

Literacy and inclusion

Teaching for participation in a literacy-saturated society



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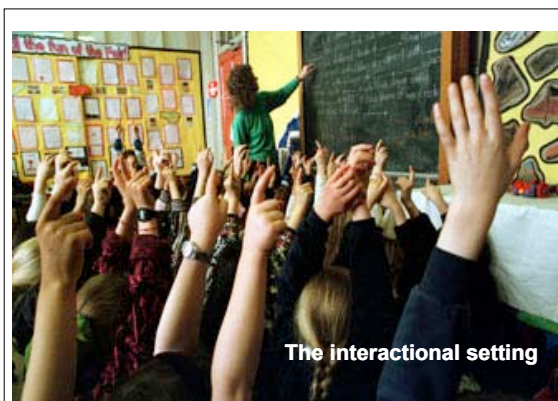
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My goals

- To frame questions about local and social inclusion with regard to literacy education in terms of three settings:
 - The interactional setting of the classroom
 - The literacy setting of English
 - The knowledge setting of increasing disciplinary variation
- To suggest some evidence-based recommendations about literacy for participation



"Teaching child to read"
Fresco, Pompeii,
1st Century CE/AD



The interactional setting

- 241 t *Well, how would you find out where it says SLOBBY?*
- 242 Jan *You'd look at SLOBBY*
- 243 t *Well how would you do that?*
- 244 s *Oh*
- 245 s *It's easy*
- 246 Jan *Find, find the, find a person, like Zak*
- 247 t *Yes, that's one way, you could go and ask Zak, because he knows how to write SLOBBY. But if Zak is busy, what else could you do?*
- 248 Jan *Look on the board*
- 249 t *Hmm, where would we look? Christine? No, just stay there and tell me darling. Hmm? There? Where?*
- 250 C *Next to the monster*

((Zak enters the group))

- 254 t *But how do you know that says SLOBBY?*
- 255 C *Because it has a 's'*
- 256 t *So does this one*
- 257 C *I know that//*
- 258 t *//so does this one*
- 259 Z *'Cause, 'cause they know 'cause it's got a 'b', two 'b's over there and a 'o'*
- 260 t *Oh, that's a good idea, Zak, yes you can look for some other sounds that you can hear. SLO::OBBY Good boy.*

- 41.T *Okay, page 3*
- 42.T *I HAD A MOUSE, IT RUNS*
- 43.T *Hang on, hang on, noo. Look at the first letter. IT RUNS ... ?*
- 44.S *()*
- 45.T */b/ /a/ /c/ /k/*
- 46.S *BACK*
- 47.S *BACK TO ITS HOUSE*
- 48.T *Alright*
- 52.S *I HAVE A RABBIT, IT JUMPS OUT OF ITS HOME.*
- T *Yeah, it's called a hutch, alright, a hutch, is its home. Okay,*
- 54.S *I HAVE A BIRD*
- 55.T *Ahh, stop, stop, bird?? how come it can't be bird? Katie*
- 56.K *Because, it's, it's a picture of ...*
- 57.T *No, but how come it can't say bird?*

58.S *It doesn't start with 'b'*
 59.T *Yeah, it starts with 'p' doesn't it. What sort of a bird starts with 'p'?*
 60.S *Pet*
 61.T *I HAD A PET, no:o, I HAD A//*
 62.R *//[parrot*
 63.T *No:o, I don't want you to call out Rachel. I know that you know. Now you've spoiled it for everyone else. Well we know now, don't we, a parrot, alright. It can't be bird because bird starts with 'b' alright? And this starts with 'p'. Alright I HAD A PARROT, right, let's read it together again*
 64.T+S *I HAD A PARROT, IT FLEW OUT THE WINDOW.*
 65.T *Ooh, it can't be window, - it starts with 'd'. Jessica said it. IT FLEW OUT THE...?*
 66.S *DOOR*
 67.T *Yeah, door, look at the picture. Alright, next page*

Some key features

e.g., from Freebody Ludwig and Gunn 1995, ch 4

- The rapidity of classroom life
- The shower of questions
- One gets it right, and on we go
- The mystery of purpose
- The rationale for the investment of work
- The assumption of optimal parents, houses, rooms, and time availability
- The potential fragmentation of curricular and pedagogic experience

Changing teacher practice? An e.g.

- Christine Edwards-Groves (2003)
- Focusing teachers' attention on the "participation structure"
- What changes would enhance you lessons as "settings for thought"?



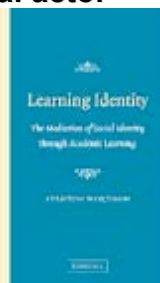
What the teachers found... and changed

- Pre- and post- framing: 'Why this?' 'Why this now?' and 'What's the goal?' – "letting them in on the secret"
- Regulatory talk cutting across the pedagogical line
- Too much 'what next?' for thinking
- Limited range of literacy resources

The joint agenda of identity: 'the learning/working social actor'



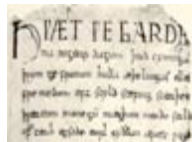
Wortham documents "the intertwining of subject matter, argument, evidence and academic learning with social identification, power relations and interpersonal struggles" in school (2006, p. 290)



Cracking and using the codes

- The peculiarity of English script:

- 44 sounds, 26 letters
- A “slippery mix” of morphemic and phonemic regularities
- >> strategic use of both analytic <> synthetic knowledge
- Unlike, say Chinese, the codes make up a ‘constrained skill set’



Part of *Beowulf*, written in Old English in about 700

Scott Paris (2005) on constrained skill sets



- They are learned (virtually) completely by (virtually) everyone over a relative short period of time (e.g., alphabetic knowledge, phonemic awareness, etc) VERSUS comprehension, vocabulary, genre control, etc)
- acquisition follows an “S”-shaped curve (roughly 3.6-8 years)

• standard parametric statistical procedures are not valid and can only appear valid for the short acquisition phase

Paris concluded:

- “unconstrained skills such as vocabulary and comprehension develop before, during, and after constrained skills are mastered so there is **no evidence** to warrant instructional priority of constrained skills over unconstrained skills.” (p. 200)
- “(the) risk is that policy-makers and the public may equate success on constrained skills with reading proficiency. This would create a **minimum competency** approach to reading assessment that does not adequately assess children’s emerging use and control of literacy.” (p. 201)

e.g., Kliever et al (2004) “Citizenship for all in the literate community”

- “How are preschool and kindergarten students who are labelled with moderate and significant disabilities supported as full, competent citizens of the dynamic literate community?”
- 9 inclusive classrooms, 213 children, 62 with disabilities
- Long-term observational, ethnographic study



Kliever et al found:

- students were encouraged to participate in imaginative, multimodal literacy experiences that incorporated opportunities to practice writing and phonemic awareness
- “By emphasizing a holistic vision of the literate community over rigid adherence to sequenced phonemic subskill mastery, teachers appeared to open up citizenship to young children who were traditionally excluded.” (p. 380)
- inclusive settings “appeared to be fundamental” for the literacy development of children with disabilities (p. 398)



The Knowledge Setting

Comprehension, textual repertoires, and critical text use

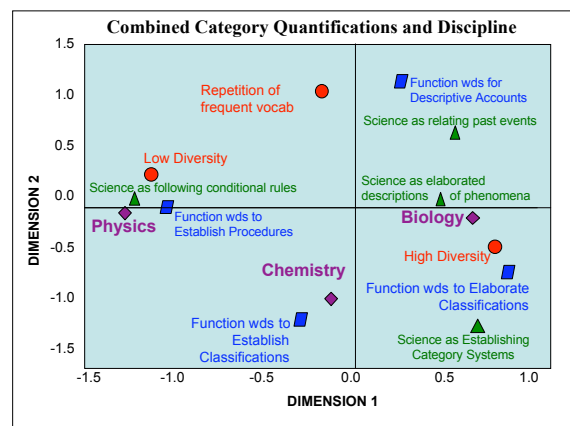
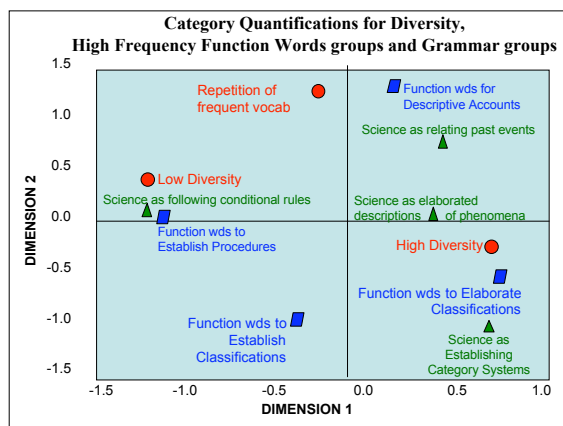
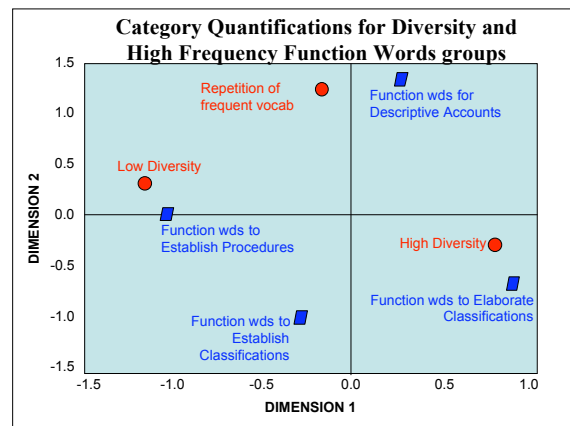
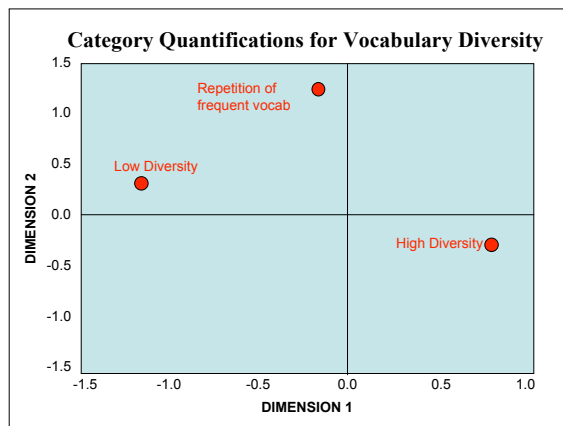
- The changing materials and demands of learning from and with texts as the school years progress
- How disciplines shape what comes to count as 'being literate' in the middle years



Example: A corpus text study

(Muspratt 2006; Freebody & Muspratt, in press)

- Sample of Science textbook chapters
- Unit is chapter (n=231)
- Physics, chemistry, biology (& miscellaneous: (measurement astronomy, scientific methods)
- 5 series x 3 each books = 15 books
- Yrs hi schl yrs 8-10 (first 3 years of high school in Queensland)
- Clustered on bases of vocabulary diversity (vs repetition), high frequency function wds, grammatical formations



Summarising the findings from Muspratt 2006

Physics:

- narrow range of vocabulary
- procedurally-based grammar
- ‘science’ as the logic of ‘if... then’
- schematic diagrams of abstract relations

Biology:

- wide range of vocabulary
- elaborative, descriptive grammar
- ‘science’ as elaborating actual objects and events
- depictions and photographs of actual living objects or parts of objects with the parts labeled



As the disciplines / curriculum areas grow apart in the middle school years ...

Freebody and Muspratt (in press) concluded

[The disciplines] have been resources for cutting beneath the surfaces of experience, gearing young people into an ‘explicable’ world beyond the touchstones of the tribe – commonsense and dogma. The literacy inquiry, therefore, concerns ... the linguistic, textual and interactional formats that vary across disciplinary formations.

The significance of writing...
...and agency



Teaching / enhancing ‘participatory literacy’

E.g., CIERA’s 10 research-based principles (& see CSR):

1. Purposeful, explicit teaching
2. Classroom interactions that support the understanding of specific texts
3. Start before children read and write conventionally
4. Teach the skills and strategies used by expert readers and writers
5. Analyse each text you wish to use to determine its appropriateness for particular students and strategies



... CIERA’s comprehension teaching principles continued

6. Build on knowledge, vocabulary and advanced language development
7. Routinely use texts from across all genres and school subjects
8. Focus on engagement and motivation
9. Use assessments that are explicitly targeted at informing instruction and monitoring students’ progress.
10. Provide ongoing teacher learning



So ... for a “participatory literacy” ?

- individual and collective responsibility for continuous learning (rather than the potential isolation of teaching)
- optimism in the face of the rigors of literacy learning and excitement at its immense consequences (rather than a fear of the time and effort that it might take)



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