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). My analysis draws on this framework to describe social interaction as it constitutes and is constituted by the context for learning (Erickson, 1996). The context for learning described here was dynamically co-constructed in interaction with real and purposeful texts. I argue that researchers of literacy as a social practice can more fully understand interaction in writing process classrooms by viewing the child not as simply engaged with writing as guided by an expert writer (Atwell, 1987, 1998; Calkins; 1994; Graves, 1983, 1994), but by viewing the child as an equally valued member of the classroom writing community in which authorship is a key means of participation (Dyson, 1997). Thus, understanding how authorship is mediated by classroom language and literacy practices will inform current theoretical conceptions of how literacy as a social and cultural practice is constructed in interaction.

In the classroom described here authorship was both an instructional goal of the teacher and a learning goal of the students. As will be explained later, the participation framework co-constructed by Maier and her students mediated authorship and co-authorship, and at the same time these authorship processes mediated the acquisition of knowledge about writing conventions. As Dyson (1997) argues, literacy researchers need to problematize process pedagogy to account for meaning as it exists in the meeting of voices or in the process of authorship as an ongoing conversation. This analysis extends current understanding of writing process classrooms to co-authorship and moves the traditional focus in process writing from individual text or the history of individual texts (Graves, 1994) to understanding the interactional dynamics of co-authorship in the construction of classroom texts.

Research on writing process classrooms, specifically writing workshop
approaches, variously describes writing as a craft (Calkins, 1994) or a creative process of personal expression (Graves, 1983). Calkins argues that children must be given a sense of authorship in writing workshop classrooms yet does not describe how that sense might be constructed in interaction. Atwell (1998) does an inspirational job of describing how she "takes off the top of her head" (p. 332) to model authorship; however, what this process looks like in interaction is not described in detail. Furthermore, Atwell (1987, 1998) discusses how she constructs a context within which her students become authors, yet what authorship means in practice remains abstract. Overall, the interactive language practices that constitute writing and authorship are not systematically outlined in the literature.

The analysis presented here describes what authorship as a social practice looked like in one process writing classroom. In Maier's first-grade classroom authorship was a multifaceted language process involving:

- active and enthusiastic participation, both central and peripheral, in and with multiple forms of texts (students' and teacher's oral and written texts, novels, children's literature, textbooks, leveled books, music, video, and computer texts);
- co-participation in composing both teacher and student texts in whole class, teacher-student, and peer conferences;
- publication of students' texts (personal narratives, chapter books, poems, memoirs, songs);
- sharing of texts across activities (sharing time, Author's Tea, the "read to three then me" rule); and
- composing decisions based on an understanding of the role of audience and purpose.

Maier was not just assisting students in understanding how professional writers work (Murray, 1985) or guiding them to publication (Graves, 1983). Rather, she co-constructed a context in which she and her students were authors together, struggling over questions and problems authors struggle over. They answered these questions and solved these problems together in a collaborative community of writers in which authorship was a key means of participation. In this classroom the teacher did not simply administer the proper sequence in the writing process (Willinsky, 1990) but explicitly modeled her own authorship through co-participation in writing activity. Thus, for Maier and her students writing was defined as those practices authors use to put words on paper (e.g., conventions, spelling, editing tools), and authorship was defined as the interactive thinking and composition practices authors use to construct text. Writing and authorship were therefore mutually constituted interactional achievements.

The analysis presented here draws specifically on linguistic anthropology and language socialization theory to analyze how the participation framework in this classroom mediated writing and authorship. Participation frameworks are key tools in the analysis of social activities that accomplish the
integration of participation, actions, and events into the coordinated actions of writing and authorship (Duranti, 1997; C. Goodwin, 1996; M. Goodwin, 1990; Ochs, 1988, 1992). Observing the organization of talk and interaction in classroom participation frameworks makes visible how contextually situated language practices position teachers and students in various roles and how shifts in those roles mediated the co-construction of written texts. Thus drawing on participation frameworks can further current understandings of writing process classrooms by revealing the complex ways in which authorship is mediated by local language practices and the ways in which these practices facilitate participants’ organization of participation with and through texts (C. Goodwin, 1981).

My previous research identified the ways in which changes in participation occur or are denied through shifts in participant roles or footings (Goffman, 1981) in classroom participation frameworks (Larson, 1995, 1997, 1999a, 1999b). O’Connor and Michaels (1996) argue that microanalysis of classroom interaction using participation frameworks is needed to understand the construction and maintenance of contexts for learning. However, their analysis frames the teacher as the creator of classroom participation frameworks. The analysis presented here extends research on participation frameworks through analysis of the ways in which they were dynamically co-constructed by both the teacher and the students.

Drawing from this theoretical frame, I will show how the co-construction of text in Maier’s classroom was mediated by talk and interaction in writing activity. The flexible participation framework in this classroom afforded the students an opportunity to take on different roles and thus to develop their own goals for writing as they gained in competence (Griffin & Cole, 1984). The concept of the participation framework permitted an analysis of how both the teacher and the students shifted roles in the joint construction of text and thus offered an opportunity to observe changes in participation (Rogoff, 1994) and responsibility for writing. Furthermore, understanding how participation was organized highlighted the ways in which writing and authorship were interactionally achieved (Duranti, 1986) and extends current understanding of authorship as an individually constructed writing process.

Method

Data Collection

Using ethnographic research methods, I undertook a year-long study of Maier and her students. I observed and videotaped classroom literacy activity on a weekly basis throughout the academic year. In order to document the consequences of current language practices on classroom participants’ literacy learning and to have access to the participants’ perspective on literacy, I interviewed both the teacher and the students throughout the project and transcribed all audiotapes. I took field notes during each observation to document the general flow of activity, including what happened off camera.

I videotaped twenty afternoon
writing periods from October to June for a total of 40 hours of videotape. I viewed, summarized, and coded each videotape to identify key segments. I selected key segments for analysis based on how well they represented the language and literacy practices of this classroom and the ways in which students and teacher shifted roles in the participation framework. Each segment was coded for participant roles and the nature of the shifts that occurred across these roles. The data excerpts that follow are representative of these key segments.

I derived transcription conventions from Atkinson and Heritage (1984) to transform these data into text. Colons denote sound stretch ("the:"); brackets indicate overlapping speech [ ]; equal signs indicate closely latched speech or ideas; outward facing brackets (<>) indicate slowed speech. For example:

ABIGAIL: <Put it on the:=
TOM: How do you think I can write after this. =
ABIGAIL: = [bu () bo:r]
TOM: = [I got a army man.]

Intervals of silence are timed in tenths of seconds and inserted within parentheses; short, untimed silences are marked by a dash when sound is quickly cut off ("What-") or with a period within parentheses (.). Rising intonation within an utterance is marked with an arrow ("Okapy"); rising intonation at the end of an utterance is marked with a comma ("so,"); falling intonation at the end of an utterance is indicated with a period ("this."); italics indicate utterance spoken with emphasis; descriptions of speech or gesture are indicated within double parentheses("((places open hand on his paper))"); single parentheses surround items of doubtful transcription.

Transcription of discourse, or the process of inscribing social action (Duranti, 1997), enabled the micro-analysis of how language use among activity participants mediated text construction. I transcribed all key segments in their entirety, including non-vocal, vocal, and timing features as additional evidence of the ways in which classroom texts were co-constructed (Ochs, 1979). These transcribed segments served as the primary database for detailed discourse analysis of face-to-face interaction. The participation roles of teacher, author, co-author, and overhearder emerged in the process of coding these segments.

If talk shapes and is shaped by the social organization of the discourse and roles of conversants (Nystrand, 1997), then examining how this organization was socially constructed by both the teacher and the students in the participation framework will reveal how the participation framework mediated co-authorship processes. As the data will show, both the students and the teacher in this classroom shifted roles among teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer in a dialogic process of text construction and literacy learning.

We selected a focal group of children to examine more closely how students co-constructed texts during student writing time and whether stu-
dents took up the authorship processes modeled by Maier. We selected six students, three boys and three girls, based on Maier's assessment of their writing abilities. The group consisted of three pairs of writers (one boy and one girl in each pair): one with high writing ability, one with an average writing ability, and one with limited writing ability. As the students went to their tables to write, I attached a lapel microphone to one focal student at a time and focused the video camera on her/him to capture the talk and interaction that occurred as each student wrote at her/his table group. I collected copies of these students' writing for the year, including all drafts, revised copies, and published pieces.

**Classroom Context**

The long drive from the city to Maier's classroom was a comforting transition from big city bustle to small town quiet. Sodus Primary (K–3) was the only primary school serving this isolated rural area. The school itself was a long, single story building. All the classrooms had windows along one wall that looked out over the surrounding rural landscape. The school served approximately 600 students of a variety of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Most students were from working-class families in the surrounding neighborhood. Some students were from very poor working families or migrant farm families. There were a few families from a wealthy enclave of corporate executives that is nested near Lake Ontario. Maier's students were representative of the larger school population. She had one student from the wealthy lakeside community, with the remainder coming from neighboring working-class families. Fifty percent of her students that year received free-and-reduced lunch (one local measure of students' socioeconomic status). All but two of her students that particular year were European American. The two minority children were biracial (African American and European American). One African American student moved away in the first month of school. Maier did not have any children of migrant farm workers that year.

Maier's classroom of twenty-two first graders was down a long hallway to the right of the front door. She had windows that looked out to the front of the school, facing the cemetery and apple orchards. A visitor's initial impression of the classroom would be that it was full to capacity. Boxes and baskets of books occupied every open shelf and cupboard space. As Maier read books in the course of a day, she placed them in baskets or on tables around the room. In this way all available books were familiar to students so that they would not sit down with a book that she had not read to them first. The weekly author's study made an additional collection of books available to students, though Maier may not have read all of them in their entirety to the class. By the end of the year, every open shelf space was jammed with baskets of books in a variety of genres.

The room was brightly decorated with children's artwork, writing, and literature-related theme bulletin boards. Much of the room decoration was
typical of a first grade classroom in the U.S. (calendar, theme-related posters and bulletin boards, alphabet and number charts, etc.). What was not typical was the incredible number of books, the reams of students’ written texts, and the nature of the interaction among students with and through text. Children worked constantly in texts of all kinds. Reading and writing permeated students’ everyday classroom activities. Maier integrated all content areas into a curriculum profoundly grounded in literacy that viewed these first graders as authors and readers and contributed to the construction of a tight-knit community of learners (see Rogoff, 1994 for the definition of community of learners referred to here). Ironically, while Maier claimed not to know how she and the students constructed this community, she seemed able to articulate the process clearly:

I don’t know how you get community. I can’t tell you. All I can tell you is you need to spend time with them. You need to—I eat lunch with them. I’m with them a lot. I make time for them. I write to them every day. I know everything about their personal lives I could possibly know. I know the names of their dogs. I know the names of their family members. They know about my family. They know what I like to do. I know what they like to do and I think the familiarity of it helps. You can’t have a sense of community if you don’t have time, spend time.

The intimacy the teacher and students constructed in this classroom was evident throughout the day. For example, they stayed in the classroom to eat lunch together family style rather than going to the crowded cafeteria. They freely discussed their lives at home and asked her questions about her family and her life away from them. The students knew her likes, dislikes, and life passions and she knew all of theirs. They knew her mother died, for example, and how sad it was for her and her five brothers and sisters. Maier commented to me one day that “you really have to give yourself to them.” While she knew this might be risky emotionally, it was this gift of teaching, the joy of giving to and being with her students, that kept her so excited after 22 years.

How Does She Do All That?
The Writing Curriculum
During the course of this project, I began to talk with colleagues and students about what I was observing. The first question people always asked was, “But how does she do all that?” It was certainly a question I regularly asked myself. What exactly did she do and how, if at all, did her students take up the practices she modeled? What were the language and literacy practices in this classroom that constructed this kind of robust literacy learning environment? In this section, I will try to describe a typical day in Maier’s classroom.

By the time the children arrived at 8:30 am, Maier had been there an hour. She made the 30-minute drive from her house to get there in plenty of time to have everything ready for the students when they arrived. She had stayed at school the night before until 5 or 6 o’clock. As the students entered the classroom, they put away their coats and
backpacks, then immediately got started with the book exchange. One part of Maier’s reading program included a home reading component in which students took home a set of books every night in a zip-lock bag that included a parent comment form, read the books, then brought them back the next morning. Maier’s vast book collection included leveled books (both packaged series such as Wright books and children’s literature she had leveled herself), poetry books, children’s novels, songbooks, and basal readers. They started the first week of school taking home 2 to 3 books to read and finished the school year taking home up to 10 to 12 books every night. Some students may have taken home fewer books, but that was usually because the books they took home were more complicated chapter books. Maier, a teacher’s aide, or a parent volunteer checked off the returned books and entered the new ones in a process that took about five minutes. Sometimes they were helped by Maier’s students from the previous year, then second graders. As this process proceeded, students went to their desks to read and respond to Maier’s daily comments in their journals. There would also be a math activity to think about and complete. The rest of the morning consisted of an integrated math, science, social studies, and language arts curriculum that continued until lunch.

Children were responsible for completing their work during this morning time period and for checking in with Maier before going outside. The class rule “read to three then me” served to facilitate an interactive context in which students learned to work with each other in all classroom activities. When students were finished with their work, they invariably chose to read. They moved to the carpet area, pulled out a pile of books and read, both alone and with a group of friends. Maier always had a basket of post-it notes available for students to write their names on and place in the inside cover of books. By the end of the year, the books were filled with colorful post-it notes with the names of all the children who read them. The reading program had several parts to it: shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, and the home reading program mentioned above. Any work that was not completed before lunch was finished afterward, then weather permitting, the children went outside. The writing period began as students returned to the classroom.

Informing the Writing Process
Researchers in elementary education may recognize the activities, strategies, and techniques that Maier used as representative of exemplary practice. However, there was more going on there than good technique. Her belief that all her students were fundamentally authors contributed to an overall atmosphere of excitement, perhaps even a magical enthusiasm about writing. Together with her students, Maier constructed a learning-centered context in which the textual and linguistic competence of her students was celebrated, encouraged, and used as a resource for curriculum development (Rose, 1995; personal communication, 1998).
took her students’ writing seriously and used their development as writers to guide her lesson planning. For example, at critical points in the school year, typically around holiday breaks, she gathered up all her students’ writing to take home (she saved every piece of writing students did). She spread their writing out on her kitchen table and spent the break carefully examining each student’s development. She based her next lessons and mini-lessons on the assessment of where her students were measured against her instructional goal of building fluency.

My goal is to have them fluent by the end of the year. So that they can start to understand what authors think about, what authors do, and what makes writing good.

Her assumption that all her students were capable literacy learners grounded the design of her curriculum. In addition, her writing curriculum drew from the workshop approach she learned in her reading of Atwell (1987), Calkins (1994), and Graves (1983). Her well-worn copy of In the Middle (Atwell, 1987) was testimony to her dedication to personal growth and reflection as a writing teacher. She attended workshops with these scholars and consistently strove to understand the teaching of writing. These varied experiences at workshops were incorporated into her curriculum and transformed by her values, beliefs, and teaching experience to form her theory of teaching literacy (Gallas, 1994). She adapted traditional conceptions of the mini-lesson (Calkins, 1994), for example, from a brief presentation before writing to an ongoing construction embedded in the context of both her and her students’ writing. Mini-lessons occurred at multiple points within and across lessons each day throughout the year and always occurred in the context of writing real texts. Thus, her understanding of literacy learning and her beliefs about students combined to form the foundation of her pedagogy. It was within this framework that a context for learning was constructed that facilitated the co-construction of writing (Erickson, 1996).

Maier used a modeled writing activity to introduce student writing time on a daily basis. Students learned about their own writing processes and writing conventions such as topic selection, spacing, paragraphing, punctuation, spelling, sequencing, etc., in the course of interaction during the writing of meaningful texts. She carefully integrated the teaching of these conventions in mini-lessons as she made her own authorship processes explicit for her students in an interactive context in which student knowledge and capabilities as writers and authors were taken seriously (Nystrand, 1997; Rose, 1995). Thus, she did not simply model writing as a discrete technique or set of skills but modeled authorship as a meaningful writing process constructed in interaction.

The following section describes the writing period in more detail, presenting the teacher’s modeled writing and students’ writing time at moments of both teacher conferencing and spontaneous student conferences. The following data analysis will focus on
shifts in participant roles across activities during writing time to examine more closely how classroom language practices mediated the co-construction of both the teacher’s and students’ written texts and the ways in which the participation framework mediated the teacher’s and students’ participation as authors.

Results

Co-constructing Text: Modeled Writing

Maier firmly stated that she “never sends students to write until (she has) written.” As a result she designed her writing period so that she first modeled her own writing for students. After the modeling students spent the rest of the day writing their own texts. Modeled writing was not a quick 5–10 minute mini-lesson disguised as writing (Larson, 1999b). She wrote real, often lengthy, personal narratives that came from her daily life. She embedded mini-lessons on writing conventions in this larger context of writing and modeled her own writing and authorship processes for students. Writing time occurred each afternoon for 90 minutes and included both Maier’s modeled writing and student writing time. All writing periods followed the same pattern throughout the year. The following excerpts are representative of the form, content, and interactional processes of this writing event.

Analysis of these data revealed that the modeled writing activity was divided into six discrete segments: topic selection, picture drawing, writing the story, “I likes,” questions and revision, and student topic announcements. During the topic selection segment, Maier used opening utterances such as “I have so many ideas floating in my head today” followed by a list of the current options for story topics to designate the beginning of the writing time and to gather students’ attention. Students frequently reminded her of the items on their evolving list of topics if she omitted one. After she selected her topic, she wrote the date at the top of the page and began to draw a picture as a clue for students. She phased out the use of picture clues as the year progressed. Students enthusiastically guessed at what she might be drawing. Writing the story followed this segment. As the following representative examples will illustrate, this text was actively co-constructed by both students and teacher in joint participation in writing in their roles as teachers, authors, co-authors, and overhearers. Students called out her next words, offered each other assistance in understanding different words, and pointed out writing conventions. The fourth segment, termed “I likes” by Maier, followed writing and consisted of a sharing of what students liked about her story. Typically students pointed out writing conventions in her story that they were working on in their own writing (spacing, story length, punctuation).

The questions and revision segment consisted of students’ asking Maier questions about her story upon which she either revised the story or answered directly depending on the nature of the question. This segment of the activity
was particularly important in modeling the kinds of questions authors ask themselves when writing. Furthermore, Maier used this segment as an opportunity for children to think about what kinds of questions readers might ask, grounding writing instruction in an understanding of the role of audience in the writing process.

In the following section examples of topic selection, writing, and questions and revision will be described. These examples are representative of all observed modeled writing activities. I selected these particular interactions as examples of how Maier and her students co-constructed the roles of teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer in the participation framework of writing activity in this classroom and how Maier embedded the teaching of writing conventions in the context of writing real texts because they represent key patterns and relationships across activities.

**Topic Selection**

In the following excerpt Maier settled into her chair next to the easel at the front of the carpet area as she did every afternoon. Students were seated on the carpet in front of her and on the couch (the "couch potatoes") at the rear of this sectioned area of the classroom. As students settled in, she framed (Goffman, 1974) the upcoming writing sequence by stating, “I have so many ideas floating in my head today” (lines 1-3). Students focused their attention on her as she repeated this statement, then began to list the topics that had been suggested on previous days.

**Excerpt 1.1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TEACHER: I have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>so many ideas floating in my head today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(sitting down facing students, looking around at students))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>JOHN: Turn it up a little bit more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TEACHER: I have so many ideas floating today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>that I’ve been having a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>&lt;real hard&gt; decision=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>((leans back in chair))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>MELISSA: So do I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>TEACHER: =having a decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>((looks upward))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>a dilemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>((shakes head))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I don’t-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I could write-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>((looks down, begins to count on fingers))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I could write about-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She went on to name many possible topics (her "trip to the theater last night to see Phantom of the Opera," “the fog and the animal story," or "my giant teeth problem story"), then decided on a story that involved her husband and his "terrible yard problem." She proceeded to build excitement in the students as she introduced a story about her husband’s problems with moles in his garden.

By modeling topic selection in the process of ongoing text construction, Maier made explicit an author’s initial
steps in the writing process that are often implicit and consequently neither understood in other classrooms (Larson, 1999b; Larson & Peckham, 1997) nor substantively discussed in the writing process literature (Atwell, 1998; Calkins, 1994; Graves, 1983). She explained why she models topic choice as follows: “You might not just have one idea; you might have four or five ideas for stories and you have to narrow it down and decide which one. You have to think about your audience, who’s the story going to be shared with.” Critical decisions that authors make regarding the audience and purpose of a text were thus modeled in interaction around text construction and reflect Atwell’s (1998) assertion that teachers must model their own writing in honest and meaningful ways. Evidence of students’ understanding that topic selection required making difficult decisions was seen in the second student turn (line 12) when a student corroborated Maier’s sentiment that this process was a “real hard decision” by stating, “So do I.” Maier’s community building strategy is also evident in this excerpt. By sharing her personal life through these stories, she let her students in on who she was and what mattered to her.

Maier began to draw a picture that provided clues to her upcoming story. As she drew her picture, the students became increasingly excited about what the story might be, generating a flurry of student guesses as each part of the picture unfolded. Students were overhearers to Maier’s writing process as she verbalized her actions much as they were overhearers to each other’s authorship processes when writing together in table groups (Larson, 1999a). Overcaller participation was nonetheless active and involved as students continued to remind her of possible topic choices and commented on her drawing.

**Writing the Story**

By the time the story writing began, students were completely focused on the text as they waited excitedly for the unfolding tale. Maier began to write, carefully saying each word as she wrote. What was remarkable about this segment was the complex nature of the interaction between the “author” and the “students.” Students, while ostensibly designated as listeners, served principally as co-authors (Duranti, 1986) in the participation framework. They actively co-constructed the story while the teacher wrote by calling out words for her to insert into the story. This co-construction process became so normative that Maier perceived the students as listening quietly. She was surprised to learn that they were talkative while she was writing. This co-construction process appeared within the first sentence of the story when a student contributed the word “in” to the text (line 101) and the word was taken up by the teacher (line 103).

**Excerpt 1.2:**

92 **Teacher:** Okay.
93 (looks at easel, rests hand on upper support bar)
94 (4.0)
95 [Mr. Miller]
Incidents of students' filling in upcoming words in the text occurred frequently in each writing period. The teacher commonly incorporated these words into the text as she continued writing, sometimes repeating the word and sometimes simply writing it. This incorporation was one way that students were active co-authors of the teacher's text. In the participation framework of this segment, the teacher functioned as primary author of her text and all students served as overhearers of the interaction as a whole, shifting frequently to co-author. This type of word exchange occurred so continually as to be a normative language practice in this classroom. The flexible shifting among these roles in the participation framework constituted the linguistic context for writing in this classroom (Erickson, 1996; Goffman, 1981). As sociocultural and sociohistorical learning theory suggests, students in this classroom were active members in a dynamic community of writers in which authorship formed the interactional context (Cole, 1996; Duranti, 1986; Dyson, 1997; Rogoff, 1994).

As the interaction progressed, one student pointed out that Maier had written an “ing” word in her story (“Hey, (0.2) working”, line 104). The class was in the process of constructing a list of “ing” words as part of an ongoing mini-lesson. Each time an “ing” word was spotted, either the students or the teacher wrote the word on the list. I frequently observed students' referring to this list when they needed help spelling one of the words they knew was there or adding another word to the list when it had been discovered in one of the books they were reading.

In this classroom understanding
the parts of text, or what Street (1995) refers to as technical skills, was grounded in the larger context of authorship. Environmental print was a valuable resource for students as they wrote. Students consistently referred to a jointly constructed sight word list, Maier's daily writing (left on the easel for students' reference), and other classroom texts to assist in composing. As mentioned, Maier incorporated mini-lessons in the ongoing construction of authentic texts (Nystrand, 1997), thus grounding students' understanding of the basics of writing in real writing. As a result, this classroom's language and literacy practices constructed a context for learning in which the parts of texts were in dialogic relation with the whole and in which the students were active participants in a dynamic writing community (Nystrand, 1997; Erickson, 1996; Rogoff, 1994).

Furthermore, the transcript shows how Maier worked toward her instructional goal of fluency, which I described earlier, as she modeled "what authors do." In lines 111 and 118 she stopped writing to reread what had been written thus far ("Mr. Miller was working in the yard"). As overhearers to Maier's audible self-monitoring process, students then took up this practice of rereading in their own writing (see Excerpt 3, lines 1–2). Most often this was an audible process, but students also reread silently. They either revised after rereading or continued with their stories. They always enjoyed catching mistakes in their own work and would gleefully point them out to neighbors at their table group. Maier consistently praised their rereading strategies as something that "good writers do."

**Participation Roles during Writing** The normative script constructed in this classroom represented what Gutierrez (1993) terms responsive collaborative and what Nystrand (1997) terms dialogic instruction: The classroom participation framework was more flexible than in a context where the teacher tightly manages the discourse. (A large body of literature documents IRE—Initiation, Response, Evaluation—classroom discourse patterns. See early work by Mehan (1979) and Cazden (1988) and more recent research by Gutierrez (1993) and Nystrand (1997) for a full discussion of the consequences of IRE on student learning). Responsive collaborative script (Gutierrez, 1993) is characterized by flexible participation boundaries with increased student responses within and between teacher-student initiations and responses. Maier framed and facilitated the activity but did not rigidly control turn selection and topic expansion. Both teacher and students generated questions to which there were no specific correct answers, with the implied goal being a shared understanding of literacy knowledge. Consequently, the participation framework constructed in this classroom consisted of a flexible range of roles (teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer) within which students and teacher shifted easily. The students and the teacher often filled these roles simultaneously. For example, while a student was author of her/his own text, she/he was simultaneously an overhearer.
of others' texts and regularly shifted to co-author while remaining author of her/his own text. The complex and overlapping nature of the participation framework in this classroom allowed for dynamic shifting of roles in the co-construction of both teacher and student texts, thereby mediating co-authorship as a means of participation (Dyson, 1997).

*Embedding Instruction during Writing*

Interaction proceeded conversationally throughout the modeled writing segment presented here except for several occasions during which the teacher shifted to an IRE discourse pattern for explicit instruction about specific writing conventions, as illustrated in the excerpts below. The teacher's purposeful use of IRE discourse in the teaching of technical skills marked mini-lessons on conventions as they were embedded in the interaction. The first shift to IRE in this representative modeled writing event occurred in lines 166-176 below as the teacher interrupted the mole story to instruct students on the purpose of quotation marks, i.e., to indicate direct speech.

**EXCERPT 1.3:**

154 **Teacher:** <He: (1.0) was (1.0) angry.>
155 ((writing))
156 ((sits back in chair and looks at paper))
157 (2.8)
158 >he was pounding the ground with a rake< (. ) he was angry
159 ((re-reading the text))
160 <I ( ) went (1.0) to the door,>
161 ((writing))
162 (3.0)
163 and said
164 ((writing))
165 (3.0)
166 I’m gonna put some,
167 ((writes quotation marks, then points to students as she turns to look at them))
168 (1.0)
169 **Students:** Talking marks
170 **Teacher:** Right
171 ((nods head, touches head with left hand))
172 so who do you think he’ll be talking to
173 ((looks back toward the easel and points to paper))
174 **Students:** You,
175 **Max:** you
176 **Teacher:** Right
177 ((nods head))
178 >I went to the door and said<
179 ((reading as she follows text with her finger))

Maier briefly shifted roles in the participation framework from author to writing teacher as she used an IRE pattern. Her authorship did not disappear but was backgrounded for the purpose of explicit instruction. She initiated the IRE sequence in line 166 when she stopped writing and stated,
“I’m gonna put some.” The rising intonation, full second pause, and pointing gesture at the end of this utterance indicated to students that a response was expected. Several students responded (“Talking marks,” line 169) to which she provided a positive evaluation (“Right”) in line 170. In this example she paused the flow of writing to demonstrate a writing convention, thus grounding a technical skill in the context of actual text and text construction. It was her practice to ground conventions in text, although she typically did so in compositions she had already written. She explained this process as follows:

I’ll go back, a lot of times when I go through a lesson I’ll write- the next day I’ll go back and say “you know the piece that I wrote yesterday, well I need to show you something” and then I flip back to an old story. . . . I try not to teach a lot of skills on a new piece. I do the same thing with reading. I think it’s much easier to learn skills on something you can already read, so when you have a new piece of writing or a new piece of reading and you’re trying to teach ’em skills, I think it’s too much—I—90% of the time teach my skills on an old favorite. Because they already know how the story goes. They already know the language of it and the same thing goes with writing. I try to talk a lot through it, but if I’m gonna talk about a specific (skill) I usually will go back to an old story and I will point it out. “In this story, I did this” and I’ll flip back three more “With this story, see I did it again.” “Here’s another time I used (it)” and I’ll flip back again. So I might go back 6, 7, 8 stories or I might have the stories all pulled and just run straight through.

Maier made explicit the various processes authors use, as well as writing conventions and tools, in the talk surrounding writing activity. In Excerpt 1.4 below, one student identified the convention they had previously discussed, “more talking marks” (line 228), as the teacher proceeded with the mole story. In the second shift to IRE (Excerpt 1.4, lines 241–244), the teacher modeled crossing out (rather than erasing) as a revision technique by asking, “What do good writers do when they mess up?” Maier made a mistake (“oops,” line 239) and crossed out the error. The student response (“cross it out,” line 242) was quickly evaluated (“Right, just cross it out,” lines 243–244) and the story continued. She used this moment of correction as an opportunity to point out “what good writers do,” thus furthering her instructional goal of fluency.

**Excerpt 1.4:**

228 **Janet:** More talking marks

229 **Teacher:** More >more talking
marks<

230 (looking at paper)

231 I said.

232 (2.0)

233 I SAID

234 (leans forward and begins to write)

235 can I he lp

236 (1.0)

237 I-

238 (1.8)

239 oops,

240 (sits back)

241 what do good writers do when they mess up

242 **John:** Cross it out

243 **Teacher:** Right.
The practice of interspersing IRE sequences in more responsive/collaborative or dialogic (Gutierrez, 1993; Nystrand, 1997) discourse structures was a normative language practice in this classroom. This language practice provided instructional moments where explicit instruction was possible without disrupting the joint process of text construction. "What writers do," both the process of authorship and the use of necessary conventions, was not just modeled by the teacher but practiced by both the teacher and the students in joint activity (Edelsky, 1996). Teaching a variety of writing conventions and strategies was thus socially constructed in interaction in the ongoing process of text construction.

Evaluating the Writing  The "I likes" segment of the modeled writing activity followed immediately after the story was written. Students shared what it was about the story that they liked most. Students were thus socialized to think first about what they appreciated in an author's text before beginning a critique. This practice helped to ensure that the potential vulnerability of sharing, e.g., opening the author up to scrutiny of an audience, was mediated (Lensmire, 1994; Ochs, 1997; Ochs & Taylor, 1992). On this particular day students shared that they liked how she used spaces, that they got the mole, that she wrote a two-pager, and that she used quotation marks. The data reveal that students' comments during the "I likes" portion of the modeled writing activity consistently followed this mixed pattern of appreciating conventions and story content elements. What a student shared tended to mirror her/his own writing development. For example, if a student was working on spacing, she/he commented most frequently that she/he "likes your spaces."

Questions and Revision
The questions and revision segment of the writing activity was significant as it provided the students with an explicit opportunity to co-author Maier's story and formed the foundation for interaction in teacher-student and peer conferences. Specifically, the kinds of questions authors ask themselves while revising text were modeled in joint participation in a meaningful language activity. Students used these questioning strategies with each other during student writing time, as will be discussed later in this article. In the interaction illustrated in Excerpt 1.5, Maier took eight questions from students, four of which led to revision of the text.

The teacher framed the beginning of question and revision time by stating, "All right. I'm ready for questions" in line 508. One student tried to prolong the "I likes" segment (line 510) but Maier restated that she was ready for questions and called on Lisa (lines 511-514). Lisa asked, "What day was he doing this?" (line 515) to start the
question and revision process, thereby shifting to the overlapping roles of teacher and co-author in the participation framework. Her question reflected the students’ growing fluency that Maier had scaffolded thus far. It was a story detail that clarified the time of day, a seemingly higher level question than one might expect from a six-year-old. Maier’s questions during student conferences were consistently focused on such story detail and, as Excerpt 3 will show, students used similar questions both in whole class revision and in spontaneous student conferences.

**Excerpt 1.5:**

508 **Teacher:** All right (.) I’m ready for questions

509 (holds both hands up, palms open)

510 **Student:** >Wait wait wait ( )<

511 **Teacher:** I’m ready for questions

512 (puts hands behind her back)

513 yep

514 (points to Lisa)

515 **Lisa:** What day was he doing this

516 **Teacher:** O:o

517 what day was he doing this

518 (licks finger, turns to look at easel)

519 that would be an important thing to put in

520 (starts to turn page on easel)

521 (2.0)

522 **Student:** yeah

523 **Teacher:** I bet you could probably guess

524 ((turning page))

Maier continued her line of thinking about Lisa’s question by offering clues for the students to realize for themselves which day the mole event happened. This example illustrates how the teacher valued student knowledge and capabilities as authors in interaction around text (Nystrand, 1997). In line 517 she marked the beginning of her revision and her excitement about the student’s question by repeating the question and adding an affective marker (“O:o what day was he doing this”). She continued to mark the student’s contribution to her text as valuable by stating, “that would be an important thing to put in” (line 519) as she turned the page to look for a location for the revision. As mentioned, Lisa shifted roles in the participation framework from overhearer to teacher and co-author while the teacher, as primary author, validated, then incorporated the suggestion in her text. The teacher also shifted to co-author in this conversational move as she revised the text with the students. The other students served as active and engaged overhearers, often shifting to co-authors as they offered suggestions or made jokes about the story (“I thought he was going to say he would have a mole dinner”) to rousing laughter from everyone. This flexible shifting among roles during questions/revision illustrated how authorship served as a fundamental means of participation in the community of writers in this classroom.
As the revision segment continued, the teacher repeated each student’s question as she turned to look at the text (see O’Connor & Michaels, 1996 for discussion of teacher reviewing of students’ utterances), turning back to whatever page in the story on which she or the students thought a revision could be made. As she added text, she modeled editing tools such as carets or crossing out as she entered new sentences or words. Maier revised the story when student questions added context or descriptions that she had forgotten or that the class felt contributed to the story’s depth. Questions whose answers she did not know or that she decided were not relevant to the story were not used to revise. Thus, an author’s right to maintain a text as she/he wrote it was also modeled for students.

The modeled writing activity came to a close when each student told Maier what she/he would write about before going to write. Students who were having difficulty thinking of a topic, usually one or two students, sat on the couch for a few minutes to think. Maier came to sit with them and asked various questions designed to focus them on a topic. As each child selected a topic, she/he went over to the paper supply table to pick up a clean sheet, then settled down for the afternoon of writing.

**Student Writing Time**
For the remainder of the afternoon, the students wrote at their desks in table groups. There was no structured conference period, but interaction around text occurred consistently. Maier circulated around the room, stopping to work with students. She did not pull students to a separate area to talk, but used this opportunity both to instruct individual students in writing directly and to instruct those students sitting at the same table indirectly (Larson, 1997). Students sitting nearby as overhearers to an interaction could both continue in their role as author of their own text and function as overhearer to other students’ writing. The flexibility of the participation framework allowed them to shift at any time to co-author as they offered revision suggestions to one another. Within this interactive context the co-construction of text was facilitated both on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level (Vygotsky, 1978) and allowed students the space and time to develop their own writing goals (Griffin & Cole, 1984).

**Chuck’s Story**
The following data excerpts illustrate the processes of text revision in student writing time and are representative of teacher-student conferences observed throughout the study. These excerpts are taken from one conference between Maier and a student named Chuck (this and all other students’ names are pseudonyms). As the interaction began, she assisted Chuck in thinking about what else he could add to his story. She approached his table, crouched down next to him, and opened the conference time by asking, “What do you got so far?” (line 1). With this statement she shifted to the roles of teacher and co-author in relation to Chuck’s role as author in the participation framework.
The other students at the table assumed simultaneous roles of author/overhearer. They wrote and listened throughout the interaction highlighted here Chuck marked his role as author with the statement in line 4 ("This is all my story") while he showed Maier the story he was writing. She acknowledged his work ("Oka: ↑y."), looked at the paper, and waited for him to read it.

Excerpt 2.1:
1 Teacher: >What do you got so far?<
2 ((Squatting next to student))
3 (0.6)
4 Chuck: This is all my story
5 ((pointing to paper and turning pages))
6 Teacher: Oka: ↑y.
7 ((looking at paper))

The falling intonation and shift in gaze at the end of her utterance (lines 6-7) indicated to Chuck that it was his turn to read. He read his story while Maier listened attentively:

I watched Street Sharks in the morning when I’m getting ready for school. Their names are Slamoo and Blaze and Hammer-head and jaws.

As the interaction continued in Excerpt 2.2, Maier started to ask a content question but immediately stopped herself and, instead, commented that she "really liked (his) story" (lines 26-27). She was modeling on a one-on-one level what she modeled in the larger writing activity; that is, to begin any period of revision with a positive comment about the author’s text. She did not point out the tense disagreement in the story ("watched . . . when I’m getting ready for school") but focused her questions on adding story detail. It was her practice to let errors go until a piece was published. She then grounded the teaching of correctness in the context of understanding the role of audience and purpose of the text (Reddy & Daiute, 1993). Maier explained it this way:

It’s real important in first grade that they [need] to know correct spellings, and I think invented spelling has its place and that is to allow the writing to happen, but they also need to learn the proper, not the proper spelling, but they also need to know that for other people to be able to read their writing, there are times that it needs to be right so that others can read.

As the conference continued, Chuck answered her first question (lines 29-34) and the conversation moved on.

Excerpt 2.2:
26 Teacher: What- what time is it on in the mor-
27 >First of all< (. I really liked your story
28 ((places open hand on his paper))
29 Chuck: I don’t know know which time it-
30 ((scratches head))
31 Is on
32 It’s after Sonics
33 Teacher: After Sonics?
34 Chuck: And I >don’t know which time Sonics is on<
35 ((pulls paper toward him))
36 Teacher: How could you find out?

37 (puts paper up on table))

38 (2.0)

Maier’s first question about the time of the show reflected the common literacy practice in this classroom of introducing story concepts such as time and setting into students’ texts. Furthermore, with this utterance she implied the role of reader in text construction by indirectly modeling questions a reading audience might ask. When Chuck stated that he didn’t know exactly what time it was on (lines 29-31), she asked him how he could find out (line 36). In this way she used the student’s own knowledge (he does know it comes after Sonics, line 32) to direct him to ways he could get the information. She was not the only source of knowledge in this classroom.

She spent a few minutes talking to him about how he could find out when the show came on, then shifted to asking more content oriented questions with the utterance in line 60, “Tell me more about um Street Sharks,” as Excerpt 2.3 illustrates.

EXCERPT 2.3:

60 Teacher: Tell me more about um Street Sharks

61 (1.0)

62 Are they good guys or bad guys?

63 (looking at Chuck))

64 (lines 61-63)

65 Chuck: >They’re good guys<

66 (looks at teacher))

67 And they fight– they fight um

68 other um ( ) um

69 They fight other people

70 Teacher: Okay. so,

71 ((shifts paper toward her))

72 What– what does this guy do?

73 ((pointing to character in Chuck’s drawing))

74 (0.6)

75 Chuck: He slams the ground

76 ((hits table gently with fist))

77 Teacher: Okay.

78 And what does this guy do?

79 ((points to character in drawing))

80 Chuck: He roller skates and puts out ( )

81 ((brings both hands together))

82 Teacher: Okay.

83 And what does this guy do?

84 ((points to character in drawing))

85 Chuck: Um he chews um through um metal and (anything)

86 Teacher: Okay.

87 So if you were gonna add on–

88 ((leans up onto knees))

89 Chuck: (.) on him

90 ((leans forward and points to character on paper))

91 Teacher: “if you were gonna make this a two-pa:ger.

92 ((points to bottom of page))
Could you tell me what these guys do?
((points to each character, then looks at Chuck))

Chuck: ((nods head yes))

Teacher: Could you?

Maier assisted Chuck’s writing process by asking a series of questions about story details. She assumed that Chuck had the necessary information to add on to his text and she used the questions to scaffold his putting these details into the story. She again used an IRE discourse structure to elicit story details. Unlike common IRE interactions, however, she did not already know the answer to her questions and Chuck was not being asked to recite someone else’s knowledge (Nystrand, 1997). She was guiding his participation as an author and a writer through questions designed to add more detail. She acknowledged his expertise in the following interchange:

Excerpt 2.4:

Teacher: All right.
((leans forward and puts new paper down in front of Chuck))

Teacher: You wanna tell me what they do?
((pointing to paper))

Teacher: You tell me what they do=
((puts hands on paper with emphasis as she stands up))

Chuck: ((nods head yes))

Teacher: =And raise your hand and I’ll come over and check it out
((walks to other side of table))

This is gonna be fantastic

I’m gonna— I’m gonna be an expert on Street Sharks
((sitting down with Tom))

Cause [you’re gonna tell me all about ’em]

(((points to Chuck, then turns her body toward Tom)))

Chuck’s knowledge about these television characters was enthusiastically celebrated and used as a source of learning for the teacher. She respected his choice as an author to use topics from children’s culture (i.e., a children’s television show) and looked forward to what he had to teach her about the characters (Dyson, 1997). Chuck’s expertise was highlighted and praised in lines 118-120 (“I’m gonna be an expert on Street Sharks ‘caus you’re gonna tell me all about ‘em”). This celebration of his knowledge was also overheard by other students at the table group, telling them that what they have to say will be valued in similar ways (Larson, 1997). This interaction provided an example of how Maier challenged her students to expand their texts beyond their current borders (Dyson, 1997) through question-asking strategies. This study corroborates research that has illustrated that how well students write and
how much they progress depends on how much choice they have in selecting topics and forms of assistance (Freedman, 1995).

This pattern of scaffolding revision through question-asking (Palincsar, Brown, & Campione, 1993) was consistently modeled across activities, most explicitly in the questions/revision segment of modeled writing. The following excerpt illustrates how the students took up this language practice in their spontaneous conferences with each other.

**Peer Revision**

Interaction around writing activity can provide information about children's internal processes (Daiute, Campbell, Griffin, Reddy, & Tivnan, 1993). In this classroom moments of spontaneous interaction during student writing time offered insight into what students were thinking about when writing and what they may have taken from the teacher's modeled writing. Maier did not have a structured peer conference time in her classroom; however, she created a context in which student interaction with text and with one another was actively co-constructed. Her rule, "read to three then me," fostered a learning community within which conversations about each others' writing were an essential part of the learning process. Students had control over their own interactions and could therefore benefit from each other's expertise in the development of their own composing strategies (Daiute, 1993).

In the following example Abigail was sitting at her table group composing her story about what happened in gym class and had paused to reread her text thus far (lines 1–2). Abigail, a student the teacher considered to be of average writing ability, was one of the six children selected to be a focus of the study. I attached a lapel microphone to her shirt and videotaped interaction at her table. Tom, seated immediately to her left, had been sitting for a minute without writing, seemingly thinking about what to write. He moved closer to Abigail as he asked her for an idea about what to add to his story ("How do you think I can write after this," line 3). She did not initially stop writing to assist him so he read his story (line 7) as it was at that point, then reformulated his question ("What do you think I can write after it," line 9) and put his paper in front of her.

**Excerpt 3:**

1 Abigail: <Put it on the>:= 
2 ((rereading her story))
3 Tom: How do you think I can write after this. –
4 ((scoots closer to Abigail))
5 Abigail: =1[bu (. ) bo:]r
6 =1[(looking down, sounding out next word as she writes)])
7 Tom: =1[I got a army man.]  
8 =1[(stands up, lifts paper and taps it with his pencil)]
9 What do you think I can write after it.  
10 =1[(places paper in front of Abigail)]
11 Abigail: =1[(stops writing and looks at Tom’s paper)]
Abigail paused for a full three seconds as she pondered his text (line 12). Her response ("Where'd you get it?") is evidence that she had taken up the practice in this classroom of assisting revision with question-asking modeled in the question/revision segment of the teacher's modeled writing activity. She did what she had overheard Maier do in other teacher-student conferences, as well as what she had experienced in conferences with Maier in her role as author. Furthermore, it was a question designed to elicit more story detail, specifically about the story setting, taking into account information a reader would need to comprehend Tom's story. She, like Maier, assumed Tom had this information and assisted him in bringing it out, then firmly told him to "write that down" (line 18). Abigail was teacher, author, and co-author in this interaction, demonstrating the complex and overlapping nature of participation roles available in this classroom. This interaction, like countless others observed, demonstrated that given a rich social, linguistic, and literate context, first graders can help each other write in sophisticated ways.

The discourse structure of this segment reflected the more conversational pattern described earlier (Gutierrez, 1993; Nystrand, 1997). Tom initiated the interaction with his question in line 3-10. Abigail responded by stopping her writing, pausing, and asking a question in lines 11-13 to which Tom responded in turn. Her directive ("write that down," line 18) served both as an evaluation of his story addition and an initiation of further action. Tom responded non-vocally by writing down the story detail she suggested (line 20). The direction of his story was thus dependent upon the interaction with Abigail (Daiute et al., 1993).

Discussion
In this article I describe Maier's afternoon writing time in detail to demonstrate how authorship processes were modeled by the teacher and taken up by the students through shifts in participation roles. Analysis of shifts in the participant roles of teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer reveal a dynamic and flexible participation framework that mediated co-authorship as a co-constructed language process. Text and text meaning were interactionally negotiated in the participation framework of writing activity through an ongoing conversation about authorship (Dyson, 1997). Changes in participation and responsibility for writing were facilitated by a flexible participation framework within which the teacher and
students jointly participated in meaningful literacy activity. Learning to be an author was thus linked to learning to become a community member through which students learned a relationship to text, to each other, and to the world through writing and authorship.

Good technique is necessary but not sufficient in the teaching of writing and there was more than good technique going on in Maier’s classroom. This “something more” refers to Maier’s conception of learning to write as an ever-evolving and ongoing process of participation in a community of authors. Making meaning in her classroom was not an individual process of text ownership (Dyson, 1997) but a dialogic process rooted in interaction with and around text (Erickson, 1996; Nystrand, 1997). If literacy learning is an interactive social practice mediated by flexible participation frameworks, then it is possible to construct a classroom context in which the social construction of literacy knowledge is negotiated between teachers and students and among students on multiple levels.

Analysis of this classroom’s participation framework in writing activity showed how the process of learning to write was socially constructed and how the students’ gradual appropriation (Wertsch, 1999) of both the teacher’s instructional goal of fluency and the students’ emerging goals for their own writing occurred. As students gained in writing competence they more regularly shifted roles in the participation framework, thereby changing their participation from author to co-author to teacher, for example, as they assisted one another in text construction. Thus, examining how the relationship of language and writing activity is linked to these changing roles or stances that participants assume during writing contributes to current understanding of writing process classrooms by describing how the participation framework mediated co-authorship (Atwell, 1998; Calkins, 1994; Dyson, 1997). Furthermore, this detailed examination of the dynamic teaching of writing conventions in the context of authorship and co-authorship processes contributes to calls for a shift in discussions about decontextualized methods to more meaningful discussions about the role of language, culture, and society in literacy learning (Coles, 1998; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Turner, 1997; Luke, 1998).

I have presented discourse data from Maier’s first grade classroom to show how the social context for literacy learning allowed both the teacher and the students to come to know one another as interested and engaged partners in a literacy learning adventure (Nystrand, 1997). Maier’s classroom was a place where “language learning takes place in a coherent, sensible, predictable, purposeful environment in which coherent, sensible, predictable, purposeful language is being used—not practiced—both with and in front of the learner” (Edelsky, 1996, p. 148). Maier and her students constructed a vibrant context for learning in which the authorship processes of all members were resources for learning and formed the basis of a language arts curriculum.
that both challenged and scaffolded children's learning to write (Gutierrez et al., 1997; Rose, 1995). The teacher's modeled writing activity, teacher-student conferences, and peer conferences were mutually constituted and as such contributed to students' growing understanding about authorship processes. Understanding how such a dynamic context for literacy learning is coconstructed in interaction will help literacy researchers more fully understand how literacy as a social practice is meaningfully practiced in classrooms (Baynham, 1995; Bloome & Bailey, 1992; Luke, 1994). Furthermore, this analysis contributes to writing process literature by expanding current understanding of the workshop approach to include how the teacher's authorship is modeled in classroom interaction.

Authors' Note

The research reported in this paper was assisted in part by a grant from the Spencer Foundation. The data presented, the statements made, and the views expressed are solely the responsibility of the authors. We thank the anonymous reviewers of this article for their insightful comments. Finally, we thank Kris Gutierrez, Elinor Ochs, Barbara Rogoff, and Alessandro Duranti for the vision of language and literacy learning in which this research is grounded. Send correspondence to Joanne Larson, Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development 1-106E Dewey Hall, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627; email: johntro@rochester.edu.

References


---

*Co-Authoring Classroom Texts*