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Indexing instruction: the social construction of the participation framework in kindergarten journal-writing activity

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this article is to discuss the ways in which the participation framework of writing activity is socially constructed over the course of interaction. Using data from an ethnographic study of kindergarten journal-writing activity, the author demonstrates how, over time, both the teacher and the students in this classroom community socialize each other to discrete roles within the instructional participation framework, thus creating a normative structure for participation in classroom literacy activity. The article focuses specifically on the ways in which the teacher indirectly indexes her instructional goal of independent writing. In this classroom, then, the participation framework constitutes and is constituted by, the linguistic context within which learning to write is socially mediated.

KEY WORDS: indexicality, language socialization, literacy, participation framework, socially mediated learning, writing

INTRODUCTION

Current dyad-based classroom language and literacy practices commonly position students not as active participants in the social construction of literacy but as passive consumers of a static body of literacy knowledge. Within these classrooms, literacy is defined as a reified set of 'neutral' competencies autonomous of social context (Street, 1995). In this article, I argue for a reconceptualization of classroom language and literacy practices from perceptions of participation as primarily dyadic to an understanding of participation as constituting more expanded multiparty participation frameworks that allow for flexible access to the social construction of literacy knowledge. I argue that changing the ways in which students participate in school-based literacy practices to allow for more flexible participation frameworks socializes students to more democratic participation in classrooms and in the larger society. This reconceptualiza-

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tion attempts to disrupt monolithic definitions of literacy by challenging the sanctity of exclusively dyadic (teacher/student) interaction in classrooms (Larson, 1996).

Specifically, I describe how the participation framework of kindergarten journal writing activity constitutes a shared indexical ground within which the profoundly social process of learning to write may occur. Furthermore, I examine how the participation framework contributes to the social construction of an indexical context in which students and teacher construct and interpret text in activity. The concept of indexicality used here is grounded in language socialization theory and is defined as the relationship of properties of speech to cultural contexts (such as the participation framework) and how this relationship constitutes particular stances and acts in activity (Ochs, 1992). Thus, this article explores how the participation framework is socially constructed over time and how, using linguistic and gestural patterns, both the teacher and students in this classroom community socialize each other to discrete roles within the instructional participation framework, thereby creating a normative structure for participation in writing activity.

Data are drawn from an ethnographic study of kindergarten journal-writing activity that examined how a context for the social distribution and appropriation of literacy knowledge was constituted in situated participation frameworks. Using Goffman's (1981) notion of a participation framework as a language structure that organizes and is organized by talk, this earlier study found that participants assumed varied and discrete roles, or footings, within the participation framework. By shifting these roles, literacy knowledge and writing expertise was socially distributed (Larson, 1995a). As a result, student journal entries became community constructions as each participant drew on the knowledge that emerged in multiparty talk and interaction and incorporated this public knowledge into their written stories (Larson, 1995b).

Five interconnected roles were identified in the participation framework of journal-writing activity that contributed to this knowledge distribution process: teacher/scribe, primary author, overhearer, peripheral respondent, and pivot (Larson, 1995b). In the role of *teacher/scribe*, the teacher is available for the student authors as they each finish drawing their story and express to her that they are ready for her to write with them. As scribe, she writes their dictated story for them to copy into their journal. The *primary author* is the student whose dictation the teacher is currently taking. The pairing of the teacher/scribe and the primary author constitutes the *primary dyad*. As the primary dyad is established, the role of the peripheral participants, such as overhearer, becomes a requisite position in the participation framework. *Overhearers* are those students who are seated at the journal-writing table and who listen in on the talk and interaction as each primary author publicly writes her or his story (Heritage, 1985). The roles of peripheral respondent and pivot (Goffman, 1981) emerge as the interaction evolves and is transformed from primarily dyadic to more multiparty participation frameworks. The *peripheral respondent* role can be filled by one

or more students who answer questions posed to the primary author by the teacher from a position outside of the predominantly dyadic interactional space between the teacher/scribe and the primary author. The *pivot* may emerge from both the peripheral respondent role and from the role of over-hearer as knowledge that is placed on the conversational floor is brought into further interactions or into written journal entries (Larson, 1995b). These roles are mutually constituted and emerge over time in daily interaction, thereby forming the normative participation framework, or shared indexical ground, of this writing activity.

In this article, I argue that the participation framework that evolves in this particular classroom represents what Hanks (1990) has termed a symmetrical indexical ground and, as a result, highly inferential instructional indexes can be used by the teacher. The relative symmetry of the indexical context, or shared body of knowledge and experience that is constituted in the participation framework, is a function of the relation between participants. Hanks's (1990: 48) Principle of Relative Symmetry states that 'the more symmetric the indexical ground (the more interactants already share at the time of utterance), the more deictic oppositions are available for making reference (the greater the range of choice among distinct deictics)'. In other words, when there is high relative symmetry, the participation framework as indexical context represents a choice of footings (Goffman, 1981) available for students to participate in the activity or to interpret meaning. The participation framework becomes a 'field of reference maximally accessible to all participants' (Hanks, 1990: 49). Bourdieu (1983: 344) describes a field as a space of positions and position taking that presents itself to each participant as a range of possibilities, or a 'space of possibles'. In this classroom, text is socially constructed and mediated by language as students shift roles within this sociocultural field. Thus, the range of participant roles available to the students is one factor that determines the nature of the participation framework that evolves. In this way, participation frameworks emerge as situated language structures that mediate the writing process in face-to-face interaction over time.

The participation framework in this writing activity, therefore, represents the range of roles available for students to assume while writing. This sociocultural field regulates students' access to the dictation frame (Goffman, 1974) by determining the principles of legitimization in which given forms of engagements are acceptable (Garfinkel, 1972). From the beginning of the school year, the teacher has established explicit and implicit entry rules for this activity that regulate access to direct participation. For example, children are required to rest their hands on her shoulder if they want to talk to her or show her their work. On several occasions there were as many as eight students standing with their hands on her shoulder waiting their turn. However, the utterances of peripheral respondents are tolerated and sometimes ratified. Thus, the teacher implicitly legitimizes a larger, more public interactional space (Heras, 1993) within which peripheral participation is accepted.

The highly symmetrical indexical ground of journal-writing activity has

been constructed over time in this classroom through joint participation of teacher and students. Furthermore, due to the socially constructed and consensual nature of the participation framework, the teacher can use this mutually understood interactional field as an intersubjective space within which indirect indexicals may be used to accomplish her instructional goal. Thus, the participation framework of this journal-writing activity serves as a layered construct in which multiple participation frameworks may be interconnected in the sociocultural field of the classroom. Indexes, then, are socially constructed in relation to a sociocultural system or field of which the participation framework is a part (Hanks, 1990). In other words, in order to determine the reference of a given utterance, it must be grounded to an indexical field (Hanks, 1990). I argue that the participation framework of this particular writing activity is one indexical field that constitutes a profoundly social context for the teaching and learning of writing.

In this classroom, the teacher uses the students' understanding of the participation framework to instruct peripheral as well as primary students at the writing table about writing and about behavioral issues.¹ She understands that the students are listening in on dyadic or triadic interaction and often deliberately uses this social space as an opportunity for learning (Heritage, 1985). The students are also aware that the teacher is listening to their interactions, as evidenced by shifts in her attention as she responds to various interruptions from students and other adults present. In this way, the teacher and the students are speakers/hearers/overhearers as they jointly participate in journal-writing activity.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

This article draws on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework grounded in theories of language socialization, linguistic anthropology, discourse analysis, and sociocultural theories of learning (Duranti, 1997; Duranti and Goodwin, 1992; Fairclough, 1992; Goodwin, M., 1990; Gutierrez, 1992, 1994; Ochs, 1988; Rogoff, 1994; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986) in the analysis of face-to-face classroom interaction. Recognizing learning to write as a complex sociocultural process is grounded in an understanding of language socialization (Ochs, 1988) as a process by which children gain understanding of the sociocultural organization of their everyday lives (values, beliefs, social structure) through participation in language activities.

Examining how the relationship of language to writing activity is linked to changing roles or stances that participants assume during writing (Ochs, 1992) contributes to an understanding of how the production and comprehension of text are interactionally negotiated in context (Nystrand, 1989). This theoretical perspective, termed *ethnopragmatics* (Duranti, 1994), relies on *ethnography* to illuminate the ways in which language is both constituted by and constitutive of social interaction. By viewing language as embedded in the context of human action, this study attempts to make sense out of the talk surrounding writing activity and to examine the var-

iety of ways in which language is used to accomplish understanding and action in the profoundly social process of learning to write.

This language socialization process can best be described through analysis of discourse in order to determine the characteristics of particular activities in particular sociocultural settings. Ochs (1988: 8) defines discourse as a 'set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating linguistic structures to context, which speaker-hearers draw on and modify in producing and interpreting language in context'. Discourse is used here to describe what Bakhtin (1981, 1986) terms a social language that has a particular speech genre. Bakhtin's unit of analysis focused on the utterance as an active representative of the voice or voices that are reflected in and produced from an organized sociocultural context, such as schools and classrooms. It is through the identification and characterization of this social language that it is possible to determine *how* discourse both reflects and creates sociocultural contexts (Wertsch, 1991).

Bakhtin (1986) viewed language, the utterance in particular, as a social phenomenon. The utterance is always oriented towards others, that is, an utterance is always dialogic as it implies an addressee. It is, as a result, mutually constructed and collaboratively composed in this interactional space. Bakhtin (1981) argues that there are three participants in a discourse activity: the speaker, the listener, and the language. Language, in turn, represents the multiple voices of others as it brings to the activity the ontological plurality and dynamic diversity that Bakhtin characterizes as heteroglossia. According to Bakhtin (1981: 345), 'One's own discourse is gradually and slowly wrought out of others' words that have been acknowledged and assimilated, and the boundaries between the two are at first scarcely perceptible'. Language, therefore, is a socially shared semi-otic medium for both the individual and the culture and is shaped by context and by larger cultural and historical factors (Himley, 1991). It is through language, then, that social interaction is mediated and becomes the means for literacy learning as children and adults participate together in activity.

In classrooms, students gain discourse knowledge through interpreting how language indexes aspects of the sociocultural context such as the teacher's instructional goals for writing activity (Ochs, 1988). It is the combination of indexes, or collocational indexing (Ferguson, 1977), that narrows the indexical scope within which students interpret the teacher's instructional goals. In other words, how indexes interact to signal contextual information constitutes the context for learning (Ochs, 1988).

There are multiple ways in which the teacher indexes instruction. She uses pitch variation, opening utterances that frame interactional sequences (interrogatives, imperative, and other forms of directives), repetition, shifts in register, simplification, indirection, body position, and eye gaze (Goodwin, 1981). This article focuses specifically on the teachers' use of indirection to index her instructional goal of independent writing.

DICTATED JOURNAL WRITING

The focal event

This article presents data drawn from an ethnographic study of novice writers in kindergarten. The classroom context for this study is a K–5 elementary school (kindergarten to grade five) serving approximately 600 students from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and which is located in a small community embedded in the larger metropolis of Los Angeles. The morning language arts period was observed once a week throughout the academic year. Journal-writing activity was videotaped weekly beginning in January. Participant observer field notes were taken during these observations, informal and formal interviews of both the teacher and the students were conducted throughout the study, and children's written products were collected after each observation.

Transcriptions of videotaped observations serve as the primary data base for analysis of classroom discourse (Figures 1–7 are extracts from the videotapes which explains the slightly blurred images). Transcription conventions derived from Atkinson and Heritage (1984) were used in transforming these data into text.² Transcription of discourse, or the process of inscribing social action (Duranti, 1997), enables the micro-analysis of how language use among activity participants influences the writing process. Non-vocal, vocal, and timing features were all transcribed and treated as additional evidence of children's developing communicative competence (Ochs, 1979). In this way, a record of the interaction between participants in writing activity is created. This inscription of talk and interaction is an abstraction of complex phenomena that represents what is of theoretical and analytical focus in this study (Duranti, 1997; Ochs, 1979).

The writing activity chosen for focused analysis is a dictated journal-writing activity that typically occurs immediately following the morning reading time each day. The teacher, Janet, hands out journals to each student and directs them to one of two large tables available for journal writing. Janet has designed her role in this activity to serve as scribe for students' daily journal entries and, as students gain in writing competence over the course of the school year, she gradually decreases this role, handing over responsibility for writing to the students. She scaffolds this move to independence by writing the student's story on a sentence strip from which the students then copy into their journal. The teacher reports in interviews that around January things 'start getting real exciting' because the students have gained competence in their writing and some have begun to try to write on their own, both in the dictated journal writing activity and other more loosely structured writing activities that are available throughout the day. As mentioned, there are implicit and explicit norms that regulate interaction in this writing activity that, over time, become a normative structure through which the children are socialized to accepted practices of participation. The resulting participation framework constituted the linguistic context for learning in this particular writing activity.

The teacher's articulated goal of this activity is to move the students

toward independent writing. Janet stated that 'my basic goal is to get them writing on their own, that's my goal' and defined independent writing as writing 'how an adult would write'. She described her role as providing an environment within which each student's own writing process is valued and where she can 'show the adult model if I need to but my role is to nurture what they already have inside of them'. Thus, Janet's instructional goal was embedded in her belief that children come to school with emergent literacy skills, i.e. knowledge about the purposes of print, knowledge about letters and their associated sounds, having had lap reading experience at home, and having begun to experiment with writing.

This orientation to the social processes involved in writing allowed a focused view of the dynamic social process of learning to write in a classroom where the teacher as expert is 'contingently responsive' (Wells and Chang-Wells, 1992) to the needs of the novice writers. In other words, the teacher has designed her role as a responsive participant to the students' varying social and cognitive needs. In the following section, I describe how the participation framework is constructed in interaction. In a later section, I discuss more specifically how the teacher uses indirection to index her instructional goal.

Establishing the primary dyad³

The primary dyad, or teacher/scribe and primary author, serves as the starting point of the emerging participant roles in this activity and begins the dictation process. Students indicate their readiness to dictate their stories in a variety of ways, including eye gaze, body position and direct verbal request for assistance. The primary dyad is established as the teacher identifies a primary author, or student who is ready to dictate her or his story, then arranges the environment so as to establish a predominantly dyadic interactional space. The teacher moves to position herself next to the author and closes off the physical space by lowering her body and shifting her body position to face the student. These gestures, in combination with verbal statements, orient students' attention to the tools of writing, specifically the journal page itself. The teacher then begins her role as scribe as she writes the story of the primary author on a sentence strip.

This teacher typically indirectly indexes writing instruction by establishing the dictation frame through routinized opening utterances (e.g. 'Is anybody ready?'), eye gaze, and gesture (e.g. bending over one student who is currently writing, see Figure 1). While only one student at a time, the primary author, receives direct instruction from the teacher, peripheral participants respond to the teacher's indexicals of instruction by taking up complementary roles such as overhearer, peripheral respondent and pivot. In the following excerpt, the teacher is distributing journals to students while several have begun to draw or write in their journals. She identifies Joseph as the next student ready for dictation, opens the sequence by asking 'Are you ready sir' (line 1), and walks over to where he is sitting and kneels down on the floor next to him.

FIGURE 1: Establishing the primary dyad.

Excerpt 1a

- 1 Teacher: **Are you ready sir**
 2 **((looking at Joseph's journal as she kneels down))**
 3 Joseph: Yeah
 4 **((looking down at his paper))**
 5 Teacher Okay
 6 **((begins to look through previous pages))**
 7 (2.1)
 8 You wanna go back and look at some of your other pages,
 or do you want to start on this one.
 9 **((lowers her body, leans in closer to Joseph and looks**
directly at his face))
 10 Joseph: [I'll ()]
 11 **((taps pencil on page of journal as he indicates where))**

Managing multiple dyads

While this interaction is predominantly dyadic, the dynamic nature of the talk and the overlapping, simultaneous occurrence of all of the participant roles puts the teacher in the position of managing multiple dyads. Students

call for her attention, respond as peripheral respondents and overhearers in the course of the interaction. In order to achieve her goal of finishing all the students' journal entries, she must focus her attention on the primary author while not shutting out the other participants. She accomplishes this goal by shifting her attention to other students in what is termed *dyadic turns*. The teacher briefly shifts her attention from the primary dyad to answer a question, give directions and/or instructions, or talk to another adult. For example, the teacher may maintain a verbal dyad but shift her eye gaze to the peripheral respondent. In addition, the primary author may also direct her eye gaze to the peripheral respondent in a non-verbal triadic participation framework.

Excerpt 1b

- 12 Student: [Mrs Taylor I'm do↑ne]
 13 [(from off camera))
 14 Teacher: Okay
 15 ((sits up, reaches in front of Joseph for sentence strip while looking ahead))
 16 (2.0)
 17 Student: (Teacher I'm done)
 18 ((from off camera))
 19 Teacher: °I'll be with you in a minute°
 20 ((looks at student off camera as she brings back the sentence strip))
 21 (2.1)
 22 °Okay°
 23 ((folds elbows on table, lowers body and looks at Joseph))

In excerpt 1b, one student, who is off camera, twice states 'I'm done' (lines 12, 17). After the second utterance, the teacher states quietly 'I'll be with you in a minute' (line 19) as she turns to look at the student. She quickly turns to look back at the sentence strip she has brought to complete the journal entry, thereby continuing the flow of interaction with Joseph. This brief shift in attention was found to be a common occurrence as the teacher attempted to manage the variety of overlapping student demands for her attention.

Peripheral participants

The talk that occurs between the teacher/scribe and the primary author during journal writing activity takes place in the 'visual and auditory range of persons who are not ratified participants and whose access to the encounter, however minimal, is itself perceivable by the official participants' (Goffman, 1981: 132). This participation status is referred to here as peripheral participant. Peripherality is linked to limited access and involvement in a practice as a point of departure in the process of apprenticeship and learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991). In the position of peripheral participant, three roles emerge: pivot, peripheral respondent, and overhearer. In other words, participation in journal writing goes beyond a teacher/student dyad to include a range of peripheral participants.

In the role of pivot,⁴ a student opens interaction between participants and distributes literacy knowledge from the primary dyad to other activity participants, thereby redefining their status from overhearers to interlocutors and establishing a secondary dyadic frame in relation to the primary dyad. The pivot expands the nature of the participation structure by expanding opportunities for participation and access to the social construction of literacy knowledge. The role of pivot, in particular, is used as a point of departure for interpretation of the text by overhearers as additional participation frameworks emerge in the activity. In this way, students draw on the talk about text offered by the pivot as a resource for their writing (Larson, 1995b).

In the following excerpt, Hannah has been closely following interaction in the primary dyad and has made numerous attempts to enter into the interaction by responding to questions the teacher has posed to Mary, the primary author. While Hannah remains in the larger activity frame of journal writing, she does not breach the dyadic frame at this point in the interaction. Subsequently, she turns to a student, John (see Figure 2, and Excerpt 2, lines 5, 6), seated across the table and includes him in a discussion of the letter 'B,' a topic that she has carried over from listening in on interaction in the primary dyad.

FIGURE 2: Pivot as distributor of literacy knowledge.

Excerpt 2

- 1 Teacher: And then bird (.) what letter does that begin with
- 2 Mary: Be
- 3 (*((looking at the place where the teacher wrote the letter))*)
- 4 Teacher: Be- B
- 5 Hannah: **B-[be-ber- ber- B**
- 6 (*[((looks across the table to John))*
- 7 John: **[Bu (.) bu (.) balls]**
- 8 (*[((stops writing and looks at Hannah))*
- 9 Mary: [Wants to]
- 10 (*((points to her paper as she continues her dictation))*)
- 11 Hannah: Ball start with B
- 12 (*((looks back to the Teacher and Mary))*)

In this example, Hannah takes the letter 'B' from the neighboring dyad (teacher/Mary) and offers it across the table to John, who takes up her utterance by repeating, then elaborating the letter sound. In this conversational move, Hannah establishes herself in the role of pivot. In line 7, John takes up the topic of the letter 'B' as the exchange is completed (Larson, 1995b).

In the role of peripheral respondent a student engages in what Goffman (1981) refers to as crossplay, or communication across interactional boundaries. As peripheral respondent, the students respond to questions posed to the primary author by the teacher. As mentioned, the teacher may actively ignore or tolerate these responses or briefly shift to vocally or non-vocally ratify the response. Over time, the students have been socialized to acceptable behavior during writing and to the appropriate times and methods for gaining access to the teacher and, in doing so, create a normative structure that governs participation in this classroom.

In the following excerpt, the teacher has begun Peter's dictation. She is kneeling on the floor next to him as she writes, while Reid is writing in his journal directly across the table from them (see Figure 3). The first sentence of Peter's story is "The daddy was riding on the freeway" and as the teacher finishes sounding out "the", she asks Peter if he can write "daddy" (line 3). Upon hearing Peter's negative response ("Uh 'daddy' no") in line 6, Reid, sitting across the table from them but looking down at his own paper, says the first letter, "D" (line 11) and is subsequently incorporated into the interaction.

Excerpt 3

- 1 Teacher: Okay T:::H:::
- 2 (*((writing the letters on sentence strip))*)
- 3 can you write "daddy"
- 4 (*((looks at Peter))*)
- 5 (2.0)
- 6 Peter: Uh "daddy" no
- 7 (*((looks at teacher and shakes his head no))*)
- 8 Teacher: all right
- 9 do you know what it [starts with]
- 10 (*((looks at Peter))*)
- 11 Reid: **['D']**

in addressing the primary author, the teacher addresses the whole group (cf. Heritage, 1985). The normative nature of the participation framework creates, in effect, a shared indexical context (Hanks, 1990) within which participants' use of indirection becomes possible.

The role of overhearer is characterized by peripheral access to primary interaction and is representative of less than full participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991). From the position of overhearer, sub-sections of talk may be picked up and incorporated into the talk around their texts and may subsequently be incorporated into their stories. It is in this process of picking up knowledge peripherally that distribution of literacy knowledge and topical diffusion, or the distribution of story topics, can occur (Larson, 1995b).

FIGURE 4: Gaining access.

Primary interlocutor status requires a situated use of the body and an orientation of attention to the tools of accomplishing the journal entry, i.e. the paper, the pencil or crayon, and the written and spoken words. As Figure 4 illustrates, overhearers do not have direct access to this embodied process, but are in a position of peripheral access to interaction in the primary dyad in which the socially mediated process of learning to write originates. Consequently, text becomes a community construction that occurs through

both direct and peripheral access to primary action. In other words, peripheral participants contribute to the primary author's text in multiple ways and, simultaneously, interaction in the primary dyad contributes to the stories of the peripheral participants. Learning to write, then, is accomplished through the varying and overlapping participation frameworks that emerge in talk and interaction during this writing activity.

Furthermore, the frame grab illustrates both displayed and non-displayed attention to the primary dyad. Three students, Ashley, Rochelle, and Dana, openly display their attention to the teacher and Peter (the primary dyad) through eye gaze and body position. Ashley has leaned over her writing to look into the primary dyad, while Dana and Rochelle have simply stopped writing and are looking at the interaction from across the table.

Indirection as instructional index

Janet uses multiple indexes to indicate her instructional goal of independent writing. As the following example illustrates, the combination of gesture (high five) and shifts in register directly indexes approval or praise and simultaneously indirectly indexes the larger instructional goal of independent writing to the group as a whole. This layered indexical context socializes children to the particular epistemological value of independent writing defined by the teacher. Moreover, children are socialized to the norms and values of the academic discourse community of this classroom and of school, in general.

As the following interaction begins, the students have been working in their journals for a few minutes when the teacher approaches (Figure 5) and establishes the dictation frame by asking, "Anybody ready for some he↑lp" (line 1).

FIGURE 5: Establishing the dictation frame. FIGURE 6: Indexing approval.

Excerpt 4a

- 1 Teacher: **Anybody ready for some he↑lp**
 2 **((leans over student and looks around the table))**
 3 **(1.4)**
 4 **Anybody want to do all your own writing today?**
 5 **(0.8)**
 6 **and [we'll all help each other out]=**
 7 Helen: [I do]
 8 **((looking up at teacher))**
 9 Teacher: =.hhhuh↑
 10 **((turns to look at Helen, begins to walk toward her))**
 11 **.hhh:ohho:o**
 12 **((slaps a hi-five with Helen))**
 13 **<.hhh Helen Thomas is gonna do all her own writing>**
 14 **((Students around the table stop writing and look at teacher))**
 15 I gotta get my camera set up
 16 **(2.4)**

The teacher's second utterance ("Anybody want to do all your own writing today?", line 4) directly indexes her articulated instructional goal of independent writing. One student, Helen, immediately responds to the teacher's request ("I do", line 7) and is emphatically recognized as the teacher shifts to a playful key⁵ (Goffman, 1981) with an affective utterance ("...hhh:ohho:o", line 11) and gesture (slaps high five with Helen, see Figure 6). This shift in key and register combines to both directly index approval of Helen's desire to write on her own and indirectly index the larger instructional goal of independent writing. As Figure 6 illustrates, most of the students at the table have stopped writing to watch the interaction between the teacher and Helen. The next utterance, "...hhh Helen Thomas is gonna do all her own writing" (line 13), directly indicates to Helen that this is a desired activity and further, yet indirectly, indicates the value of independent writing to the whole group in the public instructional space established as normative in this classroom. Thus, multiple indexes (key, register, utterance) both directly and indirectly communicate the larger epistemological value of independence as the marker of "real" writing.

In the next sequence of utterances, two students, Joseph and Kathy, use repetition and intonation to index their understanding of the teacher's goal. It becomes quite clear that these students have understood the value of achieving the teacher's articulated goal of independent writing.

Excerpt 4b

- 17 Joseph: I'm gonna tr↑y and do it,
 18 **((looks up at teacher))**
 19 Kathy: I'm doing my own writing,
 20 **((turns to look at teacher, places elbow onto table))**
 21 Joseph I'm doing-
 22 **((looking up at teacher))**
 23 Teacher: Cause I take magical moments
 24 **((standing))**
 25 Kathy: I'm gonna do all my own writing.
 26 **((sitting up and looking at the teacher))**

- 27 Joseph: I'm gonna try and do-
 28 ((*looking up at teacher, waving pencil in his right hand*))
 29 (0.4)
 30 [do my own writing]
 31 ((*looks down at paper*))
 32 Kathy: [I'm gonna do all my own] writing now Mrs-
 33 ((*looking up at the teacher*))

Both Joseph and Kathy openly display their understanding through a combination of eye gaze, cessation of writing, shift in body position and direct utterance. They repeatedly state that they will do their own writing. The teacher does not ratify these utterances, however, and moves on to work with another student on her journal. There are many other occasions when these bids for her attention are ratified and, as a result, this particular absence of ratification does not disrupt students' understanding of the instructional goal nor does it stop them from trying to write on their own. Several other students at the table (Jeff, Reid, and Carlos) do not display their attention so openly; however, they have stopped working and are watching the interaction intently (see Figure 6). One other student, Dana, has not stopped working on her journal entry nor has she shifted her gaze. She is nonetheless an overhearer to this exchange and, as such, has access to the public instructional space within which the teachers' instructional goal is articulated.

Further evidence of the students' internalization of the teacher's instructional goal is seen later in the interaction. Joseph, one of the students who openly displayed his attention to the teacher's comments, begins to assert that he does not need the sentence strip to help him write. He proceeds to turn over the strip and act as though he is not using it. He does, however, need this scaffold and continues to write by turning the paper over to see which word to do next. He glances several times at the camera, knowing

FIGURE 7: Sneaking a look
 (*Joseph, third up on the right*).

which word to do next. He glances several times at the camera, knowing that his actions are being recorded and even jokes with Janet about how he is trying to keep his actions a secret. After several peeks at the paper, he slides it onto his lap and sneaks several looks at it as he continues to work on his journal entry (see Figure 7).

After finishing his writing, Joseph spent several minutes showing his journal to the teacher and the parent volunteer and stating that he did not need the sentence strip for assistance. They both knew he had been using it under the table, but offered praise for his efforts all the same. In fact, Joseph often did not finish his entry each day and this was one of very few times he had done so. The teacher focused her praise on the fact that he had indeed finished his entry this particular day, regardless of how it might have been accomplished. There was no mention of his actions nor were they defined as cheating; rather, emphasis was placed on praise for finishing his entry.

DISCUSSION

I have argued for a reconceptualization of classroom language and literacy practices to account for the valuable role talk and interaction play in the process of learning to write (Larson, 1995b, 1996). In order for the intermental processes of learning to be effective, teachers need to construct learning environments within which interaction between participants in literacy activity is the primary focus. In this article, I have claimed that one of the ways this profoundly social process can be accomplished is through the construction of a shared indexical context, such as the flexible participation framework seen in the classroom described here, within which text construction and meaning can be interactionally negotiated. The data cited provide a representative example of the level of indirection that may be used when a symmetrical indexical context is constructed. This intersubjective instructional space creates a common understanding of the meanings, limitation, and potential of literacy knowledge and suggests a reconstruction of writing curricula to account for the ways in which talk and interaction in general, and indexicality in particular, construct the context for learning to write. In this model, the role of the teacher is transformed from a Foucauldian panoptical observer (Foucault, 1977) seen in most classrooms to that of joint participant in the social construction of literacy knowledge.

The implications of joint participation for assessment are significant. When the teacher serves as an active co-participant in the construction of literacy knowledge, she is afforded unique opportunities to assess the evolution of each student's writing and to adjust the activity according to the needs of both the individual and the group. By actively co-participating in writing activity, then, the teacher is able to provide ongoing assessment of student learning in the course of interaction. Assessment of development in this context can be based, not only on standardized or decontextualized

tests of skills, but also on the student's progress through her or his zone of proximal development as participation increases and changes over time (Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). Co-participation in purposeful talk and interaction in language activities, therefore, provide teachers with valuable evidence of learning as students change the nature of their participation in writing activity, moving to more central participation. Thus, assessment moves beyond simply examining formative or summative processes to provide the teacher with intimate knowledge of student learning that is determined in the course of interaction. Furthermore, because the participation framework is dynamic and the teacher actively participates in writing activity, curriculum development becomes a dynamic socially constructed process that has the potential to be responsive to all the participants in activity.

Disrupting the current hegemonic discourse patterns of traditional literacy instruction requires an examination of how social definitions of appropriate participation internalized in kindergarten provide the constitutive rules for classroom interaction throughout schooling (Apple, 1990). By changing these interaction patterns educators can change the nature of knowledge construction in classrooms from transmission models still dominant today, though masked in the guise of process pedagogies, to socially mediated knowledge construction. Process-oriented pedagogies, often instantiated as collaborative learning, remain subject to transmission model indexical rules if teachers restrict participation to dyadic interaction. These patterns of participation control meaning, i.e. how meaning is constructed in schools, by whom, and for what. If the process of socialization into language and interactional practices of the larger society begins not only in the family (Ochs, 1988, 1992; Ochs and Taylor, 1992; Ochs et al., 1992; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986) or the community (Goodwin, M., 1990; Heath, 1983; Rogoff, 1990), but in the first years of schooling as children are socialized into the academic discourse community, then reconceptualizing patterns of participation can alter the regularities of interaction in schools and facilitate access to the social construction of literacy knowledge. I have argued for a reformulation of the social dynamics involved in the literacy learning process to account for a definition of literacy as the social practice of reading and writing that constitutes and is constituted by the social and linguistic practices of the larger society (Larson, 1996). Transforming patterns of interaction in classrooms will socialize students to a particular world view in which the teacher no longer serves as sole arbiter of knowledge, power, and authority but serves to facilitate the co-construction of literacy knowledge in more democratic participation frameworks.

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NOTES

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1. Analysis of the larger data set reveals that all participants in this writing activity were keyed into interaction in the primary dyad. See Larson (1995b) for a more elaborated discussion.
2. The following transcription conventions, adapted from Atkinson and Heritage (1984) are used in the examples given:
Colons denote sound stretch ("...hho:oh"). Brackets indicate overlapping speech. Equal signs indicate closely latched speech, or ideas, for example:

Teacher: and [we'll all help each other out]=

Helen: [I do]

Teacher: =.hhuuh↑

Intervals of silence are timed in tenths of seconds and inserted within parentheses; short, untimed silences are marked by a hyphen when sound is quickly cut off ("Mrs-") or with a period within parentheses (.). Rising intonation within an utterance is marked with an arrow ("he↑lp"); falling intonation at the end of an utterance is indicated with a period ("okay."). Degree symbols (°) indicate a whisper. Outward facing brackets (<>) indicate slowed utterance. Underlining indicates speaker's emphasis. Descriptions of speech or gesture are italicized within double parentheses ("((looking up at teacher))"). Single parentheses surround items of doubtful transcription. **Boldface** indicates items of analytic focus.

3. Portions of the following section discussing the construction of the participation framework appear in Larson (1997) as part of the conference proceedings of the First UCLA Conference of Language, Interaction, and Culture.
4. Portions of the section on pivot appear in Larson (1995b).
5. Key signals are social clues at the micro-level of language use that index the current mode of talk (Goffman, 1974). Goffman (1974) suggests five basic keys that indicate to participants 'what it is we think is really going on' (p. 45) as make-believe (of which playfulness is a part), contests, ceremonials, technical redosings and regroupings.

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