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AUTHORS, TEXT, AND TALK:
THE INTERNALIZATION OF DIALOGUE FROM
SOCIAL INTERACTION DURING WRITING

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Sarah J. McCarthey

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**AUTHORS, TEXT, AND TALK:
THE INTERNALIZATION OF DIALOGUE
FROM SOCIAL INTERACTION DURING WRITING**

By

Sarah J. McCarthey

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ABSTRACT

AUTHORS, TEXT, AND TALK: THE INTERNALIZATION OF DIALOGUE FROM SOCIAL INTERACTION DURING WRITING

By

Sarah J. McCarthey

The purpose of this study was to investigate what students internalized from the dialogue that occurs during the writing period in a process writing classroom. Using a social constructivist theoretical perspective, the study focused on four students from culturally diverse backgrounds who participated in a fifth/sixth-grade classroom in New York City. In this classroom, the teacher used literature in her lessons, focusing on the qualities of good writing, and conducted individual writing conferences with students. Students kept notebooks of their personal experiences and reflections and then selected from those to create a project for a larger audience.

Methods of data collection drew from interpretive/qualitative traditions. Sources of data included: (a) videotaped and audiotaped observations of classroom interactions; (b) interviews with the teacher; (c) interviews with the case study students; (d) students' texts; and (e) an intervention in which students conducted writing conferences with younger students. Analyses were derived from case study, ethnographic, and sociolinguistic sources (e.g., such features as body language and proxemic cues, conversational moves by the teacher and student, and prosodic cues were used to examine the teacher-student writing conferences). Results are presented in the form of (a) classroom themes and patterns of interaction; (b) individual cases of the students; and (c) comparative cases.

The comparative cases of students suggest that what the students internalized from the dialogue was related to the quality of scaffolding provided by the teacher and their

developing intersubjectivity with the teacher. The dialogue from the classroom interactions was more likely to reemerge in students' talk with younger students and in their own texts when their images of good writing matched those of the teacher. The study illuminates the social conditions supportive of internalization as well as techniques by which it might be inferred. Contributing to our understanding of the role of dialogue in learning, the study supports some current practices in process writing classrooms and challenges others.

In memory of
my father

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

Recent theory and research on human cognitive development have begun to focus on its cultural and contextual basis. Of particular interest are the relationships among language, literacy, and learning (Rogoff, Gauvain & Ellis, 1984; Scribner & Cole, 1981). A social constructivist perspective of learning and development views dialogue within social contexts as central to learning (Cole, 1985; Rogoff, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1985).

One result of recent scholarship about these relationships is a shift in the dominant theory and practice of writing instruction, away from a focus on the written product and form of writing toward an emphasis on writing as a process of planning, drafting, and revising that is influenced by both audience and purpose. This shift toward a process approach to writing reflects the increased attention to the social context in which learning occurs and the role of language in developing literacy (Applebee, 1986; Flower, 1989; Freedman, Dyson, Flower & Chafe, 1987).

Process approaches to writing are attempting to change the traditional role of the teacher and traditional discourse patterns. In traditional settings, where teachers ask questions, students respond, and teachers evaluate their responses, students have little opportunity to interact and learn from one another (Cazden, 1988); teachers rarely turn over control of the dialogue to students (Goodlad, 1984). Process approaches seek to replace the teacher-dominated patterns within classrooms with more student-controlled interactions in which students have more choice over topic selection and opportunities to participate with teachers and other students for purposes of improving their writing (Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983).

Current school practices that lie at the heart of the process approach to writing are the teacher-student writing conference and peer response groups in which the teacher and

an individual student or peers discuss a student's text (DiPardo & Freedman, 1988). In writing, teacher-student conferences and peer conferences have been the primary means for altering discourse patterns. Both researchers and practitioners have suggested that writing conferences provide the opportunity for students to become critical readers of their own texts and to develop strategies for monitoring their own thought processes while writing (Calkins, 1986; Daiute, 1985). That is, the dialogue that takes place between the teacher and student and among students and the processes through which the student internalizes that dialogue may be central to helping students become critical readers and monitor their own strategies during writing.

While social constructivist theory links dialogue to learning, researchers and practitioners are advocating the practice of conducting conferences. Yet, previous research has left gaps in our knowledge about what students actually learn from the dialogue that takes place during these conferences. Therefore, additional research is needed to determine potential links between the dialogue that occurs during writing, especially within writing conferences, and what students learn about text.

The purpose of this study was to examine the link between the classroom dialogue that occurs during writing and students' learning. The study links fundamental principles of a current theoretical framework, social constructivism, to practice, while supporting certain aspects and challenging other features of process writing classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

To study what students learn from the dialogue, I use a social constructivist perspective on development because it delineates the relationship between dialogue and learning, providing a framework to examine the role dialogue plays as students develop as writers within the contexts of classrooms. The social constructivist perspective consists of three key features: (a) knowledge and knowing have their origins in social interaction (Bruffee, 1984; Harre, 1984; Mead, 1934; Wittgenstein, 1953); (b) learning proceeds from the interpsychological plane (between individuals) to the intrapsychological (within

an individual) plane with the assistance of knowledgeable members of the culture (Rogoff, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978; Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976); and (c) language mediates experience, transforming mental functions (Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1986; Wertsch, 1985). Transformation of mental processes occurs as the external, social plane is internalized and children reorganize and reconstruct their social experiences into individual, psychological processes (Leont'ev, 1981; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1980).

The internal reconstruction of external operations is referred to as internalization. Harre (1984) described four phases of the internalization process that proceed cyclically from the social to the individual and back to the social: (a) appropriation; (b) transformation; (c) publication; and (d) conventionalization.

This internalization of social experiences highlights two key features of Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) developmental theory--the role of the knowledgeable other and the role of dialogue. Because learning occurs as a result of the individual's interactions with others, the role of the knowledgeable member of the culture is vital to facilitating learning. Initially, children cannot function independently on tasks, but need the assistance of an adult or more capable peer through a process called scaffolding (Applebee & Langer, 1983; Cazden, 1983; Rogoff, 1986; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

An essential means through which a knowledgeable member of the culture can scaffold instruction for a learner is through dialogue. The dialogue itself becomes the means through which the external, social plane is internalized to guide the child's own thinking (Cazden, 1983; Palincsar, 1986; Palincsar & Brown, 1989; Wertsch & Stone, 1985); the transformed dialogue is referred to as "inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1986). Bakhtin (1986; cited in Emerson, 1983), whose ideas parallel Vygotsky's, suggested that inner speech is modeled upon social discourse; inner speech consists of dialogues conducted with imagined audiences drawn from the many voices a person has encountered. Because the individual is continually assimilating the words of others, establishing communication

through intersubjectivity, "a temporarily shared social world" (Rommetveit, 1979, p. 10), is essential (Wertsch, 1985).

Related Literature

In writing instruction, one of the ways that has been suggested for students to internalize dialogue to improve their writing is through teacher-student and peer conferences (Calkins, 1986; Freedman, 1987; Graves, 1983; Harris, 1986; Murray, 1979). The writing conference may offer students the opportunity to establish intersubjectivity with a more knowledgeable other, while providing models and strategies for students to improve their writing (Daiute, 1985). Descriptions of ideal conferences suggest that the role of the teacher is to listen to the writer's intentions and not impose her own structure upon the student (Graves, 1983; Harris, 1986). Previous research on writing conferences suggests, however, that teachers usually dominate the interactions and turn them into unilateral lessons from teacher to student (Jacob, 1982; Michaels, 1987; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989).

Peer conferences and response groups have been recommended as a means to reduce teachers' domination of the talk in writing conferences. Peer response has had a positive impact upon elementary, high school, and college students' writing in several studies (Daiute, 1989; DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; Gere & Stevens, 1985; Nystrand & Brandt, 1989), yet peer response groups are used in only a minority of classrooms (Applebee, 1986). Despite the descriptions of successful conferences and the research suggesting these may have positive effects on students, few studies have related peer talk to the larger instructional context. Further research is needed to explore what students learn from these conferences as they participate in writing process classrooms.

Research Questions

This study explores the relationship between discourse and learning about text from a social constructivist perspective, while extending previous work related to writing conferences. The focal questions guiding the study were:

- (1) What do students internalize from the discourse¹ that occurs during the writing period?
- (2) What might account for what students internalize from the dialogue?

In this study, internalization of social experiences was defined according to Harre's (1984) model. To examine what students internalized from the discourse, the study focused on two major aspects: (a) the opportunities that students had during the writing period for internalization to occur and (b) the reemergence of that dialogue from social interaction in students' talk and students' texts as indicators of internalization. The internalization of both the social norms of the classroom and the cognitive features of writing was studied.

Methods

The methods of data collection and analysis for this study were consistent with assumptions from interpretive/qualitative traditions of research (Erickson, 1986). The method also drew from Merriam's (1988) work on case studies, while analyses drew from sociolinguistic literature that suggests that interactions are governed by context specific rules (Cazden, 1986, 1988; Florio-Ruane, 1987; Green, 1983; Hymes, 1972). Data sources included: (a) audiotaped and videotaped observations of classroom activities; (b) interviews of students; (c) students' texts; (d) students conducting writing conferences with younger students; and (e) interviews with the teacher. The observations of naturally occurring classroom activities and the interviews with the teacher provided information about the opportunities students had for internalization, while the students' texts and student interviews provided evidence of internalization. The writing conferences with younger students established a teaching situation, providing an additional means of seeing what students had internalized.

¹ Dialogue and discourse are used interchangeably to indicate an exchange of thoughts by words; the former has Greek roots, while the latter comes from Latin.

One fifth/sixth-grade classroom in an ethnically diverse public school in the heart of New York City was the focus of the study for a five-week period. This classroom was selected for the study because the teacher had extensive knowledge and understanding of the Writing Workshop described by Calkins (1986) and had been implementing a writing process program for over four years. The study presents analyses of the cases of four students as they engaged in a set of writing activities that included writing narratives and reflections in their writers' notebooks, and then selecting pieces from them to turn into revised projects for a particular audience.

Organization of the Study

The organization of this dissertation is as follows:

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 delineates the theoretical perspective used in the study--social constructivism, which focuses on the cultural and contextual nature of learning, emphasizing the role of dialogue. The chapter introduces key concepts such as internalization and intersubjectivity as part of the framework. Both traditional patterns of classroom discourse and alternative patterns such as the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) (Au & Kawakami, 1984), Reciprocal Teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984); and a Daycare Program (Rowe, 1989) are explored in chapter 2. These patterns and programs are presented as a background for examining the research on writing conferences. Current practices and research on teacher-student writing conferences are described in the chapter prior to discussing findings on peer conferences.

Chapter 3: Methods

Chapter 3 presents the research questions and the underlying assumptions about the methodology used. The methods chapter describes: (a) the setting in which the study took place, a fifth/sixth-grade classroom in New York City; (b) the participants, a teacher and four students studied as individual cases; and (c) the sources of data. The

chapter concludes with a detailed description of how the data were analyzed. The results are presented in chapters 4 through 6.

Chapter 4: Themes and Patterns of Interaction

Chapter 4 explores several themes that emerged from the data and describes patterns of interaction to allow the reader to understand the context of the classroom. This chapter provides an overall sense of the ways in which the teacher and students interacted about writing through literature. The chapter is divided into two main sections: (a) content and activity structure; and (b) the teacher's image of good writing. The first section is further divided into narratives about the lessons observed and explanations of the types of writing activities in which students engaged. The section about the teacher's image of good writing explores the components of the implicit and explicit messages the teacher provided to her students.

Chapter 5: The Cases

Chapter 5 presents the individual cases of the four students: Miguel, Anthony, Ella, and Anita to delineate the differing ways in which students understood and used the dialogue. In each case, I introduce the student by providing background information, topics he/she wrote about, and the teacher's perceptions of the student. The cases are organized around several features drawn from the Harre (1984) model: (a) Appropriation: What opportunities has the student had to participate in classroom interactions? (b) Transformation: How has the student made sense of the classroom dialogue? and (c) Conventionalization: What has the student internalized from the classroom dialogue. I conclude each case by providing a summary of what was significant about the student's case.

Chapter 6: Comparisons of the Cases

Chapter 6 presents a comparison of the four cases to suggest the ways in which the teacher's interactions with students had differing consequences upon the reemergence of the dialogue. The comparisons are presented along the features of: (a) conferences with

the teacher; (b) students' texts; and (c) writing conferences with younger students. In comparing the teacher's interactions with the student, I compare both the content of what they discussed and the conversational style--the ways in which speakers communicated their messages to one another. I compare students' texts along the features of the classroom discourse such as use of personal experiences, use of figurative language, audience, and organization and focus. Comparisons of writing conferences with younger students use the features of content and conversational style.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Implications

Chapter 7 summarizes the findings and discusses the significance of the study linking it to previous work. Implications for practice and theory are presented as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter lays out the philosophical assumptions, psychological foundations, and the role of language in a social constructivist theoretical framework. Next, the chapter describes discourse in traditional classroom practice and delineates several alternative patterns of discourse in literacy. Research evidence on teacher-student writing conferences and peer response groups, which offers examples of alternative discourse patterns, concludes the chapter.

Theoretical Framework

The social constructivist perspective consists of several key features: (a) knowledge and knowing have their origins in social interaction (Bruffee, 1984; Harre, 1984; Mead, 1934; Wittgenstein, 1953); (b) learning proceeds from the interpsychological plane (between individuals) to the intrapsychological (within an individual) plane with the assistance of knowledgeable members of the culture (Rogoff, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976); and (c) language mediates experience, transforming mental functions (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986; Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1986; Wertsch, 1985). These three assumptions that undergird social constructivism will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Philosophical Assumptions: Origins of Knowledge in Social Interaction

Rather than being a form of objective reality mirrored by the individual, a social constructivist perspective assumes that knowledge is consensually formed through social interaction. In this view, knowledge is not an external entity that can be discovered. Instead, knowledge is created through the interaction of the individual with the community. Knowledge, because it is social in origin, cannot be separated from values, beliefs, and attitudes. In contrast to rationalist Cartesian philosophy that assumes that knowledge is separate from language, social constructivist views suggest language is constitutive of knowledge. New knowledge is generated through language by the process of socially

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justifying beliefs (Bruffee, 1984; Rorty, 1983). These philosophical underpinnings about the nature of knowledge have important implications for learning and development discussed in the next section.

Psychological Foundations: The Process of Internalization

Social interactions promote the development of higher mental functions that are critical to knowledge growth. Vygotsky (1986) characterized higher mental functions, including those that comprise literacy, as processes that require self-regulation, conscious realization, and the use of signs for mediation. The sign is an intermediate link between the individual and the environment that mediates experience and becomes a means for regulating internal activity; language is one important type of sign system. The acquisition of higher mental functions such as literacy occurs first on an interpsychological plane, or between people; then on an intrapsychological plane, within an individual. Transformation of mental processes occurs as the external, social plane is internalized and children reorganize and reconstruct their social experiences into individual, psychological processes (Leont'ev, 1981; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1980). The internal reconstruction of external operations is referred to as internalization. The process of internalization is not "transferral of all external activity to a preexisting internal plane of consciousness; it is the process in which the internal plane is formed" (Leont'ev, 1981, p. 57).

Harre (1984) built on Vygotsky's notions of the relationship between the social and the individual through what he calls the "Vygotsky space," by defining the process of internalization. As Figure 1 illustrates, Harre defined two dimensions that include the public and the private at opposite ends of one continuum and the individual and the social at opposite ends of a second continuum. The two orthogonal dimensions create a two-dimensional space containing four quadrants. Psychological development occurs through the transfer of rules and conventions that govern social practices from Quadrant I through

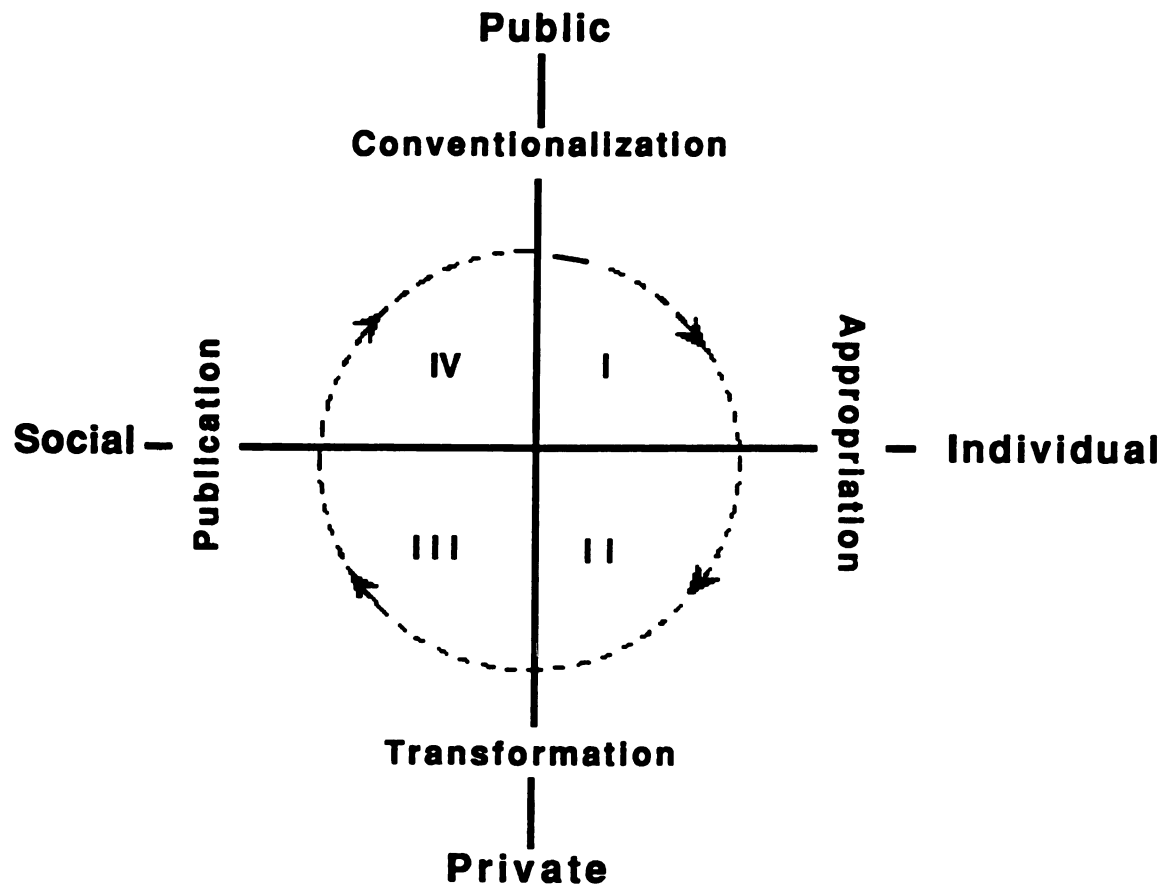


Figure 1 Vygotsky Space (Adapted from Harre [1984] Model by Gavelek)

the other three quadrants. This development can be described as phases of the internalization process that proceed cyclically from the social to the individual and back to the social. The four phases include: (a) appropriation in which the individual participates in social practices; (b) transformation in which the individual takes control over the social appropriations; (c) publication in which the transformation again becomes public; and (d) conventionalization in which the transformation is reintegrated into the social practices. The internalization process is iterative such that learning is continual and social experiences build upon, yet transform one another (Harre, 1984).

This internalization of social experiences highlights two key features of Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) developmental theory--the role of the knowledgeable other and the role of dialogue. Since learning occurs as the result of the individual's interactions with others, the role of the knowledgeable member of the culture is vital to facilitating learning. Initially, children cannot function independently on tasks, but need the assistance of an adult or more capable peer within what Vygotsky (1978) calls the "zone of proximal development."¹ Adults or more capable peers can offer assistance to learners in the performance of literacy tasks through a process called scaffolding. Scaffolding involves the structuring of tasks through instruction, modeling, questioning, and feedback for the purposes of the learner gradually taking control of the task (Applebee & Langer, 1983; Cazden, 1983; Rogoff, 1986; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

The Role of Language in Mediating Experience

An essential means through which a knowledgeable member of the culture can scaffold instruction for a learner is through dialogue. The dialogue itself becomes the

¹The zone of proximal development is defined as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined through independent problem solving and potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

means through which the external, social plane is internalized to guide the child's own thinking (Cazden, 1983; Palincsar & Brown, 1989; Wertsch & Stone, 1985); the transformed dialogue is referred to as "inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1986). Bakhtin (1986; cited in Emerson, 1983), whose ideas parallel Vygotsky's, suggested that inner speech is modeled upon social discourse; inner speech consists of dialogues conducted with imagined audiences drawn from the many voices a person has encountered.

Discourse is not only the means through which a knowledgeable member of the culture can assist another, but social discourse is the very model upon which thought in the form of inner speech is based (Bakhtin, 1986). Social dialogue provides the initial point of entry for the learner. Then, the social discourse is transformed by the individual into abbreviated forms called inner speech. Inner speech retains the dialogic quality of the external social speech (Bakhtin, 1986; Todorov, 1984; Wertsch, 1980).

This dialogic quality of speech is explicated by Bakhtin (1981; in Wertsch, 1991). In his view, the utterance, an idea unit, rather than the sentence is the "real unit of speech communication" (1986, p. 71). The utterance focuses on concrete action within a particular context; the same words can have different meanings depending on the intonation and particular context. Meaning is not an abstract concept, but is created when two voices come into contact. Using the term "addressivity," Bakhtin (1986) suggested an utterance is always responding to preceding utterances and anticipating succeeding ones, even if the speakers are temporally, spatially, or socially distant.

The utterance is the site where the systematicity of language and situated performance come into contact and struggle with one another (Wertsch, 1991). National languages (traditional linguistic unities such as English, Russian, and French), social languages characteristic of certain groups (such as professional jargon, language of fashion at a particular time) or speech genres (typical speech forms or conventions such as greetings, table conversation, or military commands) influence the individual utterance (Bakhtin, 1986). Bakhtin suggests:

... the unique speech experience of each individual is shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances. This experience can be characterized to some degree as the process of assimilation--more or less creative--of others' words (1986, p 89).

Bakhtin (1981) described two ways of assimilating social discourse by the individual: (a) "reciting by heart" and (b) "retelling in one's own words" (p. 341). Reciting by heart involves using another's words in the form of models, rules, and directions. This is an inflexible kind of assimilation fused with authority, thus it is called "authoritative discourse" (p. 342). Intellectual growth in the form of "internally persuasive discourse" (p. 342) results from the struggle between these two forms of assimilation. The internally persuasive word is "half-ours and half-someone else's" (p. 345), yet it is not static and isolated, but rather is part of a creative process that can be applied to new situations.

Because the word is "half-ours and half someone else's," a concept referred to as "ventriloquation" (Wertsch, 1991), issues of power and hierarchy come into play. Wertsch (1991) identified the term "privileging" to suggest that one form of social language is more appropriate in one setting than another. Yet, privileging is more dynamic than domination, implying that patterns of privileging are accessible to reflection and change.

The concept that discourse is dynamic, continually being shaped and developed by constant interaction and dialogue with others is key to understanding internalization. Because learning is assumed to occur on the interpsychological level first, and because the individual is constantly assimilating others' words, establishing communication between speakers is central. How do an adult and a child who is operating in the zone of proximal development, for instance, construct dialogue that can be subsequently transformed into intrapsychological functioning? The concept of intersubjectivity plays a role in explaining how the transfer from the interpsychological plane to the intrapsychological plane occurs (Wertsch, 1985). Rommetveit suggests that "communication aims at

transcendence of the private worlds of the participants" (1979, p. 94) and that through negotiation they can create a "temporarily shared social reality" (1979, p. 10); this temporary, shared reality is intersubjectivity.

Establishing intersubjectivity depends on three factors: (a) the social expertise of the expert; (b) prior experience and knowledge of the novice; and (c) the nature of the task. The expert must be able to make public her own knowledge, taking into account the novice's perspective, while the experience of the novice will influence whether the novice accepts or resists the view. The task, which is always contextualized within cultural values, plays a role in determining intersubjectivity (Brandt, 1990). Establishing intersubjectivity is not merely the novice matching the schema of the expert, but rather through negotiation, the shared reality may be transformative for both participants.

Implications of the Framework for Research

An example from the work of Wertsch (1980) serves to demonstrate several features of the social constructivist framework that can be applied to research in literacy, while providing evidence that children do internalize and use the speech from social settings when solving various problems. His study described the dialogue and activities of a two and a half year old child and her mother in a problem-solving setting. The child, with the help of the mother, was to insert pieces in a "copy" puzzle such that it would be identical to the "model" puzzle. The analysis of the problem-solving activity was divided into three episodes to capture the transition from external to internal activity. In the initial episode, the child did not use the model puzzle until her mother asked questions and told the child where to look. In the second episode, the child's question led to a response by the mother which, in turn, led to the child responding by consulting the model. In the third episode, the child was able to place the pieces in the puzzle independently and talk to herself, not to her mother, as she placed the pieces.

Several features of social constructivist theory emerge from this description. First, the problem-solving task required higher mental functioning including self-

regulation and the use of signs for mediation. Second, learning to put the puzzle pieces into a puzzle occurred first on the interpsychological plane; the child participated in a social setting with her mother and was able to internalize the dialogue to guide her own thinking in completing the puzzle. Third, the mother played the role of a knowledgeable member of the culture who provided a scaffold through questions, feedback and instructions initially, but allowed the child to complete the puzzle on her own in the third episode. Fourth, the adult and child have established intersubjectivity, evidenced by the child's understanding and taking control over the task. Fifth, the egocentric speech that appeared in the third episode reflects the dialogue between the mother and the child, yet it is transformed into new talk that retains elements of the social dialogue, but is not an imitation of the social dialogue.

The example described above demonstrates the relationship between a social constructivist theory and a problem-solving activity in the form of putting a puzzle together. Although constructing a puzzle is a very different activity from literacy practices, most likely less complex, the example serves to demonstrate in a fairly straightforward way how the internalization process operates on a specific, convergent task in a limited amount of time. Further links need to be demonstrated between social constructivism and significant, complex, cultural and school practices such as literacy. This link can be explored by using a social constructivist perspective to study the relationship between the discourse that takes place during a specific literacy act, writing, and students' learning about texts because: (a) the discourse during the writing period is an example of a situation in which teachers and students can construct new knowledge; (b) writing is an example of a higher mental function that has its origins in social interaction; (c) both the teacher and other students can provide scaffolding of instruction through dialogue; and (d) students have the opportunity to internalize and transform the social discourse into new learning. This perspective now allows us to examine relevant research regarding the issues of discourse and the learning of writing.

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Discourse in Classroom Practice

Currently, researchers have become increasingly aware of the need for students to engage in meaningful literacy activities going beyond current literacy practices in schools. The goal of moving beyond current practices is to promote "self-regulation" in which the reader or writer engages in checking, planning, monitoring, testing, and revising text, and "knowledge transformation" in which the learner is involved in solving content-related and rhetorical problems in composing text (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Brown, Campione & Day, 1981; Englert & Raphael, 1989; Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Process approaches to writing parallel this increased awareness of changing literacy practices in schools. Process approaches to writing focus on the problem-solving nature of composing text and emphasize the importance of the process and functions of writing instead of traditional conventions (Applebee, 1986; Freedman, Dyson, Flower & Chafe, 1987).

Several programs have been developed to change literacy practices in schools in both reading and writing. These programs share the assumptions of the: (a) importance of the social context in learning; (b) need for changing the teacher's role; (c) need to change the nature of the tasks in which students are engaged; and (d) focus on discourse as a means to link social context to learning. Although all of these dimensions are related and to some extent inseparable, I will focus on discourse as the link among these literacy programs because it is the essence of the relationship between social context and learning.

In reviewing the literature that is relevant to examining discourse and the learning of literacy, several different bodies of research are critical. These include research on: (a) traditional patterns of discourse in classroom practice; and (b) alternative practices for students learning about text through dialogue. Research on traditional patterns of discourse is relevant because the studies provide descriptions of current practices that suggest what kinds of opportunities students have to internalize the dialogue within traditional classroom settings. Because there are few models for examining the relationship between dialogue and writing, literature from related areas of literacy

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information or, alternatively, a command to stop laughing (Coulthard, 1977). Much of the talk by teachers in classrooms consists of informing, directing, or eliciting moves by the teacher with responses by individual students. Informing moves include the teacher providing information about the content or providing explanations about how to do something. Directing moves can include questions such as, "Are you ready to sing that, then?" as well as more command-like statements such as, "You sit down and join us," depending on the function the directive move serves within the specific context. Eliciting moves tend to be questions about either the content or classroom management issues. For students to be able to participate appropriately in the classroom discourse, students need to be able to interpret the teacher's intended meaning (Florio-Ruane, 1987). Children learn these rules for interaction and discourse at a very young age (Willes, 1983).

An example from McCarthey and Peterson's (1991) study of literacy practices in one school provides an example of traditional discourse patterns. After reading the book, Sadako and The Thousand Cranes the students and teacher participated in a traditional recitation pattern. The teacher asked the questions, "Who can remember our story? What did we talk about?" A student responded, "The bomb." After this response, the teacher evaluated the response by saying, "Okay" and then asked "What happened first?" The student then replied "On Pearl Harbor" to which the teacher responded "Very good." The discourse followed the traditional sequence of initiation by the teacher, response by the student, and evaluation by the teacher.

These dominant patterns of interaction do not provide opportunities for students to participate in discourse that is less structured, more conversational in tone, and more conducive to learning from peers (Goodlad, 1984). Further, there is little scaffolding of instruction by the teacher for the learner because the amount of teacher talk does not change, nor is there an attempt to allow the learner gradually to take control of the discourse. Additionally, there are few opportunities for a student to apply the internalized dialogue from the social setting. Within the dominant patterns of classroom interaction,

instruction such as reading may suggest some implications for writing. Research on current practices of teacher-student and peer conferences is useful in providing evidence about what students have learned through their participation in discourse events related to writing. This review begins with an examination of dominant patterns of classroom discourse, then describes research on practices that have explicitly attempted to change classroom practice in reading through discourse, and finally describes changing practices in writing through discourse.

Discourse in Traditional Classroom Practice

Verbal interactions in classrooms differ from ordinary conversation. In conversation, topic changes are unpredictable and uncontrollable, whereas, in the classroom, the teacher chooses the topics of discourse, generally takes two turns for every one of the student's, often asking questions to which he or she already knows the answers. In typical classrooms, teachers have the right to speak to anybody at any time; whereas, students do not have these rights. Instead, students have to bid for an opportunity to speak and the teacher nominates the next speaker (Cazden, 1988; Coulthard, 1977). Because the teacher is doing most of the talking, talk among peers is rare in schools (Cazden, 1988).

Mehan (1979) has identified a structure of classroom lessons consisting of three phases: opening, instructional, and closing. Within each of these phases, the most common pattern of classroom discourse is the three part sequence of teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation, often referred to as the I-R-E sequence (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979, 1982). Usually the initiation takes the form of a question to which the student gives an answer, and the teacher provides feedback about the adequacy of the answer. This form of classroom discourse limits the amount of interaction among peers and keeps the control of the interaction with the teacher.

Teachers' questions in classrooms can serve a variety of functions. For instance, a question such as "What are you laughing at?" can be interpreted as a request for

information or, alternatively, a command to stop laughing (Coulthard, 1977). Much of the talk by teachers in classrooms consists of informing, directing, or eliciting moves by the teacher with responses by individual students. Informing moves include the teacher providing information about the content or providing explanations about how to do something. Directing moves can include questions such as, "Are you ready to sing that, then?" as well as more command-like statements such as, "You sit down and join us," depending on the function the directive move serves within the specific context. Eliciting moves tend to be questions about either the content or classroom management issues. For students to be able to participate appropriately in the classroom discourse, students need to be able to interpret the teacher's intended meaning (Florio-Ruane, 1987). Children learn these rules for interaction and discourse at a very young age (Willes, 1983).

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few opportunities exist to test out the social constructivist theory of language and learning.

To gain some understanding about the relationship between classroom discourse and learning about text, we need to turn to alternative instructional patterns and examine interactions that come from programs designed to alter traditional classroom practices for literacy instruction.

Alternative Patterns of Classroom Discourse in Literacy

The following sections detail some of these alternative practices including reading instruction in the Kamehameha Early Education Program, reciprocal teaching, teacher-student writing conferences, and peer response groups in writing instruction.

KEEP

The Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) in Honolulu, Hawaii has focused on altering traditional discourse interactions during the reading of text to become more culturally congruent with native Hawaiian participation structures outside the classroom. Teachers use the experience-text-relationship method that involves the teacher using initial questions about children's background experiences that are relevant to the text, students reading silently, and the students and teacher talking about the text in relation to the students' background knowledge. The talk-story-like participation structure is characterized by student control of turn-taking and collaborative production of responses (Au & Kawakami, 1984; Au & Mason, 1981). Using discourse analysis of segments of videotapes of reading instruction during a lesson with five third graders, Au and Kawakami (1984, 1986) found that complex interchanges among the students and the teachers allowed the teacher to support students' comprehension, while allowing students to initiate discussions. Their research indicates that students are able to increase their comprehension of text through participating in altered patterns of talking about text under the guidance of a trained teacher.

Reciprocal Teaching

A second example of altering discourse patterns in classrooms during literacy events is Palincsar & Brown's (1984, 1989) "Reciprocal Teaching" method. Reciprocal teaching, developed to increase reading comprehension and metacognitive strategies, is premised on students internalizing the dialogue about text that is modeled by the teacher. The dialogue is structured around four strategies: summarizing, self-questioning, predicting, and clarifying. The teacher provides support for the students as they gradually acquire the ability to use the strategies independently (Brown & Palincsar, 1982). Besides showing that reciprocal teaching significantly increases reading comprehension in both elementary and junior high school students (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Palincsar, 1987; Palincsar & Brown, 1989), research on reciprocal teaching suggests that students do internalize the dialogue modeled by the teachers. This internalization is reflected in students' use of strategies in their dialogue with other students, independent of the teacher (Palincsar, 1986; Palincsar & Brown, 1989). Distinguishing features of the dialogue that affected student learning included the teacher (a) supporting students' ideas at the idea level rather than the word level, (b) linking students' ideas to new knowledge; (c) focusing the dialogue; (d) being explicit with students; and (e) reformulating evaluation of students' responses from negative to more constructive (Palincsar, 1986).

Students are able to learn reciprocal teaching methods through dialogues the teacher uses and successfully implement the strategy with peers. In their study of seventh-grade remedial reading students, Palincsar, Brown and Martin (1987) found that tutors provided modeling for their students and provided help to their tutees in ways that reflected the previous teacher-student dialogues. The reciprocal teaching research links classroom discourse, specifically the dialogues used in the instruction, to learning of students about the texts with which they engage.

Daycare Program

A third example of setting that altered traditional discourse patterns and classroom interactions can be found in an ethnographic study by Rowe (1989). She studied a daycare program for 21 three and four year old children. The program focused on providing opportunities for children to choose how, when, and why they would participate in literacy activities. Print related activities included writing notes to parents and classmates, writing books to be shared, writing stories for the class paper, and reading trade books with a teacher. Teachers provided demonstrations and supported children's efforts at using literacy. Children and teachers participated in continual discourse about the literacy activities in which they were engaged in a natural conversational form.

Rowe's work illustrates how young children learned to interact with each other and with their texts through dialogue. The study shows frequent patterns of linkages between children's earlier social interactions with other children and adults and their later conversations as well as links between social interaction and the texts students produced. Children used content, processes, and purposes demonstrated by the adult or student authors as starting points for their own texts, as confirmation of their existing literacy knowledge, as means to form new literacy knowledge, and as opportunities to revise their own hypotheses about literacy. The data show that the character of the interactions among teachers, children, and their peers played an important role in the kinds of cognitive strategies that students used independently as they read and wrote. Examples from the data indicate the ways in which students appropriated the dialogue from the interactions to use in their own texts. The study suggests that, in classrooms where there is curriculum aimed at developing children's literacy learning by providing children with functional reasons to participate in literacy, students can learn about text from social interaction.

The three examples are linked by their focus on altering patterns of discourse and social interaction during literacy instruction. Each provides some evidence of the relationship between discourse in the social interactions and learning about written texts.

The KEEP example is informative about how "participant structures," which are culturally learned forms of interacting, influence the learning about texts (Philips, 1972). Reciprocal teaching provides evidence of how scaffolded dialogue can enhance comprehension and be used by students to direct their own learning. The research by Rowe specifically links discourse about literacy in a less structured setting with learning about text.

The first two examples, however, are limited to comprehension instruction in reading. Additional research is needed with students in public school classroom contexts to investigate further the link between dialogue in social interaction and learning about text, especially in the area of writing. Fortunately, a basis for this research exists in the literature that supports alternative forms of discourse through two major vehicles within writing instruction: the teacher-student writing conference and peer response groups. These two approaches to changing classroom practice through discourse have been influenced by the Teachers College Writing Project (Calkins, 1986; Calkins & Harwayne, 1987; National Center for Research on Teacher Education (NC RTE), 1987).

Teacher-Student Writing Conferences

Purposes. In writing instruction, one of the ways that has been suggested for students to internalize dialogue about texts and improve their writing is through teacher-student writing conferences (Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1979). Both researchers and practitioners have expressed several different purposes for writing conferences. Calkins (1986) described the main purposes of the writing conference as getting students to become critical readers of texts--to engage in dialogue with their own texts. The conferences are conceived of as conversations between the teacher and child that can include the topic of writing, the strategies the student uses, as well as the writer's goals and opinion of the work (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987).

Beginning writers have the opportunity to have their work supported and valued through dialogue, while discussing texts gives students the opportunity to practice orally

ways of using written language (Florio-Ruane, 1991; Graves, 1983). Writing conferences also provide an immediate audience for responses to a piece of writing. Daiute (1985) suggested that conferences offer children models and strategies for looking at their writing objectively and an opportunity for the monitoring of a writer's thought processes. The writing conference also provides the students and teacher the opportunity to "trade conversational places" (Florio-Ruane, 1991) because the student may initiate talk, while the teacher is ideally in the role of responding to student concerns.

The goal of the writing conferences is, ultimately, for the improvement of student texts and the development of thought processes by stimulating reflection in relation to suggestions and responses that have been offered. After engaging in conferences, students ought to be able to carry on inner dialogues in which they internalize the social and conversational activities that took place between the teacher and student.

Research evidence. Most of the literature on conferences consists of descriptions of successful conferences and guidelines for participants to consider in conferences (Calkins, 1986, 1991; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1979). For example, Murray (1979) emphasized the need for the respondent to listen to what the writer is communicating and not impose a particular structure onto the text the student is creating. Graves (1983) suggested that the child must lead in the interaction about text, while the teacher must react in a responsive, intelligent way. Calkins (1986) provided more specific guidelines for conducting conferences by suggesting there are different kinds of conferences that serve different functions. Whereas content conferences are focused on asking questions about the writer's intentions and the content of the text, design conferences may include suggestions about focusing a topic or the questions about the structure of a piece. Strategies for responding to the writer include listening to what the writer has to say, asking authentic questions, and making suggestions about how to improve texts. The role of the teacher is to help the writer find his or her own intentions (Graves, 1983). Although these authors provide rich descriptions of classroom practices to facilitate teacher-student interaction

about text, few research studies have examined the relationship between these conferences and student learning.

The studies that have been done on teacher-student conferences have focused on the process that takes place between teachers and students and suggest that writing conferences replicate the traditional teacher domination of the talk that characterizes other kinds of classroom discourse. Although teachers believe that the writing conference is more helpful than any other type of response to students' texts (Freedman, 1987), successful scaffolding of instruction rarely occurs. Freedman's (1987) ethnographic study of two ninth-grade classrooms demonstrates how the students were oriented to the teacher's task rather than to one another's writing. An analysis of the patterns of talk revealed that the teacher did not relinquish control.

Instead of teachers relinquishing control and encouraging students to take over more of the dialogue, teachers have continued to dominate the conferences and turned them into unilateral lessons from teacher to student (Jacob, 1982). In some cases, writing conferences resembled traditional "teacher red penciling, oriented to correcting mistakes" (Bruce & Michaels, n.d., p. 71) through face-to-face interaction rather than substantive exchanges between teacher and student.

Michaels and her colleagues have studied conferences within the context of two sixth-grade classrooms using ethnographic approaches to data collection and analysis. A common theme in the studies is the relationship between the teacher's authority role and her expectations for the kinds of texts students should produce. The teacher's goals played a dominant role in the 60 conferences that were analyzed in the first study. In most cases, students changed their texts to match the teachers' expectations (Michaels, Ulichny, & Watson-Gegeo, 1986). In a linguistic analysis of compositions by 14 students and the conferences about those drafts, Michaels (1987) found that responses by the teacher and revisions by the student were geared toward finding a match between the text and the teacher's implicit schema for an adequate representation of the text. If students' texts did

not match the teachers expectations, the students changed them to get the teacher's approval. The power differences between teacher and students resulted in lack of synchrony between students' intended meanings and the teacher's expectations as well as resulting in students becoming passive, expecting teachers to correct their drafts (Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989).

The studies conducted by Michaels and her colleagues point to the difficulties of changing classroom norms within the teacher-student writing conferences. Suggested reasons for these difficulties include minimal support for instructional innovation, system-wide pressure to improve achievement test scores, and district mandated writing tests that do not support the goals of process writing (Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989). Although mandated curriculum, large class size, and lack of time are institutional forces that impinge upon teachers' practice of writing conferences (Florio-Ruane, 1991), teachers can learn to listen and respond to student writing in an authentic way through extensive inservice programs that are aimed at changing teachers' conceptions and practice of writing (McCarthy, 1990b). Teachers need supportive conditions and extended training in process writing that provide the means to engage in meaningful dialogue with students.

Besides teachers' domination of conferences, teachers display differential treatment toward students of differing ability levels and ethnic backgrounds. In Freedman & Sperling's (1985) linguistic analysis of one teacher and four college students who differed in ethnicity and achievement level, the authors found there were differences in topics that were the focus of the conferences, differences in the amount of praise low and high achieving students received, and differences in synchrony between teacher and student depending on the student's achievement level. The study suggested that although the teacher did not intend to treat the students differentially, ethnicity and achievement level do affect the teacher-student interaction. Recent studies such as Sperling (1989) suggest that patterns of interaction in dialogue vary from one student to another. In her study

focusing on one teacher's interactions with six ninth-grade students, Sperling (1989) used both quantitative and qualitative analyses to establish that the dialogue patterns between teacher and student varied for different students according to the purpose of the conference, the particular writing task, and the different types of conferences. In addition, the collaborative relationship between the teacher and student varied for the same student at different times in the sequence of tasks. This study suggested that dialogue patterns in conferences are dynamic and that collaboration between teacher and student exists on a continuum.

Although the studies described above are helpful in highlighting the power differential between the teacher and student, the difficulties with changing classroom norms, and differential treatment among students by the teacher, the studies do not make explicit links between the teacher-student interaction in the conference and what students learn about text. Relatively little research has focused on the process through which students incorporate the dialogue from the conference into their thinking about and revision of their texts. Research is needed to examine the relationships between the dialogue that takes place within writing conferences and student learning within classroom contexts. This study builds on the work done in writing conferences, but extends it by making more explicit the link between what occurs during writing conferences and what reemerges in students' talk and in their texts.

Another classroom practice designed to change the nature of student learning about their writing through discourse is through peer response groups. Peer response groups hold the promise of altering traditional discourse patterns because they lack the traditional authority figure, the teacher, who generally dominates the talk about text. Problems with teacher-student writing conferences may be ameliorated by having students in control of the discourse.

Peer Response Groups

Purposes. The literature on peer groups in writing suggests a variety of purposes for peer groups depending on teachers' and students' goals: (a) responding to writing; (b) thinking collaboratively; (c) writing collaboratively; and (d) editing writing (DiPardo & Freedman, 1988). Further, groups provide a forum for discussing the writing process, generating ideas, understanding the functions of an audience, and providing support for engaging in writing (Gebhardt, 1980). The benefits claimed for teachers and student discussing texts together include writer's knowledge becoming available in talk; the beginner's work being supported through questions, comments, and suggestions of others; beginning writers having the opportunity to practice orally ways of using written language; and talking about text making clear to the writer the value of his/her work (Calkins, 1986; Florio-Ruane, 1988; Graves, 1983). Students can then transform the conversation based knowledge and strategies into their independent writing. Additionally, students who engage in talking about their texts reveal their beliefs about literacy and their thought processes (Daiute, 1989).

Research evidence. What do students learn about writing from peer interactions? What is the nature of the social interaction and the discourse when writing groups work together? A small body of literature from both process-product and ethnographic methodologies has contributed to our understanding of the relationship between social interaction and student learning. Hillock's (1984) meta-analysis of 29 experimental studies comparing instructional approaches that rely on small groups found that students can learn from one another to improve their writing when given more structured tasks. Other process-product studies by O'Donnell, Dansereau, Rocklin, Lambiotte, Hythecker and Larson (1985) have provided additional evidence about the relationship between students working in groups and improved writing. In their first study of college students writing cooperatively, O'Donnell et al (1985) found that not only did students who wrote cooperatively write more explicit communicative instructions than those who wrote alone,

but the students who worked together initially also wrote better instructions alone than those who initially wrote alone. In the second study of 49 college students, the authors found that cooperative interaction during rewriting can also improve some aspects of the written product.

Research focusing specifically on revision when peers respond to and edit writing has revealed that students can help one another improve their writing through response. For instance, in a process-product type of study of 250 college students, Nystrand (1986) compared different classroom structures and measured their success through students' achievement in writing. He found that students who worked in groups produced better revisions than students who did not work in groups. In addition, the students who worked in groups reconceptualized writing as revision, whereas students who did not work in groups viewed the task of revision as editing only. When the peer groups worked well, students tended to gravitate to the problem areas of the texts and deal concretely with the uncertainties of the texts to which they were responding. Nystrand (1990) suggested that peer conferencing is successful because it concretizes readers for writers; students write for a particular reader and learn to balance their intentions with writers' expectations. These studies suggest the impact that peers can have on student writing, especially in the revision stage.

Although the Hillocks, Nystrand, and O'Donnell studies provide data about the relationship between group interaction and effects on the products of writing, none of the studies examined the quality or kind of talk engaged in by students during writing. Nystrand and Brandt (1989) did investigate the talk of group members in their study and found that students who worked in peer groups produced higher quality texts than those who did not, and that the students who worked in peer groups could accurately predict the strengths and weaknesses of their own texts in ways that correlated with trained raters. Another study by Nystrand and Brandt (1989) found a relationship between peer input and the author's subsequent revisions, with the extent of the discussion predicting the

level of revision. For instance, discussion at the level of genre would influence other levels of changes such as revisions in organizational structure of the text.

In their studies of the talk of 46 students in peer response groups from nine classrooms representing 5th, 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders, Gere and Stevens (1985) found that students' responses were specific and focused on the text. The coding of talk into the content of the topics students discussed and the ways of responding such as informing, eliciting, and directing revealed that students' talk was focused on the writer's intended meaning. The students were evaluative in their comments, praising or criticizing using accompanying details to support their suggestions, and collaborative as expressed in the ways in which they helped each other improve the drafts. Students' comments were richer and more varied than teacher feedback which tended to be generic, focused on mechanics, and embodied a specific conception of good writing. Further research suggests that the type of text and the grade level of students affects what students attend to in the texts. Gere and Abbott (1985) found that younger students attend more to content, while older students attended more to form. In addition, narratives evoked more discussion of content than expository texts.

Studies focused on the talk of elementary students about writing suggest that even young writers can discuss text in useful and sophisticated ways. Dahl's (1988) study of one fourth-grade classroom focused on the nature of the talk about revision, the expectations learners had when they conferred with a peer, and the extent to which revision occurred. Using a microanalysis of peer conferences and student interviews, Dahl found that students did focus their talk on helping other students revise and writers took into consideration respondents' comments to their drafts. Students expected and received help through peer conferencing when conferences focused on improving the author's draft.

Group writing conferences influenced revision knowledge and revision activity in a study of 16 students in a first-grade classroom (Fitzgerald & Stamm, 1990). Using a

combination of methods that included a single-subjects-with-replicates design and a coding scheme to trace revisions to conference comments, the authors found that students' talk during interviews and the actual revisions were linked to the talk that occurred within teacher-led response groups. The extent of the conference's influence on their knowledge of writing was mediated by their entry-level knowledge of revision such that there were much greater effects for students with the least knowledge and little measurable change for students with high amounts of knowledge initially. This study linked the talk that takes place in conferences with subsequent revisions by young children.

Daiute's (1989) study of third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classrooms did not focus on student talk in relation to revision, but rather focused on what students learned from the talk during collaborative writing tasks. When student discourse was analyzed, the researchers found that children engaged in playful talk that contained elements of critical thinking. After examining the texts the students wrote individually after collaboration, Daiute found that students' individual writing improved after collaborating with one another, especially when there was a balance between playful talk (e.g., role-playing, trying out concepts, using imagery) and controlled talk (e.g., planning, evaluating, labelling, or controlling the composing process).

These studies have differed in the questions that were asked (e.g., relationship between group interaction and achievement, the relationship between talk and writing, or the relationship between the teacher's authority and group interaction), in the definitions and purposes of the task in which students were engaged (e.g., writing together versus responding to one another's individual papers), the grade level of participants (e.g., college, high school, and elementary), and the method used in the study (e.g., meta-analysis, process-product, or ethnographic). Because of these many differences, there is no consensus about the relationships among group interaction, talk within groups, and learning. However, an emerging picture suggests that: (a) peer groups, whether writing

collaboratively or responding to writing, can have a positive impact on student writing; (b) the nature of the talk is an important element in determining the kinds of revisions students make in their texts; and (c) the kind of talk may influence the learning of individual students. What is lacking, though, are data about how the talk within peer groups is related to student learning as measured by anything other than changes in students' drafts. More research is needed to examine what students learn from the talk using additional measures of student learning.

Although response groups have been used in some elementary, secondary, and college settings, they are not widespread (Applebee, 1986). Students who have participated in them do not necessarily find them as helpful as conferences with the teacher (Freedman, 1987). Additionally, teachers may experience difficulties in organizing, managing, and monitoring the groups within the larger classroom structure. Like teacher-student conferences, they are labor-intensive and time-consuming. The larger constraints of the organization such as large class size, mandated curriculum, and other institutional forces may mitigate against teachers' widespread use of them (Florio-Ruane, 1991; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989). Additionally, some teachers may not want to give over the control of response to students.

As DiPardo and Freedman (1988) concluded at the end of their review of peer response groups, many questions about the nature of peer response remain unanswered. They suggested that studies are needed to relate peer talk to the larger instructional context, while focusing on actual patterns of students' interactions and ways that students solve intellectual problems. Although this study focused more on teacher-student interactions than on peer response, the body of work on peer talk in writing contributes to our understanding of programs that are attempting to change the traditional norms of classroom discourse. Peer response is another form of response that might go on in a process writing classroom simultaneously with teacher-student conferences; both

teacher-student conferences and peer conferences are recommended in elementary classrooms by Graves (1983) and Calkins and Harwayne (1987).

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study extended previous work related to writing conferences, while linking this work to the larger classroom context and exploring issues about the relationship between discourse and learning about text. The focal questions guiding the study were:

- (1) What do students internalize from the discourse that occurs during the writing period?
- (2) What might account for what students internalize from the dialogue?

In this study, internalization of social experiences was defined according to Harre's (1984) model. Because the theoretical model is a socio-cognitive one, both the cognitive and social domains were included in exploring what was internalized. For example, cognitive domains might include understanding (a) the writing process such as planning, drafting, and revising; (b) the use of descriptive language and style; (c) organization of text; or (d) mechanics of grammar and punctuation. The social domains of writing include how to participate in a writing process classroom such as choosing an appropriate topic, conferring with the teacher, and sharing writing with an audience.

To examine what students internalized from the discourse, the study focused on two major aspects: (a) the opportunities that students had during the writing period for internalization to occur; and (b) the reemergence of that dialogue from social interaction in students' talk and students' texts as indicators of internalization. Several concepts discussed in Chapter 2 emerged as particularly significant in what students internalized. First, the concept of intersubjectivity in this study is defined by a shared understanding between the teacher and student within a particular moment about a particular task. Participants achieve intersubjectivity through negotiation within the writing conferences; uptake by speakers--often incorporating the words of the other in a meaningful way (not simply parroting)--is an indication of intersubjectivity. Second, the term synchrony implies agreement on the part of the two speakers. Scaffolding, the

third term, is the process by which the teacher helps the student solve a problem or carry out a task, nudging the student from one level of competence to a new level through models, questions, or explanations. As the learner becomes more competent, the teacher gradually withdraws the temporary scaffold.

Assumptions and Definitions

The philosophical assumptions about methodology that undergirded this study were consistent with interpretive traditions articulated by Erickson (1986). Interpretivist traditions assume that humans share systems for defining meaning through culture. Epistemological roots of these traditions may be found in phenomenological approaches (e.g., Husserl cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) and in symbolic interactionism which assume that human experience is mediated by interpretation; therefore, reality consists of multiple interpretations (e.g., Mead, 1934). Because different individuals may assign different meanings to any particular action, the symbolic meaning attached to the action is more important than the behavior itself (Erickson, 1986).

In interpretivist traditions, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection, providing a detailed, descriptive account of the setting and participants to answer questions about how a phenomenon occurred (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 1988). Consistent with understanding the meaning that the participants ascribe to their actions, the natural setting is the site for collecting data. Often research questions emerge from the site as the researcher comes to understand the meanings the participants ascribe to their actions.

The method of data collection and analysis for this study drew from Merriam's (1988) work on case studies and Bogdan & Biklen's (1982) approach to qualitative research. A case study is a bounded system appropriate for examining a particular phenomenon, a specific social group, or an individual (Merriam, 1988). Case studies can use either quantitative or qualitative methods. In this study, because of shared

assumptions with interpretive traditions, I used qualitative methods--use of words rather than quantitative analyses.

Analyses drew from sociolinguistic literature that suggests that interactions are governed by context specific rules (Cazden, 1986, 1988; Florio-Ruane, 1987; Green, 1983; Hymes, 1972). Sociolinguists provide analytic methods to examine language in its every day use, enabling researchers to use particular tools for analyzing everyday interactions.

I have selected an interpretive frame in the belief that the research questions that I was interested in studying, grounded in issues of social context, were best addressed through its use. First, I wanted to understand how individuals used language to shape their understanding of the contexts in which they interacted. Second, I wanted to understand how the roles of the participants and the social context would mutually shape one another. Third, I was interested in how the particular participants in the setting, the students and the teacher, would make sense of their actions. Thus, I have drawn from interpretive traditions, used sociolinguistic methods of analysis for understanding language use, and presented my data in the form of themes and cases.¹

¹Although my assumptions and data collection processes were consistent with interpretive traditions, the study was not purely ethnographic in several ways. First, I had a somewhat well-defined question I wanted to examine before beginning my fieldwork. This contrasts with many ethnographic studies in which the specific research questions emerge from the context. Second, my analysis was not purely inductive, building towards grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Instead, I used a particular theoretical framework to begin the study, that of social constructivism, especially the model of Harre (1984), challenging and revising this model as I went along. Third, a five week time period is not the same as conducting a year long ethnography in a classroom; I chose to focus on a particular period of time and set of tasks. Fourth, ethnographers generally study the context as it is (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). I, however, set up an intervention of writing conferences between the older and younger students for a particular purpose; some researchers might claim that I intervened in the setting and set up a situation in which the older students do not ordinarily engage. However, once students were engaged in the conferences, their conversations were naturally occurring. For these reasons, I do not consider my study an ethnography, yet I do believe that the assumptions, sources of data, and processes of analysis have much in common with qualitative/interpretive traditions.

While my study focused on several individuals and their learning processes, thus qualifying as psychological cases studies (e.g., Merriam, 1988), my interests were in understanding those individuals within their social contexts, thus issues of culture were essential.² I collected my data in a natural setting, a classroom, and consider myself the primary instrument of data collection, augmented by various technological tools. Analysis proceeded inductively, although I had some constructs in mind before beginning.

I present my understanding of the individuals within the setting in subsequent chapters in three ways: (a) presentation of classroom themes and patterns of interaction; (b) individual cases of the students; and (c) a cross-case analysis of the students. I present a chapter on themes to provide the social context of the classroom to better understand the individual cases. I present the complete cases of the individual students because it is only through examining the individual's processes that we can understand the nature of internalization for that student. A cross-case comparison is presented next to compare and contrast students and to provide a lens on the larger issues relevant to internalization. In the sections below I provide details about my data collection processes.

Data Collection

The following sections describe the setting of the study, the participants, and the sources of data.

The Setting

The study took place in a fifth-sixth grade classroom in New York City. The teacher had participated in the Teachers College Writing Project and implemented a particular version of process writing. Below, I discuss the rationale for selecting this

²Case studies can be of an individual, a classroom, a school, or even a larger organization. My unit of analysis was the individual, thus qualifying as a psychological study. Case studies can also be observational, relying on observational data or life history in which extensive interviews are conducted. My cases combined observational data and interviews.

site, provide some details about the Teachers College Writing Project, and describe the school context and the particular classroom.

Rationale for Site Selection

What led me to choose this site, this teacher, and these students? My previous work with the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (NC RTE) provided access to a particular writing program with a specific orientation towards writing--the Teachers College Writing Project. Because of my interest in this program and my findings that teachers could enhance their knowledge about writing, change their beliefs about writing, and change their writing practices through their engagement in a particular program (e.g., McCarthy, 1989; 1990a; 1990b), I wanted to explore the connections between teachers' practice and student learning. Thus, I selected a teacher, Elma Meyer³, who had demonstrated in her interviews in the NC RTE study a high level of understanding of the principles of the Writing Project.

Although I had only been in Ms. Meyer's classroom on one occasion, I had observed another teacher in the school on several occasions and knew something of the school context. It was after discussions with the teacher about how to select the children, when to come, and what she would be teaching that I found myself at Public School 999⁴ in New York City. To understand Ms. Meyer's classroom, it is helpful to discuss the Teachers College Writing Project which had influenced her teaching before describing the school and classroom context.

Program Context

The Teachers College Writing Project was a coordinated effort between the New York City Board of Education's Division of Curriculum and Instruction and Teachers College at Columbia University to involve teachers and students in the writing process

³All names of principals, trainers, teachers, and students are pseudonyms.

⁴ This is a pseudonym for the school; schools in New York City are numbered by district.

within the regular classroom setting (Calkins, 1986; Calkins & Harwayne, 1987; NCRTE, 1987).⁵ The Writing Project had two major components: (a) teacher trainers (including two co-directors, seven teacher-trainers, and three professional writers) who interacted with teachers and children about the writing process in the public school classrooms; and (b) workshops run by project staff at Teachers College that took place during the two week Summer Institute, on Saturdays, and monthly during the school day for New York City teachers (NCRTE, 1987). During the workshops and the Summer Institute teachers engaged in writing themselves and responded to the writing of peers, watched videotapes of trainers working with students, and engaged in such activities as role-playing and discussing with one another ways to teach writing in their classrooms (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987).

In the Teachers College Writing Project, writing is assumed to be purposeful; students should be involved in the process of what "real authors" do (Calkins, 1986). Just as authors write to record ideas, plan, organize, and make sense of their lives, children should be able to choose their own topics to make sense of their lives (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987). Writing is a process that consists of drafting ideas, responding, revising and rethinking, sharing those drafts with others, and finally editing for publication. Essential aspects of the program, called Writing Workshop, include: (a) involvement of very young children in writing; (b) the use of invented spelling as part of the acquisition of conventional spelling; (c) the use of literature for exposure to different genres of writing; and (d) anecdotes about the personal lives of authors (Calkins, 1986). The workshop is a place for "teaching to become deeply personal" (1986, p.6) where teachers and students focus on topics of importance to children. The focus of much of the Workshop is on encouraging students to write personal narratives.

⁵Soon after my data collection, the New York City School District cut the funding for this program.

The role of the teacher is to "help students care about their writing" (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987, p. 23) and to "listen, extend, and guide" (Calkins, 1986, p. 8). Teachers should establish a "literate environment" in which they can respond to the writing of children by providing materials and a simple, predictable schedule. The predictable structure which Calkins promoted in the staff development program consisted of a mini-lesson in which the teacher presents an idea about the process of writing or exposes students to a published author's piece, regular writing time in which students write and confer with one another while the teacher circulates among students conferring with individuals about their writing, and share time in which several students read their work-in-progress and other students respond to it (Calkins, 1986). Calkins views teacher-student writing conferences as being "at the heart of teaching writing" (1986, p. 21) because through them students learn to interact with their own writing. This visible structure is a vehicle for altering traditional classroom norms and fundamentally changing the relationship between teacher and student by getting teachers to interact on a daily basis with students about writing.

The Writing Project staff believed that involving a whole school in the process of changing writing instruction was important. Public School 999 had been selected as one of the sites for extensive on-site work. The teacher whom I selected worked closely with personnel from the Teachers College Writing Project to develop long term changes in classroom practices. One trainer, Ms. Ezmie Henderson, visited the school twice a week to work with several teachers on the staff. Another trainer, Ms. Elsa Hall, visited the school on one occasion when I was there.

School Context

The setting for the study was Room 555 located on the fifth floor of Public School 999, an old school building in the heart of Manhattan, New York City. The school is located in a middle class neighborhood close to several area hospitals and draws students from both the neighborhood and from across the city. The school draws primarily from the

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neighborhood children who do not attend private school and those whose parents work in the nearby hospital facilities. However, as the teacher in the study suggested, students come from all parts of the city, providing their own transportation, to escape going to schools in a "ghetto type neighborhood." The student population consists of an ethnically diverse population, consisting of 53% whites, 16% blacks, 17% Hispanics, and 14% Asians, as reported by the school principal. About 30 % of the 387 students that attend the school are on free or reduced lunch.

Like many school buildings in New York City, the building was old, noisy, and not a very inviting structure for teachers, students, parents, or visitors to enter. The building's starkness was interrupted by the red door that faced the street and set the building off from the residences and commercial buildings surrounding it. Few soft corners were evident in the building; instead, I was surrounded by clanging metal, heavy doors labelled "in" or "out," and cage-like apertures on the stairwells.

The attendants at the door warmed up with familiarity, but their function was clear--to protect children from the possibilities of strangers entering the building and harming the students. The bureaucracy of signing in and signing out, stating one's purpose, and securing permission to enter the building decreased as the attendants got to know me, although making friends with those whose jobs were to sit at a desk facing the front door was not an easy one. I felt I had reached friendly communication in my final week when the guard shared with me the manual he was studying to become a technician.

One of the striking features about this school was the noise level. The screeching of bus brakes, the blaring of taxicab horns, and intense ambulance sirens continually pierced the air. Additionally, the voices of children yelling in the schoolyard and the increasing volume of teachers' voices to hold students' attention above the din could be heard much of the time. In the hallways and stairwells, students' and teachers' voices contributed to the overall sense of frenzy that characterized the school, specifically, and Manhattan, in general.

The school was run by the principal, Tamara Klein, who was in her fourth year of being a principal, having come from an administrative position at the district office. Ms. Klein was trying hard to bring literacy programs such as whole language and the Teachers College Writing Project to her school. As understood by the teacher in the study, the principal hoped to persuade many of the neighborhood families who send their children to private schools to return to public schooling by offering a more progressive approach toward education.

Ms. Klein seemed reserved and business-like, but appeared committed to improving the educational program offered in her school. She was not pleased that I was doing research in her school, perhaps because she felt her teachers were already stressed. She greeted me with the phrase, "I can't believe Ms. Meyer has agreed to do this with all she has going on." However, once I was in the setting, Ms. Klein waved to me and made arrangements for me to use the copy machine, although such severe restrictions were applied that I always had to walk several blocks to have students' notebooks copied.

The Classroom

Stepping into Room 555 was a reprieve from the constant noise and hubbub of the hallways, although the playground, street, and hall noise often invaded the classroom space. As Figure 2 illustrates, the room was essentially divided into two areas: the rug area and the desk area. The area of the room that contained the rug was devoted primarily to reading and writing activities. The class met daily on the blue rug that occupied about a quarter of the room. This area consisted of bookshelves, bulletin boards, and book jackets that hung above the bulletin boards. This part of the room gave the impression of being a "literate environment" because the bookshelves were crammed with picture books, while shelves and shelves of fiction were easily accessible to the students. Students utilized the space freely and selected books to read throughout the day. They recorded the titles of the books they were reading on a chart on one of the bulletin boards. Book jackets were

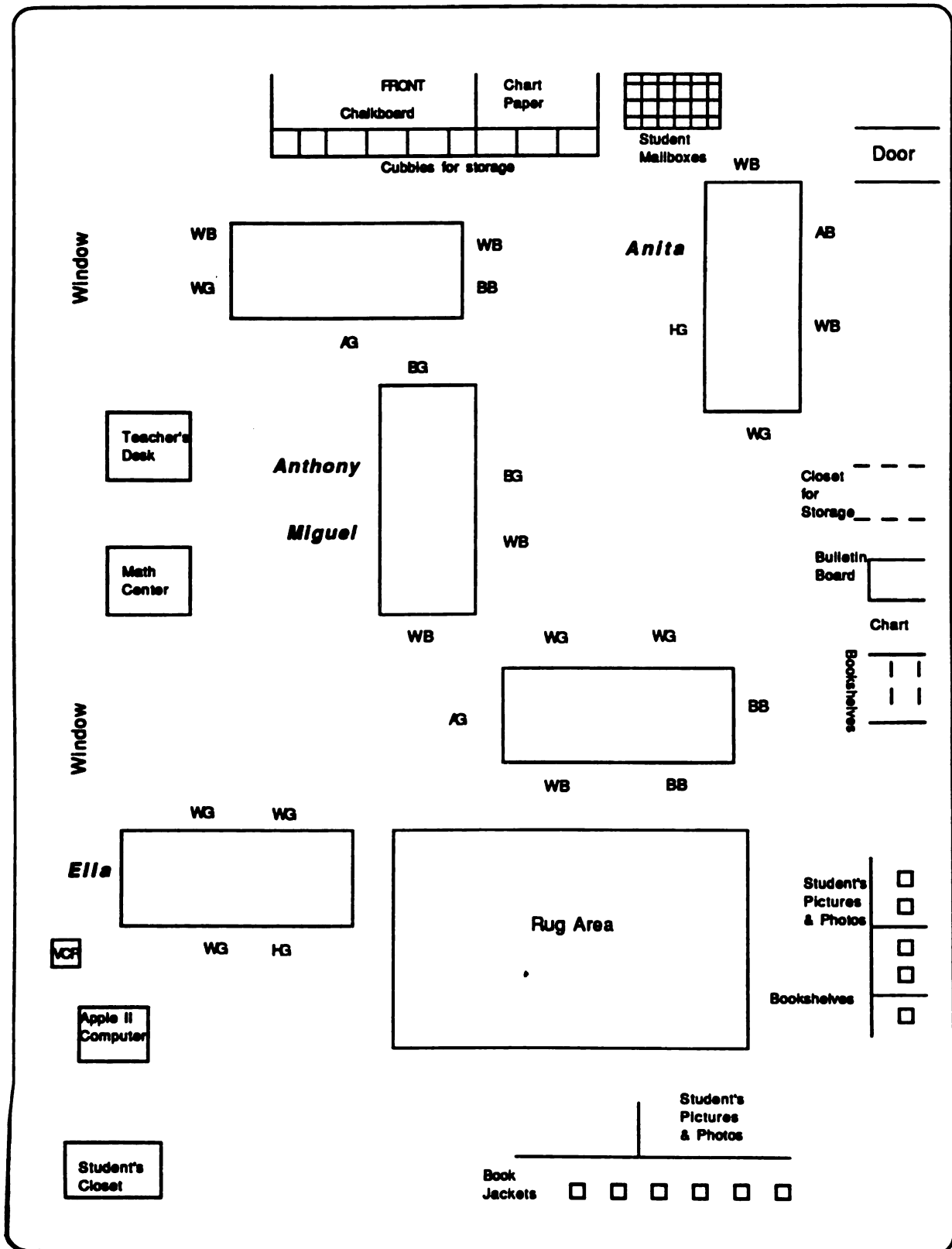


Figure 2 Classroom Map

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arranged aesthetically above the bulletin boards with a variety of jackets from The True Story of the Three Little Pigs to Owl Moon.

Two large bulletin boards occupied the back corner of the rug area; they were divided into 1' x 1 1/2' sections in which each child cut out his/her name, placed it on the board, and covered it with personal mementoes or pictures. For instance, Ella had a picture of herself drawn by her friend, Serena; Anthony had a magazine photo of New York City from the air; Miguel had cut-outs of whales, pop-eye, and assorted figures that he had drawn himself; and Anita had photographs of her family and friends. The overall appearance of the rug area was of a focus on literacy, an eye for aesthetics, and attention to students as individuals.

The rest of the classroom consisted of five tables arranged throughout the rest of the room, with four of the tables near the front of the room and only one near the back. The teacher had assembled these tables herself because the original ones had come in the wrong height; she spent the first week of school getting the tables to be the right size. Students were seated in groups of five-six. An Apple IIe, a VCR, a "math center" and the teacher's desk occupied the back corner and the wall space underneath the windows. A coat closet took up a small space in the back corner. The front of the room contained a large blackboard and cubbies where students kept some materials. Most of the students' books and materials, however, were kept in baskets under their chairs or on the tables themselves. Students' writing notebooks, for instance, remained within easy reach of the students--on the table or in the baskets.

Writing Sessions

Patterns of interaction during writing time will be described at length in Chapter 4. However, the following description provides the reader with a brief account of the types of activities that took place during daily writing sessions to understand the rationale for the methods and procedures used. The daily writing period consisted of:

(a) a "mini-lesson" in which the teacher and students discussed a topic related to literature or the writing of texts; (b) writing time during which students worked on their texts; (c) teacher-student writing conferences in which the teacher discussed an individual student's text with him or her; and (d) a share session in which several students had the opportunity to read their texts to the entire class.

The Participants

The participants in the study were the teacher, trainers from the Teachers College Writing Project, and four students from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Teacher

The teacher, Elma Meyer, was an experienced classroom teacher, having taught elementary school for 18 years. She had taught in another part of New York City for 3 and 1/2 years prior to coming to P.S. 999 where she has been since 1977. Ms. Meyer had been using a process approach to writing in her classroom for four years. She had taken part in the Summer Institute in the summer of 1987. She continued to participate in workshops at Teachers College, having taken a course in adult literature the summer just previous to data collection. She was well-read herself and kept her own writer's notebook. Ms. Meyer seemed eager to learn new things about writing and literature, and was sharing her own knowledge with other teachers who attended workshops.

Ms. Meyer described herself as growing up in a middle-class Jewish family; she had wanted to become a lawyer, but decided to become a teacher instead. A native New Yorker, Ms. Meyer was in her mid 40s, was slender, had very dark, just short of shoulder length hair, and had a strong presence in any room. She was a very expressive person, bordering on the dramatic. Ms. Meyer talked a great deal and provided her opinion on most matters quite freely. She had a rather loud, high-pitched voice that increased in volume when she became excited. Her style of interaction matched well with Tannen's (1984) description of "high-involvement style." In this style, the speaker tends to prefer personal topics, shifts topics abruptly, uses a fast pace of speech and exhibits quick turn

taking. Several paralinguistic features such as expressive hand gestures linked to high involvement style marked her style as well. Ms. Meyer's style was often evident in her interviews with me in which she would speak rapidly, shift the topic abruptly, and add a dramatic flair; it was a challenge keeping up with her pace.

The Trainers

Two trainers worked with Ms. Meyer at the time of the study. One trainer, Ms. Henderson, came into Ms. Meyer's classroom at least weekly, occasionally twice a week for a total of five visits. The other trainer, Ms. Hall, worked in the classroom on one occasion. Both were experienced trainers who had worked for several years with the Project. Ms. Henderson's role was to share literature with the large groups of students and to meet with individuals or small groups of students about their writing. She also provided ideas and support to Ms. Meyer. In fact, they worked collaboratively, discussing plans together before the lesson Ms. Henderson conducted.

Students

Classroom 555 consisted of 28 students of ethnic backgrounds that reflected the school population: 14 Caucasians, 7 African-Americans, 4 Latinos, and 3 Asians⁶. There were fifteen girls and thirteen boys in this fifth/sixth-grade classroom. Students stayed together for all subjects except for mathematics where they were divided into two groups by ability. The school day was a busy one; students had different teachers for computers, art, physical education and moved to those different locations where the subjects were taught.

Initially, the teacher and I had planned that I would follow six students as case studies. I had provided some guidelines for her to consider when selecting students. I asked her to select students who varied according to culture, class, and gender as well as

⁶The school administrator used the terms: black, white, Asian, and Hispanic to refer to students. I use these terms on the classroom map and when identifying the school population, but in the text I use the terms: Caucasian, African-American, Asian, and Latino.

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students who differed in their oral and written fluency, but who would be willing to be interviewed. I selected these features because of existing theoretical and empirical data that suggests that culture, class, and gender are interrelated (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991) and that these features influence teachers' interactions with students (Michaels, 1981; Freedman & Sperling, 1985).

I also advised Ms. Meyer to select students about whom she wanted to learn more. She told me she was tempted to select students who were all "good writers" but said she did not think that was what I wanted. Ms. Meyer selected six students: three girls and three boys; three "high achievers" and three "low achievers" (her words); three African-American students, two Latino students, and one Caucasian student. From these six students I have selected four to present here as cases studies because they (a) have the most complete data sets (e.g., the Caucasian girl was absent for two weeks during data collection); (b) provide examples of the varied nature of internalization; and (c) represent a balance of gender. Next I briefly describe each student; the individual cases presented later contain longer descriptions of the background of each student.

Miguel. Miguel was an eleven-year-old sixth grader who came to the United States in third grade from Guatemala, speaking only Spanish. He learned fluent English quickly and often helped his mother with her English. He was from a working class background.⁷ Miguel lived in an apartment shared by several families with his mother and his brother. The apartment building was in the neighborhood and he walked to school. His mother worked as a baby sitter at the homes of other families. Miguel read extensively, both fiction and non-fiction books.

Anthony. Anthony was a nine-year-old fifth grader whose parents came from Puerto Rico. He considered Puerto Rico a second home even though he had lived in

⁷Determinations about class were made based on whether the student were on free lunch, the occupation of parents, the neighborhood in which a student lived and transportation to school.

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Manhattan all of his life. Anthony was from a middle-class background. His father was a local newscaster; his mother worked in the school as an aide. Anthony considered himself an inventor and a writer. He often experimented with scientific activities at home and kept a scientific journal of his discoveries. He read a great deal, especially fiction and liked writing, although he revealed that he frequently got "writer's block." Anthony had participated in writing process classrooms before by virtue of his attendance at this school where other teachers had used features of the Writing Workshop.

Ella. Ella was a tall, African-American, fifth-grade girl. She lived with her mother in an apartment in Spanish Harlem, and was from a middle-class background. She commuted to school by taxi or by subway, accompanied by her mother. Her mother worked as a proofreader in a publishing company. Ella read extensively, mostly fiction and detective novels, and enjoyed writing fiction and more personal types of writing. She had been at the school since kindergarten and had many opportunities to participate in writing process classrooms.

Anita. Anita was an eleven-year-old sixth grader from a working class background, living in the Bronx. She was an African-American, living with her brother and her mother, who worked as a housekeeper. Anita liked singing and dancing and entertaining people, although she was very withdrawn in whole group class discussions. Anita took the train to school each morning by herself. She had not had many opportunities to participate in writing process classrooms previously. She reported having done little writing before; this was her first year at P.S. 999. Anita did not enjoy reading; she read very little, and the teacher reported that she read at a very low level. Anita, however, enjoyed writing in her notebook and she reported having written five pages on one story, "Lenox Hill Camp," which was the most she had ever written in her life.

Sources of Data

I collected data over a five-week period--from October 8 through November 8. I chose this time period because it provided the opportunity to trace the development of at

least one text through its inception, development, and publication phase, corresponding to Hayes and Flower's (1980) planning, drafting, and revising stages. This time frame represented a meaningful unit of study for the teacher because she was introducing students to notebook writing, a particular genre, with the intention that they would select one theme or issue from their notebooks to turn into a revised piece for a larger audience. The span of five weeks allowed me to gain an understanding of the classroom context, while seeing the development of students' writing of particular pieces. Having observed both the notebook writing and the progression through their projects, I could gain a sense of how a student approached a topic, drew from previous entries, and revised them into a piece for a larger audience. Because I was there during the phases in which they generated notebook entries and because I had copies of their notebooks, I could trace the history of a topic and the student's thinking about the relevant issues.

Data for the study drew from five different sources described below: (a) observations of the classroom during the writing period; (b) interviews with the teacher; (c) individual interviews with students; (d) students' texts; and (e) students teaching younger students. These sources of data were intended to map onto the Harre (1984) model of internalization, tracing the process of appropriation of dialogue from the social interaction through transformation by the individual and back to the public reemergence of dialogue (see Figure 3).

The classroom observations helped to understand the opportunities that students had during the writing period to learn the cognitive aspects of writing and the social norms related to participation in a writing process classroom. The observations related to quadrant I as students began the process of appropriation, participating in the social practices of a writing process classroom. Interviews of the teacher provided additional context to understand her perspective about classroom events. Individual interviews with students fit into quadrants II and III as students transformed and made public what they had

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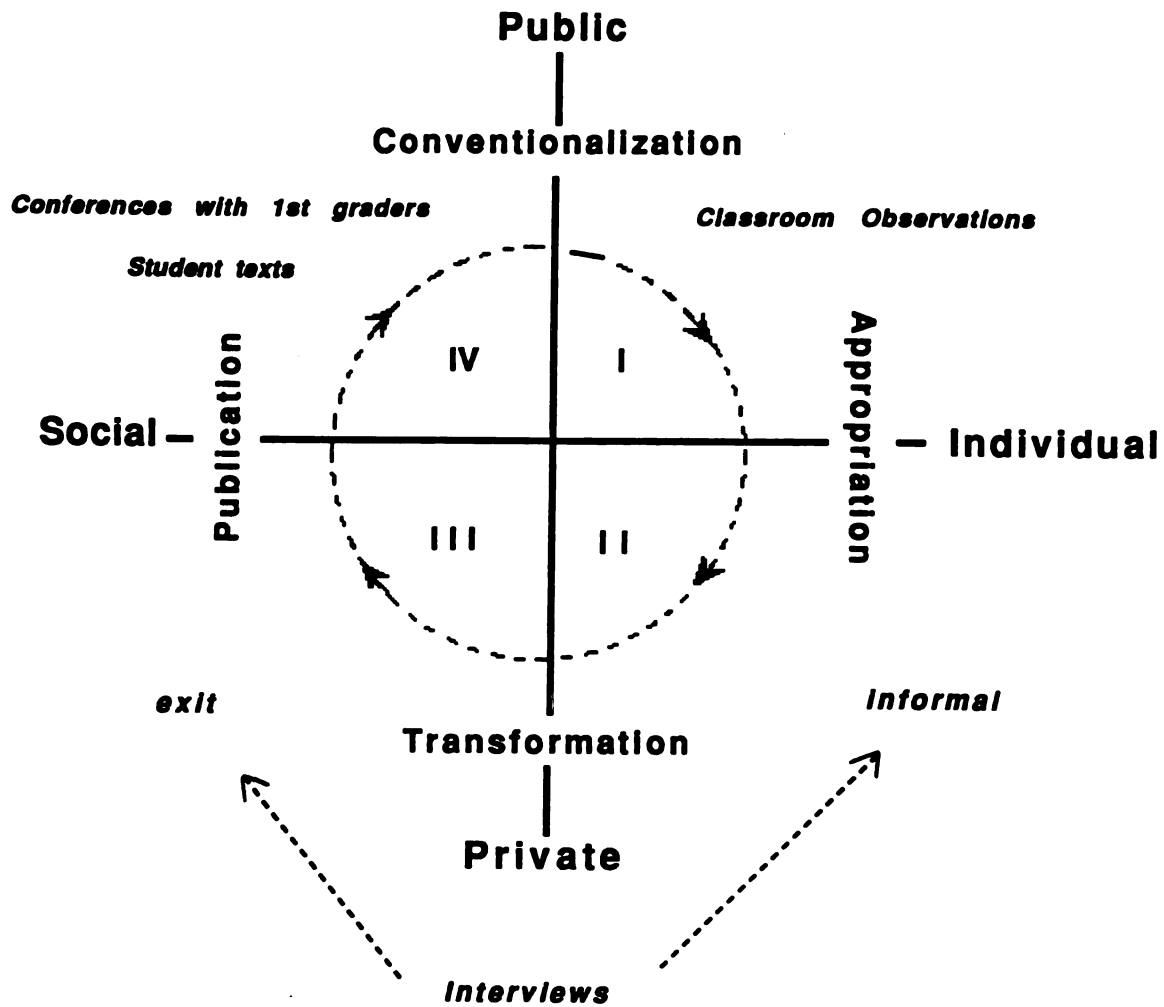


Figure 3 Data Sources and Harre Model

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appropriated. Interviews provided information about the students' understanding of classroom events and their own texts. The informal interviews were designed to get students' immediate understandings of events and to get as close as possible to students' internal processes. The exit interviews, occurring at the end of data collection, were designed to understand students' transformations as they were made more public. Students' texts and the teaching of younger students provided data to understand what students had internalized from the classroom dialogue. These sources fit into quadrant IV, as students' knowledge became reintegrated into the social practices of their texts and talk with younger students.

Using multiple sources provided opportunities for triangulation of data to strengthen the interpretations of the data. I provide details of the sources of data and processes of collecting these data below as they link to the Harre model.

Appropriation

Audiotaped and videotaped observations of classroom interactions provided an account of opportunities students had to participate in the writing process classroom. The teacher provided her perspective about events and goals for students through interviews.

Classroom observations of writing. In order to understand the nature of the interactions and the dialogue that took place during the writing period, I kept an ongoing record of those interactions. The focus of my observations was on the hour block of the writing session each day. However, I spent three to four hours at the school daily between setting up my equipment, interviewing students and the teacher, and photocopying students' work.

My role as participant observer was primarily to observe classroom activities. I was certainly known to the students, accentuated by my video camera and audiotape system. I became part of the classroom setting rather quickly, though, in spite of my equipment. I focused on the case study students, but talked to other students as well, often approaching

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students to ask questions about their writing. Further, many students approached me to ask my opinion and solicit my help for their writing.

A few times, my role became more than that of an observer. For instance, on one occasion Ms. Meyer asked me to read aloud to the class while she talked to certain individuals outside the classroom in the hall. She also had recommended to me to keep my own "notebook" of perceptions of New York City to become more of a part of the classroom. I did keep a notebook, but did not share any pieces until the very last day when I read aloud a text I had written about all of the students in the class.

In this classroom, many adults were often present for either working with the teacher, like the trainers, or observing Ms. Meyer's writing process classroom. Consequently, students seemed quite at ease with having adults present and with approaching them to ask questions. Students seemed to accept me easily, but I felt the teacher regarded me as a disruption. Because I spent a lot of time interviewing the "case study" students, I developed a strong rapport with each of them.

I collected observational data in three ways: (a) my field notes; (b) videotapes; and (c) audiotapes. Field notes provided information about the general classroom context and a description of the activities in which the teacher and students engaged. Videotapes provided visual information that was used to add detailed descriptions of the classroom context and specific writing activities. Audiotapes provided an accurate record of the dialogue that took place between the teacher and students. While in the classroom, I alternated taking field notes with videotaping and audiotaping the classroom sessions. My primary source of data for the observations was the videotapes, augmented by my field notes and the audiotapes. After each day in the classroom, I watched the videotapes, listened to the audiotapes, and consulted my field notes to write a narrative of the events of the day; these narratives became my expanded field notes including observer comments.

Procedures: The focus of my classroom observations was on the case study students as they engaged in their various writing tasks. Generally, I set up the equipment in this

way: (a) the teacher wore a wireless microphone connected to an audiotape that recorded her comments; (b) I ran the video camera using a tripod whenever possible; (c) I used another tape recorder with a "sound grabber" microphone to pick up the voices of the students in whole group sessions; and (d) I jotted down notes in my notebook as I was recording. However, different phases of the writing period demanded differing amounts of attention on my part and different levels of involvement. During the "mini-lessons" and "share sessions" I generally kept the camera on the tripod, and focused on the speaker. If the teacher were reading aloud or talking for a long period of time, I would alternate between focusing on her and taking close-up shots of the case study students.

Negotiating the writing/conferring time was more complicated, as I: (a) followed the teacher and her conferences with students; (b) focused on the case study students; and (c) conducted informal interviews with the case study students, especially if they had had an interaction with the teacher. Because I could not do all of these things all of the time, I used several implicit rules in this order of priority: first, made sure I got an accurate record of all conferences between the teacher and case study students; second, kept a visual or written record of all students with whom the teacher had conferences; third, interviewed case study students as close to their interactions with the teacher as possible; fourth, recorded the interactions of case study students with other students. I kept these priorities in mind as I tried to respond to and record the changing, complex social system of the classroom.

All audiotaped observations were transcribed by professional transcribers. I listened to the tapes and edited all pieces that I subsequently used for analysis and inclusion in the data set. For example, I edited all of the teacher-student conferences and added analytic notations.

Teacher interview. The teacher interview was intended to provide data about the school context, the teacher's goals for writing, her specific plans, and perceptions of the students. I conducted two, forty-minute interviews with the teacher during data collection

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(see Appendix A). The first interview included questions about the school setting and the students who attended the school. In this interview, questions focused on the teacher's goals for notebook writing, her rationale for having students engage in notebook writing, and the progress students had made so far. I also asked about her plans for moving students to projects and her expectations about those projects. During this interview, I began to ask questions about the specific case study students I was studying.

In the second interview, the questions emerged from issues within the classroom context. My purpose was to try and understand the norms of interaction from the teacher's perspective. I had noticed several features that seemed to be important to the ways in which the classroom was operating and I wanted Ms. Meyer to provide information about why she had established the rules for writing that she had. I asked questions about how she thought the projects were going so far, and asked about particular events that occurred with students. For instance, I asked about Ella's writing of fiction and elicited Ms. Meyer's beliefs about students' writing of fiction as well as her perceptions of particular writing conferences she had with students. I also elicited the teacher's impressions of the case study students and how they were progressing as writers. These interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. I gathered demographic data on the teacher from previous NCRTE (1987) interviews and from a telephone conversation with her.

Transformation and Publication: Student Interviews

I conducted two types of interviews with students: (a) semi-structured interviews--entry and exit; and (b) informal interviews. Semi-structured interviews consisted of a set of pre-determined questions that I asked the case study students, were conducted with individual students, lasted about 40-50 minutes, and took place outside the classroom context. By contrast, informal interviews took place within the classroom context, were brief (5-10 minutes), were frequent, and consisted of contextual questions about events that just occurred. I found that each type of interview revealed different kinds of information about students' internalization processes.

Each student had at least two semi-structured interviews--usually an entry interview and an exit interview. In the case of Anita, however, because of complicating circumstances (see her case), she did not have an exit interview, but did have a total of two interviews outside the classroom context. The purpose of the entry interview conducted with each student was to gain information about students' personal histories and their knowledge of and experiences with writing.

Entry interviews. The entry interview contained two major parts: (a) Part I: personal history; and (b) Part II: knowledge of writing (see Appendix B). The personal history section consisted of two subsections: (a) background knowledge and (b) literacy history. Questions in the background knowledge subsection related to family life, neighborhood, interests, and school. The questions rest on the assumption that children bring to the writing process experiences that bear either directly or indirectly upon their future learning. This section also served to establish a level of comfort between the student and me by asking students about issues that were familiar to them.

The history of literacy section of the interview focused on the students' prior experiences with and attitudes towards reading and writing. Questions were related to reading and writing habits such as how often students were engaged in writing, topics they wrote about, and attitudes towards writing. These questions provided background information about what kinds of attitudes and reading and writing habits students possessed that may have influenced their learning.

Within the history of literacy section, I also asked students about experiences in writing from previous years, opportunities they had to engage in writing currently, and perceptions of the current classroom. I asked students to describe what it meant to be a good writer and followed up with probes about their own processes of writing including sources of ideas, specific audiences, and genre or types of writing they did.

Through Part II of the interview, I intended to elicit information about students' knowledge of text. Believing that explaining their own texts provided the opportunity for

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students to express what they knew in an area in which they were experts--that of their own text, I asked students to bring examples of their own work.

In the task of responding to their own texts, I asked students to select a piece they liked, read it aloud, and talk about what they had written, pointing out features they thought were effective or interesting to the reader. The questions were intended to be very open-ended so that the students could select the things about the text they wanted to explain. Follow-up questions focused on asking the student about the source of their ideas, audience, purposes for writing the piece, and revision strategies because these all potentially influence what authors write. I also asked the students to describe the process they went through to write their pieces. Because the students were keeping notebooks, I asked students about the function of their notebooks and the types of writing they included in them.

The last series of questions about the students' own texts were related to the planning process. I asked questions about topics they planned to write about next and planning strategies they used.

Although I used the protocol I had developed as a guide so that I would collect comparable data on students, my goal was to get the students to talk about their texts, their understanding of writing, and the classroom context. Thus, I deviated from the protocol when necessary, following the student's lead and asking questions that related to topics the students raised.

Exit interviews. The exit interviews consisted of questions I developed out of themes that had grown out of the classroom context (see Appendix C). I focused the questions around four major topics: (a) qualities of good writing; (b) classroom events; (c) notebooks and projects; and (d) conferences with younger students. First, because so much of the classroom discourse centered on "the qualities of good writing" I asked students to describe to me what they considered good writing. Follow up probes included asking students to use examples from books, from other students' work in the class, and

from their own notebooks or projects. In the second question, I asked students to identify good writers in their class and describe what those writers did. The third question about qualities of good writing consisted of asking students to describe what they thought were important aspects of writing. Then I presented to students a list of ideas and examples that had come out of the classroom discourse such as "description," "getting a picture in the reader's mind," and "keeping the reader on his toes." Within this list I also included ideas that had not been part of the discourse such as "punctuation," "spelling," and "character" to see which ones they would select as important.

The second series of questions focused on classroom events. I asked students what they had learned about writing this year and from whom. I followed this up with questions about books, events, or things that occurred in the classroom that helped the student. I began with asking the questions in an open-ended way and then provided some examples of events that had occurred. I then asked students to describe what the classroom was like during writing and followed up with probes such as asking them to describe a particular event or conference with the teacher that had influenced them.

The third area of focus was on their own notebooks and projects. I asked students about their projects, how they had selected their topics, and which notebook entries they used. I then asked them about audience, revisions, and why they had made the changes they did. Follow-up questions included what events or individuals (e.g., conferences, discussions, etc.) had affected changes they made in their projects. Because the students had not done their final copies, I asked what they would do to finish their projects.

I concluded the interviews by asking students about the conferences they had conducted with the younger children, how they had gone, and why they did what they did. Again, in these interviews, my purpose was to try to understand what students had learned, what the students' views of writing were, and how they had constructed the events. To this end, I pursued certain aspects with students when they seemed fruitful and

did not pursue to the same extent issues that seemed less meaningful to a particular student.

Procedures: The semi-structured interviews took place outside of the classroom context in a separate room to provide privacy, some quiet, and an opportunity for the student to reflect in a setting outside the classroom. The interviews took place in either a small teacher's lounge next to the classroom or in the larger science room across from the classroom. Although the rooms were separate from the classroom, teachers and students often came in and out of the rooms, interrupting us as they entered or exited.

The entry interviews lasted about 45 minutes and occurred during lunch time because this was the only time the teacher would allow the students out of the classroom. Students had to try and eat their lunches as I asked them questions. Because I could only conduct one interview a day with each child, the entire set of interviews was not completed until the end of the second week of data collection. These interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriber and subsequently edited by me.

The exit interviews took place all on the same day, the third to last day of data collection, in the science room. The teacher had allowed me to take students out of class on this day to be interviewed. She was planning to be absent and thought they would not miss anything substantive because a substitute would be handling the class. These interviews averaged about 50 minutes. The exit interviews were both audiotaped and videotaped; the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim which I then edited.

Informal interviews. Informal interviews were an important source of data about students' thinking and understanding of events as they occurred in the classroom. An important reason for conducting these interviews within the classroom was to get students' immediate thoughts about classroom dialogue as close to the event as possible. Questions emerged from the classroom context, focusing on what the student was writing or had written that day, where the student got his/her ideas, and their impressions of interactions they had with adults or other students. After asking an open-ended question

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about what they were thinking or writing, I usually asked about a specific event that had taken place, especially a teacher-student writing conference.

Procedures: Another reason I conducted these interviews within the class was that the teacher approved of them and preferred them to taking the students outside of the classroom. Therefore, I tried to make use of this time as much as possible. Typically, I briefly interviewed from one-three students daily about their writing and classroom events. These interviews often took place as students were writing and the teacher was conducting conferences with students other than case study students. Occasionally, I waited until close to the end of the writing period and asked students questions then. I selected the student whom I would interview based on (a) who had recent interactions with the teacher, and (b) what student I had not talked to recently. I got to each student at least once every three days, resulting in four-six informal interviews for each child. On several occasions, I was able to have informal interviews with students during lunch. The focus of these discussions was on events that had occurred that day.

Conventionalization

To understand what students had internalized from the classroom dialogue, I collected students' texts and asked the case study students to conduct writing conferences with younger students.

Student texts. Because the focus of the writing process was on texts the students generated, I collected all of the pieces that students wrote. Drafts of student texts provided information about how students' writing changed in relation to the dialogue and, was, therefore, one representation of what the student had internalized from the social interaction. Students had written two types of texts: entries in their notebooks and final projects. Students' notebooks contained both their responses to books they were reading and the entries in their personal notebooks. I collected the students' notebooks, in which each entry was dated, several times weekly and made photocopies of every page in the book so that I had a record of their work from the beginning of the year through the end of data

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collection. I collected all drafts of the projects as well as the students' final projects. In the case of Ella, who kept another notebook and wrote stories outside of class, I also collected samples from those pieces.

Teaching a younger student. Each participating student conducted a writing conference with a first-grade student about the younger student's text. This provided the older students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they had internalized from the classroom dialogue through the help they provided a peer. Because students had been participants in the process of conferences, they had some experience with conferences. However, they had little prior experience with conducting writing conferences with younger students; therefore, conducting conferences with younger students provided the case study students with the opportunity to make explicit their knowledge of text in a real situation with a particular student.

Procedures: I made arrangements with a first/second-grade teacher whom I had known previously and explained my research project to her. She readily agreed to select students from her writing process classroom who were at least adequate or were very fluent writers. These younger students were working on pieces of their choice and had experience in conferences with their teacher and in reading their work to peers.

After I explained who the younger students were, I gave the older students only brief instructions about how to talk with the younger students because I wanted the case study students to construct the task in a way that was meaningful to them. I gave the students three guidelines: (a) have the younger student read his/her piece to you; (b) try to help the student improve his/her work; and (c) use what you have learned this year about writing to help the child. These conferences took place in the hallway at small desks, or in one case, the small teacher's lounge during the older students' lunch time. Three dyads met together simultaneously with a tape recorder between the two speakers. All writing conferences with dyads of students were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and then edited by me.

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Processes for Collecting Data

The first week of data collection involved observing the classroom to get a sense of the classroom context and beginning the interviews with each of the students. My intent was to introduce myself and the equipment gradually so that students would become accustomed to my presence. On the first day, I brought only my notebook and took field notes, while on the second day I brought a tape recorder. For the rest of that week, I used the wireless microphone for the teacher as well. It was not until the beginning of the second week that I brought the videocamera. Intensive classroom observations using all of the equipment continued for the next four weeks.

Because of the nature of the school calendar and due to the teacher's own schedule, I conducted a total of 17 observations in five weeks. Several holidays and incidents interrupted the flow of data collection including two school holidays (Columbus Day and Election Day); two Teachers College Inservice days that the teacher attended; two days in which the teacher was absent due to a family emergency; one field trip day; and one day the students did not have writing (Halloween). I was able to interview students, however, on the four days that the teacher was absent.

During the five weeks, each student participated in at least two semi-structured interviews and four-six informal interviews that were spread out across the data collection period. I interviewed the teacher during the second and fourth weeks of data collection. Each student conducted a writing conference with a younger student during the last week of data collection. All texts written during the data collection period were collected. Students also sent audiotapes of their reflections of their final projects. These reflections were in response to a set of questions and a blank cassette that I gave them before leaving the site.

Analysis

Ideas for analysis were derived from a wide variety of case study (e.g., Merriam, 1988), ethnographic (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) and

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sociolinguistic sources (e.g., Cazden, 1986; Florio-Ruane, 1987; Gumperz, 1982; Hudson, 1980; Hymes, 1972; Mehan, 1979; Stubbs, 1983) as well as from research specific to writing and the analysis of talk and text (e.g., Daiute, 1989; Michaels, 1987; Nystrand, 1986; Sperling, 1989). Analyses of cases were useful to construct ways of describing individuals and comparing those individuals with one another. The ethnographic sources contributed ideas about sorting, compiling, and categorizing data, especially observational data. The sociolinguistic frameworks were particularly helpful in constructing ways to analyze linguistic data, especially from the classroom interactions in terms of features such as turn-taking, roles and interactions of speakers, and the functions of language within particular contexts. The studies of writing were helpful in analysis of student-teacher writing conference data.

I used different kinds of analyses and different levels of analyses depending on the kind of data (interview, observational, text) and the pertinent chapter (see Table 1). The chapter on classroom themes and patterns of interaction, for instance, draws primarily on observational data; the individual cases of students draw on data from particular aspects of the observations, from student and teacher interview data, from the students' texts, and from the writing conferences the older students conducted with younger students; the cross case comparisons draw from observational data, writing conferences with younger students, and texts. Although the overall guiding principle was triangulation of data (both in the sense of obtaining the participants' views and the researcher's views, and in the sense of combining different types of data to make an argument stronger and more valid), each chapter with accompanying level of analysis needs detailed explication.

My procedure for doing analysis was both deductive and inductive. I had begun my analysis with a particular question in mind, namely the nature of internalization, and two particular categories I wanted to use: content and conversational strategies. However, as I became immersed in the data, other issues, patterns, and themes emerged including intersubjectivity which came to play a key role in the ways in which I made sense of the

Table 1 Summary of Categories of Analysis

Chapter 4: Developing Classroom Themes

Observational data

Content

Activity structure of writing workshop

**mini-lessons
writing time
conferring
sharing**

Teacher's image of good writing

Teacher interviews

Chapter 5: The Cases

Observational data

**content
body language and proxemic cues
conversational moves by the teacher
prosodic cues
conversational moves by the student**

Student interview data

Texts

Students' conferences with younger students

Chapter 6: Comparisons of Cases

Teacher-student conferences

Writing conferences with younger students

Texts

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data. Therefore, there was a continual interplay between beginning with theories and categories and checking those against the data, and starting with the data to move to "grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Developing Classroom Themes

The observational data from classroom interactions were my primary sources of data for developing classroom themes. From the narratives of the classroom, which were developed from a combination of my field notes, watching the videotapes, and the verbatim transcriptions of the audiotapes recorded during classroom interactions, I discerned several recurring activity structures, events, and relationships between teacher and students. These recurring events developed into the classroom themes.

Content

First, I analyzed the content (the main ideas of the sessions) of the 17 observations by rereading the narratives and establishing a logical way in which the sessions were organized. The two major ideas the teacher expressed as being important were: (a) the focus on literature and (b) the process of turning notebooks into projects. These ideas were interrelated and occurred throughout the five weeks. Three phases emerged as I organized the observational data: (a) notebooks and qualities of good writing; (b) moving to projects through writing conferences; and (c) using literature to improve writing. These phases seemed to capture both the teacher's goals and the ways in which the topics and interaction patterns related to one another. I then selected the most salient events and phrases from the narratives of each day, while providing a description of the case study students' involvement to present in brief narrative form.

The Activity Structure of Writing Workshop

The Teachers College Writing Project uses the term "Writing Workshop" to describe the types of events related to students' participation in writing. I have added the term "activity structure" to designate the types of activities that took place within Ms. Meyer's classroom. To establish the common interaction patterns, I drew upon my

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existing knowledge about how Writing Workshops are often established (e.g., with a mini-lesson, writing and conferring time, and sharing) and sought to understand how the structure of Ms. Meyer's classroom was similar to or different from the ones described by Calkins (1986). Because the teacher used Calkins' (1986) terms, and had established a Writing Workshop in her classroom, I used the same overall categories and labelled the observational data accordingly: (a) mini-lessons; (b) writing time; (c) conferring; (d) sharing. However, by analyzing the data more closely, I came to understand how the phases of the Workshop in Ms. Meyer's classroom were more dynamic than in other Project classrooms.

Mini-lessons. To understand the patterns of the mini-lessons, I read through all of the mini-lessons several times and viewed the videotapes, making note of the language the teacher used, the cues she gave to students about when it was appropriate to respond, and the pace of the lessons. I then selected three observations (10/19, 10/24, and 11/2) to watch in closer detail; these three had lengthy mini-lessons, seemed typical of the types of interactions present in the classroom, and contained rich information about the teacher's, trainers', and students' perceptions of the qualities of good writing, which I had already identified as an important theme. From these observations, I observed the pace of the lesson, the kinds of questions the teacher asked students, the teacher's involvement with the literature and the ideas, and the amount of participation by the students.

Writing time. While in the field, I had been puzzled about how it was that students knew when it was appropriate to talk to peers during writing and when it was not. I pursued this in interviews with both the teacher and students and drew upon these data to write about "quiet writing time." A key incident with one of the students had caught my attention and I used this as a vignette to explore in more detail to provide information about the larger theme of the messages the teacher was communicating to students during writing.

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Conferring. I developed the teacher's conferring patterns by selecting three days in which the teacher had conducted from 6-8 conferences on each day. I read the transcripts from these conferences several times to understand how the teacher began the conference, what transpired in the middle, and how the conferences ended. From these conferences, I interpreted a pattern and then tried this pattern out on additional conferences, checking for disconfirming conference structures.

Sharing. I read through the transcripts, noting how sharing time was organized during different writing sessions. I looked for frequency of share sessions within the writing period, number of students who shared their work each time, and which students seemed to share more often than others. I also discerned the patterns of where students and the teacher sat when they shared their work, especially whether these sessions were held on the rug or at students' tables.

Teacher's Image of Good Writing

The idea for this section evolved from reading the transcripts and noticing that the teacher had specific ideas she wanted to convey to the students about what constituted good writing. I developed this section as a backdrop against which to compare the students. Developing the ideas for the teacher's image of good writing section was complex. I selected these themes by rereading my narratives and the verbatim transcripts several times, highlighting key phrases, important events, and ideas that stood out. I tried out several category systems before I finally settled on the one I present. This category system was developed by organizing all of the recurring phrases into the categories of personal experience, selecting a genre for a particular audience, elements of language and style, and organization and focus. Within these categories the topics of strategies the teacher used such as modeling, examples of texts used, assignments, and language cues emerged as capable of capturing the relevant events. The teacher's interview data also provided evidence about her own beliefs about important themes of the classroom. I analyzed all interview data that was relevant to her perspective on writing and selected

particular passages to use in this section. I looked for overall themes to capture the teacher's image, but examined disconfirming examples as well.

Cases of the Students

The individual cases of the students drew from the complete data set including students' interviews, the teacher's interviews, writing conferences with younger students, classroom observation data, and students' texts. Triangulation of data was essential to developing the cases. The Harre model provided organization to present data from the four cases in a comparable manner.

Initially, I approached the cases by having a folder for each individual student on my word processor, then developing subfolders for chronologically identifying interview data, relevant fieldnotes, transcripts of teacher-student conferences, and transcripts of student-student conferences. Further, students' texts were organized chronologically, separating notebook materials from "project" materials. I then analyzed students' data on a case by case basis, trying to understand each student's point of view and what was unique about each student's internalization process.

Observation Data from Classroom Interactions: Establishing Intersubjectivity

My analysis of the observation data proceeded in several ways. First, while still in the field, I wrote a summary of each case study student's participation in classroom activities at the end of each day. In these summaries I noted whether the student had participated in the classroom discussion, whether she had had a conference with the teacher or a peer, whether I had interviewed her, and what she wrote in her notebook or for her project that day. These notes aided me in the more in-depth analysis. Using the observational data set on each student, I could look for patterns of student participation and understanding of the particular events that had transpired.

Next, I selected all the teacher-student conferences for a particular student and performed a systematic microanalysis, similar to Erickson's (1977) microethnography. I conducted a detailed analysis on these segments of video and audiotape because, as I got

deeper into my analysis, the conferences seemed increasingly important in finding out if and how the teacher and student established intersubjectivity. Through this process I defined intersubjectivity as "a temporary shared reality," in line with Rommetveit's (1979) definition. The link between intersubjectivity and internalization became more significant as I struggled to make sense of the individual cases. The importance of these conferences as windows to understand the classroom discourse was substantiated by meetings with individuals and a group of researchers who corroborated and expanded many of my emerging theories and offered some of their own.⁸

First, I edited each of the conferences for accuracy of transcription by listening to the tapes repeatedly. Then, I watched the videotape segments of the conferences to get a sense of the event. Next, I read the transcripts of an individual writing conference and asked myself, "What appears to be going on here?" By using an inductive approach, I formulated some hypotheses about what was occurring. I segmented parts of the data into meaningful units that seemed to capture certain aspects. For instance, with Ella's conferences, I found that a sequence of events took place that I labelled, "finding a shared topic," "establishing a shared meaning," "problem solving," and "recommendations for revision." Even though this structure did not end up being the final presentation in the case, it helped me to find patterns within an individual conference.

I used various units of analysis, depending on the meaning that seemed to be developing between participants. For instance, the larger turn exchanges such as that just described for Ella helped in understanding how the communication between speakers was unfolding generally. However, I also examined the individual turn of each speaker and what messages were being conveyed. In the transcripts of the conferences presented in the cases, I have labelled the dialogue exchanges by numbering the turn exchanges sequentially

⁸I wish to thank the video group consisting of Susan Florio-Ruane, Sue McMahon, David Eichinger, Jim Reineke, Ruth Heaton, Jenny Denyer, and Dan Chazan for their many contributions and insights into my teacher-student conference data.

from the approach of the first speaker and ending with the words of the last speaker; this provides the reader with a means to orient the dialogue presented within the whole exchange. In addition to these types of analyses, I also examined the specific utterances within each turn exchange. An utterance is the unit of talk that has meaning; therefore, a short "Mhmmm" can carry as much significance as a long statement about how a student might change her piece.

In analyzing the conferences, I noted several features of the dialogue. First, the conferences focused around particular content--what the participants said. Second, how the teacher and students conveyed their messages was essential to whether they established intersubjectivity. Several features of the ways in which speakers communicated surfaced including: (a) body language and proxemic cues; (b) conversational moves by the teacher; (c) prosodic cues; and (d) conversational moves by the student. These are all features of the social interaction between teacher and student that are indicators of communication during the appropriation phase of internalization. I discuss each of these below. Each of these types of analysis provided a means to approach what transpired between teacher and student, yet it was the gestalt of the interaction that was important.

Content. As I looked at the transcripts, I noticed that certain patterns emerged concerning the conference content--what the teacher and students talked about. The teacher and student tended to discuss the topic of the project students had selected or were about to select; the genre or form of the writing; or the organization of the piece. When discussing the topic of the project, the teacher focused on students' previous entries, having the student try and identify themes, issues, or particular persons about which the student had written. In discussing genre, the teacher used the categories of fiction vs. non-fiction, letter, speech, story, or poem. Conferences about organization focused on themes, leads, or sequencing of sections. Sometimes several of these topics were discussed in one conference.

Body Language and proxemic cues. Because other researchers (e.g., Hall, 1966; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982) have found that body language and proxemic cues can be very important in communicating messages to others, I viewed the videotapes of the individual conferences with the teacher from eight-ten times each, jotting down when a participant in the event smiled, laughed, or nodded. I also noted the distance between speakers and whether they faced each other because these details can provide information about how the participants perceive and feel about each other. I also indicated when participants made eye contact with one another.

Conversational moves by the teacher. Several researchers studying the language of classrooms have noted the common structure of classroom discourse (e.g., Cazden, 1988; Coulthard, 1977; Mehan, 1979; Willes, 1983). They have identified strategies that teachers often use with students such as eliciting (asking questions), informing (making declarative statements), and directing (giving commands). I drew from these general categories to analyze the teacher's moves in the classroom I studied and formed four main categories: (a) interrogatives; (b) statements; (c) commands/recommendations; and (d) expressive cues. I considered utterances that ended with a question as interrogatives. However, these interrogatives served different functions within the context. For instance, some interrogatives requested specific information such as, "So you actually have that entry? . . . Now are there other parts, other entries where that happens?" Other interrogatives were much more open-ended such as, "Okay, you want to talk?" In still others, the teacher raised her voice at the end, but was actually summarizing the student's responses. An example of the summary, which also had the function of suggesting that the student ought to do something, was this, "You've started to look through your notebook, take all the good stuff and copy it over and work it into one piece?" Here the teacher was summarizing what the student had done, but was also suggesting if he had not, he should.

I distinguished statements from commands with the former providing information to the student, while the latter directed the student to do something in particular. A

statement provided information to the student about what the teacher was thinking. For instance, when the teacher said, "I wasn't asking what you were thinking about her. I was asking what you were thinking about you." Statements also functioned in different ways within different contexts. The previous example was a statement of fact. A statement of "That's terrific" had the function of praising the student, while other statements seemed to summarize and extend what the student had said. For instance, the utterance, "You know how you start feeling like the whale and that kind of led you to thinking about the killer whale is your favorite whale." In this case, the teacher is not directing the student to do something but rather is extending what the student has suggested or agreed to.

Commands on the other hand, directed a student to do something. However, I distinguished between different types of directives, mostly through whether they seemed insistent or were mere recommendations. Often the teacher couched her suggestions in "might's" or "could's" which I considered recommendations, whereas at other times she used more directive language such as, "You need to really go through this book very carefully and read it very carefully and take another color pen."

In looking at the transcripts and listening to the tapes, I noticed that words such as "Mhmmm" or "Ok" seemed to serve different functions in different contexts and I set out to understand these uses within the individual cases. For instance, for some students, "mhmmm's" by the teacher served as encouragement, while for others the "Mhmmm's" were merely acceptance or indicated boredom. I made these judgments on the basis of prosodic cues--the ways in which the teacher used her voice.

Prosodic cues. Gumperz (1982) defines prosodic phenomena as voice cues that include (a) intonation (pitch levels on individual syllables); (b) changes in loudness; (c) stress (general feature that incorporates variations in loudness, pitch, and duration); (d) vowel length variations; (e) chunking by pausing; and (f) overall shifts in speech register. I considered these features as I listened to the conferences and focused on which ones seemed to make a difference in the communication between teacher and student. Next,

I attempted to train myself using Trim's (1973) categorical scheme for grouping English intonation into one of seven patterns.⁹ This detail of coding did not seem essential for understanding the discourse of the teacher and students. Nor did my word processor allow for easy notation of such a system. When examining my data, the crucial prosodic cues that seemed to play a role in whether the teacher and students developed intersubjectivity were (a) intonation in a general sense--whether the teacher raised her voice at the end of statements to turn them into questions; (b) pauses and overlapping talk; (c) stressed words; and (d) changes in loudness or speed.

As I read through the conference data and listened repeatedly to the audiotapes of the conferences, I devised a notation system to capture the interactions. I used question marks to indicate a rising intonation. Question marks also suggest the speaker expected either a verbal or nonverbal response. I developed a system to denote pauses because I thought that pauses and overlapping talk might be indicators of the synchrony and comfort between speakers, depending on the particular context. For instance, Tannen (1984) found that overlapping talk was comfortable and a sign of participants relating well in a conversation in some cases, whereas overlapping talk made others quite uncomfortable. Pauses can suggest whether the speaker is anticipating a response, but can also indicate discomfort or comfort on the part of the speakers. I investigated Michaels' (1987) work using a system of slashes to indicate pauses, as well as Tannen's (1984) work using a series of dots to indicate time elapsed as possible notation systems, before selecting the one I did. First, to indicate pauses, I placed pause marks (/ = short pause) and (// = long pause) in the transcripts. I did not time the length of the pauses, but chose a simple short pause, longer

⁹ These patterns include low fall, high fall, low rise, high rise, fall-rise, rise-fall, and rise-fall-rise. Each of these patterns can fall within the overall categorization of questions, commands, or statements. For instance, the "high rise" can turn a statement into a question or it can be used to repeat an order in a command.

pause system as being sufficient for my purposes. Next, to indicate overlapping talk, I placed the marks (--) into the transcripts.

A feature that emerged from the data as being important was the stressed word. I noticed that at certain points in the conversations, the teacher or student would repeat the idea mentioned by the other speaker; the words that were stressed by each speaker seemed to be operating as cues. I went through all of the transcripts of the conferences, repeatedly listening to the tapes, noting words stressed by each speaker. These are indicated by the underlining of each stressed word in a phrase; words that are emphasized more than usual are underlined and italicized.

The last type of analyses of prosodic cues that I used included pitch and speed, especially with regard to the teacher who increased or decreased volume and pace at certain points in the conferences. The most convenient way to indicate these changes was by setting them off in brackets and italicizing these features. For instance, I wrote [*increased speed*] to indicate a change in pace. When not otherwise noted, the reader may assume that the pitch and volume are within the normal range for this teacher or student.

Conversational moves by the student. Because communication involves at least two parties, I wanted to represent the students' discourse patterns in the conferences. Reading the data over several times, it appeared that students were using several types of moves in their responses to the teacher. Student moves fell into one of several categories: (a) explanations in response to a question by the teacher; (b) agreement with the teacher such as "yeah" or "sure;" (c) disagreements with the teacher such as "no" or "not really;" (d) initiating a new topic for discussion; (e) requesting information from the teacher; or (f) transitions such as "Well." An example of an explanation in response to the teacher's question might be, "I do have every single entry here, they're all different." Initiating a new topic for discussion occurred when the student introduced a topic that the teacher had not previously asked about. A request for information included, "It's due next week?" I

used these categories as general guidelines to analyze students' responses. Prosodic cues including enthusiasm in voice were also indicators of students' responses.

Although I employed many different analytical schemes on the conferences with students, the guiding principle for me was: What is the function of this statement, change of tone, or pause in this particular context? At this point in time, I did not numerically score any of the sections of the conferences. Instead, I selected from these features when relevant to the discourse and used these analyses in the interpretations I present in the cases (see Table 2 for notation scheme).

Student Interview Data: Making Sense of the Individual

After reading all of the interview data for a particular student several times, I marked relevant passages from the interviews. Next, I developed the categories of background, views about writing, writing topics, and the teacher's views of the student for analyzing the entry interviews. I organized the exit interview data around the ideas that seemed central to the classroom discourse: use of the personal, description and imagery, audience, and organization. However, these categories did not capture the essence of every child. For instance, as I read through Ella's data, the most significant issue seemed to be her interest in fiction writing as well as in notebook writing. Therefore, I moved between inductive analysis, in which I tried to discern the most salient features of writing from the student's perspective, and deductive analysis resulting from categories I had identified from the overall classroom themes.

The informal interviews were used to understand the students' perspectives on the conferences that had just occurred and their developing understanding of their own texts. I selected relevant passages from these to present, providing evidence of the student's perspective.

Table 2 Key to Transcription Conventions

1.	number of turn in sequence of dialogue
/	short pause
//	longer pause
<u>underline</u>	marks emphatic stress
<i>italics</i>	marks more emphatic stress
CAPS	mark very emphatic stress
- -	overlapping talk of speakers
?	marks question, rising intonation
[brackets]	are used for comments on pitch, amplitude, quality of speech
(parentheses)	used for comments about actions such as nods
(inaudible)	indicates transcription impossible

Texts: A Window On Internalization

I had available to me all of the students' notebook writing since the beginning of the year as well as their projects. I read all of the examples from their notebooks and categorized them into topics that emerged from their writing. Consulting with an expert in the field,¹⁰ I also examined stylistic features such as elements of an oral text, that emerged from the texts. For analysis of the texts constructed for the projects, I used both inductive categories that emerged from the individual texts as well as more deductive categories I developed from using the teacher's image of an effective piece. These categories included features such as use of imagery and figurative language and organization. My analysis of imagery and figurative language was aided by Lukens' (1990) book on children's literature.

Students' Conferences with Younger Students: Another Window On Internalization

In analyzing the students' conferences with younger students, I used the two major categories of content and conversational style. Topics within each of these categories emerged from the data. For instance, description and imagery was a relevant category for the topics of two students' conferences, while a focus on the author and a focus on mechanics and spelling emerged for another student. I discovered these categories by reading the students' conference data several times and noting when the topics students discussed shifted. I traced these ideas back to the content of the classroom discourse, checking to see if similar topics were discussed. I then selected characteristic samples from the data to use to explain what the students had internalized.

I analyzed the conversational styles of the students by using a similar, but less detailed structure to that of the teacher-student conferences. For the student-student conferences, the primary focus was on what they had internalized and used from the classroom dialogue, not whether they had established intersubjectivity with the younger

¹⁰ I wish to thank Eliot Singer for sharing his knowledge of text with me and, in particular, helping me to understand elements of an oral text.

students. Therefore, I used a scaled down version of the conversational moves by the case study students. In this version, I examined the moves of the case study students into (a) questions; (b) commands or recommendations; or (c) informative statements. Utterances such as "What do you want to do to make the book better?" were considered questions. Directives included statements such as "You should really listen" whereas recommendations consisted of statements such as "You can write about that." Informative statements consisted of "Now that's actually like a diary" where the student explained something to the other child. I also looked for the amount of talk of each participant and overall tone of the conferences and how the younger child seemed to be responding. I used these ideas as a guide as I found patterns in the ways in which the older students were conducting the conferences.

Comparisons of Student Cases

To make the comparisons among the students I proceeded inductively and deductively. I used my understanding of the individual students in a holistic way to compare the ways in which they interacted with the teacher, the manner in which they conducted their own conferences, and the texts they produced. I also used the categories I had used inductively, described in the previous section, in a more defined, deductive way. That is, I had a hunch, backed with evidence, that the teacher was interacting differently with different students.

Teacher-Student Conferences

In comparing the teacher-student conferences, I sought ways to understand if and how the teacher and student established intersubjectivity. I did this in two ways: (a) by identifying key moments in the conferences that seemed crucial to the interactions; and (b) through establishing categories of content and conversational style to look across students. I identified the key moments by reading the conferences several times and understanding the development of the interaction. Uptake, integrating one speaker's ideas into subsequent discussion, emerged as a salient feature of teacher-student interactions.

Therefore, I examined particular segments of dialogue, focusing on whether uptake on the part of the speakers had occurred.

Next, I wanted to understand the pattern of the whole conference of each student to make comparisons. In using the category system to examine the conference as a whole, I examined both the content of what occurred in the conferences and the conversational styles of the teacher and student. I divided the content into the categories of (a) the topics that were discussed; (b) language cues such as "important"; and (c) encouraging words. These three features emerged from the data as factors in establishing intersubjectivity.

To understand the conversational styles of teacher and student, I compared the teacher-student interactions along the dimensions of: (a) body language and proxemic cues; (b) conversational moves by the teacher; (c) prosodic cues; and (d) conversational moves by the student. I further categorized the conversational moves by the teacher in each of the conferences into (a) interrogatives; (b) statements; (c) commands; or (d) expressive cues. I then characterized interactions within those categories. Using the features of (a) explanation; (b) agreement; (c) disagreement; (d) initiating a topic; (e) requests for information; or (f) transitions, I examined the conversational moves by the student.

However, these categories served to guide my understanding of the interactions and as a basis for comparison. I used the categories not to tally, but rather as guiding principles to establish the kinds of patterns that occurred within each conference. Based on the various patterns of the data, I described the ways in which the teacher and student established intersubjectivity and made comparisons. I made these assessments based on examining the data in a holistic manner after considering each of the types of analysis, and then providing examples to substantiate these claims.

Writing Conferences with Younger Students

Next I compared the writing conferences the older students conducted. I compared what the students talked about in those conferences with the important themes such as

imagery and figurative language that had emerged from the classroom dialogue. I examined what the students discussed and then looked back at the classroom transcripts to see if the dialogue linked to the ideas presented.

When comparing the students' conversational styles--the ways in which they communicated their ideas, I looked for overall concepts to capture their styles. For instance, a style in which the older student was continually telling the younger child what to do constituted a "didactic" style. In contrast, when the older student listened to the younger students' ideas, the style was characterized as that of an interviewer or as Calkins' (1986) ideal teacher. These styles emerged inductively from the data to characterize a particular type of interaction between two children. To link these styles back to the classroom dialogue, I searched for evidence to characterize in a holistic way the manner in which the teacher had interacted with the individual student. I compared these interactions to the student-student interactions.

Texts

To compare what students had internalized from the classroom dialogue that reemerged in their texts, I used the features that characterized the teacher's image of good writing. The features of (a) personal experience; (b) language and style; (c) audience; and (d) organization and focus seemed like logical dimensions by which to compare students. Because the teacher had attempted to convey these aspects of good writing either implicitly or explicitly to the students, they seemed appropriate features to use. I examined students' texts for these features and noted whether they were present or not. I also examined other features of students' texts that emerged from their individual constructions and used these when appropriate.

Making Links Among Types of Data

After establishing categories to look at the various data, I next decided to make links among the classroom observation data, the texts, the writing conferences with younger students, and the interviews. Certain themes, ideas, and concepts related to the

content of classroom discourse provided a means of linking the data. Identifying the components of the teacher's image of good writing: writing from personal experience, use of language and style, audience and genre, and organization and focus allowed me some overarching categories to examine the students' interviews, texts, and writing conferences with younger students. I used these organizing themes, while maintaining sensitivity to other issues and ideas that might emerge as I tried to take other perspectives. The conversational style categories that came from the observational data provided some categories for trying to link students' styles to the interactions. However, the categories were flexible and dynamic.

I have attempted to present the analysis of the cases as proceeding in a logical fashion; however, it was anything but linear. Instead, the analysis was both inductive, examining the data closely, and deductive, drawing from theoretical schemes from existing literature. Analysis was dynamic and interwoven, and frustrating as I went down many blind alleys and encountered many unexpected problems.

Prior to data collection, I had envisioned the analytical task as a fairly straightforward one of tracing certain ideas, key words, and categories back to the classroom interactions. After struggling with the data as well as trying many analytic schemes, I found that the one-to-one correspondence model I had envisioned simply did not apply. Instead, a metaphor that more nearly approximates the task was that of attempting to describe a rich, complex pattern of cloth as it is being woven, while attempting to identify the original strands of yarn. In the process of analysis, I would identify a particular color, texture, or pattern and try to trace it to its origin, yet the threads would become intermingled and woven together.

In this process, I have made some thematic links between the social interaction in which students engaged and what they subsequently internalized. Through continually

triangulating the data from the cases and searching for disconfirming examples, I have attempted a systematic analysis of complex, qualitative data. Next I present the chapters that discuss what I learned in classroom 555.

CHAPTER 4

CLASSROOM THEMES AND PATTERNS OF INTERACTION

In this chapter, I set the larger context for the cases of the individual students. Because the four students I followed as cases were part of this particular classroom where certain norms of interaction prevailed and the teacher had particular objectives and images of writing she wanted to convey to students, exploring the classroom themes is essential. The chapter describes the classroom around two central themes: (a) the content and structure of the particular lessons taught by the teacher, Ms. Meyer, often in collaboration with trainers from Teachers College and (b) the teacher's image of effective writing. I have chosen these themes because the first one provides both a narrative of the lessons I saw and a means of understanding the organizational structure of the classroom, while the second theme allows us to understand how the teacher's views of writing may have influenced student learning.

The Content and Structure of Lessons

The work of Lucy Calkins (1986) and particularly Calkins' latest work, Living Between the Lines (1991) strongly influenced the content and the structure of the lessons during the writing period. For instance, Calkins (1991) advocates having students keep writer's notebooks in which they can record events, memories, and reflections of their lives. Sharing literature with students as models of powerful writing is a strong component of the model. Calkins (1986) also promotes establishing a "predictable structure" in which students can write and teachers can respond to student writing. This structure includes establishing a consistent daily writing period for students in which they participate in mini-lessons--teacher directed lessons to discuss qualities of good writing, revision strategies, or editing; writing time where students work alone on their drafts; conferences--both teacher-student and peer conferences; and share sessions in which student/authors read their writing to others and get feedback.

Ms. Meyer used many of these features in her classroom. Students kept writer's notebooks and selected pieces to turn into projects for a particular audience; the teacher made extensive use of literature as examples of good writing; and the teacher established a time of the day devoted exclusively to writing. However, due to personal idiosyncrasies, contextual constraints, and her years of experience as a writing-process teacher, Ms. Meyer implemented her own version of the Workshop.

The first deviation from the Calkins' model is in the consistency of the writing period. In Ms. Meyer's classroom, writing was rarely at the same time, depending on Ms. Henderson's schedule and the schedule for the rest of the school day. In fact, I called Ms. Meyer nightly to find out what time writing was scheduled for the next day. Second, Ms. Meyer used the activity structure quite freely, not necessarily including all the features such as mini-lesson, writing, conferring, and sharing on a daily basis nor in a particular order. Instead, she interspersed these elements depending on what she wanted to accomplish that day. Sometimes she wanted students to talk about literature together in the whole group, while at other times she focused on helping students with their individual projects. Ms. Meyer established norms of interaction within this activity structure that shared some elements with the published versions of the Writing Workshop (e.g., Calkins & Harwayne, 1987), but also reflected her own interpretation and adaptation. Below I begin by describing the content of Ms. Meyer's lessons and then discuss the activity structure in her classroom.

Content

In her book, Living Between the Lines, Calkins (1991) described writers' notebooks as "invitations to write" (p. 38) in which children like writers could generate entries, make notes, write rough drafts, use descriptions, or record whatever it is they notice about the world around them. Notebooks are the records of students' lives or observations about the world that they could draw from to create more polished pieces to

be shared with a wider audience. Notebooks are the "raw material" to be shaped and elaborated upon.

Projects are described by Calkins as revised pieces that come from the notebooks. In selecting topics, students can find "the meaning in the moments" (p. 74) and should select topics that "feel significant." Topics can come from puzzling lines and anecdotes in notebooks, or topics might come from entries that use beautiful language or "reveal something bigger" (p. 61). According to Calkins, projects are intended for real world audiences. Drawing largely from Calkins, Ms. Meyer defined projects as consisting of a collection of entries about a person, event, or something "important" to the writer to be developed and shared with a particular audience.

Students had been writing in their notebooks for about three weeks when my observations began. In the class sessions I observed, the students continued writing in their notebooks for about two more weeks. Students then moved on to selecting topics for their projects from their notebooks, working on their projects, and then revising them for a particular audience of the student's choice. Different students moved from notebooks to projects at different points in the five weeks. Students subsequently shared these projects with their parents at an afternoon school session.

In the next section, I describe the content of the lessons related to the notebooks and projects. For purposes of analysis I have divided the 17 class sessions I observed into three phases: (a) discussion of qualities of good writing found in literature to generate notebook entries; (b) the transition from notebooks to projects through the use of conferences; and (c) use of literature for revising and editing project pieces. I have hypothesized these phases based on the teacher's plans and implementations. Because the actual content of the various lessons was essential to this classroom, I provide a brief narrative of each of the lessons I observed.

Phase 1: Notebooks and Qualities of Good Writing

Phase I of the class sessions took place primarily during weeks one and two of my observations. The focus of these sessions was on providing examples of "good writing" and identifying those qualities for students to include in their own notebook writing. Examples included texts from literature, from the teacher and trainer's notebooks, from students' work from previous years, and from current students' notebooks. In the following descriptions of the content and events of the Writing Workshop during my five-week stay, I have included the major events, the focus of the content of the lesson, key phrases, and major interactions of any of the case study students.

Tasting memories (10/9). The first class session I observed had three parts: a mini-lesson, writing time, and sharing time. Ms. Henderson, the trainer, emphasized the importance of students rereading their notebooks, looking for "the real meaning." Ms. Henderson used Rom's (a student) example of writing about the porch as an example of a writer who had expanded on one particular idea. Both Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson selected a line from their own notebooks and told that line to students.

Ms. Henderson described how she had reread her own notebook to find the deeper meaning behind her own experience. Her description included having read in the paper that it would have been John Lennon's 50th birthday which reminded her of the song, "Imagine" he had written. From that song she wrote about her friend in Providence who worked in a soup kitchen. Ms. Henderson suggested that "the real meaning" behind her notebook entry was the discovery that one person could make a difference. Ms. Meyer then instructed students to try and "get to the bottom of something" by rereading their notebooks and expanding upon something already written or by writing a new entry.

During writing time, Ms. Henderson and Ms. Meyer wrote in their own notebooks. At the sharing session, Ms. Meyer read her piece that started out with "I can almost taste the memories" that described laughing with an old friend. Ms. Henderson read her piece that was sparked by John Lennon's birthday and the idea of making a difference. Four

students shared their pieces including Anthony who shared his first story about his grandmother and Ella who wrote about a best friend.

Lois Lowry's use of description (10/10). The session began with a student reading his piece about bazooka bubble gum to which Ms. Meyer responded that he had "focused in like a camera lens," using detail. Next Ms. Meyer read a portion from "Autumn Street" in which Lois Lowry describes in detail the taste of school milk. Discussion focused around using beautiful language. Ms. Meyer told students to underline descriptive pieces in their own writing and to expand upon them. Ms. Meyer wrote along with the students during writing time. During the share session, eight students including Miguel volunteered to share examples from their notebooks. Miguel read aloud his piece about being followed by a shark. Ms. Meyer had called on three other students who declined to read because they did not feel they were ready.

When I was Young in the Mountains (10/11). For the mini-lesson, Ms. Meyer read a piece written by a student from a previous year, about being at a baseball game with his grandfather. The paper was read as an example of how the student focused on one thing and described that in detail. As students pointed out what was good about the piece of writing, key phrases such as "using description," "using beautiful language," and "focusing on certain moments" emerged. Next, Ms. Meyer read aloud When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant. The subsequent teacher-led discussion focused on description, the use of beautiful language, forming pictures in the reader's mind, and writing about something you know well because "that's how you get the best language." Ms. Meyer and the students then had about a 25-minute writing time in which they were to take one entry and write it in "beautiful language" in the way that Cynthia Rylant had. Four students including Ella, who read her "Catskills" piece, and Miguel, who read his piece entitled "Man's Best Friend, the Car" shared their pieces with the group. Ms. Meyer closed the share session by reading her own piece about autumn in Connecticut.

Qualities of good writing (10/12). During the mini-lesson, Ms. Meyer had students focus on qualities of good writing by coming up with a list. First, Ms. Meyer asked students to provide examples of her "hate" list; students correctly provided words such as "nice" and "good." During the discussion of qualities of good writing, students suggested ideas such as descriptive language, sticking to one subject, using a good structure especially starting out with a strong beginning, and providing excitement for the reader. "Keeping the reader on his/her toes" was the expression that Miguel used to express suspenseful writing. Anita did not respond when the teacher called on her for an answer during the discussion. Anthony contributed his idea of "the pineapple filled my mouth with joy" about which Ms. Meyer became excited. Five students shared their examples of good writing. Ella read her piece about handicapped people; and Anthony read his piece about his grandmother dying. Students then went back to their seats to write for the rest of the period.

Notebooks and diaries (10/15). Ms. Henderson, the trainer, began the mini-lesson by reading a portion from Mallory and the Mystery Diary, one of the Babysitter Club books, by Anne M. Martin in which the character describes and gives examples of the difference between diaries and notebooks. Diaries are recordings of daily events, while notebook entries are "deep, sensitive, and interesting." Ms. Henderson led a discussion on the differences between them, read an example of a diary entry from her notebook, and then read an example of a notebook entry in which she identified procrastination as an issue for her. Students stayed on the rug and wrote diary entries. Four students and Ms. Meyer read their diary entries aloud. Students then were to identify an important issue in their diary entry to turn into a notebook entry. Three students including Ella, who wrote about not being able to find something to wear, shared their notebook entries. Ms. Meyer read her piece about being envious of a friend with cancer who was a very strong character. Ms. Henderson directed a discussion about the differences between diaries and notebooks, suggesting that diaries were like grocery lists because they both merely listed

things, while notebooks identified significant events or issues. Students went back to their seats to find an issue to write about. Ms. Henderson and Ms. Meyer talked to two students back on the rug about how you could make many different things out of your notebook entries.

A Chair for my Mother (10/17). During the mini-lesson, students read and selected significant lines from Vera B. Williams' A Chair for My Mother. Ms. Henderson asked students to focus on the *writing*, not on the particular topic. Discussion focused on use of details, forming a picture in the reader's mind, use of flashback, comparisons, when a grocery list type of description can be powerful, and convincing the reader. Ms. Henderson asked students to imagine and provide ideas for what the author's notebook might have been like from which to draw on for this particular piece. Ella and Anthony contributed ideas to the discussion. Students went back to their seats to write about anything of their choice. Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson both conferred with two students, and each of them conducted a conference with one other student during writing time.

Jenny (10/19). During the mini-lesson, Ms. Meyer read five short poems from the book, Jenny, and students were to jot down ideas on yellow "Post-its" about what the poems in Jenny meant in their own lives. Students were also supposed to look in their own notebooks to see if they had any entries like the poems. Five students shared pieces they thought resembled the poems from Jenny. In the subsequent discussion, Ms. Meyer emphasized the use of description, focusing on one aspect like a camera lens, and the use of beautiful language that had been represented in the poems. Ms. Meyer then instructed students to go back to their seats and write entries from the "Post-its" where they had jotted down ideas related to the poems. Ms. Meyer had individual conferences with five students, and a small group conference with three girls. During the share session which was held in their seats, Anthony shared his writing with the group, but Ms. Meyer responded that he had spent too much time talking and not enough writing. Four students shared their pieces.

Little By Little (10/22). For the mini-lesson, Ms. Meyer read aloud to students from Jean Little's book, Little by Little. The chapter was about the girl in the story learning to read. Students were instructed to write down in their notebooks whatever came to mind as they listened to the book. Ms. Meyer had brief individual conferences with six students including Miguel. For the share session, students did not read what they had written. Instead, Ms. Meyer asked them if the book had affected what they wrote. Students then volunteered the topics about which they had written and how those topics connected to the book. One of the student's comments reminded Ms. Meyer of the death of her cat; Ms. Meyer ended writing time by telling the students about her fear of telling her daughter, who was very attached to the cat, about the death.

Phase 2: Moving to Projects through Writing Conferences

Phase 2 of the observation period, taking place within weeks three and four, consisted of mini-lessons and conferences about selecting topics and working on projects for an audience. Conferences during this time differed from previous conferences in that they focused specifically on selecting a topic for a project. Although chapters from the book Little by Little were read aloud on two occasions, literature was the background during this phase, while topic selection was highlighted. The teacher and the trainers used two key metaphors to describe the process of moving from notebooks to projects: (a) taking bread dough (the notebook) and shaping it into many different forms (a particular genre); and (b) mining for gold (notebook entries) to turn into a jewel (polished project).

Selecting topics for projects (10/23). Ms. Hall, another trainer from Teachers College, joined Ms. Henderson and Ms. Meyer on this day for the mini-lesson. Ms. Hall brought in a figure woven from yarn of three girls of different ethnic backgrounds sitting on a park bench. She asked students to generate ideas about the figures and pointed out that students could just walk in the park and not notice the figures or they could "live like a writer," being observant and recording the meaning of events. Ms. Hall then talked about

her own experiences of becoming "obsessed with a topic" such as the New York Yankees and mentioned some other topics with which students in other schools had become obsessed. Ms. Hall used the metaphor of contact lenses being like an obsession that changes and shapes one's view of the world. She then asked students to give examples of obsessions to which Anthony responded his grandmother was an obsession for him. Ms. Henderson showed her folder with many different examples of writing and suggested that these pieces would be shaped and pushed and pulled like "bread dough" to form a project--in her case, a speech. Ms. Henderson also suggested finding a topic to turn into a project was like "mining for gold" in one's notebook. Ms. Hall gave yet another example of her discovery that many powerful moments she had written about in her notebook were related to her mother and sewing. A brief discussion followed in which the teacher and trainers suggested to students that they select a topic that was so important that they could live with it for awhile. During writing time, the teacher and the two trainers met with a small group of six students that included Anthony to discuss projects. They did not specifically discuss Anthony's text with him.

Projects and conferences (10/24). At the teacher's request, I read a chapter from the book Little by Little to the class while Ms. Meyer had a small group conference in the hallway with three students, including Miguel. After returning from the hallway and listening to the rest of the chapter I read, Ms. Meyer told a story about meeting the author, Jean Little, the previous summer. Ms. Meyer then conducted a small group conference on the floor with three students. Ms. Meyer then had one additional individual conference.

Projects and conferences continued (10/29). Ms. Meyer held a brief mini-lesson about how to turn notebook entries into projects with one part of the class while the others went to physical education. She used several different students' topics as examples of projects, including Anthony's, and asked them what form they would take (e.g., letters, articles for magazines, poems) and to what audience they would be addressed. Key phrases included "using such beautiful language," selecting something that "seems to be more

important than something else," and "writing what it felt like in your heart." Ms. Meyer held brief, individual conferences with six students, including a very brief interaction with Anthony and a lengthy conference with Anita.

More projects and conferences (10/30). Ms. Meyer read another chapter of Little by Little to the students; the chapter was about the protagonist participating in a game in which she was harassed by other children. Students were sent back to their seats to work on their projects or to write a new entry if they got an idea from the book. Ms. Meyer met with a small group that included Ella to discuss projects. Key phrases in the small group conference included "getting to the bottom of something," "thinking about what is really important" and "what speaks to you from your heart." After Ms. Meyer spoke with those students individually, she had individual conferences with five students. Ms. Meyer called the whole group back together, and used one student's piece as an example to explain the process of selection, organization, and revision of a project. Ms. Meyer also used Ella's examples of her memories with her aunt to show how students could think about their projects.

Projects, conferences, and suggesting books (11/1). On this day Ms. Meyer met with the other half of the class who had not been present two days before. During the mini-lesson she asked student to suggest books from published authors that would help other students with their projects. Students provided Ella with some examples of books that might be helpful for her piece, while Miguel suggested many different books for other students. During writing time, Ms. Meyer looked for additional books for students to use and gave some students suggestions. Miguel and Rom had a peer conference about their texts.

Phase 3: Using Literature to Improve Writing

Phase 3 began at the end of week four and continued through week five of the study. It consisted of using literature to revise and improve students' drafts for their projects.

During this phase the teacher and the trainer focused on aspects of good writing such as language, the use of time, voice, and having a strong beginning.

Galimoto and qualities of good writing (11/2). The teacher read the picture book, Galimoto, by Karen Lynne Williams to the students and asked them to jot down what they were thinking. Students including Ella and Anthony shared what they had written. After this discussion, Ms. Meyer asked students to identify features of good writing that the author had incorporated. Responses included "description," "imagination," "a good use of words," "getting a picture in your mind," the use of real voices, and suspense--"keeping the reader on his/her thin toes." Miguel and Anthony participated orally in the discussion. Ms. Meyer had a lengthier conference with Anthony, and brief individual conferences with Miguel, and brief conferences with several other students.

The Ring and The Window Seat (11/5). Ms. Henderson showed several picture books about the topic of grandfathers because several students were writing about grandparents. She then read the picture book, The Ring and The Window Seat, to the students in the mini-lesson to point out several features of powerful writing and suggested to students that literature could offer many ideas about how to improve their writing. The focus of the discussion was on how the beginnings of stories are important, how the author provided language to help the reader get a picture in their minds, playing with time as a feature of writing, and point of view or in whose voice to tell a story; these aspects characterized the book, The Ring and the Window Seat. When Ms. Henderson met with six students, she asked them to suggest books that would help people in the group with their projects. Ms. Henderson also suggested that students think about what holds their notebook entries together and used the image of a clothes line. Ms. Henderson recommended that students write "from their hearts" instead of writing summaries and praised a boy who was going to turn his fishing entries into memories about fishing instead of using them to teach somebody how to fish. Key phrases included it should be "more from your heart" and "it should be more personal." Ms. Henderson emphasized students choosing an important

thing to write about and thinking of an audience. Ms. Meyer then had a conference with another student after Ms. Henderson left.

Revising and editing (11/8). Ms. Meyer held a whole group discussion with students remaining in their seats to discuss the features of revision and using an editing checklist. She mentioned the importance of "a lead" to "grab the reader," and recommended to students that they consult literature if they wanted to get ideas of good leads. Ms. Meyer then asked students for suggestions about what ought to be on an editing checklist. Students made suggestions such as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and use of paragraphs and Ms. Meyer wrote these on the board. She then told students their last decision would be about how to present their piece, for instance a letter should be written on nice stationery. Students then copied down the checklist and Ms. Meyer had two longer conferences, one with Ella, and three brief conferences including one with Miguel.

Beginnings of pieces and sharing projects (11/9). Ms. Meyer started off the mini-lesson by telling students that she had been thinking about their projects and how great they were last night. Then she read the beginnings of several picture books including Netty's Trip South, The Faithful Elephant, and The Midnight Eaters to students to demonstrate how to interest the reader and set the stage for further development of their texts. Ms. Meyer recommended to Ella and two other girls to read the beginning of a book to get some ideas for their leads. She had individual conferences with six students. Two students shared their work at the end of the writing period.

The next section describes some of the norms the teacher had established within the classroom. The section is structured according to the four types of activities during the writing period.

The Activity Structure of Writing Workshop

Students engaged in four types of activities during the Writing Workshop: (a) mini-lessons; (b) writing; (c) conferring; and (d) sharing. These were terms that Ms. Meyer used to describe her version of the writing workshop which are the same terms

Calkins (1986) uses to define the Workshop. However, not all activities occurred within every class period; instead, they were interspersed throughout the week.

Mini-lessons

The mini-lessons were teacher-directed lessons with the entire class in which the teacher, Ms. Meyer, or the trainer, Ms. Henderson, read pieces of literature to students and discussed with them qualities of good writing based on those selections. Mini-lessons most often took place on the rug in the back of the room, although on three occasions the teacher had students remain in their seats for these lessons. During the mini-lessons, the teacher or trainer read aloud pieces of literature and then focused students' attention on certain aspects of the texts.

The teacher often sat on the floor with students, but occasionally sat in a chair or on a small stool while students sat on the floor in the rug area. She seemed to be more a part of the group when she sat with her back resting against the wall rather than sitting in front of students on her stool. Most of the time, however, Ms. Meyer sat in front of the students while the students sat in various positions. Students chose locations on the rug; they were not assigned.

Mini-lessons were teacher-directed and teacher-dominated. Either Ms. Meyer or Ms. Henderson selected the literary texts that were to be discussed that day; there seemed to be a particular purpose for each piece selected. Ms. Meyer read with a very expressive voice, often interpreting each character's voice and providing information about the character through her pitch and tone. It was very easy as a listener to know when she was taking on the voice of the narrator and when she was being each of the other characters. For instance, she would shout angrily if a character in the story was angry or whisper if the character had a gentle nature. Her reading was very dramatic; students listened carefully and seemed to be very engaged while she read.

The teacher's presence was apparent during the mini-lessons, though when Ms. Henderson directed the lesson, Ms. Meyer deferred to her and took on a supportive role.

This was clear through Ms. Henderson's sitting on a chair or on the floor in front of the group and doing most of the talking, while Ms. Meyer sat in a chair away from Ms. Henderson or on the floor with the students. Ms. Meyer would speak up on occasion to add her own opinions, but when Ms. Henderson was in the room, she was in charge. However, when Ms. Henderson was not there and Ms. Meyer was directing the lesson, she was very much in control.

Similar to Mehan's (1979) I-R-E, Ms. Meyer selected the speaker to provide an idea or to read from her notebook. Students volunteered by raising their hands to get a turn; however, the students who sat close to Ms. Meyer often provided ideas without raising their hands and being called upon. These students' answers were often acknowledged by Ms. Meyer, especially the answers of three students in particular-- Miguel (a case study student), Orlanda, and Alexis. Ms. Meyer also dominated the discourse through the relative amounts of talk by teacher and students. In other words, Ms. Meyer talked frequently and for long durations of time. Ms. Meyer asked questions of students, but often provided her own opinion. For instance, in the session on Jenny where she had asked a student, Rom, how he would have categorized these entries and he suggested that the poems could be grouped under the title "Nature," Ms. Meyer had a different opinion. She said:

Nature, you think? Earth? You mean entries about earth or about nature?
That's interesting. I kind of thought these fell under the category of like the kind of notebook entries where you wonder about things.

It was difficult to disagree with the teacher in this class; she had definite ideas about things and was very willing to share her ideas with students. On another occasion in which she had read the book, Galimoto, to students and they were sharing their written responses, Ms. Meyer gave a mini-lecture on what she thought the theme was. In the book, the main character went to great lengths to find the materials to make a small toy, a galimoto. Ms. Meyer expressed her opinion about the boy and about the moral she thought

students should gain from it--kids today are missing the challenge of making their own fun:

I was very jealous of the fact that he really wanted something badly enough, went ahead and had the determination and he gathered everything. Today things are so easy for us here, you want something, you want a car, you want a toy--and then how long do you like it? (Students piped in with answers like an hour and she continued.) Couple hours, and, you know, we sit in front of a, we buy a disk we go to the store, we sit in front of a disk, we plug it into a computer and you sit there for hours. Here's this boy who had nothing but his box of stuff; and he was so happy he got these wires and he made this incredibly wonderful car. And he had the challenge of getting it, and in certain ways I felt so envious of that. I think that in some ways, you kids need more of that kind of stuff. You need to be able to, have less things and make more of your own, that's, you know--

Alexis: More challenges.

T: Anyway, yeah. I think that kids today are missing the challenges of that. These mini-lectures within mini-lessons were frequent. Ms. Meyer believed she had a lot of expertise in literature and writing worth sharing with the students.

One of the striking features of her discussions with students during the mini-lesson time was the pace. Ms. Meyer seemed to have felt rushed much of the time and wanted to fit in as much reading of literature and time for individual writing as she could. Often the sense of trying to fit everything in was reflected in the discourse during mini-lessons and subsequent discussions. For instance, when Ms. Meyer asked questions about a book, she provided little wait time and often began summaries of students' responses with "So what you are saying is." In the same Galimoto discussion, Alexis offered that she would be angry in the protagonist's situation. Ms. Meyer rephrased her suggestion calling it frustration to which Alexis agreed.

The fast pace of the mini-lessons was also promoted through Ms. Meyer's questions which were quickly followed up by additional probes of the same or different student. For example, when Carl said he was wondering why there was a bike in the story, Ms. Meyer fired the following questions at him without a breath, "Why what? Why a bike? What do

you mean, why a bike? What would be a bike?" This kind of questioning kept the pace of the class lively.

The teacher often moved into the "teacher-as-teller" mode during these mini-lessons. For instance, Ms. Meyer asked Carl a question about what he had been thinking about the book. Carl answered that he was wondering where it took place. Ms. Meyer quickly followed up by asking him where he thought it took place. When Carl said he did not know, she did not ask other students to speculate, but instead, gave a lengthy description of the part of Africa where the story took place.

Some students seemed to flourish within this rapid pace discourse. In fact, several students were quite adept at negotiating turns and offering opinions without being called upon. About eight students participated regularly in the dialogue and offered their opinions consistently even if those opinions did not seem to be immediately valued. About eight other students rarely contributed to discussions. Occasionally, Ms. Meyer would call on students who did not have their hands raised, but these students often declined to answer.

Ms. Meyer slowed down the pace of her own speech when she was giving directions. On several occasions, Ms. Meyer had specific assignments related to identifying qualities of good writing that she wanted students to do. Before dismissing students to return to their seats to write, Ms. Meyer would give explicit instructions in a directive voice at a much slower pace than either her "reading" or "discussion" voice.

Ms. Meyer appeared to really enjoy the mini-lessons. She told the class on one occasion that she learned a lot from her own lessons. It was in these sessions that her sense of humor and sense of drama were highlighted. She often joked with students, especially about her own personal appearance. Once, she got the class and the adults present laughing about her jeans that she explained were too tight because of just being washed. When the trainers were present, they too joined in the fun and made jokes about Ms. Meyer's sense of the aesthetic and how she noticed and liked colors and nice clothes.

Ms. Meyer was often quite dramatic in these conversations with the whole class, telling stories about her daughter, her cat, or her own experiences. She enjoyed bantering with students, especially with those who responded with a quick repartee.

Writing

The second feature of the activity structure was students' writing time. Ms. Meyer provided students with class time to write every day that I observed. She also encouraged students to write in their notebooks at home and to carry them with them wherever they went. Notebooks were prominently displayed on students' desks and many students did write in them at home. The duration of writing time depended on the particular day, what other events occurred during the school day, and the amount of time Ms. Meyer had allocated to writing that day; generally students had from 15-25 minutes of quiet writing time daily. The time allocated for writing tended to be shorter when the trainer, Ms. Henderson, was there as she spent a proportionally greater amount of time in whole group sessions.

Students usually wrote at their individual seats, located at tables of five to six students. Some writing took place by the whole class during the mini-lesson on the rug; this tended to be a very short amount of time in which students wrote a few lines directly related to the text being discussed. For instance, during the sessions on "Differences Between Notebooks and Diaries" students wrote short pieces in their notebooks while they were seated on the rug. Often several students would ask if they could remain in the rug area; Ms. Meyer usually granted permission to them. It was definitely considered desirable by the students to be able to write on the rug when others had been dismissed back to their seat after the mini-lesson. However, students who remained on the rug knew they could not speak to anyone but the teacher.

The expectations about both the permissible noise level for writing time and the expectations about what students could and could not talk about were difficult to understand and seemed inconsistent. The norms were also different from Workshops in which

teachers are encouraged to establish an environment where a "busy hum" can be heard. Almost every single day, Ms. Meyer would say to students at least once, "This is to be ABSOLUTE QUIET writing time" in a very loud, emphatic voice. Usually after Ms. Meyer made this announcement, silence would settle on the group for about three to five minutes, and then the noise level would rise. At times the noise level was high enough that it was difficult to hear a student's response to my informal interviews (especially compounded by the street and hall noise). Ms. Meyer became very frustrated at times and reprimanded students in a high-pitched, loud voice or interspersed her one-on-one conferences with "Shhhh's" to the whole class. Ms. Meyer scolded students continually for the lack of silence in the class, but did not use other sanctions to gain quiet.

It was not clear to me, nor do I think it was clear to the students, whether or not they could talk with peers about writing. During writing time, students occasionally read their work to other students or made a comment about what they were writing. However, much of the talk among students was about topics other than writing. Ms. Meyer became frustrated with several students on occasions when she did not think they had accomplished much writing. For instance, one day she admonished Anthony for not having written much, saying he was not accomplishing anything because he was not concentrating on writing but was either playing or talking. On another occasion she asked Terry to read aloud what he had written. When he seemed unwilling to read, she told him it was because he was too embarrassed because he had not written anything. He said he had written one sentence and she became very annoyed, asking him if that were enough for a twenty minute writing period. Terry told the teacher he had been sharing to which she replied in an apologetic voice, "Oh, you were sharing? Okay." She then told the whole class they needed to concentrate on writing more.

Initially, Ms. Meyer had been annoyed because Terry had been talking during writing time, and thus did not get writing accomplished. Yet when he announced he was

sharing his writing with someone else, she sanctioned his talking. When I asked Ms. Meyer later about her expectations for writing time, she said:

Ms. Meyer: That they'll be quiet --

Sarah: So kids should not be talking to each other at their table?

Ms. Meyer: That there won't be distractions because I think that the minute there are distractions they lose their train of thought and they're not writing.

It was somewhat unclear what she meant by distractions. Clearly, Ms. Meyer wanted students to write and she expected them to be quiet when she reminded them. However, in some cases talking--if it were about writing--was permitted. I asked Ms. Meyer specifically about the case of Terry to which she replied:

Yes, that is legitimate because that's the way it's been, that's the way it's been in the younger grades. They've always been able to do that, and now that they're expected to do a little bit more sophisticated kind of stuff. Somebody like Terry, who's a baby, can't do it. Do you know what I mean? He can't sit still long enough to go ahead and do it. So he'll do that because he's been allowed to do it in the past, so even though my words say it's quiet writing time, to him, it's OK for him to conference because conference is part of writing, it has been.

It seemed, then, that because students had learned in other classes that it was appropriate to read their work to other students, Ms. Meyer sanctioned sharing with another student during writing time. She believed that Terry, who had learned that having a conference with another student during writing time was permissible, did not have the maturity to wait until the appropriate time (share time) to read his work aloud. In this case, she allowed Terry to share once she knew that is what he had been doing on that occasion.

Ms. Meyer saw a big difference in the types of conferences certain students had. For instance, she thought that Terry was simply reading his work to another student, but not really learning anything from it. She said:

If I say it's quiet writing time, then I will, you know, we'll have time to share. You know what I mean, we'll have share time and conferencing time, but he's not, he's not really conferencing to learn. See he's conferencing to talk and to tell what he's written. They're not helping each other; they're missing the point of the true conference.

However, in the case of Miguel and Rom, both high achieving students who had sought one another out, she thought their conference had been quite valuable to each of them. She said:

Oh I think they were really working together today. You know that's a different story; they were really helping each other. But when Terry says he's conferencing, he's saying listen to what I wrote, and somebody's listening and saying, they're not commenting to him, they're not helping him. Terry's not speaking to somebody to say look I'm stuck, what do you think about this, give me some advice, Terry's not doing that.

Ms. Meyer distinguished between the types of interactions students were having and clearly valued some of those over others. The expectations seemed to be, then, that students were to be quietly writing in their seats. However, students were allowed to talk if they were talking about writing, especially if they were students who, in Ms. Meyer's opinion, were sophisticated and could provide substantial help to one another.

Conferences

The third type of activity that took place was the writing conference which occurred while the students were writing. I defined conferences as more than one turn exchange about writing so that a simple question of "How is it coming?" or "Are you working on your grandmother piece?" would not count as a conference. Conferences consisted of teacher-student exchanges about writing that took anywhere from 30 seconds to 7 minutes per student. The teacher conducted both individual conferences with students and small group conferences with three to five students at a time.

In a given daily class period, Ms. Meyer conferred with about six-eight students. During the five-week period of my observations, Ms. Meyer averaged about three writing conferences per student. Every student in the class had at least one conference with the teacher, but differences existed in the frequency of encounters between Ms. Meyer and particular students. For example, Alexis, a high-achieving, prolific writer in the class had a total of seven conferences about writing with either Ms. Meyer or one of the trainers, whereas five other students only had one conference each with the teacher or trainer. Of the students followed as case studies, Miguel had the most frequent number of

conferences--four; Ella and Anthony each had two; and Anita had only one, although it was lengthy.

Places conferences occurred. Individual conferences occurred in many different places in the room--there was no set pattern for the 17 observations I saw. Individual teacher-student conferences occurred in several locations throughout the room: (a) at the student's seat with the teacher leaning over or squatting beside the student; (b) on the rug with the teacher and student seated together; (c) standing together briefly at different places in the room; or (d) at a table pushed against the wall where the teacher and student were seated. Once she met with several students in the hall.

When Ms. Meyer conducted conferences on the rug, she often called the students back to her. In the beginning phase of the projects, she called upon students who she thought were ready to move from their notebooks to their projects. When called, students joined her at the place she indicated. Sometimes, Ms. Meyer leaned against the wall and the child sat next to her. At other times, she sat more centrally on the rug and faced the student. Her proximity to the student, amount of eye contact, and the content of what she discussed with students differed, depending on the student and the particular context.

At other times, Ms. Meyer conducted conferences by roving around the room, looking at students' texts and talking to them about their pieces. Because students were seated quite closely together at their tables, Ms. Meyer stood or squatted close to the child. Unless a seat were unoccupied, she rarely pulled up a chair and sat next to the child. Instead, she just leaned in towards the child and was in either a standing position or a squatting position, level with the child.

Both the teacher and the trainer conducted small-group conferences. Most of these conferences took place on the rug. On one occasion Ms. Meyer conferred with three students in the hall. During the small group conferences, a student usually remained in the group until his or her turn of focus was over. Then, the student returned to his or her

seat after the interaction; however, on one occasion Terry remained to hear what the teacher and another student discussed.

Getting a turn. Generally, it was the teacher who determined with whom she would have a writing conference. Unlike some writing process classrooms, Ms. Meyer did not use an explicit system of selection such as keeping track on paper those students with whom she had spoken. Further, while some classrooms have a means for students to indicate a need to talk to the teacher (e.g., by putting their names on the board), students in this classroom did not have any such system. Ms. Meyer apparently kept track mentally information about students because she indicated knowledge about students' topics by raising ideas in share sessions or in subsequent conferences.

Rarely did students approach Ms. Meyer to talk to her about their writing. Two students were notable exceptions--Alexis and Jade, both of whom had frequent conferences with her. Both of these girls approached the teacher and asked her opinion of what they were writing or shared information with her. Additionally, on one occasion Miguel initiated the conversation as Ms. Meyer was walking by.

Characterizing the teacher-student interactions. Although many variations of conferences occurred, Ms. Meyer had a particular style in which she usually conducted the conferences. In my analysis, I found the conferences generally consisted of three parts: (a) the opening; (b) the body; and (c) the closing. Ms. Meyer usually began by asking an open-ended question such as, "So what were you thinking?" or "How is it going?" Ms. Meyer followed up her opening by asking several more specific questions such as, "Is there something you write about more often than not?" or "Which pieces have you selected?" The "body" of the conferences consisted of Ms. Meyer asking many questions, the students responding or clarifying issues, and Ms. Meyer's summary of what the student had said, often interspersed with recommendations. The closing of the conferences frequently consisted of Ms. Meyer providing specific directives about what the student should work on. Particularly noteworthy is the amount of teacher talk during these

conferences. Ms. Meyer *always* talked more than the students, but the proportion of teacher-talk to student-talk differed. For instance, in one conference with Anita, Ms. Meyer said four times as much as the student, (900 teacher words versus 246 student words) whereas with Miguel she only talked 33% more than he (462 teacher words versus 357 student words).

Much of Ms. Meyer's talk was filled with questions, indicated by the inflection at the end of sentences such that she would turn statements into inquiries. However, these questions often functioned as recommendations or as openers for student agreement with her ideas. For example, she might ask, "What about if you turned them into a letter to her?" or "And you are going to describe them so beautifully?" She phrased these as questions indicated by her rising intonation at the end of the utterance, yet she was actually recommending to the students that they follow her advice. Likewise, Ms. Meyer often summarized her interpretation of what the student was trying to express in the form of a question; within these summaries she often phrased questions in such a way as to get the student to agree with her. An example of this is her frequent use of, "So don't you think that . . . " or "So it will have to be . . . right?" Ms. Meyer also tended to ask many focused, closed questions in which she asked for specific information from students rather than asking open-ended questions.

Ms. Meyer gave out suggestions and ideas about what students ought to do quite freely. Her closings were filled with either recommendations about what the student could do including ideas like "So maybe this would be where you describe things in the park to your father" or more directive statements about what the student ought to do such as underlining particular phrases that were well written. Her tone of voice and selection of words distinguished recommendations from her more directive statements.

Pace was another distinctive feature of Ms. Meyer's conferences. She spoke rapidly to students and her pace increased when she became impatient with students or wanted to

move the conference along. Long pauses tended to mark the occasions in which she was uncomfortable.

Student responses tended to consist of explanations after the teacher had made a request for information. Sometimes the student would initiate a topic to be discussed. With some students, Ms. Meyer followed up their topics, while with others she re-introduced her own topics. Students rarely openly disagreed with Ms. Meyer; agreement was much more frequent. However, occasionally, a student would resist by saying, "Not really." In this case, the student would not openly disagree, yet would not be totally compliant. Some students were much more enthusiastic than others about following the teacher's advice.

Peer conferences. Peer conferences as such were quite rare in this classroom. No particular place in the room was set aside for this activity and the teacher did not encourage students to exchange ideas with students seated near them at their tables. Recall that Ms. Meyer frequently began writing sessions by telling students this would be "absolute quiet writing time," yet, students often chatted at their tables with one another. Conversations occasionally consisted of brief exchanges about writing, but Ms. Meyer never officially sanctioned or encouraged peer conferences as was evident through the discussion about Terry.

Sharing

Sharing was the fourth activity that comprised the structure of the classroom during the writing period. Sharing generally took place on the rug, although on one occasion students shared from their seats. Sharing consisted of students reading aloud entire pieces or portions of pieces of their written texts. There was no specific chair or place assigned as "author's chair;" students read aloud from where they were already seated. Peers did not provide feedback for one another to improve the piece of writing during this time. Instead, the teacher used share sessions as opportunities for students to provide examples to one another of "good writing."

The share sessions were consistent with the purposes Calkins set up in her 1990 book where students "reread, celebrate, and learn from their notebooks" (p. 50) rather than providing suggestions for revision. Occasionally Ms. Meyer would have noticed a specific aspect of a piece written by a student and ask that student to share, but usually students volunteered to read portions of the text that they wanted to share or that seemed to fit the point either the teacher or trainer was making. About eight students including Anthony and Ella frequently volunteered to read their pieces; some shared infrequently; some students including Anita never did share any of their work.

The next section will describe Ms. Meyer's image of good writing that came through in her interviews and in her interactions with students in whole group sessions as well as in conferences. This image provides a backdrop upon which we may view students' understandings of texts as manifested through their writing and their talk.

The Teacher's Image of Good Writing

What was the teacher's image of good writing? How did she communicate her view to students? Ms. Meyer had a particular view of good writing that she told me she had learned at an institute at Teachers College the previous summer. She described the course as being an adult literature class in qualities of good writing with the implication that the same qualities could be applied to children's literature.

Evidence for Ms. Meyer's view of good writing can be found in her interviews, in her selections of literature to read aloud to students, in her discussions with the whole class, and in her individual writing conferences. The trainer, Ms. Henderson, shared Ms. Meyer's view to a great extent; they worked collaboratively and shared many of the same opinions about literature and good writing. In Ms. Meyer's view, good writing (a) comes from personal experience; (b) takes on a particular form for a particular audience; (c) uses elements of style such as imagery and figurative language; and (d) focuses on one particular subject. Because these ideas were central to Ms. Meyer's interactions with students, these topics will be discussed in detail below. The role of writing from personal

experience and using elements of style are particularly relevant to what students subsequently internalized.

The Best Topics Come from Personal Experience

Ms. Meyer strongly believed that children should write about issues with which they are very familiar. For her, this meant that children should write from personal experience and write "true" stories rather than fiction. This belief underlay Ms. Meyer's rationale for having students keep writers' notebooks. Ms. Meyer provided this rationale for her use of notebooks:

Well, I think what I want from them is to be able to just get them to become chroniclers of life, of their lives. I think for me the most important thing is that I give them this gift of being able to observe their lives and to look at themselves and what they're doing and their place in the world and be able to keep track of that. . . . I think it's really a very nice gift to be able to give children to teach them to be observers and recorders of their lives and the lives around them. That's what I really hope that they'll get, that they'll take always with them, that this gift that will last forever.

Ms. Meyer believed that through the notebooks students could record their own lives and that this was a gift they could have forever. Part of her rationale for providing this opportunity for children reflected her sadness that she had not chronicled her own life. She expressed it this way:

I think one of the saddest things in my life is that I never wrote down all of these things that I thought I would always remember but that I didn't. I'm very envious of people who always do, who wrote in notebooks and kept their feelings. They chronicled their lives and just had it for whatever reasons, whether they never looked at it or whether they always looked at it.

Ms. Meyer believed so strongly in children writing about their own lives that she discouraged students from writing fiction. She did not want students to write fiction in her class for two reasons: (a) students wrote better pieces when they wrote about their own lives and (b) she could not monitor their writing nor teach them the qualities of good writing using fiction. Ms. Meyer expressed her beliefs that it is necessary to explicitly teach fiction writing in the second interview:

There's no way to model them, there's no way to get them to understand what qualities of good fiction are. They get out of hand so if you're going to let them do that, you have to study fiction first. You have to study how to develop a character; you have to study how to develop a setting; you have to teach them how to do that and then you have to model for them first good, short pieces of fiction, good short stories so that they understand how to structure a fiction piece.

Ms. Meyer's dislike of children writing fiction at this point in the year rested on her assumptions that the students were too unsophisticated to see that fiction writing was based on truth--the personal experience of authors. She believed that writers used notebooks to generate ideas for fiction, but that notebooks recorded events of writers' lives that could be used for development into stories. Ms. Meyer said:

. . . [students] don't have an idea that it really is the same and that fiction writing should really be based on truth from their notebooks. In other words, nobody goes out, Katherine Paterson, nobody goes out and writes a piece of fiction that isn't based on truth somehow or somewhere. You know what I mean, and if they did do fiction, it should really have come, should come from their notebooks at some point.

Ms. Meyer felt strongly that students should base their writing on research or the reality that they observe around them. Students have to write from their own experience because:

That's the way it has to be for young kids. Otherwise you get these stories about Ninja Turtles and that G.I. Joe is coming alive and about people living on the moon. It's not based in any kind of fact or any kind of research or any kind of reality. Whatever their story is about, they're not doing any research into the reality of the fiction, you know?

Ms. Meyer had found that students wrote long fantasy stories that went on and on when a teacher allowed them to write fiction without teaching them about the qualities of good writing. She found that the students' writing was unwieldy and difficult to get a handle on. Furthermore Ms. Meyer believed that students did not learn from just writing fiction without a teacher "monitoring" it and teaching them about good writing. She acknowledged that students liked to write fiction, but she felt they did not learn anything from such writing. She said:

They [students] like to but they don't learn anything from it, [writing fiction] they never learn anything from it, ever.

Ms. Meyer communicated her value on writing from experience to the students both explicitly and implicitly in a variety of ways including: (a) modeling writing from her own experience through the use of her own notebook; (b) selecting literature that focused on personal experiences; (c) assigning students to keep notebooks and to develop particular, personal events from their lives; (d) using specific language cues; and (e) through implicit messages during writing conferences.

Modeling

First, both the trainers and the teacher focused on the importance of drawing from personal experience by modeling. Both Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson encouraged students to write about personal topics by providing examples from their own notebooks. In the first session I observed, "Tasting Memories," both Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson read from their own notebooks. Ms. Meyer read about her daughter and an old friend from her childhood, while Ms. Henderson read about wanting to make a difference like her friend who worked in a soup kitchen. In the session on "Diaries and Notebooks," Ms. Meyer read about her feelings of inadequacy compared to a friend who had cancer, but was so strong and determined. Ms. Henderson read about an issue in her life--procrastination of the writing of a speech.

In the session on "Selecting Topics for Projects" the teacher and both trainers used examples from their personal lives and from their own writing to demonstrate the topics that were really important to them. Ms. Hall provided the example of writing about her mother and the images she had of her mother sewing a new dress for her. Ms. Henderson read from her own autobiography about an incident of skating. Besides modeling from their own notebooks, the teacher and trainers discussed their own experiences and shared them readily with students.

Examples from Texts

The second way in which Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson communicated their emphasis upon the personal aspects of writing was through the selection of texts they read

to the class. Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson read several pieces to the class about relatives of both published authors and students from previous years. For instance, on October 10, Ms. Meyer read a piece by a previous student, Tommy, about a memory of his grandfather and him at a baseball game. In this piece there is a physical and emotional closeness between the author and his grandfather. On another occasion, Ms. Meyer read from the book, Jenny, the poem, "My Daddy," describing a birthday of the author and her relationship with her father who was divorced from her mother.

Relatives were central characters in other pieces read to the class as well. In A Chair for My Mother the mother is the central character, while in The Ring in the Window Seat, the author tells an event in which her aunt is the central character. Additionally, these pieces are written in first person, providing the reader with the sense that these events did occur in the authors' lives. Ms. Meyer also read When I Was Young in the Mountains that included the author's memories of her experiences growing up in the coal mines. Little by Little is about the life of the writer, Jean Little, and is written in first person as is Lois Lowry's description of school milk. Except for the book, Galimoto, Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson selected pieces of literature that shared many of the following features: (a) were connected to the authors' lives; (b) were written in first person, (c) were about a relative; or (d) included a memory of childhood. Through selecting these particular texts, Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson encouraged students to write about their own lives and people who were close to them.

Assignments

A third way in which Ms. Meyer expressed her value upon personal topics was through encouraging students to write about their personal lives. The entire idea of keeping writers' notebooks rested on the assumption that students would keep records of their own lives and jot down and elaborate upon important events, people, and issues. Ms. Meyer encouraged students to write about their own lives through specific assignments as well. For instance, on October 11, Ms. Meyer instructed students to select one entry that

had happened to them and embellish it by using "beautiful language" to describe the event. Discussions that were focused around having students imagine the notebook entry behind the picture book encouraged students to tie writing into personal experience. Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson wanted students to imagine events in the authors' lives that might have generated the ideas that they subsequently included in their texts. After reading pieces from Jenny, Ms. Meyer asked students to write about something from their own lives that connected to the poems. These assignments encouraged students to focus on particular, personal events in their lives.

Language Cues

One of the implicit ways in which Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson communicated to students the value of writing from their own experience was through specific language cues. Because Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson believed that students wrote better pieces when they wrote about their own lives, they used a phrase called "getting to the bottom of something" as a metaphor for having students write about important events or issues in their lives. Several examples of use of this phrase provide evidence for the teachers' encouragement of students to write about deep issues in their lives. For instance, in the diaries and notebooks session, Ms. Henderson explained that the students did seem to be doing a lot of notebook writing, rather than diary writing because they were "trying to get to the bottom of things." This phrase is used to denote writing about personal issues, expressing feelings, and finding patterns among events or feelings. Getting to the bottom of things indicates that students should look for an underlying meaning. For instance, Ms. Henderson found that vacuuming, eating, and talking on the phone had been indications of the characteristic of procrastination. The teacher and trainer wanted students to find similar patterns in their own writing.

Other phrases that communicated this value on sharing deep, personal feelings and events were variations on the theme of "write from the heart." Ms. Henderson often asked students "What speaks to you from your heart?" or encouraged students by saying, "Write

from your heart." Although neither Ms. Henderson nor Ms. Meyer defined these expressions, the expressions seemed to imply selecting or writing entries that expressed emotion or a depth of feeling about a person or event.

In both whole group discussions and her conferences with students, Ms. Meyer used the word "important" frequently. In fact, so prevalent was the word "important" in topic selection that on three different occasions, the word was used from 12-14 times in the transcripts from each lesson. Ms. Meyer would encourage students to select entries that were really "important." She alternated using this word with the phrase "what really stands out for you?" Ms. Meyer's use of the word "important" seemed to imply that students should write about people with whom they had a close bond, especially parents, grandparents, or siblings or about events in which a special bond or relationship was evident. Ms. Meyer seemed to hope that students would reveal deeply personal, moving, emotional thoughts. As we will see later in the cases, however, the use of the word "important" had different meanings to different students and not all students shared her definition nor her value on writing about emotional events.

Discussions and Conferences

An emphasis upon selecting personal topics and infusing them with deep emotion was also apparent through the interactions with students in small group or individual conferences. Often in individual conferences students would reveal personal anecdotes or observations about relatives or people that were close to them. Dana, for instance, revealed how she would walk to the park with her father who was blind and describe what she saw to him and how she felt about the experience; Carl expressed his confusion over his parents' divorce; Sam talked about the differences between his mother and the woman who was to become his step-mother. Alexis became angry and discussed how she hated her grandmother and how much her feelings contrasted with Orlanda's relationship with her grandmother. Both Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson encouraged students to both write and talk about these family issues. With Carl, for example, Ms. Meyer encouraged him to

write about his feelings about his parents getting divorced and the resulting confusion. In the conferences, Ms. Meyer often made suggestions about how a student could write about one particular moment with a grandparent or a memory of the relationship between the child and another person.

To a large extent, Ms. Meyer was successful in communicating her emphasis on personal writing. One measure of this success is an examination of the topics about which students in the class wrote. Of the 28 students in the class, 19 wrote about relatives--aunts, grandparents, great grandparents, brothers, and parents. Five students wrote about themselves--being dyslexic, memories of fishing, experiencing holidays in both China and the US, growing up in Africa, and comparison between a student and a whale. Few students wrote about topics that were not of a personal nature. One student wrote a theme piece about feelings and friendship; one wrote a series of nature poems; and two students' pieces were unknown to me.

Selecting a Genre for a Particular Audience

A second aspect of the teacher's image of good writing is revealed through selection of genre and audience. Ms. Meyer believed that students ought to write texts with a particular audience in mind. This belief was interwoven into the class sessions--both whole-group mini-lessons and in the individual writing conferences. Ms. Meyer and the trainers used words such as "audience" and having a purpose or reason for writing. When students were determining the form their projects would take, Ms. Meyer began conferences by asking students questions about form and function of their texts. For instance, she asked, "Who is this going to be for? Who do you think would want to read this?" to get students to think about audience. She also asked students what form their projects would take by saying, "What will this be?" and made suggestions about turning the piece into a letter to someone or a poem.

Ms. Meyer and the trainers supported the idea of writing for a particular audience by modeling their own writing. For instance, Ms. Hall described writing a letter to her

mother telling her how she felt on one occasion and writing a toast on another occasion. Ms. Henderson explained how she was writing a speech for a large group of people about her experiences in classrooms. Ms. Meyer explained to Serena that she could imagine writing a letter to her own daughter to tell her how much she cared. Ms. Meyer had several favorite formats that she recommended to students; letters to a particular person and poems were the most frequently recommended.

The concern for selecting a particular form for an audience was represented in the students' projects. Students used a variety of genres for their projects, often with a particular audience in mind. Several students wrote descriptive pieces about their relatives, while others wrote poems to be shared with classmates. Several students wrote letters to a particular relative, and one student wrote "an open letter" to the school community about being dyslexic. Two students picked up on the trainers' ideas of writing a speech and wrote toasts to parents who were getting remarried.

Elements of Language and Style

A third aspect of the teacher's image of good writing was the emphasis upon elements of language and style. Ms. Meyer had strong beliefs about what constituted effective pieces of writing. Consistent with practices advocated by Teachers College, Ms. Meyer drew heavily from children's literature to form her ideas and to communicate her values to students. In the five weeks of my observations these images began to emerge both through Ms. Meyer's planned lessons and through the underlying messages she communicated to students in conferences. The most powerful elements of style that Ms. Meyer focused on were the uses of imagery and figurative language; these elements permeated the literature she read, the discussions, and assignments she gave students. Additional aspects of language such as suspense, use of flashback and voice occurred less frequently, but were nevertheless part of the classroom discourse.

Imagery and Figurative Language

Ms. Meyer focused on two related features of language in her lessons and in her interactions with individual students: imagery and figurative language (Lukens, 1990). Imagery consisted of including descriptive adjectives, adding detail to events and settings, and avoiding the use of common words such as nice and good for the purposes of forming a picture in the reader's mind. Figurative language included any type of comparisons, especially similes and metaphors.

In almost every class session, the teacher, the trainer, and the students discussed the uses of language by authors and by student/authors. The teacher did not refer to imagery or figurative language by these names, but used such expressions as "description," "beautiful language," "detail" and comparisons. Both Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson referred to "getting an image in the reader's mind" as a phrase to connote imagery. Other specific language cues included [the author] putting "you right there," and "creating pictures" for the reader. The most prevalent phrases were "description," "beautiful language," and "getting an image in the reader's mind." Description was common enough that in one lesson it was used nine times.

When reading literature to the students, Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson pointed out particularly effective language. These examples tended to be filled with adjectives and details such as When I Was Young in the Mountains: "When I was young in the mountains, we'd pump pails of water from the well at the bottom of the hill and heated the water to fill round, tin tubs for our baths." Similarly, the discussion that followed the reading of A Chair for My Mother centered on two particular phrases: "But each evening every single shiny coin goes into the jar" and "Yes, a chair. A wonderful, beautiful, fat soft armchair. We will get one covered in velvet with roses all over it."

Students' texts that were read aloud also provided opportunities for teachers and students to discuss description and adding details to form a picture in the reader's mind. Ms. Meyer celebrated students' use of imagery in their writing by calling attention to it

and by becoming quite excited about the inclusion of beautiful language or comparisons. For example, when Anthony offered "the pineapple filled my mouth with joy" as an example of good writing, Ms. Meyer jumped up and said, "Oh wow! That's so great! The pineapple filled my mouth with joy." She also pointed out that Anthony's description of a scream filling the room was a very good way of saying something.

Much of the discussions, then, were filled with examples of "good writing" that included descriptive and figurative language. The class session on October 12 was particularly informative for understanding the teacher's conception of good writing because the discussion focused around having students generate ideas about good writing to which Ms. Meyer responded. In this session, Ms. Meyer explicitly discussed use of descriptive language as a key issue in good writing.

Flashback and Voice

The qualities of "voice" and "use of time" or flashback qualified as components of good writing, but were much more in the background than the aspects of imagery and figurative language. The issue of voice was mentioned in the qualities of good writing session and in The Ring and The Window Seat discussion. Voice seemed to mean developing a style or way of writing that was both unique to the writer, but was very realistic--as if one could hear the person saying it. Ms. Meyer and Ms. Henderson also considered the use of flashback as a quality of good writing as mentioned during two sessions, A Chair for my Mother and The Ring and the Window Seat.

Suspense

The element of suspense was an idea that seemed to be introduced by students, not the teacher, though Ms. Meyer valued surprise as an aspect of good writing. Miguel introduced the phrase "keeping the reader on his or her thin toes" as an expression to indicate surprise or suspense. For instance, in his own piece, "Man's Best Friend, the Car," Miguel withheld the information that the best friend was a car and led the reader to believe the friend was another animal. The reader's discovery that the friend was a car

was a surprise, yet the reader wondered throughout the piece just who the friend would turn out to be. This piece was valued by the teacher and students and often referred to by the students as an example of "keeping the reader on his toes." Students also described the book, Galimoto, as an example of keeping the reader on his or her toes because of the suspenseful nature of finding out what the toy was. Although Ms. Meyer did not consciously work on getting students to understand this quality of writing, she did value it and respond to it when she saw this feature in students' work. Unlike the more explicit features of imagery and figurative language, suspense operated at a more implicit level.

Focus and Organizational Structure

A fourth key feature in Ms. Meyer's conception of good writing was the ability of a writer to focus on one particular aspect and to develop the piece around that focus. In the session on October 11, Ms. Meyer pointed out to students that in the pieces she read, especially Tommy's, the author had focused on one particular thing and told it in detail. "Sticking to one subject" was the way in which a student described this need to focus in the October 12 session. Throughout conferences with students, Ms. Meyer had them try to find a focus for their projects and to develop one issue. Once the piece was focused, Ms. Meyer used the beginnings of literature to help students to have strong "leads" that would engage the reader. What constituted a strong beginning or lead was not well-developed in what Ms. Meyer communicated to students, but she did emphasize an organizational structure that included using a beginning sentence such as Anthony's "Thank god I still remember what my grandmother looked like." These features of writing from personal experience, writing for a particular audience, including devices of language and style, and focusing on one particular subject were key to Ms. Meyer's view of good writing.

Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the classroom themes and patterns of interaction described in this chapter as they relate to the appropriation phase of the Harre (1984) model. Table 3 summarizes the central features of the classroom interactions

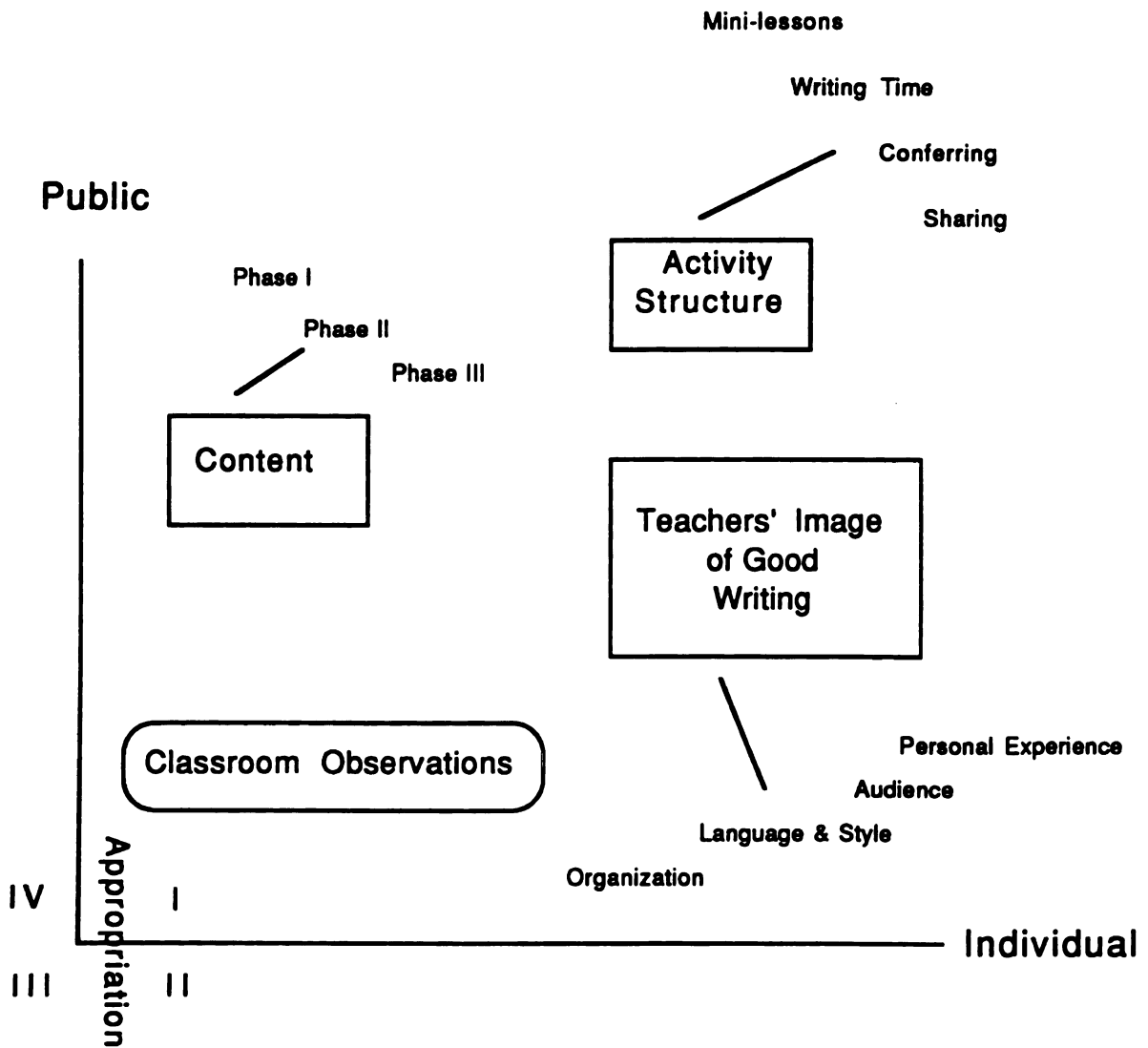


Figure 4 Classroom Themes and Harre Model

Table 3 Summary of Classroom Themes and Patterns of Interaction

Content

Phase 1: Notebooks and Qualities of Good Writing

Phase 2: Moving to Projects Through Writing Conferences

Phase 3: Using Literature to Improve Writing

Writing Workshop Activity Structure

Mini-lessons

Writing Time

Conferring

Sharing

The Teacher's Image of Good Writing

The Best Topics Come From Personal Experience

Elements of Language and Style

Selecting A Genre for a Particular Audience

Focus and Organizational Structure

that provided opportunities for students to internalize the classroom dialogue. In the next chapter consisting of the cases of individual students, we will see how these features played a major role in influencing what students internalized.

CHAPTER 5

THE CASES

This chapter presents the four cases of the students: Miguel, Anthony, Ella, and Anita. The cases could be presented in several different orders. For instance, the two strongest contrasting cases could be presented first. However, I have chosen to present the cases in order of descending synchrony with the teacher. The first three cases: Miguel, Anthony, and Ella are examples of the teacher's scaffolding instruction in varying ways for the students and the development of intersubjectivity. The three students had previous experiences in writing process classrooms and internalize much of the classroom dialogue. The fourth case, Anita, is illustrative of less successful scaffolding and lack of shared understanding. There is less reemergence of the dialogue in her case as she both resists aspects of the classroom interaction and makes compromises in terms of topic.

Each case is organized by providing background information on the student first. Then, the cases present data and interpretation from the classroom interactions in which each student participated. Students' internalization processes are traced through their texts and their conferences with younger students. Each case ends with a description of its significance.

A Perfect Fit? The Case of Miguel

Who is Miguel?

This section describes Miguel's background, views of writing, and topics about which he wrote. It also provides examples of the teacher's views of him and gives an example of her concern for him.

Background

Miguel was an eleven-year-old, medium-sized, dark-haired sixth grader whose native language was Spanish. Miguel lived in Guatemala until he was in third grade when he came to New York. At the time of the study, he lived with his younger brother and his mother in one-room apartment, sharing kitchen facilities with other families in the

apartment. The building was in the neighborhood of the school, so Miguel walked to school. His father lived elsewhere and Miguel reported that he came to visit him and his brother "once every lifetime." Miguel reported that his mother babysat children at their homes. He was on the free lunch program at the school.

Miguel spoke no English when he came to the United States, and there were no bilingual classrooms in the school. His mother had learned some English from a school in Guatemala. Miguel reported that he learned English from friends and that he had to learn it to succeed in school; now he reported that he was proficient enough to correct his mother's English. In fact, Miguel's facility with the English language was notable--he was very fluent, articulate, used extensive vocabulary, and was a delightful conversationalist. Miguel gave elaborated answers to most interview questions and was quite orally fluent in both interviews and in class discussions, interspersing his comments with figurative language. He was also quite exacting in his facts and theories. For instance, when he was telling me about a scientist from a television show who was struck by lightning, he said, "the chemicals on the shelf made him run really fast. I think 642.2 miles an hour."

Non-school activities in which he participated included reading, skateboarding, and watching television. Miguel read both fiction and non-fiction extensively. He liked to read books about animals, especially killer whales. However, his interests ranged to include books about space. In fact, in a three day period, Miguel had checked out five books about comets, the moon, and nebulae. Additionally, he also read fiction, checking out several books a week.

Miguel appeared to be quite artistic. He had drawn several pictures of whales, parrots, Pop-eye, and Darth Vader that decorated his space on the bulletin board. In a class discussion about the book, Galimoto, Miguel pointed to this space and suggested that he, like the character in the book, had set his mind to something and achieved it; Miguel's achievement was accurately drawing the whale.

Achievement was a concern of Miguel's. In describing his own writing process, Miguel suggested that he coached himself along by telling himself he would get an "F" if he did not produce writing. Later on when he achieved his goal, he would pat himself on the back:

It's really funny. See, I say "you better write something or you'll get an 'F' on it". . . . And when I did it, I go "great, Miguel, now you're getting an 'A' plus."

Miguel was also a kind of political activist. He believed strongly in preserving the earth from pollution, in saving the trees, and in keeping species of animals from extinction. He was particularly disturbed by damage that was done to animals by human carelessness and pollution such as throwing rings from aluminum cans into the water where fish could choke on them and die. He acted on these beliefs by writing letters to forest associations to help save trees. Miguel also spoke out about cultural differences between the land of his birth and the United States. For instance, he was very upset about the way in which New Year's Eve was celebrated in New York which was quite boring in contrast to Guatemala where children can set off firecrackers and are very involved in the celebration. He also expressed his anger about Mexico taking land from Guatemala.

Miguel had a depth and intensity about him that allowed both adults and children to engage easily with him. He also was very charming, sincere, and captivated others with his brilliant smile. Miguel was very well-respected by both the teacher and his peers. His friends tended to be other fluent, articulate boys in the class such as Anthony whom he sat next to and Rom, a fluent writer. Several students considered Miguel to be one of the best writers in the class and mentioned his piece about "Man's Best Friend, The Car" as an outstanding one.

Miguel also seemed to highly respect authority. He would only say positive things about the teacher and became very uncomfortable in a small group setting in which other students had criticized the teacher. He liked this year's class a great deal, much better than the previous year's class and attributed success in writing to his teacher.

Views About Writing

Miguel enjoyed writing when he felt he had ideas: "when all these ideas are popping out of my head." He found that there was too much talk about writing and not enough time to write in the classroom, preferring to look out the window or just think rather than listening during the mini-lessons. He was unhappy when the trainers had the students read something more than once, noting in one example, "she (the trainer) read it and then she made us read it again. And I wonder why if we already knew what it said." Miguel also seemed frustrated when a student read a piece that did not seem to connect with the discussion at hand. However, he was always polite, never criticizing another student; he just seemed to wonder quietly to himself.

Miguel was particularly sensitive about the audience for his and others' writing. He wanted to share with people who would like and respect his writing--individual students or the whole group. He was willing to share his writing with people who would not laugh. During the interview, he defined a good audience as:

A person that won't laugh about my writing or a person that will say it's good because they know it's really hard to think about something when it's too noisy.

Even though he thought that about 10% of the class did not respect others' pieces, he attempted to ignore them and read his work anyway. He acknowledged that some people might not like his writing, but felt confident enough about his own writing to say that he liked it anyway. When asked why he liked his writing, he said:

I like it because it comes out of me and I don't copy from other people. But sometimes I read books and I like their description so then I sort of copy them but I don't do that often.

He also liked to read his work to the teacher:

I do like sharing stuff with her because she knows it's really hard for a kid to get something out of their mind and write it.

Not only did Miguel enjoy sharing pieces with his teacher, but he believed that his teacher provided him with many ideas and helped him with his writing.

Topics Miguel Wrote About

Miguel was a fluent writer, filling his notebook with lengthy entries and often writing two or three entries daily. Miguel had strong feeling about his notebook and these are reflected in the metaphors he used when describing his notebook:

Well, it's [his notebook] like a seed where you get ideas out of and then the tree starts to come out and it forms a story. And then the branches come out which form the description.

Miguel wrote about many topics from sports to love and death. Most of his notebook entries fell into one of five categories: (a) himself and his feelings; (b) his family and relationships with them; (c) science including space or how things worked; (d) the environment, especially pollution; and (e) whales. He had from four to nine entries in each of these categories. In his project Miguel combined two of these topic areas by writing a comparison of himself and killer whales. He tended to draw more heavily from the information he gathered on whales and the pieces he had written about them, and drew, to a lesser extent, upon his entries about himself and his feelings.

Miguel's pieces reflect a depth of thought about himself, others in his life, and the impact of humans on the earth. He often took the perspective of others in his pieces or identified with the person who was suffering. For instance, in writing about a first grader who had cancer, he connected it to the death of his grandmother and wrote:

I wish someone would cure him, or even a miracle. I don't know what to say! And life only comes in onces! I wish he could be cured so his parents won't be crying for him. And worse, I don't want his parents to have to go through what I went through, that is- one loved so much- one life in one turn- to die of cancer.

Miguel also was concerned about problems in the world such as illiteracy and wanted to be able to do something about it. He wrote:

I feel terrible, because its so sad that some people don't know how to read. That is a very important thing in ones life, you don't get to enjoy books, the wonderful things someone has written. If I could get a chance to teach someone how to read, that would count in my life alot!

Miguel's deep concern for the environment comes through in his pieces about pollution. In the following excerpt from an entry, he addressed his audience directly. He wrote:

Have you ever seen the sky? Well if you have, have you seen the bright colors there are and how beautiful they look. But guess what? Those colors are made by man-kind, humans, we were the ones that did it. Do you know how we did it? Well, we did it by polluting the air, our only oxygen.

Miguel's work often used descriptive language and he used similes and metaphors frequently. For instance, on one occasion he wrote:

Windows opened, cranes hanging on the lights. Wind blowing in, cranes dancing (paper cranes), cheerfully dancing. Wanting to get out, and just try to fly away towards the outside world.

This excerpt from an entry also reflected Miguel's use of perspective as he took on the viewpoint of the paper cranes and imagined they would like to fly away. Miguel wrote about a large variety of topics, drawing upon an extensive knowledge of the world and a curiosity about how things worked. He expressed strong viewpoints about the world and displayed empathy with other people. Miguel also incorporated descriptive language into many of his entries. Later in the case, we will see how these features are incorporated in his project entitled, "Who Am I?"

Teacher's Views of Miguel

The teacher considered Miguel an excellent student who scored in the 99%ile in standardized achievement tests. Ms. Meyer enjoyed Miguel and valued her relationship with him. During an interview following a conference with him, she expressed her enthusiasm for him and voiced her concerns about his readiness to do a project:

Miguel is the greatest kid, he's the greatest kid, he really is. Yet, he's not that interested in doing a project, he's really much more interested in his notebook and writing in his notebook than finding something that he really wants to work on you know as a project. I think he's forcing his project because he has to do it but I'm not sure it's something that he's really that interested in.

The positive feelings that Miguel and the teacher had for each other were reflected in his defending her against other students at times, while she attended to Miguel when he seemed to be troubled about something. For instance, on at least two occasions, Ms. Meyer

spoke to Miguel privately about his feelings that day. It was unusual for Ms. Meyer to have an individual interaction with a student that was not related to writing during writing time. The first brief exchange took place on October 19 when Ms. Meyer approached Miguel who was seated on the rug looking pensive:

1. T: Scared you didn't I?/ What were you thinking?/
2. Miguel: Well/ The outside world//
3. T: The outside world?/ Wishing you were there?/
4. Miguel: Yeah//
5. T: It feels all closed in today/ huh?/ It's a day you want to be outside?/
6. Miguel: Yeah//
7. T: Me too// It seems like the first really crisp day//

Here Ms. Meyer showed concern for Miguel's feelings and tried to identify with him by expressing an understanding of a closed-in feeling related to the change in weather.

On another occasion, Ms. Meyer was concerned about Miguel's upset feelings and lack of contributions to the class. The incident that precipitated Miguel's sadness was Ms. Meyer's lecture to the whole class about their inappropriate behavior on the playground. Students had not been lining up and coming in properly; she took the opportunity to tell children that they were not respecting authority. The teacher had singled Miguel out as well as several other individuals in her lecture by saying that he had been overheated from running on the playground too much. Miguel seemed to have been strongly affected by this lecture. When Miguel looked quite unhappy during writing time, Ms. Meyer asked him, "Do you know what you are doing?" to which he responded "yes." She then said to him, "Don't look so sad; it is not the end of the world," directed him to look at her and then did a fake smile, seemingly trying to cheer him up. Miguel did not seem cheered, however, and later she went over to him and spoke very gently to him. This was their exchange:

1. T: Here. How are you doing?/ Are you still upset with me? Is that why you are looking like that?

2. Miguel: (inaudible)
3. T: Bad things?
4. Miguel: No. (inaudible)
5. T: You get so upset whenever I say anything to you about the bad things/ about the negative stuff// I feel terrible/ Most of the things I say are so wonderful/ you are so terrific/ that I feel bad ever saying anything to you in a negative way because I think you get so depressed about it// I don't want you to/ You know you were wrong and that's the end of it/ I don't want you to feel bad/

These brief exchanges provide an indication of Ms. Meyer's concern for Miguel and her desire to be sensitive toward him. While she seemed aware that scolding Miguel might be embarrassing to him, she may not have been aware of why he seemed particularly offended. If his cultural background highly values authority which some Hispanic cultures do (e.g., Reyes, 1991), that may have been a reason for his embarrassment that she did not consider. However, Ms. Meyer seemed to care about his response to her and wanted to repair any damage that might have been done temporarily to their relationship.

Appropriation: Opportunities for Social Interaction

Miguel's participation in class, his writing conferences with the teacher, and his writing conference with a peer, Rom, are described in this section.

Classroom Participation

Miguel was an active participant in the classroom, often contributing ideas to class discussions and occasionally sharing his entries. On October 11, Miguel read his piece entitled, "Man's Best Friend." In this entry he suggested that most people thought about man's best friend being the dog, but he believed man's best friend was something else. Miguel did not say exactly what it was until the very end. Instead, he described features such as being able to snuggle and love them that led the reader to believe he was writing about another animal. Near the end, he gave hints about treating this thing well and making it shiny, ending the piece by saying that man's best friend was the car. Miguel's piece received praise from the teacher as well as other students. After Miguel completed reading the entry, Ms. Meyer laughed and said, "That's a surprise ending. I didn't get that.

What made you think of that?" Miguel responded that he had been walking down the street noticing people taking care of their cars and decided to write about it. Ms. Meyer praised his work and told him what an interesting entry he had written.

Two points are significant here. First, this is one of several examples in which Ms. Meyer praised Miguel's work within the whole-class setting. Second, Miguel had introduced the idea of using a surprise ending to his piece which Ms. Meyer noted. This feature of surprise played a role in what Miguel contributed to subsequent class discussions. The next day Miguel introduced the idea of "keeping the reader on his toes" in the discussion of qualities of good writing. (When asked later about this particular expression, Miguel took credit for coining the expression and said that he just found it in his brain). The teacher encouraged this expression by repeating the phrase and suggesting that an indication of "keeping the reader on its toes" is when people are so interested in the writing that they continue to talk about it with other people. As she was summarizing the qualities of good writing, Ms. Meyer used the expression "get the reader on its toes" and interpreted the statement as writing an exciting piece. This expression, introduced by Miguel, became part of the classroom discourse for talking about text.

Writing Conferences

Something that was distinctive about Ms. Meyer's interactions with Miguel was the relative frequency of contact about writing. Ms. Meyer held one lengthy conference with Miguel that took place with three other students present. She also talked to Miguel briefly on three other occasions about writing.

Ms. Meyer's first conference was a brief one of about thirty seconds on October 22, in which she responded to his piece about his experiences learning to read. Miguel's piece started out by expressing a concern for those who could not read and then ended with a brief description of how his uncle had taught him to read by hitting him with a belt if he got stuck reading a word. The following is his text:

It was frustrating, I didn't know how to read, but, with a belt on my uncles hand I soon dashed through the words. They seemed pretty hard, but I tried hard, so I wouldn't get belted by my uncle. He was serious about it to, when I got a paragraph right, he would give me a peice of gum, but when I got it wrong, well all I can tell you is that it was terrible. But it was a great experience. Before I knew how to read I took a book and started mumbleing with out knowing how to read, I just faking it. Even though, I had to unless I wanted my uncle to come over with his belt on his hands.....And if I get a word wrong he would say: Do you want this. Even though then, we had to be able to read at the age of six I learned at the age of 5.¹

On this occasion, Ms. Meyer knelt on the floor very close to Miguel--about one foot away. They made frequent eye contact and Miguel nodded and smiled throughout the conference. Ms. Meyer started out by saying, "Ohhh" as she read his piece. Then Miguel began the conversation, almost as if they had been reading simultaneously, and he could just begin at a point in the text. Here is their exchange:

1. Miguel: With a belt/
2. T: Oh/ (she reads) "with a belt / on my"/
3. Miguel: uncle's hand/
4. T: Oh/ god/ [*appreciative sound*] Your writing is so good/ [*whispers*] So you are saying he kind of like/
5. Miguel: Threatened me/
6. T: Threatened you/ Wow// [*draws out*] That got you to read because you knew you had to?// But it worked for you/ It's not the best way to get somebody to read/ (laughs) (some momentary, overlapping, inaudible talk)
7. Miguel: (nods and smiles in agreement).

Although the teacher initiated the conversation by going over to him and reading his text, it was Miguel who began the exchange of words by bringing up the belt his uncle had hit him with to get him to read. This was somewhat unusual because Ms. Meyer almost always began the conversations. Even though this was the beginning of the conference and the only day in which Miguel had worked on this particular entry, it was almost as if they were continuing a previous conversation because of the ease with which they talked about

¹All students' texts are presented using students' original wording, punctuation marks, and spellings; they have not been edited, except for cross-outs or students' own editing.

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the line ("hit me with a belt") and the overall idea of the text (being forced to read through physical means). The rapport between teacher and student was quite strong during this brief exchange. They were sitting close together and they both nodded and smiled throughout the exchange. Their emphasis was upon the same words, both emphasizing "belt" and "threatened." Also, Ms. Meyer provided a kind of generic praise for his overall writing by telling him his writing was good, emphasized through the whisper and the use of "oh, god." This brief conference provides an indication of the strong rapport between Ms. Meyer and Miguel that had been established.

The next conference which took place two days later was about Miguel's project. This conference took place in the hall with only an audiotape (I was in the other room reading to the rest of the students). Several students took part in the small group conference about projects. First, Ms. Meyer told students this was a good opportunity to talk together about their projects and to review what Ms. Henderson had mentioned the previous day. She reminded the four students of what Ms. Henderson had been talking about by saying:

T: . . . Look through your notebooks and kind of treat them like you're a miner/ and you are going through and you are mining for the pieces of gold that you found for your notebooks//

Miguel: Or the seeds for the trees?//

T: Right/ or the seeds for the big trees/ Miguel/ you have such a nice way of putting it/ and what you decided was real important to you// What deserved your attention// Either some entries that worked together/ or some big idea that you had that you figured that you would like to do a project on/ okay?//

Ms. Meyer then focused on Jimmy's pieces about feelings and asked him if there were something that appeared often in his notebook. They continued their conversation with her asking Jimmy to think about what the project could become (meaning what form, although she continued her metaphor of turning the gold into something such as a bracelet or earrings). She suggested Jimmy turn his entries into poems and then encouraged him to "start taking the wonderful pieces of gold lifting them off that page and trying to make

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them more, more, and more beautiful." When she turned to Miguel, then, she had established some background for how the project was to consist of entries that were linked together into some type of theme. Ms. Meyer and Miguel had an exchange that lasted over six minutes about Miguel's topic for his project. Here is their beginning:

1. T: Okay// (sighs) Miguel/ you want to talk?/
2. Miguel: Sure// Um (long pause) Well/ Nothing's really come up--
3. T: Mhmm-- [*mild encouragement*]
4. Miguel: like too often/
5. T: Mhmm/
6. Miguel: Because I do/ I do have every single entry in here are almost/ different// They're all different/
7. T: Mhmmm/
8. Miguel: They're not/ they're like strangers to each other/
9. T: Mhhmm// [*chuckles with an appreciative intonation*]
10. Miguel: So/ I don't know which one to choose//
11. T: So you're saying Miguel that/ now what I'm hearing you/ is that nothing stands out in that notebook as being more important than the next?//
12. Miguel: Uh huh--
13. T: You can't read through it and find/ um// any connections like there's some theme that runs through it/ that/ you know/ that most of your entries/ that/ like most of them have to do with your father/ or do most of them have to do with being afraid/ or/ um/ do most of them show you a specific kind of person/ one who takes charge/ who goes and does things/ or/ you know/ are you saying that/ there's no connection at all you haven't seen?// [*draws out father and afraid*]
14. Miguel: No I haven't seen any connection in every/ uh/ entry/ but I like all of them/
15. T: Mmm/ What do you like about all of them?// [*shows interest with elongated sound*]
16. Miguel: Um/ I like my expressions towards them and I like --

17. T: Okay/ so say more about that/ you like your expressions towards it//
[*slower pace*]

In the beginning segment, Ms. Meyer turned the floor over to Miguel by inviting him to talk. Miguel's response indicates the continuing nature of the conversation which Ms. Meyer and the other student, Jimmy, had begun. Miguel immediately began to describe how his notebook entries did not connect to one another in a thematic way. He expressed this thought using the metaphor of his entries being "like strangers to one another." Ms. Meyer showed an appreciation for this figure of speech by her laughter which had a friendly, amused tone. She then followed up on his statement and phrased a series of questions to get at whether there was a theme in his notebook. It is interesting that she phrased it using negative words such as "nothing stands out" and "you can't read through it?" Her strategies consisted mainly of asking him questions and summarizing her interpretation of what he had said.

In this segment, Ms. Meyer also clarified to some extent what she meant by "important." For instance, she mentioned the words "theme" and "connections" and then gave suggestions such as "entries that have to do with your father," or "being afraid," or the writer himself. The teacher's "hmmms" in this segment seemed to serve as sources of encouragement for Miguel. We can get a sense of how the teacher and student were communicating through the types of responses they both gave. Each time she asked a question, he was able to give an example of what he meant, which in turn led her to ask an even more specific question to which he provided a more specific answer.

Miguel responded rather matter-of-factly, not apologetically, that he did not see any connections but that he liked his pieces. Ms. Meyer responded to this by asking him to provide examples of the qualities of writing he liked, and then prodded him in the next segment to become specific about the entries that he liked. The following section shows the teacher encouraging Miguel, while Miguel tried to explain that he was pleased with his writing, even if other people did not respond positively. Ms. Meyer continued to encourage

him by agreeing with him, saying, "I know what you mean," and getting him to be more specific about the entries he liked. Here is that portion of their discussion:

18. Miguel: See/ I like the way/ the way I write something// I don't care what other people say//

19. T: So/ you like--

20. Miguel: No/ not like I don't care what they say-- [*spoken rapidly*]

21. T: No I know what you *mean*// [*spoken rapidly and emphatically*]

22. Miguel: If they say something like/ oh/ you can't write (inaudible)--[*lifts voice to imitate a student mocking another*]

23. T: Yeah so what is it specifically?// Find a place that you're talking about like find which entries you like// Okay/ like that one/ tell me specifically// [*encouraging tone*]

After being prodded by Ms. Meyer to tell about a particular entry, Miguel told Ms. Meyer about the feeling of being a killer whale when swimming. It seems that because Miguel had not identified a particular topic that Ms. Meyer was trying to get him to identify a type of writing. However, she did not make that very explicit in the following series of questions:

24. Miguel: Well/ I used/ when I went swimming/

25. T: Mhmm/ [*mild interest*]

26. Miguel: Well I usually went swimming/ and I/ all of a sudden I felt like a (inaudible)/

27. T: Mhmmm/ [*rise-fall-rise to her voice, indicating interest*]

28. Miguel: like/ going through--

29. T: Ahhh/ [*draws out*] so you actually have that entry/ you like the way you actually became the whale?/

30. Miguel: Mhm/

31. T: Now are there other parts/ other entries where that happens?/

32. Miguel: Well/

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33. T: Where you think you did that kind of writing?/ In other words you think you're good at that kind of writing// You think you're really good at it//
34. Miguel: I think I've got another one// Yeah/ I got (long pause) Wait/ here it is/
35. T: Mhmm/ And how does that one go?/
36. Miguel: Um/ it says/ (alternates reading and explaining) "I remember the day that my mother had to leave me home/ alone// It was night// And I was very scared/ because I thought that someone might come// " And you know/ when you get the feeling/ that someone's watching you/ well I felt that/ "I felt that way/ like I felt/ scared/ as if I was a shark's prey// I didn't know what to do/ Except watch TV// When I watched television/ there was a movie// It was Friday the 13th Part 7// It was really scary/ mostly when the girl knew /what would happen in the future// She knew how to move things without touching it/ and when I/ when I got/ hold of that information/ I sort of went to sleep on the couch"
37. T: Mhmm/ [*some interest*]
38. Miguel: "and I/ had a dream that I was I was a kid who/ who knew how to move things without touching them//."
39. T: Mhmmm/
40. Miguel: "And/ Jason came toward me/ and I said--"
41. T: You know/ now that I'm thinking about it/ I think you have uh/ don't you have a lot of entries about dreams?// [*interrupts and expresses interest*]
42. Miguel: No/
43. T: No?/ You didn't have another entry about dreams?//
44. Miguel: No/
45. T: Hmm/ So what do you think you want to do/ Miguel?/ You think you may not be ready/ to do a project yet?/ Nothing really stands out as being important to you in here?// You can't kind of put your finger on what's important to you?//

In the previous segment, the teacher seemed to have wanted Miguel to identify a topic (dreams), an issue (being scared or something personally revealing), or a type of writing (taking another perspective, becoming something else). He provided two examples of pieces of writing with accompanying explanation. Although she seemed somewhat anxious to get on with her own agenda, Miguel did have the floor to read his entries. She interrupted Miguel's reading and explanation of his entry to ask him about

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dreams, and then suggested that perhaps there was not something "important" for him to turn into a project. Throughout the segment both teacher and student initiated topics-- Miguel by reading from his notebook and Ms. Meyer by asking questions. They responded to one another and seemed to understand each other's meaning, but had not arrived at a common topic. Up to this point the teacher had been encouraging him to find a topic, as her questions encouraged him to focus more and more specifically. Ms. Meyer seemed on the edge of abandoning Miguel's identifying a topic for a project, when in the next turns, Miguel literally picked up on her use of the word "stands out" and continued the conference. Here is their interaction:

46. Miguel: Well--

47. T: Okay, so--

48. Miguel: Mostly the killer whale/

49. T: Uh huh/

50. Miguel: It's my favorite whale and/ I like the way it stands out/

51. T: Mhmm/

52. Miguel: It's// the colors it has//

53. T: Mhmm/

54. Miguel: And it's not like/ a shark//

55. T: Mhmm/ *[encouraging tone]*

56. Miguel: But it can be//

57. T: So do you think that/ why do you think you like that killer whale so much?// What do you think/ why do you think that one for all the ones that stand out to you/ why the killer whale?//

58. Miguel: Because/ the killer whale can be mean/ and it can be friendly

59. T: Mhmm

60. Miguel: like brothers or sisters/

61. T: So you think that's at all/ you think you're at all like a killer whale?// *[questioning tone shows interest]*

62. Miguel: Yes I do /

63. T: Yeah// So you think that might be a/ an interesting kind of/ project for you?/ Try to write something on/ take your entries/ and look through your entries and see where you find/ go through all/ mine it/ mine your notebook/ for places/ where you write about yourself/ where you really think you show specific characteristics/ and then work on the characteristics of the killer whale/ and kind of work that together?//

64. Miguel: Sure/ [*with enthusiasm*]

65. T: What do you think about that?/

66. Miguel: It's good/

67. T: Sounds like something that might be important to you?/

68. Miguel: Yeah/

Immediately after Miguel's suggestion that the killer whale might be a topic because its colors make it stand out, Ms. Meyer encouraged Miguel's development of that topic for a project. He introduced the topic of the killer whale and she immediately followed up on it. It was at this point in the conversation that the teacher and student seemed to have developed intersubjectivity, a shared understanding. The emphasis upon the words "stands out" seemed to have triggered a response from Miguel. The teacher pursued this topic with him briefly before introducing her own idea--that the killer whale was like himself. She introduced this idea in the form of a question. When he responded in the affirmative, she immediately suggested he look through his notebook to find the places where he had written about himself and the characteristics of the whale, and then recommended he work those two ideas together. Ms. Meyer brought in her own idea of what she thought was "important"--that is, that a project should include something personal. Miguel was amenable to the idea of comparing himself to the killer whale; he used many affirmative statements and provided clarification when Ms. Meyer asked for it. It was at this point that Miguel and the teacher seemed to have reached a shared understanding and agreed upon a topic, based upon their negotiations. Miguel had not merely accepted his teacher's idea, but contributed his own.

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In the final segment, Ms. Meyer gave Miguel suggestions about how to go through his notebook to identify relevant pieces, and then asked him what it might become, meaning what form or genre such as poetic, personal narrative, or fiction. Here is the conclusion of their conference:

69. T: Yeah/ You want to try that?// Okay/ so see what happens// Go through that notebook/ and see what you can find out/ about// how you and the killer whale are kind of alike//
70. Miguel: Ok/
71. T: Kind of an interesting thing/ And then somehow you might be able to use that first entry you wrote/ about the whale?/
72. Miguel: Uh huh/
73. T: You know/ how you start feeling like the whale and that kind of led you thinking/ about the killer whale is your favorite whale/ and what ways/ you know you're together/ [*pace quickens*] It's interesting And what would you do with that?/ But/ what can you imagine it becoming?//
74. Miguel: Well/ this is a lot of information about the killer whale//
75. T: Okay/ so you can imagine it being a non-fiction piece about the killer whale?/
76. Miguel: Uh huh--
77. T: Uh huh/
78. Miguel: And// what (???) and you know how--
79. T: Yeah--[*interruption and high rise indicates an interest*]
80. Miguel: Like a/ like a book/
81. T: So you could see/ you could see/ [*increased pace*] you could write a little piece about the killer whale/ and then/ and then/ kind of like a poem about/ you/ comparing you and the killer whale together/ how you and the killer whale are the same?//
82. Miguel: Uh huh/
83. T: It would be interesting to do that// That would really be nice// [*with emphasis*] Yeah/ You could work on a book/ a little you know non-fiction piece on killer whales/ That's great/ Okay Miguel/ go for that/ Does that sound like important to you/ important stuff?// [*voice becomes more emphatic*]

84. Miguel: Yes/

85. T: Good/

The conference ended and Miguel left the group at this point to go back into the classroom. In this segment, Miguel had provided ideas such as drawing upon the information that he had about killer whales. The use of non-fiction piece seemed to be quite ambiguous. Initially, it appeared that Miguel wanted to write an expository piece based on his ideas to include information about the whale. Ms. Meyer's view of the "non-fiction" project, however, seemed to be more of a personal-comparative piece in which Miguel would compare himself to the killer whale. She seemed quite pleased with her idea and praised Miguel, highly recommending that he should write a "non-fiction piece on the killer whales."

Miguel seemed quite agreeable, and indeed, he wrote his piece about how he and the killer whale were alike. One of the ways in which Miguel indicated agreement in the conversation was through his many uses of "uh huh" and other affirmative statements that were sprinkled throughout the conference. When Ms. Meyer provided an idea, he picked up on it, indicating her scaffolding had been successful. Her recommendations to him were almost all in the form of questions; that is, she raised her voice at the end. Although she contributed her ideas to the conference, Miguel also found an opportunity to suggest he wanted to write the piece in the form of a book.

Ms. Meyer was concerned that Miguel would like the ideas. For instance, toward the end she asked him if that would be "important stuff" for him to write about. Her tone of voice and the fact that she asked him indicated that she hoped that he would be invested in the project and value it as something worth writing about. When the teacher seemed to have been giving up on his selecting a topic, Miguel may have felt pressured to hurry and come up with the killer whale as a topic. From the tone of their interaction, however, it seemed they had reached a common understanding of what the project should be. Although

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Miguel may have had to compromise what he had originally been planning, he seemed positive about the idea of writing a comparative piece about the killer whale.

In the conference between Miguel and the teacher, they seemed to develop intersubjectivity, a kind of shared understanding. Ms. Meyer took on a role of prodding Miguel to identify something in his notebook to use for the project. Each time he would make a statement, she built upon that statement and asked him to be more specific. She apparently wanted him to identify the topic, yet her implicit messages were that the topic should fit her own idea of what constituted a good narrative. When Miguel described his dream, Ms. Meyer indicated an interest in dreams, asking whether Miguel had a lot of entries about dreams. When she was about to abandon the idea of Miguel's honing in on a topic, he found the whale piece. Ms. Meyer was able to weave in her beliefs that a project should contain something personal by recommending that Miguel compare himself to the whale. Although she provided suggestions and support, she also wanted him to take control over the selection of topic. Ms. Meyer wove into the dialogue her conception that the projects should also be "non-fiction," yet she did not want the piece to be expository either. Thus, she reiterated that it would be a non-fiction piece. Additionally, by including the comparison to himself, the piece could bring in the personal characteristics that Ms. Meyer valued. Miguel seemed to have valued her contributions and felt that she got him going on his project.

Miguel had several opportunities to interact with the teacher as well as having a writing conference with a peer. The teacher followed up on Miguel's development of his pieces in two brief exchanges which occurred on November 2, and November 8. In their one minute conference on November 2, Ms. Meyer came over to Miguel, sat close to him and put her arm around his chair. Miguel opened the conversation, suggesting that he had taken seriously the teacher's idea:

1. Miguel: I'm doing what you asked/

2. T: How is it coming?
3. Miguel: I am taking the pieces// and on like on this piece I write (reads the part)
"Killer whales can live up to sixty years--
4. T: Uh huh--
5. Miguel: sixty to seventy years/ Then I took something from myself and I said/ "But guess what? So can I?" [*enthusiastic*]
6. T: OK/ but why can you?/ See this is where the part that could become really
really interesting because/ because you are going to take really good care of
yourself you are going to see yourself/ like all that part about seeing
yourself in the future and you are going to exercise/ and stuff like that//
And maybe you do a lot of swimming/ like the killer whale/ You know what I
mean?-- [*pace increases as she becomes more involved*]
7. Miguel: Yeah--
8. T: You can kind of get it all into that/ it is really neat// [*emphatic*]

Miguel suggested to the teacher that he was "doing what she asked" by comparing himself to the killer whale. His examples suggest that he was taking a feature of the whale such as living a long time and then adding something comparable about himself. We can see the teacher's emphasis upon the personal here as she pressed Miguel to be more explicit about himself. We can see how many times she used the words "yourself" and "you" and compare it to the infrequency of uses of the word killer whale. Synchrony between teacher and student was particularly apparent in this interaction as teacher and student sat close together; Ms. Meyer was quite enthusiastic in her tone of voice, and Miguel nodded and smiled during their brief conference. He also became excited when he told her about the connection he had made between the killer whale being able to live seventy years and his own life span.

In the exit interview with Miguel, he reflected upon the influence that the teacher had had upon him. He gave Ms. Meyer credit for both the idea of writing about himself and the killer whale and the development of the piece in which he compared the life span of the whale to his own. When I asked him if he had experienced any conferences with the teacher

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that he thought went well, he discussed both the October 24 and the November 2 conference. Here is the way in which Miguel expressed it:

Oh yea, Ms. Meyer . . . I was telling her about my project. So I was only writing the killer whales and then she said um, do you have a lot of, she said that I have a lot of um entries about myself. So I just said yea, I do and then when I said I had a killer whale in me, so then she said you can compare both of them so then I did and at. At the same time I didn't want to, until one day she really got me into it because she said because I was writing it. I was writing um that the killer whale can, can live up to 70 years, 60 through 70 years and I was just going to leave it like that and I was going to say but so can I. And now I was just going to leave it like that but she said you can write how you can live up to 70 years and I wrote like a paragraph about it.

Miguel's understanding of the two conferences was that he was intending to write about killer whales only, but Ms. Meyer asked if he had written a lot about himself. In the second conference about his project she "really got [him] into it" by giving him a particular suggestion about how to compare himself to the whale. His interview supports the idea that he had made a connection between the killer whale and himself and felt enthusiastic about it.

Ms. Meyer showed further interest in Miguel's project a few days later when she asked him how things were going on his project and suggested that a teacher next door had several books on whales that he should examine. Their last interaction about the project took place when Ms. Meyer came over, leaned over Miguel, and had the following conversation with him about intended audience and the form of the piece. Below is their interaction:

1. T: This is going to be a couple of different entries here?/ It's a poem?//
2. Miguel: No/ it's not a poem/
3. T: This is all one piece?/ It just keeps going on from here?// (looks through different pieces of paper.) This is separate and this is separate?//
4. Miguel: Yeah/
5. T: And the poem is going to be?/ What kind of form do you want this to take?/ How are you going to do this/ just on three separate pieces of paper as a project?/ Who is it going to be for?/ Who is the audience?/ Who do you think is going to want to read this?/ That is what you have to think

about/who is the audience// Do you know what I am saying?/ Like some people are writing letters/ others are doing something else/ others are writing poems// You have to decide who your audience is going to be/ how you are going to present it/ What would you like it to be?// Would it be an article like for a magazine?/ nah// Would it be a speech?/ Who would be interested in it/ you know// Would it be a talk?/ You know/ you have to think/ OK?//

In this conference, unlike others with Miguel, he said very little and the teacher did almost all of the talking. At this point Miguel had written several different pieces with the poem as the lead. Ms. Meyer seemed to be pressing him to find a particular audience and to think of the form it would take. Miguel contributed little to the conversation; instead, he answered her questions but did not add any explanation. In this interaction, there was less synchrony between the two speakers than in others between the two. Ms. Meyer provided one of her "mini-lectures" about Miguel's need to consider audience.

Besides the influence of the teacher on his work, Miguel mentioned in the exit interview the influence of his conference with Rom, a boy who sat at another table, on him. Below a narrative of Miguel's conference with Rom is presented.

Peer conference with Rom. During writing time on November 1, Rom moved to the seat beside Miguel to discuss his writing with him. Miguel began the conference by stating that he was going to write about killer whales to which Rom asked what specifically he was going to write. Miguel said, "Well, first I'm going to write a book about it and compare the killer whale to me," and asked Rom what he was doing. Rom responded he was writing about "the balcony" where his grandparents live. After looking at each other's entries, Miguel asked Rom, "Do you like it?" Rom responded, "These are good. I like it. You are a human being?" Miguel then said, "Yeah, of course I am. I'm a human being. I express myself as a killer whale, but I'm not."

In the opening of this conference we see the two students exchanging entries and finding out about the topics each is writing. Each seemed to be interested in the other's work, asking general questions. In the next segment of the dialogue, Rom helped Miguel with indenting his paragraphs properly, ensuring he had capital letters, and correcting

his spelling. Miguel told me that Rom was very good at providing help with spelling and capital letters. At this point, Miguel suggested he tried to copy Rom's handwriting, but couldn't, and Rom responded that he had learned to write like that when Vanessa, a former student teacher, had taught them about haikus.

The introduction of the term haiku into the discussion seemed to have influenced Miguel because he told me he decided to use the haiku poetic form to write the poem, "Who Am I?" After Miguel and Rom talked about things related to the sea, Miguel read his piece, "Who Am I?" to Rom and the conference ended.

What is significant about the conference between Rom and Miguel is that Ms. Meyer encouraged them to write together, telling me that they really helped each other as opposed to just providing an audience for one another. In other words, Ms. Meyer sanctioned their conference, even though she did not encourage all students to hold conferences with peers. Additionally, besides reading and sharing their work with one another, Rom did bring up the issue of the haiku which, in turn, influenced Miguel to start his piece off with a haiku-type of poem.

Transformation: How Has Miguel Made Sense of the Classroom Discourse?

Miguel came away from the long conference about his project on whales with a clear sense of what he wanted to write and articulated his new understanding of what a project was. He used several of the words and ideas that emerged from the conference. For instance, in one response he used the gold metaphor that Ms. Meyer had described, developed his own metaphor of the tree growing, and linked these to the idea of connecting entries to form a whole. He also used his own topic as an example for connecting entries into a project. Here is how Miguel expressed his understanding of the project after the conference:

Like gold and making it into a bracelet or a ring or something like that.
Like a like a tree growing. Making it into a tree with apples and so we sort of got the most entries that are connected together. You know like let's say for me it was whales and how did the whale become the killer whale and they're alike. At least I think we are alike. And umm, see the killer whale

is one of my favorite, it is my favorite whale and it's one of my favorite animals too.

In Miguel's response we can see how the ideas took hold and compare it to the teacher's and trainer's intentions. The whole metaphor of a miner mining for gold was intended to capture the idea of an author (the miner) going through the notebook, looking for all the best entries (the gold) to turn into a finished product with a particular form such as poem, letter, non-fiction piece (the bracelet, ring, etc). Miguel seemed to have been able to use the terminology in a meaningful way, while developing his own metaphor of the seeds (presumably the notebook entries) to allow them to grow into the tree, complete with apples. Most interesting was that Miguel understood that the entries were to be connected to one another in some way. He then described literally connecting the killer whale to himself. At this point in the development of his ideas, Miguel suggested that his project would take the form of both a poem and a non-fiction book about killer whales. He said:

I'm doing a poem. I'm doing a non-fiction book about killer whales. Then I'm going to do a poem on how the killer whale and me are compared.

Clearly, the teacher's suggestions had made an impact. He explained that he was writing both a non-fiction book and a poem, one of the teacher's ideas she had introduced into the conversation, and he explained that his topic was about the comparison between himself and the whale, another suggestion she had made to him.

Miguel described the most important attributes of good writing as "good description," "good use of language," and "imagination." He gave examples of description reading from other students' work as well as from books. For example, he suggested that a girl, Alexis, had written a descriptive piece about her father that provided Miguel with an idea about what constituted good writing. Miguel also provided an example from his piece about being followed by a shark as illustrative of the use of "beautiful language." He said:

We were kind of taking a word, a sentence and then making it into beautiful language. So then I took being followed by a shark and then I made a whole sentence out of it.

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For Miguel, good description seemed to mean both adding detail and using adjectives. He also particularly enjoyed the writings of Tolkien, especially The Lord of the Rings because of the author's use of detail and description. In an interview Miguel noted:

Mr. Tolkien, he uses um lots of imagination and he uses a lot of language and he describes like the elves and everything and it's, and he uses a lot of imagination at the same time.

Miguel thought that the most important thing he had learned in this year's class was about description, and stated that it was the teacher who "got him into description" by having him use "Post its" to mark phrases in books that used descriptive language. He felt that he could make "people get a picture in their minds." He also distinguished descriptive writing from diary writing, providing some examples of the differences. Miguel was quite adept at drawing from the classroom discourse and transforming the dialogue to create his own understanding.

He identified several factors in the classroom as being beneficial to helping him understand description, including talk and other students reading his notebook. When I asked him why pieces became more descriptive, he said, "Maybe a lot of talk and a lot of children reading your notebooks." Miguel also cited a specific example of where a girl, Orlanda, had read where the rain kissed her cheek. In his next piece, Miguel tried to create images. Miguel gave examples of imagery that were unlike the rain kissing her cheek, but conveyed a strong visual sense such as "fire burst out of the engines" that had rolled over. When I asked how Orlanda had helped, he said:

Well, she sort of gave me the idea of what descriptive writing was when the rain kissed her cheek . . . so I just get like a tv up here, think about it and just write it.

Listening to other students talking about their brothers and sisters had also caused him to be reflective about his own family, especially his relationship with his brother. He brought up Anthony's piece about his grandmother saying that that also had made him think about his own grandmother. Miguel credited Rom for helping him specifically with a

part in his whale piece, suggesting that Rom had told him that one part did not make sense which had improved the whale piece.

Conventionalization: What Has Miguel Internalized?

We can infer what Miguel has internalized from the texts he created for his project and his conference with the younger student.

Texts

As noted before, Miguel filled his notebook with lengthy entries about a variety of topics. Many of these entries reflected the emphasis in the classroom upon description, imagery, and writing about personal issues and events. Miguel's project, "Who Am I?" went through one draft before the final project. His project reflects the classroom dialogue and shows the influence of the teacher-student and peer writing conference. In composing his project, Miguel drew from two existing pieces in his notebook as well as constructing new text, based on information from a video he had watched and books he had borrowed on killer whales. Miguel's final project, entitled "Who Am I?" reflected these various sources of published texts, his own, and classroom dialogue.

Miguel's project, which was neatly typed, was divided into four separate parts with two lines separating the parts. The first part is in a poetic form and was revised from his October 4 notebook entry. The second part is a description of being a killer whale, revised from his first notebook entry, written on September 17. The third part is a comparison of himself to the killer whales, imagining what the author could be in the future; this part was revised from information he had written about the whale on October 30 as well as revisions after the November 2 conference. The fourth part of the text provides information about the length and strength of killer whales, drawn from information he found in books about whales.

What do we see in Miguel's text? The first part of the text is written in poetic form:

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I am a human being
 But can't be seen
 I express myself as a killer whale
 But I am not a killer
 I am friendly as a trained dog
 But I can be fierce as a killer whale hunting
 I can be your friend
 But I can ignore

In the poem, Miguel has used first person. After starting off by explaining he was a human, he quickly took the perspective of the whale. Miguel used figurative language in this part, combining personification with simile. Miguel's use of simile reflects the teacher's emphasis upon figurative language. In this revised segment, Miguel took the advice of Rom whom he had conferenced with earlier. Rom had suggested that the initial lines "I can be your friend, But I can be your enemy" were contradictory. Apparently Miguel agreed because he took this line out as well as the line "I can love." Interestingly, Miguel thought this format was a haiku, but never really explained why it fit that category. It may be that his knowledge of poetry was limited to using haiku.

The second part of the text reflects his knowledge of whales with the use of details such as the size of the body of both the whale and the shark. It also reflects the emphasis on description and detail in the classroom. For instance, Miguel used several adjectives to describe the sea and "great" and "powerful" to describe the fluke. Miguel also used expressive language such as "crunch" along with verbs that express particular actions as in "dash" or "rip." Miguel also "put himself into the piece" starting off by taking the perspective of being a human and then taking the perspective of being a whale. In this segment, Miguel has used features of personal narrative as well as description, both features of the classroom discourse for constructing successful texts.

You know, when I go swimming I just get the feeling of being a killer whale in the deep blue ocean. Then again I feel like I am being followed by a shark, so then I get scared and I get out of the water. But thinking of being a killer whale, I then dash out the water without being scared of the shark. But imagining the shark, how fierce it would be, hurdling through the water, mouth open, wanting to crunch on my bones and rip my flesh off my bones. Boy that would be scary!
 But wait, I'm a killer whale so then I would be able to tear the shark's flesh and crunch on its bones.

With my 30 ft. body and the shark being only 15 ft., boy would I crunch him for lunch I would slap the shark on it's head with my great and powerful fluke, and let it swim away.

In the third section, Miguel does the comparison of himself to the whale. Beginning with a factual statement about longevity of the whale, he formulated a question to the reader, and then used the comparison. Using features of the killer whale such as strength and bravery, Miguel as author then suggested how he as a human would attain these characteristics. In this segment, we see the influence of the teacher's conference with Miguel. In their November 2 conference, Ms. Meyer had indicated that the most interesting part was where he wrote about himself. Miguel included this in his final project, although it was reduced from his October 30 draft.

Killer whales can live up to 60-70 years, but guess what?
So can I!
I know, because I am going to exercise, swim [but of course not as fast as the killer whale], eat properly and I am going to be as strong as the killer whale, and as brave as the killer whale.

The fourth part of the project seems to be the least related to the rest of the project. It is here that Miguel has included the information about whales. He used third person and did not bring himself into it at all. It is interesting, though, that even in the expository part of the project, he has included similes such as the killer whale being like a submarine and the swing of the fluke being like playing baseball. He used several adjectives to describe the whale, although the last sentence looks like those often appearing in published informational texts.

The dorsal fin of a killer whale is 6 ft.. The killer whale is like a submarine. It's great 8 ton body hurdling through the water. It's great powerful fluke can knock off a human being's head with just one swing, as if it was playing baseball. New borns are 8 ft. long. Killer whales live in family groups of several hundred- remaining in them for life- in all oceans, mostly in cooler coastal waters. This extremely powerful whale is tame and gentle and survives well in captivity.

In Miguel's texts, he has transformed the emphasis on description and imagery in the classroom to use in his own work. His project included descriptive adjectives, precise verbs, and an attempt for the reader to "get a picture in his mind." His texts reflect the

multiple voices of the teacher with her emphasis upon the personal, of the student, Rom, who encouraged him to use haiku, and of books he had read about whales. Miguel drew from many sources from his interactions in the classroom to include in his text.

Writing Conference With Monet

Miguel's writing conference with the first-grader, Monet, occurred in the hallway during lunch time. The two children sat together at a small desk with a tape recorder between them. Monet had brought her story which was a personal narrative about the events of her day, including feeding the fish. After reading her piece to Miguel, he thanked her and asked her what she wanted to do. Below is their interaction:

1. Miguel: OK/ you can read you stuff/
2. Monet: The (pause) One day I had a (inaudible). After I ate my dinner, I went to bed/ The next morning (inaudible). Before I left/ I fed my fish/ I came home/ I was tired/ I decided not to eat dinner/ Then/ I took/ I mean the/ what I said// I took my fish into the kitchen so I can feed them/ The end//
3. Miguel: Thank you/ Now/ would you want to/ what do you want to do now?//
4. Monet: Umm/ what I want to do is/ I'm not doing those// What to do because it's nothing but (inaudible).
5. Miguel: Well/ do you want to describe your fish?//
6. Monet: What do you mean?//
7. Miguel: Like you can say/ "His mouth was full of water// Then the water went on. (inaudible) water/ went out/" And then you could say/ as if he was kissing at you because they open their mouth/ right?// And it looks like they're kissing at you/ right?// So you can say that//

Miguel opened the conversation by asking Monet what she wanted to do rather than imposing his idea of what she ought to write about or how to improve her text. Next he provided some help by asking if she wanted to describe her fish. When she seemed unclear about what he meant, Miguel offered an example such as the fish's mouth was full of water or he "was kissing at you." In this segment we see the idea of description emerging right away. Not only did Miguel use the word description but he provided an example of description that would work within the specific context of Monet's work. Following this

discussion, Monet suggested that this was not a true story. Miguel asked if she made it up to which she replied, part of it was true but part was made up--the part about the fish dying. In the next section, Monet said that she had wanted the book to have more adventure. Miguel picked up on that idea and then gave her some ideas about how to do that. Their dialogue continues:

12. Monet: Yea// I wanted to make it more adventure-like/
13. Miguel: Oh/ oh/
14. Monet: I just couldn't think of like more than this// I just like wrote anything//
15. Miguel: Oh/ so you mean you wanted more adventure in there?// So you mean just about your fish?//
16. Monet: Well/ sort of because umm/ like when I first/ I started the story and stuff// But every time I start a story/ because I think it's going to be good/ but then it's like I can't/ . . . stuff/ And then/
17. Miguel: Oh/ so you want your book to be an adventure book// Umm/ that's easy// Well/ I you want to do is/ about your fish and you/ right?//
18. Monet: Mm/ mm/
19. Miguel: See/ you can write umm/ do you have a tank or just like a bottle?//
20. Monet: A tank//
21. Miguel: Like how big?// The width of the table we're on right now?/
22. Monet: Umm/ this big// (Demonstrates) See where this is?/ If this wasn't--
23. Miguel: So you mean 28 inches?/ Oh/ 28 inches// So then you can say you can almost feel this fish//

Miguel built on Monet's idea that she wanted to make her piece include adventures and tried to clarify whether the adventures would be about fish. He also asked her if she wanted to write about the fish and her. Miguel then asked the first grader questions about what she kept her fish in. One of the most interesting things is that Miguel brought in his own experience, drawing from how he had written his piece when he says in turn 17, "about your fish and you, right?" That is, he suggested to Monet that she could imagine

being the fish and write about that in a similar way to how he had compared himself to the whale.

Monet and Miguel's conference continued with Monet describing how she had combined two stories about Halloween and Christmas into one story to make it humorous. Miguel's responses were very supportive; he made statements such as "Oh, that's a really cool thing" and "So you mean it's like a mixed up book. I never thought of that." In this portion of the dialogue, Miguel supported Monet's ideas and tried to summarize what she was saying. He then asked her what she wanted to do to make the book better. Monet explained that she was writing the book backwards because it was a mixed up story. Then Miguel began to give Monet a series of ideas she could write about.

The next sequence of turns consisted of Monet volunteering ideas and Miguel suggesting that those were good ideas that she could write about. In turns 35-50 we can see how Monet introduced an idea and Miguel encouraged her through telling her she could write about that topic, but also by showing an interest in the topic of her cousin. The next sequence of dialogue shows Miguel's supportive role:

35. Monet: Because I start from this way/ but I like/ I just like// . . . story// I tried to make it a mixed up story// I'm writing about stories/ I wrote two stories/ but . . . I take all my stories home because I always read my stories to my umm/ my mother and my father/ and she's like my cousin/ she's always home and stuff// I never get to like really see her//
36. Miguel: Well/ you can write about that// You can write a book about it/ like you going to her house and everything//
37. Monet: But if I write and like I want to see her/ but I know it's going to happen// We're going to have like a ---/ Because she always helps me on stories/
38. Miguel: Who's the she?//
39. Monet: She's my cousin/
40. Miguel: Oh//
41. Monet: Her name's Diedra/ And every time I'm starting/ like if I go and I start a book/ and then I read to her/ she's going to say/ "-----." And I go to say/ umm/ let's say I made a map book/ And then she comes/ when I read it to her and stuff I just want her to read a book// We don't really get to see each

other// And I'd rather write a book about like/ if I write a mystery I'm writing about my tooth//

42. Miguel: You can write about your cousin// You can write about the fun times you had with her//

43. Monet: But I don't like making up/ I don't like like writing//

44. Miguel: Excuse me?//

45. Monet: I said that umm/ I don't really like/so much writing// And that's all//

46. Miguel: What were you talking about?// You can write about your cousin// You can write about the good times you've had with her// You can write about the books you two/ you both/ you two wrote// You can write really good stuff about it//

47. Monet: I guess/ Sometime/ I don't know//

48. Miguel: Try that//

49. Monet: I try to write stories/ but I think of doing pictures// Every time I do a story--

50. Miguel: It's good to make pictures//

In this segment of the dialogue, Miguel attempted to build on the statements that Monet had made. When Monet introduced the idea of a person helping her with stories, Miguel asked who the person was and suggested she write about her. He seemed to ignore the statements she made about not liking to write, and instead focused on how she could write about the good times with her. He even praised her for doing pictures, telling her it was a good idea. Later on in the conference, Monet brought up two additional ideas, one about slipping and falling on a banana peel. Each time, Miguel would recommend that she could write a story about that incident. Toward the end of the conference, Miguel suggested she could write about several ideas and she could include description. Here is their interaction:

67. Monet: I slipped on a banana peel/

68. Miguel: You can write about that// You can write about lots of things/ Like you can write about this moment right now//

69. Monet: Well//

70. Miguel: You can write about the school/ what it looks like//

71. Monet: That's what I already wrote about in here/
 72. Miguel: That's what's called description// You like/ like let's say--.
 73. Monet: Do you want me to read this to you and I'll show you what I mean?//
 74. Miguel: Sure//

Miguel encouraged Monet to write about several topics and re-introduced the idea of description. He used the example of her writing about the school and describing what it looked like. He both used the ideas she had initiated and introduced some of his own ideas such as writing about the school or this particular moment. Miguel's primary emphases were on giving Monet additional topics to write about and using description in her piece. Both of these seem to link back to the classroom content which emphasized description and Miguel's conferences with the teacher in which she helped him with topic selection.

Most striking about this conference is the evenness of the turn exchange. Monet took as many turns as Miguel, and her turn was often more extended than his. He seemed to really listen as she spoke about a particular event or something she was thinking, evidenced by his picking up on what she said and asking relevant questions or making suggestions that fit the context. Miguel saw his role as trying to help the younger child write more stories. In fact he ended the conference by saying, "I'm trying to help you write more stories." Miguel's role was very supportive during the conference. He did not interrupt Monet, but let her complete her sentences. He gave suggestions and asked questions, but did not insist that she write something. In this conference, Miguel played the role of the prototypical teacher that Graves (1983) writes about. Here, Miguel has allowed the child to lead, by asking questions about the piece and supporting the child's efforts.

His conference with Monet has some connections with his conference with the teacher. Just as the teacher built on his responses in his long conference with her, Miguel built on the responses of Monet. They used similar overall strategies such as asking questions, summarizing what the student had done, and making recommendations.

However, Miguel focused even more on the author's feelings and tried to be supportive of the girl.

What Is Significant About Miguel's Case?

Several features are noteworthy about Miguel's case. First, he was a student who regarded the teacher highly and was anxious for her approval. The teacher, in turn, valued his contributions to class and found occasions to meet with him frequently. The teacher scaffolded instruction by building on his ideas, yet introducing some of her own. During their interactions, they developed a shared understanding of meaning and of the task. Their body language and their emphasis upon particular words resulted in a shared understanding of the task. Teacher and student were in synchrony with one another. Although Miguel may have compromised initially by writing about something he was not clearly enthusiastic about, he became more invested in the project after the subsequent conference about the piece.

Second, Miguel's case reflects the multiple voices of the teacher and others with whom he had interacted. The teacher clearly influenced his topic choice, but Rom's reference to the haiku affected Miguel's writing as well. His style of conducting writing conferences also linked back to his interactions with the teacher in which both teacher and student built upon each other's ideas. Miguel was the "ideal" teacher Graves (1983) described because he followed the ideas that the younger student introduced and supported her efforts.

Third, Miguel was almost a perfect fit with the teacher's expectations; he turned an expository piece into a personal piece and he included features of language and style. However, he was also a perfect fit with the Teachers College Writing Project ideals, more so than his teacher, because he focused on the younger student and her text, not on his own agenda. Miguel acted upon his own beliefs about the need to have a supportive audience who would take seriously the author's ideas. Despite the norms of the classroom that discouraged peer conferences, Miguel initiated a conference with Rom about their projects

and acted upon ideals that were consistent with the Writing Project. He did so because the teacher was supportive of him and his efforts in the classroom setting.

Description and Didacticism: The Case of Anthony

Who Is Anthony?

This section describes Anthony's background, the teacher's views about him, and his own strongly held beliefs about writing. It also details some of the topics he wrote about, especially pieces related to his grandmother.

Background

Anthony was a lively, thoughtful, and entertaining nine-year-old boy in the fifth grade. He was small and slight and young for his grade because he started school early. He had brown curly hair and wore wire-rimmed glasses giving the appearance of a "little professor." His body was continually in motion and his answers were often accompanied by dramatic facial expressions, getting up and walking around the room as he sought an appropriate way to express his ideas, and changes in voice and intonation to make a particular point. In interview situations Anthony often used any objects that were available as both items to play with as he was talking and as objects that took on particular meanings, events, or people to illustrate his responses. On one occasion, he represented his ideas through the use of a cassette tape as his "writing," the use of his glasses that he dangled in front of him as the "writer's block," and the use of a plastic tape holder as his "teacher" who helped him over the block. His conversation was also filled with the use of metaphors such as describing his project as, "about one subject, whereas, my notebook is a thousand and one taste adventures."

Although Anthony lived with only his mother and father, he considered his extended family consisting of a brother and sister who were much older and lived in their own homes, an uncle, aunts, grandparents, and godparents as part of his family. English was his native language, but he understood Spanish because it was often spoken by his relatives. Having relatives who still lived in Puerto Rico, Anthony regarded Puerto Rico

as an important place in his life and spoke of it tenderly such as, "[My relatives are] all from Puerto Rico. That's my hometown. I call it my hometown because I love going there."

Anthony lived in mid-Manhattan, within a long walk of the school or a short cab ride. His father was a reporter for a local television station, while his mother worked at the school as an assistant teacher. Anthony's home environment seemed to have provided many opportunities for reading, writing, and science activities. His father had written a book that Anthony had read and Anthony reported that dinner table discussions were filled with talk about happenings of the day as well as discussions about particular words and ideas related to literacy. Anthony had access to a computer at home and reported reading many books. In short, Anthony's home environment seemed to have been filled with many opportunities to participate in literate activities that would support and extend school learning. He read a great deal at home as well as in school, mostly fiction, but sometimes books on science.

Besides engaging in many reading and writing activities at home, Anthony considered himself an inventor, having invented a heat ray that succeeded in keeping him warm at night and an electronic boomerang that flies in the air, and was pursuing making robots. He took private piano lessons and sculpted in clay on occasion. While viewing the Ramses exhibit in Boston he had gained an interest in hieroglyphics and studied the pamphlets and materials well enough to identify several relevant hieroglyphics.

Anthony's perception of himself was that he was an intelligent boy and this occasionally caused him some discomfort. He explained that he did not write down the experiments he tried at home in his notebook because he would get embarrassed in front of other students, they did not share his interests. Anthony expressed his embarrassment and his view of himself in this way:

It makes me feel embarrassed sometimes because everybody else is into football. Hey, man. [they are] like into football, not science. They don't. . . .I skipped a grade. I skipped kindergarten. . . .I'm smart. I'm smart. I'm smart. But, it's just that I know a lot more things. Like I know a lot more things than other people do. I know things that, like if you ask an ordinary

kid what are these lines on the guitar, they wouldn't know. I could tell them. They're called frets. There are a lot of things. I am actually the class dictionary. I have been a class dictionary for a long time. It's like, "Hey Tony, what...how do you spell this word?" And they say it out to me. G-o-n-e. And sometimes it's very silly words like...This is one that I'm working on. Anti-dis-establishmentarianism.

The teacher's perception of Anthony did not necessarily coincide with Anthony's own views.

Teacher's Views of Anthony

Ms. Meyer viewed Anthony as a "good student" who scored in the 80%ile on standardized achievement tests. Yet, she described him as a phony and a student who was into "the show" rather than the substance of classroom interactions and concepts. She described him in this way:

I think he's Mr. Show Biz, I think he's like his father, you know his father is, his father is . . .this newscaster on t.v. and I think Anthony's a big, he's like a real ass kisser. He's real phony; Anthony's a real phony and he pretends to know everything and to be able to do everything . . . but if you call on him he'll like-- and he'll try to beat around the bush. I don't think there's anything there really of substance. Anthony's very verbal and he's bright about a lot of things but [with regard to] his performance, he's a real big baby.

Ms. Meyer felt that Anthony had been pampered by his father who was an older man and by his mother who was over protective of him. She reacted negatively to his having skipped a grade and suggested that this contributed to his lack of maturity as a writer. Ms. Meyer believed that Anthony got easily distracted during writing time and that his thoughts were scattered. While she thought that Anthony had some good pieces in his notebook, she believed that lack of maturity made him unable to focus on writing and following a piece through. Ms. Meyer's perceptions of Anthony as a writer included these:

I think his writing could be very sophisticated but I think he lacks the maturity to get it down on paper. He'll sit down and he'll have the thoughts but unless you sit with him and he's all quiet, he's very easily distracted during writing time. He's another one who could write two sentences in a half hour because he's looking around the room or he's kicking his feet or he's doing something else. It's just so immature. He's supposed to be writing about his grandmother and he's got some pretty decent things in that notebook, some snippets of good stuff . . . and he could tell you all those things but I'm not sure that he could really get it down [in writing].

While Ms. Meyer held the view that Anthony was an immature writer, Anthony had strongly developed views about writing and himself as a writer.

Views About Writing

Anthony considered himself a writer. He engaged in many different kinds of writing activities at home including keeping scientific journals in which he wrote down chemicals used and experiments he tried. He also liked to write about himself and "what's happening" in his notebook. When asked if he were a good writer, he initially responded, "Not bad. If I tell you, it would be an opinion but I don't know." When reassured that his opinion was welcome, Anthony responded, "Alright, alright, alright. Yes. Yes. Yes" meaning he did think he was a good writer. His criterion for good writing matched one of the teacher's criteria--that of using description. Anthony said, "I describe when I write" and then read an example from his notebook to express what good writing was. He believed he was a good writer because he incorporated description in his writing. Anthony expressed it this way:

When I said I heard a scream that filled the whole room and gave me a chill down my spine, it's like ahhhhh and you can hear it in the room. It actually made me quiver. That's what I call it. It makes me shake. And that's what. That's what makes my good writing descriptive.

Anthony was familiar with such ideas as writer's block and described that as a problem that he had. He had a strategy for solving this problem though.

The simplest one in the world--keep on writing . . . Just write any old thing. Actually, just walk around the room and immediately you get an idea.

He gave an example of having a block and looking out the window and noticing it was raining. By saying aloud "it was raining" and by talking about the weather, Anthony was able to get an idea to stop his writer's block. Anthony believed that he could say things orally better than writing them down and agreed with the teacher that he usually talked instead of writing during writing time.

His experiences in Ms. Meyer's class have been much more positive for him than last year's writing class. He found that Ms. Meyer loved writing and was a good teacher,

whereas Anthony reported that the teacher last year made students write book reports and he hated that class saying, "Oh, don't talk about it." and "Oh boy. [I] just went into tears."

Anthony's sense of what a writer did was based both in practical terms and in aesthetic terms. He recognized difficulties that may be part of producing a piece of writing. Anthony suggested that a writer needed to make many drafts of a piece before submitting to a "publishing place" and that even then the piece may not include all the relevant information and might contain mistakes. Besides having a conception of writing as a process of revision, Anthony believed that writers used their whole bodies to generate ideas and to continue the process. He used metaphors to describe what writers do as well as to describe how ideas can slip away. Anthony described a writer in this way:

A writer is a person who uses their mind and body and thinking with their head. . . . Sometimes they use thinking of your heart. That is allowed. . . . They use their hearts sometimes about what they're writing like if they really want to write something stupendous and they really have to grab. It's like taking a piece of sand and grabbing it and let it slide out of your hands and if it goes out of your hands, you've lost all your writing. And if you don't keep that sand in your hands without spilling any of it, believe me, you're not going to be a writer.

Anthony felt that he was a writer, perhaps because he, too, wrote with his heart, "When I write, I use my heart." When asked to explain what he meant, Anthony divided writing into two portions--from his brain and from his heart. An example of writing from his brain was to do the kind of writing he had done the previous year in another classroom, presumably the book reports he had described earlier. In contrast, writing from his heart meant to write about someone he cared about like his grandmother.

Anthony explained it this way:

Like if I want to write something very, very lovely like I love my grandmother. She is very nice. She used to kiss me all the time. That's what I would just say. I would use my heart about that.

Anthony had a sense of the writer as much more than a person who wrote books and used correct spelling and mechanics. A writer, like Anthony considered himself, wrote from his heart. Anthony also thought about writers as doing different kinds of writing,

each attached to either the heart or the mind. The writer who used his mind was concerned with writing book reports, whereas the writer who used his heart wrote pieces that were full of emotion and would move others. In the quotation above, Anthony indicated that writers used "their hearts" when they wanted to produce a quality piece of writing and that producing such a piece was not necessarily easy. It is as if the writer needs to hold onto the ideas and the words without letting them slip away.

Although Anthony had a belief that writers created many drafts before having pieces published, during the notebook phase of the project, he did not believe in revising his notebook entries in any way. He suggested that he would not change anything nor edit, though he was willing to add to it. Revision implied crossing out and he did not want to lose any of the ideas that he had written in his notebook, especially in the pieces about his grandmother.

Anthony's notion of audience was tied to his work in his notebook. He indicated that his notebook was personal and not to be shared with the group. He wrote the entries for himself. At the end of the project, however, Anthony had a different view of audience and believed it was important to write for particular people and to share work with classmates. He especially wanted to share his work with the adults who listened to him such as the teacher, the trainer, and me.

Anthony did not believe that punctuation was important at all in the notebook and said he did not like using punctuation, but he was willing to go back and put it in when he finished his notebook, not before. The most important aspect about writing for Anthony was the idea of description. He suggested that he loved putting in interesting details such as what a character wore. Anthony believed that the most important thing in writing was description. He said:

We always come back to that subject--describing . . . because that's the main subject.

Topics He Wrote About

Anthony's notebook was filled with responses to literature he had read as well as memories of his earlier childhood. In his recollections, Anthony often described particular moments with one of his parents such as skating or his father cutting himself with a knife. He wrote about them in caring terms. He often incorporated descriptive phrases or words in his pieces. On two occasions he jotted down particular phrases that had struck him from the group interaction. The most striking feature of his notebook was the number of entries about his grandmother who had died in his presence. He had a total of seven entries about his grandmother in a month's period of time. These entries tended to have descriptive words, and expressed emotion on his part. Not surprising, Anthony chose to focus his project on his grandmother and drew heavily from the entries he already had in his notebook about her.

Appropriation: Opportunities for Social Interaction

In this section, Anthony's classroom participation is described and his two conferences with the teacher about his writing are presented.

Classroom Participation

Anthony was highly involved in classroom discussions and interactions. He contributed to many discussion through his verbal responses as well as by sharing his entries from his notebook. His responses were generally valued by the teacher as evidenced in the reactions she had to his contributions in several discussions. When discussing qualities of good writing, Anthony offered two examples from his notebook which were both noted and praised by the teacher. Later Ms. Meyer used "pineapple filled my mouth with joy" as an example to illustrate the use of "good language."

In the discussion about choosing topics with two trainers and Ms. Meyer, Anthony offered his writing about his grandmother as an example of an "obsession" to which the teacher and trainers responded positively. He also provided his interpretation of the meaning of Galimoto, a book the class had read, in the session in which the teacher and

students discussed what the book was about. Ms. Meyer's response to his analysis that if you believe in something, it can happen, was "Absolutely right, Anthony! Absolutely right. If you believe and you want something badly enough and you really want it, then you can make it happen."

Writing Conferences

Below, Anthony's conferences with Ms. Meyer about his grandmother piece are presented to understand how the teacher-student interaction might influence Anthony's thinking and to trace his internalization process from the conference to his own text. The first exchange about his grandmother piece occurred on October 29 with a group of eleven students present. Ms. Meyer had asked several students about their projects, and asked two girls who were doing grandparent stories about their projects. They had just explained that they were going to put them together to make "grandparent stories." At this point, Ms. Meyer directed her attention to Anthony who was seated against the wall in front of her. Anthony had his notebook opened and was looking at the teacher. Below is the brief exchange about Anthony's writing:

1. T: Anthony/ what do you think?
2. Anthony: I think that would be a good idea for her because--
3. T: I wasn't asking what you were thinking about her// I was asking what you were thinking about you// *[annoyed tone of voice]*
4. Anthony: Oh// Well/ I think I've got my project pretty well//
5. T: And that's about?
6. Anthony: And I/ I was thinking that I was going to put the sad part/ my sad part/ in the middle and then end it with a happy one instead of um sad at the beginning/ *[accompanying hand gestures with wide movements for the happy ending]*
7. T: Is that/ you're talking about your grandmother?/ *[voice softens here, loses annoyance]*
8. Anthony: My grandmother/
9. T: So what's the beginning going to be? The happy ones?

10. Anthony: Yes/ the first is going to be a happy one/ and the middle is going to be like a really sad/ and the ending is happy again--

11. T: So the end is going to be happy again/ Great// Have you started to work on that in your notebook? (Anthony nods) You've started to look through your notebook? (Anthony nods) Take all the good stuff and copy it over and work it into one piece// (Anthony nods) Ok/ Terrific//

Although the teacher was annoyed in the beginning of the conference, she became excited as Anthony gave details about his project. After he described how he was going to organize it according to sad and happy parts, Ms. Meyer identified that he was writing about his grandmother and became interested. Her tone of voice changed and she ended the exchange by using several supportive words such as "great" and "terrific." Although the conference got off to a rocky start, teacher and student seemed to have come together to develop a shared understanding.

On the occasion of the second and lengthier conference, the teacher had come over to Anthony's desk. She noted that Anthony was using a printed copy of his piece (one he had created at home on his word processor) as a basis for subsequent writing. He had used several of the ideas that were on the printed copy and wrote those ideas onto a piece of notebook paper. So far he had written on notebook paper, "Thank god. I still remember what My Grandmother Always wore loose clothes. She was very nice. She was old. thank." Ms. Meyer approached him, squatting down by his desk so that she was at eye level with him. She started out in an irritated voice with three questions right in a row without pausing for a response. Here is their interaction:

1. T: What are you doing now?/ Why are you copying this over now? Are you copying this over exactly as it is here? [*machine gun questions suggesting challenge*]

2. Anthony: No/ I'm adding/ I was just adding on// [*tone is slightly defensive*]

3. T: Uh uh uh/ No// You need to write more about this/ OK?/ You need to pick a specific time/ You need to work up a specific time/ OK? [*slows down her pace to emphasize specific time*]

4. Anthony: Oh/ Ok// [*low fall intonation indicates unhappy tone*].

In this first segment, Ms. Meyer expressed irritation and appeared to have an expectation that Anthony was merely writing in handwriting what he had already typed on the computer. Anthony responded by being defensive and trying to explain that he thought he was adding on to what he had written. Ms. Meyer began, with a series of elicitations and then moved into providing some directives about what Anthony needed to do. In the second part of the conference the teacher became more specific about what she wanted Anthony to do, explaining her interpretation and imposing her organizational structure on the piece. The conference continued in this way:

5. T: You need to// you need to/ first there is this/ The way I see it Anthony is there are like a few parts to this grandmother thing// One is/ a description of what she looks like/ OK/ and it is not enough to say my grandmother always wore nice clothes/ You need much more/
6. Anthony: I know I am going to write more/
7. T: The second/ It seems the second part of this is that's where it starts stories about the times you spent together// So then it starts stories/ One story is/ is about/ she used to play the (pause trying to read word)
8. Anthony: Pilon [an instrument]
9. T: Playing/Ok// And now you need much much much much more about that and what it was like for you/ and how you sat together with her/ and where you sat/ and what it felt like// Much more from your heart--
10. Anthony: Alright--
11. T: OK?--
12. Anthony: Yeah--
13. T: Then this--
14. Anthony: This is just like a--
15. T: Take out this part/ "My grandmother was very nice/" Obviously you don't need to say that/ OK/ because we know she was very nice because you are writing this piece about her// OK?
16. Anthony: Yeah//
17. T: OK?/ Right/ So the third part here it seems to me Anthony is about the time you would go to the heights/ OK/ And you need to have much more/ OK/

18. Anthony: Yeah/ I am still working on it--

19. T: OK Well/ then get then get with it/

20. Anthony: Yeah/ That's what I am going to do//

In this part of the conference Ms. Meyer used many directives, telling him what he needed to do, interspersed with statements that were more informative in nature where she told him how she was thinking of the piece. Anthony completed statements in which he was suggesting his intention to write more and where he was clarifying information central to the decoding of the text, e.g., "pilon" (a Puerto Rican instrument). Despite his being occasionally interrupted, Anthony's attitude was not defensive. His "yeahs" of agreement were enthusiastic and sincere, unlike his initial responses in the first segment.

The body language of both teacher and student suggested a kind of synchrony in their interaction throughout the second portion of the dialogue. Ms. Meyer sat in close proximity to Anthony and alternated eye contact with him with looking at what he had written. During this time, Anthony nodded and smiled a great deal at the suggestions she recommended. At this point in the interaction, the momentum picked up; this is demonstrated by Anthony's moving his arm bent at the elbow in a continuous back and forth motion and changes in the teacher's voice. In the following part of the dialogue, the teacher's voice changed intonation, reflecting a shift from being solely directive and informative. She became engaged in certain aspects of Anthony's text. Here is the last segment of dialogue from their conference:

21. T: Now I want to see a total description/ I want you to work right now/ "My grandmother always wore loose clothes/" I want you to fill up this page now with descriptions of what she looked like// That's all/ and then show it to me// OK/ Just what she looked like/ the kinds of things she wore/ what her face was like/ what her hair was like// *[as she says 'wore', 'face', and 'hair', her voice softens and she draws out those words]*

[As she is saying this, Ms. Meyer writes (1) description, (2) pilon, stories, and (3) heights on Anthony's typed piece.]

22. Anthony: I remember/ *[softly, drawn out]*

23. T: Go ahead/ Go ahead// So now you can say/ "thank god/" You can start it that way// I love that/" Thank god/ I remember/ I still remember// what my grandmother looked like/" It is just what you just said/ "What my grandmother/ looked like/" OK?/ [*her voice gets soft, she draws out 'god' and emphasizes the words*]

[Anthony is writing.]

Now you can start it like that/ "She always/ wore loose clothes/" What did they look like?/

24. Anthony: They were/ I always saw blue with hearts on it// [*draws out 'blue' in a reverent tone*]

25. T: Go/ go/ go// Explain what the embroidery looked like/ Was it neat?/ You know? You see what I am saying?/ You really need to go for that and do that// [*her voice increases in pitch and pace*]

In this segment Ms. Meyer continued to provide directives about how Anthony should add more details to his piece. She stood up, rather than being at eye level so that she could write on his paper more easily. She wrote down an organizational structure for him on his printed sheet, suggesting he should place ideas within those categories. As she did this, she read more of his piece aloud and became engaged in what he had written. Evidence for this engagement includes a change in intonation and pitch. As she got to the part, "Thank god I still remember what my grandmother looked like" she slowly drew out her words, almost whispering, yet saying them with expression while she wrote. Her tone became increasingly more gentle. Anthony's voice matched this gentleness as he explained what he remembered about her clothes. At this point, Ms. Meyer became quite excited and said loudly, "Go! Go! Go!" touching him as she left. Her role resembled that of a coach, urging him on.

Although much of the conference was about the organization of the text, the point of contact between Anthony and Ms. Meyer occurred when they were discussing description. Toward the end of the conference, Ms. Meyer provided ideas for what Anthony should include in his grandmother piece once she was engaged. Likewise, Anthony connected with her and offered a description of his grandmother's clothes. In this segment of the conference we can see how Ms. Meyer's emphasis upon imagery and description from the

whole-class discussions reemerged in her conversation with Anthony. Anthony seemed to understand the point she was making and connected it to his own text. Throughout their interaction, the teacher was directive, coaching him along. She scaffolded instruction for him by providing ideas about organization and asking him questions about description, yet it was clear that she wanted him to assume control over his piece.

Transformation: How Has Anthony Made Sense of The Classroom Discourse?

Although he did not directly refer to his teacher helping him with description in his piece, in an interview Anthony expressed how the conference made a deep impression on him. Anthony did not seem to take offense that the teacher was imposing her organizational structure on him. Instead, he found it helpful that she had written on his paper to aid him in thinking about how to include more description. He remarked that having a conference with his teacher was "like magic that she does to me."

Anthony explained his interaction with his teacher in the one-on-one conferences in this way:

Oh it got me started again. . . . I got writer's block, yeah I got a block. (He demonstrates with tape holders, indicating his glasses as the 'block,' the cassette tape as his 'writing,' and the tape holder as the 'teacher'). It's like um this thing, this is my writing and this is the block, all right I was writing, writing, writing, writing, the block was starting to fade away and then just when I was going to hit, it came back--

He then went on to explain that it was the teacher who had helped him "jump the block:"

She made me jump the block. . . . She saved me, she, she um, like took the block and threw it away, like put it, or like put it away for a while and helped me on my writing.

It appears, then, that a connection between the teacher and Anthony occurred during this conference that had the potential to influence his subsequent thinking.

Anthony was apparently influenced by the type of interaction from his own teacher-student conference as well as by the class discussions about qualities of good writing. In the exit interview, he focused on description as the most important aspect of good writing. He not only used examples from his own notebook, but he revealed that he kept notes of some of the phrases the teacher used that made an impression upon him. For

instance, he said that the "sun kissing the top of the leaves like gold coins" was an example of description she used that he particularly liked. Anthony tended to notice descriptive phrases in many places including the teacher's work, other student's work, and in published books. For instance, Anthony stated that The Dark is Rising was a very good book because from the beginning the author provided images:

They start out with this country home and ice and it gives--the first word
they start out, the first line--mind picture, mind picture, mind picture!
It's true! It's true!

The idea of providing the reader with particular images had taken hold, evidenced by Anthony's continual references to getting pictures in the reader's mind and using description. Besides thinking description was important to include in a piece of writing, Anthony referred to Miguel's piece about man's best friend, the car, as an example of good writing because it kept "the reader on his or her thin toes." What he learned from Miguel that he wanted to use in his own writing was, "Never, never tell, never tell a moral in the beginning." Anthony's interviews provide information that he was making sense of the classroom discourse, fitting it in with his prior knowledge of text, especially in relation to imagery and figurative language. Anthony's text and conference with the younger student provide further evidence of what he had internalized from the classroom discourse. By analyzing features of Anthony's text, and by examining Anthony's conference with a first-grader, Will, we can infer what Anthony has internalized from the classroom dialogue, especially in relation to imagery and figurative language.

Conventionalization: What Has Anthony Internalized?

We can infer what Anthony has internalized from the texts he created for his project and his conference with the younger student.

Anthony's Text

Anthony internalized many of the aspects of "good writing" that had been discussed in class, especially in the features of imagery and figurative language. Anthony's internalization process can be traced through examining the development of his texts about

his grandmother. Beginning on October 3 Anthony wrote seven entries in his notebook about his grandmother. He then used these pieces as the basis for his project. In his first entry about his grandmother Anthony wrote:

I remember when I was 5 years old and my Grandmother was dying and I
herd a scream. that filled the whole room and gave me a chill down my spine
I went to her room and I huged she and took me By the shoulders and said I
am going to die and we cried

Beginning with this piece we can see how Anthony's text reflected already many of the aspects of "good writing" that Ms. Meyer discussed with students subsequently. Anthony drew upon a vivid memory of his own about his grandmother. Here he has included the features of using one's own personal experience and writing about something personal and touching--the moment of death of his grandmother. He has focused on a particular moment and used figurative language, "herd a scream that filled the whole room and gave me a chill down my spine." The use of description was an aspect of text that Ms. Meyer valued and discussed in class.

Anthony's second entry about his grandmother again incorporated many of the features of narrative text that were valued by the teacher. His second entry was the following:

My Grandmother was very nice. She was old thank God I saw her because she always realy loved me--I mean realy loved me. She used to play the pillion and I would play the drum and we used to go the Park and then have lunch and then go to the hights and get a ice that was called pidagua* (it's ice that is shaved from a block of ice and Put it in a cup and there are different flavors that you drink and first you put the ice in the cup then put the flavor and they give you a straw and you eat the ice and drink the flavor)*, and then I took the subway home and wen to the returant that I called the pop shop and I had some bacon and eggs went home to the house and went to bed.

In this piece Anthony again used many of the features that characterize the teacher's conception of good writing. He included a lengthy description about what a pidagua was, presumably for the reader to be able to picture it. Anthony ended the piece with a series of events--going home, having eggs, and going to bed, however, they were not

valued by the teacher as examples of good writing. These events later disappeared from his subsequent revisions.

Anthony wrote other entries in his notebook that reflected this same emphasis upon the use of imagery and figurative language. For instance, in the October 10, piece about his grandmother, he wrote about a specific event, going to get Kentucky Fried Chicken with her, and later on underlined the line:

"The oily's Best spicest chicken I have ever tasted. It was Good. It filled my mouth with joy."

Just as Anthony used description in this line, he also used imagery and figurative language in his October 30 piece, just before beginning his project. Here he wrote:

My grandmother was a very nice old Woman when I touched her crinkly face and she kissed my clean face and I kissed her back I felt like history just changed

Subsequently, Anthony went back and highlighted this piece except for the last three words "history just changed;" these three words never appeared again in his project about his grandmother. Throughout Anthony's entries about his grandmother, he used the features of interweaving his personal experiences, revealing his feelings about her, and use of description and metaphor to communicate. Anthony appropriated the classroom dialogue and transformed it in a unique way to use in his piece about his grandmother.

Besides the inclusion of imagery, Anthony's final project reflected the interaction he had with his teacher in the writing conference on November 2. The focus of the conversation was about Anthony's organization of his pieces into a coherent whole and including more details. Just previous to this conference, Anthony had typed three entries from his notebook onto a new piece of paper. Two of the three entries were typed exactly as they appeared in the notebook while the third entry began in the same way but had a slightly different ending.

After the conference with the teacher, Anthony's project was revised several times. In his first revision directly after the conference, Anthony included a description of what

his grandmother wore. This seemed directly tied to the interaction during the conference in which Ms. Meyer suggested that he should add details about what his grandmother wore.

At her suggestion, Anthony began his piece with the following:

Thank god I still remember what my grandmother looked like; She always wore loose clothes. She used to wear embroied [embroidered] flowers on her blue Gown. It was the best most buityful Dark Blue. More Blue than the sky. her shoes were black with a brown and a zig zag bottom. and when she walked it had a stutter like a man with a cane.

In his piece, Anthony has added a great deal of imagery as evidenced by his inclusion of many adjectives and his comparison of how she walked. There seemed to be a great deal of uptake on Anthony's part in relation to the use of description.

Anthony's final project reflected the organization that his teacher had suggested to him, even though it was different from the original organization he had told me he would use. The teacher had written "(1) description; (2) pilon, stories; and (3) heights."

Anthony used the organization of first describing what his grandmother looked like, then describing the instrument, pilon, that she used to play, and then included incidents of times he and his grandmother spent together on the "heights." He ended the piece with the scene in which he heard a scream and his grandmother died. We can see this organization by looking at his final piece:

My Grandmother Matilda

Thank god I still remember what my Grandmother looked like; she always wore loose cloths. She used to wear embroiderd flowers on her blue gown, bluer than the sky. It was the most Beautiful Dark Blue, more bluer than the sky. Her shoes were black with a Brown zig zag bottom; when she walked she limped like a man with a cane. Thank god I saw her because she always loved me I mean realy loved me. She used to play the pilion, a pilion is a kind of instrument that you pound and it makes a high pitched ding that filled the whole niehborhood. I would play the drum and we would go to the park and have lunch and go to the hight's and have a ice that is called a piragua. (it's a ice that is shaved from a big block of ice and there are flavors that you have to pick and the ice is put into a cup and then the flavor in the cup and then you eat it and drink it. When you go to 181st it gets noizy and people come gushing in to the streets and they put out there tables and start to sell. it's weird when we came home it's different. in the morning people dont come gushing into the streets and you cant get the mouth watering flavor of the air and the frut flys hitting your face like a mist of water. it's so poluted in new york so you cant sell or get a piragua.

my grandmother took me to kentucky fried chicken. it was the most oily good chicken and I almost ate the whole thing and the room looked like a lot of pigs just ate the time of there life and they were right. I remember when I was five years old and my grandmother was dying and I herd a scream that filled the whole room and gave me a chill down my spine I went to her room and I kissed her and huged her and she took me by the sholders and said that she was going to die and she cried. my grandmother always wanted to see me get old but she dyed to soon.

In his final project, Anthony has retained many of his original ideas that reflected aspects of "good writing" envisioned by the teacher. Additionally, he incorporated his teacher's suggestions at an organizational structure and told me that his teacher's suggestions "made more sense."

Writing Conference With Will

The writing conference between Anthony and Will, a first grader, took place at a desk in the hallway outside of Anthony's classroom during lunchtime. Sitting side-by-side, the two students hunched together over Will's text, with the tape recorder in between them. I provide a narrative of the conference to give the reader a sense of the sequence of talk/events.

The writing conference began by Will's reading of his co-authored book with another first grader named Alex. The first story he read was entitled, "Mike's Adventure" about a boy who runs away from home after being yelled at by his father. The story continues through the boy's meeting of his brother and their adventures to Utah. After Will paused, Anthony responded, "That was a very good book," to which Will said, "It's not over yet." Will finished reading this book and then immediately began to read his second story entitled, "Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade" about Indiana Jones' adventures in Spain finding a treasure.

At the close of this story Anthony asked who Alex was and Will explained that he was a boy in the class who had written the book with Will. Anthony then focused on the first piece indicating the beginning where Will had written that his father yelled at the character and asked Will, "What was that screaming about?" After Will explained that the character had done something bad with the result that his parents yelled at him and the boy

decided to run away, Anthony asked whether the boy had really run away. Will responded that in the story the character did.

Anthony then raced back to his classroom to retrieve his entry notebook and showed it to Will. Anthony continued to refer to his own notebook at several different points in the conference and read several pieces from it, explaining to Will that description was important. Anthony then began to write on a separate piece of paper the beginning of Will's story, adding his own details to it. After adding some details, Anthony asked Will if he minded. Will tried to explain that he was going to add some pictures to the book, and then Anthony told Will that every book did not have pictures in it implying that Will should not worry about that.

Next Anthony flipped through his notebook and showed Will his "Post-its" that marked what he called "good words." After Anthony mentioned that the good words help the reader get a picture in their minds, Will began to tell Anthony about a book he had read, The Karate Kid III, to which Anthony responded by telling him about a book, The Fox Mare. When Will suggested he needed to go back up to his classroom, Anthony then asked him whether he had a computer to use for writing. Anthony used the paper containing his project-in-progress that had the words the teacher had written on it to show Will how he could add on to his own writing. When Will offered that he wanted to draw a picture of Indiana Jones in his diary, Anthony began to write on the cover of Will's book, "retold and republished by Will." The conference then ended.

Because Anthony and Will were engaged in a lengthy talk about text in which Anthony had the opportunity to respond to Will's text and to teach Will about his own writing, this conference provides an excellent opportunity to find out what ideas Anthony used that related to previous social interaction. We can trace several ideas of Anthony's back to the social interaction from the classroom. The most striking activity was that Anthony, without any prompting, went back into the classroom to get his own notebook to use as a reference and to illustrate the points that he made throughout the dialogue. This

action suggests that not only did Anthony value his own notebook as important to him, but that he also seemed to believe, as his teacher did, that it is through illustration of good writing that another writer could learn. In the portion of the dialogue that begins with turn 20, Anthony was trying to describe in a nutshell his own development as a writer through the pieces in his notebook Anthony said:

20. Anthony: This is, um, what I call, my entry notebook. It is a very large notebook. It has many things that I would like you to hear. It starts out like this, this was my first entry I ever did. (He reads) "I remember when I was five years old and I used to water my mom's plants. And then she gave them a pot" and blah and blah and blah. It's like a diary, it goes on and on and on. Now, as I get deeper, into the notebook, like, if you were to take a piece of paper when your teacher's reading you a story, and do this, like this, (he takes a piece of paper and inserts it in his notebook) listen. (He reads) "I remember when I was five years old, and my, and my grandmother was dying and I heard a scream that filled the whole room up. And I, and gave me a chill down my spine." Do you know what a chill down my spine is?

In this turn of Anthony's, he demonstrated several features he had internalized from the classroom interaction: (a) the use of his own notebook as an example; and (b) the use of a placeholder (Post-its) to keep track of important lines and uses of description. Anthony had had several opportunities from the classroom interactions to internalize the activity of sharing your own notebook with a younger audience. Besides just the action of using your own notebook as an illustration, Anthony clearly seemed to value his own notebook and the sharing of his ideas with students.

The most consistent topic that Anthony incorporated in his conference with Will was the idea of description. Anthony also included the ideas of needing to give the reader a picture in his/her mind and the differences between notebooks and diaries, linking to the teacher's emphasis upon the use of imagery. Description was clearly a focus of Anthony's writing conference with Will. For instance, Anthony used the word describe, description, or "good words" as synonyms seven times during the conference. In addition, during five different turns, Anthony gave examples from his own notebook of ideas that included the use of description. Using Will's story, Anthony also demonstrated how Will could

elaborate and add interesting details. Turns 26 and 27 are particularly indicative of Anthony's emphasis upon description.

26. Anthony: That's what makes you have a chill down your spine// And um/ when/ and/ when you describe about that/ like, if you would/ you put/ you would say/ like/ my grand mother was/ I remember when I was five years old and my grand mother was dying// I heard a scream that whole/ the/ that/ I heard a scream// I went to her room/ like/ listen/ you don't describe/ that's the problem with the/ with some kids/ even my/even my age/ they don't describe// That is the major problem// And/

BREAK IN TAPE

27. Anthony: When you describe/ it helps you learn sometimes// Like when I wrote this/ (He reads) "My grand mother had an old crinkly face" /like/ you know when it's old and you can move your skin/ move your skin very well?/ And/ that "I kissed/ old/ had an old/ crisp/ crinkly face that I kissed// And when her wet lips hit my face like a drop of rain// " You understand like/ if you say/ my grandmother had an old crinkly face that I kissed// Blank// It would not/ like he had/ and (He reads) "her wet lips hit my face like a drop of rain//"

Even though Anthony struggled somewhat in his trying to give Will examples, he did succeed in using description in his examples. "Making you have a chill down your spine" is an example of what the teacher considered good language or including description. Anthony's inclusion of several adjectives such as "old," "crisp," and "crinkly" along with his comparison of wet lips to a drop of rain constitute examples of using "good words." Additionally, Anthony believed that description itself was important in writing, highlighted by his telling Will that that was a problem with some kids--they did not describe. Although Anthony did not tell Will *how* description helped him learn, Anthony did believe that description helped him.

Linked to his emphasis upon description was Anthony's belief that diaries did not include description but only told a chronology of events. Turns 29 through 33 illustrate Anthony's conception that diaries did not include description and told events. Here is Will and Anthony's interaction:

29. Anthony: Alright/ here/ (He reads) "I remember when I was five years old and I used to water my mommy's plants// And then she gave me a big hug/ And we would have a picnic in the park// And then we'd go to the carousel and meet my friend Sal and he would give me free rides/ and then I would climb

on the rocks and I used to jump big distances and then go home/" Now that's actually like a diary/ like you know/ if you start out like this/ woke up/ brushed my teeth/ uh/ woke up/ brushed my teeth/ looked at a little Nintendo--

30. Will: Yeah--

31. Anthony: Ate breakfast/ it's like a diary/ one thing and over the other/

32. Will: But you're not telling them about it/

33. Anthony: Yeah/ you're not describing anything// Now listen// When you're writing this book Indiana Jones/ this one/ whoa/ wait--

In this example, Anthony provided illustrations from his own notebook about what constituted a diary entry. Will seemed to have picked up on the distinction Anthony was making by agreeing that Anthony had not told the audience much about each event. Anthony not only seemed to have internalized the concept of description, but he was able to apply it to Will's story. This is one of several different points in the dialogue in which Anthony tried to get Will to elaborate upon his story. In his subsequent attempts to get Will to add more description, Anthony provided examples for him. In turns 52-58, Anthony showed Will what he should have done as an author:

52. Anthony: I know/ I know it says that/ but this is what I would have done// And then um/ and then on the next page/ you would write/ why you felt bad/ like/ because/ "because I have no reason to be"-- (Anthony writes and says this slowly.)

53. Will: Yelled at/

54. Anthony: Yelled at/

55. Will: But the reason I did that/ because/ I'm working with somebody/ and they did the first page/ so like/ they did the first page// I did the 2nd page// They did pictures for that page// But what happens is/ as the story goes on/ like/ I wrote the pictures for this/ well/ as the story--

56. Anthony: You should really/ but listen// When/ and then I won't/ "I shouldn't be yelled at/" You know when you turn to the next page/ the next day/ is it the next--

57. Will: Well/ yeah/ it's like--

58. Anthony: "Next/ day/ when/ my/ mother/ and/ father/ were/ asleep/ I/ went/ very/quietly/and/ and/ took/ my/ blanket/ and/ made/ a/ rope/ and/ and/ then/ ran/ away// Now that's what I would do// Now look// The next day/when my mother and father were asleep/ I went very quietly and took

my blanket and made a rope and then ran away from home//” (Anthony writes this on a separate piece of paper as he says this.)

Anthony seemed to become quite invested in having Will include description and greater detail, setting the stage for the character's running away. Indications of his investment are Anthony's overriding Will's explanation of what was written already and why. Anthony seemed to have valued description and adding detail to such an extent that he almost completely rewrote Will's story to include more detail.

As this conference illustrates, Anthony had internalized several features of the content of the social interaction of the classroom. The features of description, adding detail, and giving the reader a picture were apparent in Anthony's teaching of the younger student. Clearly these features were the focus of the classroom dialogue during the five weeks I observed. Sources in the classroom interaction for these features can be seen throughout the time, especially in the particular sessions in which literature was discussed. In these sessions the teacher discussed and provided examples from literature of the features of using beautiful language, description, adding detail, and getting a picture in one's mind. However, the teacher did not differentiate among the ideas, perhaps implying that they were all connected to one another and shared many features. They all seemed to fall under the teacher's image of using imagery and figurative language.

How did Anthony interact with Will during the writing conference? What strategies did Anthony use to talk to Will about his story? Anthony's style during the conference can be described as very didactic. Anthony took more conversational turns (59) than did Will (57), but most striking is the length of Anthony's turns compared to Will's. Other than reading his two stories aloud, Will had to battle for the floor. Anthony often interrupted him and provided his own examples, giving lengthy descriptions of his own work.

Anthony interpreted his role in the conference as a traditional teacher role in which he would ask questions about the story and provide information. In fact, most of Anthony's talk was filled with informative statements, although he used both elicitations

and directives. Anthony was also very task-oriented, not asking personal information about Will but discussing only issues having to do with writing.

Several sections of the conference are particularly illustrative of Anthony's interaction style with Will. At several points in the dialogue, Anthony told Will what he would have done if he were the author, indicating that Will should consider these:

50. Anthony: This is what I would have done// It all started five days ago when my mommy yelled at me for no reason and I felt/ and I felt bad//

51. Will: Is that the like--the like--

52. Anthony: I know/ I know it says that/ but this is what I would have done// And then um/and then on the next page/ you would write/ why you felt bad/ like/ because/ because I have no reason to be--(Anthony writes and says this slowly.)

Anthony wrote on another piece of paper the ideas he thought Will should include on Will's next draft. The above excerpt is illustrative of Anthony's didactic style in which he actually demonstrated for the child, showing him how to change his piece. Throughout the dialogue, Anthony was often directing Will's attention to the story or to his notebook by telling him to look or listen.

Anthony's own interaction with his teacher was apparently fresh in his mind both in terms of content and in terms of style of interaction. In the following excerpt, Anthony demonstrated his understanding of his interaction with his own teacher. Here he used a combination of strategies from directing Will to look at his notebook, to informing him about how his teacher had helped him, and adding his own interpretation of how words grow into sentences.

107. Anthony: Like when you start out/ look/ you could write this// My grandmother/ My grandmother always wore loose clothes and print more and more and stuff// Now/ when you're done with this/ you can take a sheet/ and as you see my teacher did this// Put description/ about this part/ and then she put stories/ all these stories together/ then she put pilon/ Pilon is that word// Then another thing/ the heights/ And we made a big thing out of it/ as you see/ it's big/ it starts out with one sentence/ then it goes to a word/ then it goes to a big/ to the whole paragraph/ and it gets even bigger// That's what happens in your writing/ you get corrupted// If you write a lot--

Much of the way Anthony interacted with Will reflected his own writing conference with Ms. Meyer. Many parallels, especially in style, are apparent. The most striking parallel is that both the teacher and Anthony dominated the discussion, providing many ideas, and making strong recommendations. Their talk had a similar style in its didactic tone and emphasis.

What is Significant about Anthony's Case?

Why did Anthony seem so successful at internalizing the classroom interactions? The content of the classroom dialogue can not be separated from the norms of interaction during writing time. Anthony was not only able to understand the content of the discussions about qualities of good writing including description, but he also understood the underlying rules of interaction between the teacher and student and among students. Anthony contributed to group discussions, and his ideas were valued by the teacher and students; these ideas then became part of the ongoing discourse. In other words, there was uptake of Anthony's ideas in the group setting as well as understanding on his part.

Anthony and his teacher were in synchrony in terms of their styles of interaction. The teacher scaffolded instruction for him, yet relinquished control to him. The teacher-student writing conference provides a microcosm to view the ways in which Ms. Meyer and Anthony's styles matched. This match between teacher and student contributed to Anthony's success. Anthony was able to understand and match his writing to the teacher's notion of good writing, perhaps in part because his existing background knowledge about text already shared features with the teacher's image of a successful text.

In Anthony's case we can hear the voice of the teacher both in what he wrote and in his style of interacting with the student. The teacher's emphasis upon the personal and her uses of language and style were clearly evident. However, Anthony had transformed the dialogue to use in the particular contexts of his text and the writing conference with the younger student.

Fact or Fiction? The Case of Ella

Who is Ella?

This section describes Ella's background, her previous experience with writing including her fiction notebooks, and her views about writing. It also provides the teacher's perceptions of Ella.

Background

Ella was a tall, African-American, fifth grader. She usually wore her hair tied neatly in a braid on top of her head. She wore wire-rimmed glasses and often sported colorful sweaters or interesting T-shirts such as one with tie-dyed patterns. Ella loved to talk. She often spoke very softly and swallowed some of her words so that often her responses were difficult to hear. However, she particularly liked to engage adults in conversation and would launch into lengthy stories about herself or humorous anecdotes of the world around her. For instance, one time Ella and I spent about 20 minutes during a lunch time discussion talking about and demonstrating different techniques for hailing taxis in New York.

Ella described having a big family consisting of more than just her parents and sister. She spoke of her Uncle Val as a member of the family, as well as her Aunt Dolores, and her grandparents. Ella lived with her mother in an apartment in a neighborhood that would be considered Spanish-Harlem. She took cabs to school, often accompanied by her mother. Her mother was a proofreader for a publishing company and Ella spoke of her mother and her mother's friends teaching Ella how to proofread texts. I had the opportunity to meet Ella's mother on one occasion when she came to take Ella to lunch. Like her daughter, she was tall, and elegantly dressed. She was very supportive of the research project I was conducting. Ella's father, a teacher at NYU, lived in what Ella described as a fancy apartment about 14 blocks south of Ella's. Ella was not certain what he taught, but commented that he taught people "how to run things" like elevators. She saw

him most weekends and spent time with her baby sister who lived with her father and his wife.

Ella had many opportunities to engage in literate activities at home. She read voraciously, frequently wrote stories on her own at home, and played on her father's computer. She thought she wanted to be a banker when she grew up, but her Uncle Val, a writer, had suggested to her, "I want you to follow in my footsteps" and she was taking this advice seriously. She read for at least forty-five minutes every night. Her compelling interest was Nancy Drew books or any type of mysteries; she wanted to read all 80 in the series. She read many other types of books, though, because her teacher did not approve of Nancy Drew books and required students to read literature from the classroom as well. Ella checked out from the classroom a piece of fiction about every two days. She had read several different versions of The Little Princess and was interested in comparing them because she saw "how the story changed with each version" and said that "different authors write different ways." Her tastes were rather eclectic as demonstrated by her reading of the "National Enquirer" and "the Post." About these she said:

The only newspaper I like to read is "The Post" and the "National Enquirer" because nothing is true. . . . They pick the wackiest stories. A lobster baby and ape give birth to a regular baby. Just seeing Vanna White starving herself.

Besides reading often in her free time, Ella also participated in several different types of dance--ballet, tap, and ethnic (African)--at the Harlem School of the Arts.

Ella's oral discourse was filled with stories and humor. One idea would remind her of another idea and she would talk and talk. A striking feature of Ella's conversations, which seemed to be how she interacted in life, was the ways in which she interwove books she read, games she played, and her own writing. She would move back and forth between these worlds, often leaving me wondering, "Was she talking about her own life, a book she had read, or something she wrote?" For instance, in describing books she liked to read Ella stated:

I like detective stories so she's a detective. Me and Serena play this game of spy where we're the detectives. And Morris is an ace detective that loves to eat and is always sleeping. And Marsha is goody two shoes.

This passage roughly translated suggests that Ella liked detective stories and identified with Nancy Drew. She and her friend, Serena, played a game in which they were spies-- Ella was Morris, a sarcastic detective and Serena was Marsha, a "goody two shoes." What is interesting is that the characters, Marsha and Morris, reemerged in Ella's fiction stories. It seems that the girls played the roles of these characters in their games and then used them for writing material.

On almost every occasion when I would ask her about an event that had occurred in the classroom, Ella would relate it to her background knowledge, a book she was reading, or a specific experience she had. For instance, when I asked her about the class discussion in relation to A Chair for My Mother, Ella immediately launched into how she, like the character, was saving her pennies, but she would buy a Nintendo, not a chair. The visit from Ms. Henderson and Ms. Hall and their description of the park bench had reminded her of her own friends and what she would get them for Christmas. From talking about the description in a book she was currently reading, Ella immediately shifted into how she could not live with her own grandparents--presumably the character in the story was living with his grandparents. In another instance, Ella told about a series she had been writing two or three years ago, then immediately shifted to what she was writing in the classroom now, and then to an experience she had on the beach where the waves pulled her in.

Ella's discourse during interviews was characterized by lengthy turns, humor, and many personal anecdotes sprinkled with insights about her teacher, her relatives, books, New York City, and humanity.

Views About Writing

Ella had been at P.S. 999 since kindergarten and had many opportunities to engage in writing process classrooms. In fourth-grade she had been in a classroom, which she

really loved, where she was allowed to write many stories. In response to whether she liked to write she said:

I like writing. I like writing. I don't know why I like writing detective stories so much but I just do.

When asked any question about writing, Ella almost always began to tell a story of something she had written. She believed that the one thing she had gained from Ms. Meyer's class was the importance of literature in supplying ideas for writing:

I learned that you can use your best writing off of books. Books can give you some good ideas. . . . Like I got the ideas for the Catskills [piece]. The Catskills came from that book, When I Was Young in the Mountains.

When asked if she considered herself a good writer, Ella responded, "It depends on what kind of a story it is." Ella believed she was best at writing fiction, and thus, to continue her work on fiction she kept a separate notebook.

Ella's Notebooks

Ella kept two notebooks--a small one for her classroom writings and a larger one for her writing fiction and what she called "humorous stories." She described the difference in notebooks in this way:

There's one that you usually use for stories and then there's one that you use for things that have happened in your life. Ms. Meyer says you are supposed to put everything in your notebook.

However, Ella did not put everything in her small, class notebook. Instead, she kept a secret, fiction notebook. This seemed to be related to the fact that the writing of fiction was not sanctioned in the classroom and was strongly discouraged. Ella shared with me the book she had written in fourth grade of which she was very proud. This was the book entitled, Morris and Marsha. P. I. (the "I" is cleverly drawn in the form of an "eye.") Inside were three stories, "The Case of the Dog de Menson," "The Case of the Foggie Building" and "The Vanishing Castle." Each story had several chapters with the book totalling 32 pages. Her large notebook for fiction contained several fictional pieces, some

with a several chapters. This notebook also contained the story that she and Serena had written together, much of it on the telephone.

Teacher's Views of Ella

Ms. Meyer felt positively towards Ella. She described her as an excellent student who received ratings of "excellent" in every subject and scored in the 99% on standardized achievement tests. She found that Ella had good ideas and seemed in control of school and of her writing. About Ella Ms. Meyer said:

Ella is a really neat kid, she's a very, very neat kid, she really is. She's very much on top of the situation, she's a little flighty, you know, she's a little like disorganized and all over the place.

Ms. Meyer believed that Ella's mother may have overrated Ella's abilities.

Well her, it's very interesting, her mother has come into school and asked for her to be skipped a grade because she thinks . . . obviously her family thinks that she's this brilliant child. She's very bright, I mean there's no question about it, but she's certainly not extraordinary in any sense of the word. So I think that, that she's probably you know an only child who's really being doted upon and who gets a tremendous amount of attention. I think that the family is pushing her

Ms. Meyer did find that Ella was performing well in the classroom, got her work completed, and wrote some very good pieces. Ms. Meyer expressed her attitude toward Ella in this way:

As far as her work is concerned, she really does fine. She pays attention in class, she's really a really neat kid, I really like her. I think her notebook is lovely. I mean I think it's honest and it's really lovely and you know there's a lot of really great things happening there. I think perhaps her project will really be very nice, you know she'll pull out those really nice pieces about her aunt and do some really nice writing about them.

Ms. Meyer valued Ella's contributions in class.

Appropriation: Opportunities for Social Interaction

This section describes Ella's active classroom participation and presents the two conferences she had with her teacher about her project, a letter to her aunt.

Classroom Participation

Ella often contributed to classroom discussions and shared what she had written with the whole class. Ms. Meyer responded very positively to her texts. For instance, on October 11 after the mini-lesson on When I Was Young in the Mountains, by Cynthia Rylant, and after writing time, Ella read aloud to the class her piece about being in the Catskills. In this piece she wrote about the fresh aroma of pine trees and her difficulties with skiing when she got tangled up in the pine trees. She ended the story by writing, "Somebody helped us out. I'll never forget him."

Ms. Meyer's response to Ella's piece was filled with praise, pointing out where Ella used description:

You know, it's so interesting. That's such an interesting ending. It almost sounds like that's what could have been, like Cynthia Rylant's notebook could have been like that. All those little, like your line went from one thing getting there to the snow mobile, to the skiing, to the drinking cocoa to that. I could just see, I can almost see lifting that out and turning that into a picture book about going to a country house. And all the different things, being tangled in the trees and drinking the cocoa. It sounds great, Ella. Really great. And I loved how you described. Each thing you talked about you did such a nice description about the cocoa and about the sledding. I loved it. And about the smell of the pine. It's really nice.

Ella commented that she had gotten her idea to write about the Catskills from Cynthia Rylant's mention of hot cocoa in the book, When I Was Young in the Mountains. Ella appeared to pick up on topics and ideas that were discussed in class with some ease, connecting them to her own experiences. The teacher found many different aspects of Ella's writing to which to respond. For instance, on October 12, during the discussion of qualities of good writing, Ella read her piece on handicapped people. Ms. Meyer asked the class to come up with ideas about what made Ella's piece an example of good writing. Ms. Meyer herself responded that the piece had "voice," sounding as if a real and specific person read it. Ms. Meyer suggested to the class that "author's voice" contributed to effective writing.

Students also contributed ideas and suggestions about Ella's work. For instance, Ms. Meyer used Ella's example of writing a letter to her aunt as an illustration of the type of project that other students could do. Ms. Meyer asked students to suggest some books that would help Ella write her piece and she recommended that Ella read the book, Just Us Women. Students made suggestions to Ella that she also include pictures of herself in the letter to her aunt. Although Ella did not use the book for her project, she liked the idea of the picture and decided to send a gift as well as the picture to her aunt.

Ella was quite involved in classroom discussions and sharing of her pieces. She made a comment during most whole-group discussions and shared her pieces on three of the four occasions in which students shared their work with the class.

Ella sat at the table with her best school friend, Serena. They occasionally shared their work with each other informally at the table. Their table was one of the quiet tables in the room, and Ella and Serena spent most of their writing time absorbed in their individual writing. However, they thoroughly enjoyed writing together which was not permitted in the classroom. Ella and Serena tried to find ways in which they could collaborate on their fiction writing. Mostly this occurred by telephone because the girls lived in different neighborhoods from one another and it was difficult for them to find time at school to write. When Ella had asked me if I would allow Serena and her to write during lunch hour one day, I agreed. I had access to a separate classroom that the girls thought was suitable for writing. I ate my lunch, talked to the girls, and watched their collaborative writing efforts. What was most striking was how they collaborated in the construction of their fictional texts. For example, Ella began the actual writing with Serena providing some ideas about characters. The girls took turns coming up with different events that would take place in the story. Then, toward the end of the session, the girls traded handwriting roles, though both continued to compose the text. Both girls enjoyed this session so much that for the next few days Ella begged me to allow them

another lunch time writing session. I include these events and observations because they affected Ella's subsequent interactions with the teacher and with me.

Writing Conferences

The first conference between Ms. Meyer and Ella occurred on October 30 within a small group conference held on the rug. In the original group, six students had been present. Two of these, Michele and Jenny, had gone back to their seats after Ms. Meyer explained that the students should return to their seats and find all the good parts about their grandparents and start writing those over for use in their projects. The teacher then had a conference with Terry, asking him "what was at the bottom" of his piece, meaning what seemed to be important to him. Terry then stayed on the rug to listen as Ms. Meyer conferred with Ella.

Prior to the conference, Ella had written many pieces in her notebook, but had not yet decided upon a topic for the project. As the conference with Ella began, the teacher and student faced each other, sitting about four feet apart, while the three other students remained in their places. In the beginning of the dialogue, the teacher and Ella were trying to find a common ground on the topic of what Ella would write her project about. Ms. Meyer started off with several opening lines, trying to get a sense of where Ella was in terms of topic selection. Their conference began in this way:

1. T: Umm/ so what were you thinking/ Ella?//
2. Ella: I don't know/
3. T: Have you read through your notebook already?/
4. Ella: Yeah/
5. T: Mhmm// And nothing seems to stand out for you as being important?//
6. Ella: Not really/ [*little affect or intonation*]

Ella seemed at a loss as how to respond to the teacher's question about what may have been "important" to write about. For instance, the expression on her face was one of

puzzlement. She responded to the teacher's questions, but offered little information on her own initiative. At this point, there does not seem to be a shared sense of what is "important" to write about. From the teacher's point of view, what is important to write about is a personal subject that has some deeper meaning for the child's life. Ella, however, based on previous interviews with me, seemed to have a very different idea about what selecting something important meant. When I asked her before the conference what she was going to select for her project that was important, Ella responded:

I don't know what I'm going to do . . . because, because there's no really big, important issues in here (indicating her notebook). Except for this, I wrote about the news. I was mad though because this guy was missing since Sunday and they found him in the lake drowned and they didn't put it on the news or anything.

Ella may have been having difficulty responding to the teacher's questions because she was operating from the assumption that the teacher wanted her to select an item in her notebook that had dealt with a news event; that was her definition of "important." However, when the teacher continued to probe and ask specific questions about what Ella had written, Ella was able to respond more fluently, with greater ease. The conference continued:

7. T: Mhmm/ Is there something you seem to write about more often than/ than not?//
8. Ella: Yeah/
9. T: What do you think that is?//
10. Ella: Ummm/ Well/ about ummm/ usually about me and when I was little/
11. T: Mhmm/ Mhmm/ Why do you think that you're writing a lot about when you were little?/ It's interesting when we do that when we/ when we write a lot about when we we're little and we're not little anymore/ Why do you think you're doing that?//
12. Ella: Because (inaudible) . . . I'm not really sure/
13. T: I'm I'm not hearing you sweetie/
14. Ella: My Aunt Delores really reminds me of that because I spent a lot of time with her/

15. T: Mhmm/

16. Ella: And//

17. T: You spend a lot of time with her now?/

18. Ella: Not anymore cause she lives in Virginia/

At this point, teacher and student seem to have found a common ground. The teacher asked Ella several questions to lead her to talk more about her aunt. Ella seemed more eager to respond, adding why she did not spend time with her aunt now. The non-verbal language contributes to the picture as well. Whereas Ella had looked puzzled in the previous sections, here she nodded her head on several occasions and then shook her head when the teacher asked her if she spent time with her aunt now.

In the next section, the teacher revisited the issue of trying to find what was "important" about Ella's relationship with her aunt. In this sequence of dialogue, the teacher suggested that Ella was missing her aunt and remembering the wonderful times. For the teacher, it appeared that this is what was important for the child to discover-- what was "important" was the personal relationship the student had with the other person. Here is the next sequence of dialogue:

19. T: Okay/ So you so you are missing her/ is that what you're saying?//

20. Ella: Yeah/

21. T: Ahhh// So you're saying that the bottom of all this is that you're missing your Aunt Delores now and you're/ remembering all the wonderful times?//

22. Ella: (nods) And I'm mad at my grandparents because they're going to see her and they're not taking me/

23. T: So/ don't you think that/ what does that sound to you?/ that maybe this would be that/ that you you have all those stories about when you used to do things with her?// Well what about if you turned them into uh/ kind of a letter to her// That would be a really neat project a real neat letter to her where you/ went on and on and talked to her about all the wonderful times as a way to say to her I miss you so much// Maybe in a way to plan/ a time where you could get together?/ Yeah?/ Does that sound like something you might want to do?//

At this point, Ella had become engaged in the conversation about her aunt and seemed to have found this a satisfactory topic about which to write her project. The teacher suggested that she write a letter to her aunt and this seemed to strike Ella as a good idea, evidenced by her nodding of her head at several different points. The teacher emphasized several words such as "stories," "letter" and "miss" indicating these were the important ideas. In her recommendations to Ella, she also placed her inflection on "neat," giving the implicit message that writing a letter was a good idea. She did couch her recommendation in less directive words such as "might" and expressed her own enthusiasm about the topic.

In the next sequence, however, conflict emerged. At the mention of the word project, Ella suggested that she and her friend, Serena, were doing a "project" with me. Here is how the conversation proceeded:

24. Ella: Yeah/ Plus I'll be doing a project for Sarah/ (laughs and turns toward camera) [*intonation becomes more animated*] This fiction project that me and Serena are doing// We're writing we're writing these two stories/ and we've been writing them for (laughs) quite a while now/
25. T: For Sarah?/ [*surprised tone*]
26. Sarah: I'm willing to listen to the stories she writes with Serena. I'm not really writing them with her--
27. Ella: She's going to read--
28. T: Oh/ Okay--
29. Ella: Umm/ well/ she's listening to us while we're writing them--
30. T: Um/ OK/ [*spoken quickly*]
31. Ella: (inaudible)--

At the point where Ella introduced the topic of writing another project for me, Ella looked directly at the camera which I was holding. Ella was somewhat animated as she smiled and gestured towards me. Ms. Meyer seemed very surprised, also looked at me, and asked "For Sarah?" indicating she was trying to understand my role with the students. In

an interview later that day, Ms. Meyer explained that she had thought I was encouraging students to write fiction, of which she disapproved. Just prior to the interview, in fact, Ms. Meyer had shouted at me in the hall when I asked if Ella and Serena could write together during lunch. Ms. Meyer then accused me of undermining her attempts at having students write personal pieces by encouraging them to write fiction.

Ms. Meyer's further interactions in the conference reflect her discomfort with both what she saw as my intervention with the students and the fact that Ella was proposing writing a fictional piece, rather than a personal expressive piece. In the next phases of the conference, Ms. Meyer moved into a more directive mode after the brief interaction about the "other project" and became explicit about the procedures that Ella should go through to complete the letter to her aunt.

32. T: So/ umm/ you need to get started with that/ OK// So how do you think about that?/ You have a couple of those entries in your notebook?//

33. (Ella nods)

34. T: Okay so why don't you start/ take a folder/ okay// and on separate pieces/ stick some papers in your folder/ and start lifting out those entries about your aunt/ and start finding the ones that really are important/ about the times that were really important// And start writing them in such a way that you think that they would fit in perfectly// Okay?/ (Ella nods) And then you'll decide how to put it in to a letter form to her/ okay?// (Ella nods) That sounds like a nice project Serena/ uh Serena/ (laughs) Ella/

The conference ended with Ella getting up from the floor and going back to her seat where she began to select existing pieces from her notebook for her project.

Ella responded positively, if not enthusiastically, to her conference with the teacher. In an informal interview with me after the conference, Ella explained that she now felt that she understood what a project was. She said that the teacher had explained it to her. Ella summarized her interaction with the teacher by saying that she had told the teacher she had a lot of entries about her Aunt Dolores and that, the teacher, then recommended turning those entries into a letter to her aunt. When I asked Ella if the

teacher's idea were a good one, she said, "I'm going to go ahead with it." In response to whether that were something she wanted to do, Ella responded:

Yeah. And she's [aunt Dolores] been begging me to write her a letter so it won't run up my grandparents' phone bill.

Looking back at the writing conference, we can understand Ella's interpretation of the events. Initially, Ella suggested that she had written several entries about her Aunt Dolores. Ms. Meyer picked up on this and encouraged Ella to write about this topic for her project. Ms. Meyer also suggested Ella turn these entries into a letter which seemed satisfactory to her because she could meet the teacher's criterion of an appropriate topic, while meeting her own interest in contacting her aunt without creating an expensive telephone bill.

The teacher and student had come to a shared understanding of what the project was. Even though Ella had temporarily gotten excited about writing a fiction project when she told the teacher I was listening to her and Serena, her interest waned when the teacher and I (for my own reasons) did not encourage her to write fiction for this project. Ella may have compromised her own interests to satisfy the teacher, but she did so in a way that allowed her to find a topic that she was interested in pursuing.

Ella's interest in the letter to her aunt developed over the next several days. She worked on her project, selecting work from her notebook and expanding upon those entries. On November 8, Ms. Meyer conducted a second writing conference with Ella. The conference took place between the two of them at the back table. Ms. Meyer was seated at the table and called Ella over to her, saying, "Can I see what is going on with you?." Ella was standing and handed her paper into Ms. Meyer's outstretched hands. Ms. Meyer looked through Ella's sheets of paper and started the conference out by saying:

1. T: Where where is this beginning?
2. (Ella remained standing and shuffled through papers and showed her the beginning.)

3. T: Here/ Now/ is this in the form of a letter?

4. Ella: No/ not yet/

5. T: Oh/ these are just the entries?

6. Ella: Yeah but I changed them.

In the opening segment, teacher and student were again trying to find a common ground. Ms. Meyer remembered having suggested that Ella turn the piece into a letter and asked her if it were in the form of a letter. When Ella responded no, Ms. Meyer asked another question to find out what she had done. In the next sequence, the teacher pointed out how Ella needed an introduction that would be more fitting to a letter after establishing that there was a conflict between writing a letter (which required second person) and a story (which required the use of either first person or third person).

7. T: Oh OK/ So first you are copying all the entries then you are going to go through this/ and you are going to find/ how to make this because it can't be [*speeds up pace*] "Dear Aunt Dolores/ Me and my Aunt Dolores have always been close/" See what I am saying? (pause) So how are you going to do that?// That that's your challenge/

8. Ella: I have to have a new start (inaudible) something like (inaudible) I changed--

9. T: But you need to have the whole tone change In other words you have to be/ speaking to her as if it is in a letter// See what I am saying?/ So if you were writing all this/ to her/ you wouldn't be saying it like "summers were no different something always happened like when" (reads a part from Ella's text very quickly) You might want to say, "Remember Aunt Dolores when" [*says this slowly*] or/ you know remember when/ or "Boy I laugh when I think about us./" It's kind of like you kind of need to be talking to her as if you would in a letter/

10. Ella: I started doing that/ it was like I was telling it to Serena (laughs).

11. T: Ahh/ yeah/ it's a good idea/ (turns to reprimand class)

In turns 7-11, the teacher smiled frequently and moved her body back and forth in a rhythmic fashion as she was giving Ella ideas. At the point where Ms. Meyer gave specific suggestions about how Ella could start off her piece, teacher and student seemed to connect. Ms. Meyer leaned in toward Ella and Ella sat down, closing the physical gap

between them to a distance of about one foot. Ella began to tell the teacher about how she had started to do that and had even tried it out on her friend, Serena. Then Ms. Meyer reprimanded the class briefly, and turned immediately back to her. The two resumed their conference when Ella showed the teacher the last entry.

12. Ella: I'm on the last entry/
13. T: Ok/ so that's when you need to/ kind of/ take all this stuff and decide/ how you can turn this in/
14. Ella: My mother said/ my mother said/ she um like she got her friend to/ like we are making a tape/
15. T: You are going to tape it and send it to her also?/
16. Ella: Yeah/
17. T: That's wonderful/ [*draws out word*]
18. Ella: She has a friend that has her voice/ my Aunt Dolores' exact voice/ (laughs) she just talks/ just like her/
19. T: Wow// So/ I am trying to think how you are going to get this done/ So it'll have to be "Dear Aunt Dolores/" right?/
20. Ella: Uh huh//
21. T: That's your challenge/ OK Your challenge is to find where it should start/ OK and how you are going to say it in your voice/

The teacher responded positively to Ella's suggestion that she send a tape along with her letter as evidenced by the teacher's enthusiasm in her voice and her saying "Wow." In this segment there is a much more cooperative element to their interactions. Ella initiated this part of the exchange by offering to show Ms. Meyer the last entry. Additionally, each speaker said about the same amount within a turn. The student offered ideas and the teacher used those ideas. We can see how both speakers incorporated the ideas of the previous speaker. For instance, Ella stressed the word, tape, which Ms. Meyer then picked up on, emphasizing the same word.

Both seemed to be in a problem-solving mode as Ms. Meyer commented, "I'm trying to think how you can get this done." It was not just the teacher telling Ella what to do, but

rather the teacher giving suggestions that would support Ella's idea of using the tape.

Although the teacher provided suggestions, the dialogue was negotiated between them.

Their body language also demonstrated a kind of synchrony in turns 12-19; both looked at the papers at the same time, looked back at one another simultaneously, looked at the papers again, and then made eye contact. In the next sequence, the teacher seemed to take over again, doing more of the talking and providing specific suggestions.

22. Ella: It's due next week?/

23. T: Yeah/ Now you don't have to include all of this OK/ Not all of this you are going to have to include right?/ You're not going to always say [*speeds up pace for next part*] (reads) "me and my Aunt Dolores have always been close I love all of my aunts but we have a special friendship we love being together considering the fact that we're always getting into trouble like the time/" All right up to here/ This this might be important in the letter?/ So "Dear Aunt Dolores/" What kind of a start? What do you think you need to start this with so the rest of it can come afterwards?// "I've been thinking a lot about you lately/"

24. Ella: Yeah/

25. T: You know/ Maybe that or/ "I find myself very angry Dolores/ because Grandma and Grandpa are coming to visit you and--

26. Ella: They already went--

27. T: "And I am not going/ and I am finding myself thinking a lot about you/ And these these are the things I have been thinking about" You know not/ as simple as that/ but that might be a way to get into it/ You know what I am saying?/ That that might be your beginning/ Something like that/ You need to go and work on that OK?/ It's really going to be nice/

As the teacher was talking in turn 25, she leaned in closer to Ella and spread her arms in an open gesture towards Ella. Ella seemed to be in agreement with the teacher's suggestions as evidenced by her looking directly at the teacher and nodding. Both turned at the same time to get Ella's text, then Ms. Meyer handed it to her. At this point, Ella was standing up to leave and added the following:

28. Ella: She is always been telling me "Write me a letter write me a letter instead of running up the phone bill" (laughs)/

29. T: So that could be a good start/ "I decided to listen to you after all Aunt Dolores and kill two birds with one stone--/ satisfy you and write you a letter/ and satisfy my writing project in school by turning my love for you into a letter/" *[pace of this slower, tone is friendly, warm and interested]*
30. (They both giggle.)
31. T: Something like that/ right? So here it goes/ That's kind of great right?/ "Dear Aunt Dolores/ I finally decided to listen to you and guess why?/" That could kind of be// a very good beginning/ OK?/ *[friendly, excited lift to her voice]*
32. Ella: OK/
33. T: Things like that/ You think about it/
34. Ella: All right/

The conference seemed to end on a positive note. Ella offered the statement about how her aunt had wanted to communicate with her without adding up the phone bill, and the teacher picked up on the idea immediately, suggesting that the phrase could serve as the introduction to the letter. Synchrony between teacher and student continued as they both laughed about "I finally decided to listen to you." Ms. Meyer was smiling and her voice got a little louder as she made a hand gesture outwards indicating to Ella how she might use the idea of writing the letter. Both teacher and student seemed to enjoy the idea of starting off the letter in that way; Ms. Meyer moved her body back and forth, leaning in and out as she said the words, "Dear Aunt Dolores," while Ella nodded and then returned to her desk. Later on in an informal interview, Ella shared with me that Ms. Meyer had given her the idea to begin her piece, "Dear Aunt Dolores, I finally listened to you." Ella liked this idea and said that she was going to begin her piece that way.

Transformation: How Has Ella Made Sense of the Classroom Discourse?

Ella had a unique way of making sense of the classroom discourse and fitting it into her existing knowledge of writing. A way to understand how Ella made use of the classroom discourse and her previous knowledge about writing is to examine her views about fiction versus non-fiction writing. Ella distinguished between the two types of notebooks she kept and suggested there were different standards for notebook writing and fiction writing.

When I asked her to tell me about the qualities of good writing, she expressed her beliefs this way:

. . . if it was like a story and it was fiction, then humor. And if it was non-fiction story--feeling. If it was a notebook entry--feeling.

In this brief statement, Ella not only identified how she thought the two genres differed, but also implied that she knew how to write using both genres. Her example of what was meant by feelings had much in common with the teacher's emphasis upon description and imagery. In response to what she meant by feeling, Ella said:

I mean, using, not just saying, like if you go to sleep, not just saying "I went to bed." But saying like, "I drifted off into a deep sleep" or something like that.

It seems that Ella's use of the word feeling had much in common with the teacher's view of the use of "good language." In her example, Ella used the word "drifted" instead of "go to" and used an adjective, "deep" to describe sleep--both examples that Ms. Meyer would have agreed were indicative of descriptive language. On another occasion, Ella defined "feeling" as "using detail" and provided an example of using specific words to convey an idea. It appears that Ella had a good grasp of the idea of using description, and as will be shown in her texts, she was quite capable of using imagery. However, she did not believe it was important to write with "feeling" in her fiction works. Instead, in her view, fiction should be filled with action and humor. Ella made the further distinction between fiction writing and nonfiction writing in this way:

You don't always have to write with feeling in detective stories. Sometimes you can, but you don't have to. In some instances you just like, when you really get to the end of the book, that's where the exciting parts happen and you can zip through it actually. But in the beginning, it's kind of, there's no action or anything, you try to put a little humor in it.

Ella seemed to have read enough detective stories to know that plot and action are the salient features, and that you might want to add humor in the beginning to get the reader's attention. In fact, most mystery books I have read do not include a lot of description of setting, character's motives, or detail about how things happened. Instead,

mysteries are focused on plot, are packed with action, and often employ humor (Lukens, 1990).

"Voice" was another characteristic of Ella's secret fiction writing. I have labelled this characteristic voice because it seems to both literally and figuratively capture what Ella was trying to express. When Ella described how she used her own voice to differentiate among characters, she was using a more literal definition of voice. However, she also employed voice in a more abstract sense in terms of developing her own style where a reader can almost hear the individual writer. Ella expressed some difficulty with writing "with feeling," whereas using her voice to indicate different characters' actions was an easier way to express herself and more entertaining for an audience. Ella said:

It's hard to just come up with something like that [using feeling, detail, description]. . . . Sometimes if you're writing a book, you don't have to write with feeling. But you can just, but if you're reading it out loud to somebody then you can just say it with feeling instead of writing it with feeling. . . . When you read a story out loud you can use different characters' voices. I think that's why I like writing stories so much because when I read them, everybody seemed to like them.

Ella clearly preferred writing fiction to anything else and on several occasions mentioned this to me. One day she mused, "I wonder when she's (the teacher) going to start letting us write stories." Later on in the interview, she said:

I don't like writing non-fiction but she said we're going to write an autobio- a biography. . . . I'm going to have to go through a lot of things because my mother tells me all these different stories.

One of the reasons Ella preferred writing fiction rather than personal expressive pieces was that she had difficulty remembering incidents that had happened to her in her life. Also, she found that trying to write with "feeling" slowed her down. She could not just jot down her ideas quickly in her class notebooks, but rather had to take a lot of time to include detail. She thought of non-fiction stories as being about herself and taking a biographical, perhaps even chronological format:

If you're writing a biography of yourself, then you don't use feeling in the beginning because you don't really remember because that's like when you

were little. And then in the end you can use feeling because you just had it recently or last year.

In Ella's mind, writing with feeling (using description) seemed connected with being able to remember and use details from her experience. In her mind, it seemed to be easier to write what is freshest or most recent in her memory. In talking about writing about herself, she said:

If it just happened then you can really write about it, but when you're younger, you write a short little piece about it because you don't really know that much about it. . . . When you're writing fiction, you can just write what you want to write. I mean you have to like put a setting and everything, but still you don't have to remember, you don't have to strain your brain to remember.

Ella, then, clearly preferred writing fiction to personal memoirs recorded in her notebook. However, Ella was quite savvy about the classroom context and norms. In fact, Ella said that she thought the teacher "Obviously believes in using feeling." Ella did not totally accept her teacher's view of good writing and was able to articulate the view that different people had different standards of good writing. When asked in the exit interview about characteristics of good writing, Ella responded:

There's a lot of different ways to describe good writing like expressing yourself, using feeling and not just zipping through, but taking some time to do it. All different people have different ways of doing good writing. And all different people have different standards of good writing. Like Ms. Meyer thinks that good writing is feeling. And another person might think you should not just zip through it. Well, a lot of different people have different feelings of writing.

Besides recognizing the teacher's values about good writing, Ella was able to read the teacher's reactions to students' writing quite well. In describing her teacher's responses to students' writing, she offered this insight:

Ms. Meyer, every time she hears something she likes, she's always like, "Wow!" And then every time she hears something she doesn't like, "Oh, that's good." So I want something she's going to go wow to.

Although Ella was able to figure out what was important to the teacher, her relationship with Ms. Meyer was not without conflict. Ella believed the teacher did like her as a person and valued some of her entries, but knew there were some entries the

teacher did not like. Ella continued to like some of the entries she knew the teacher did not like, but at the same time she felt the need to please the teacher:

Sometimes when you're with an adult, it makes you feel nervous, especially Ms. Meyer. Every time she looks over my shoulder, I get frightened because she makes me feel nervous sometimes. . . . She's so unpredictable. Sometimes she loves an entry and you'll think, "oh." And some times she'll hate an entry and you say, "Hey, I like it."

Ella was successful at understanding her teacher's values about good writing and using her teacher's ideas to construct a text in a genre that would be acceptable to her. She acknowledged that the teacher gave her ideas to write about both directly and indirectly, but believed that students, especially, her friend, Serena, provided ideas too.

Conventionalization: What Has Ella Internalized?

From Ella's texts and conference with the younger student, we can infer what she has internalized from the classroom dialogue.

Texts

Ella's texts consisted of three different genres: her fiction writing kept in her "secret notebook," her classroom notebook, and her project. Each of these contributes something different in understanding Ella's writing and what she had internalized from the classroom dialogue. In her fiction notebook, Ella focused on characters, setting, and plot. She sprinkled much dialogue in the stories to develop her characters. The characters generally encountered some dilemmas that are resolved by the heroics of one of the major characters. The stories are packed with events and filled with humor. Here is an example of the beginning of one of Ella's untitled works from her fiction notebook:

WAAHI, there was a cry from the bedroom. Does that baby always cry Ella, my dog asked. I was babysitting my cousin Leland for 2 weeks. I went to get him. I brought him into the living room and put him into his playpen. Then it hit me. my dog was talking. I fainted. I woke up 5 minutes later with coffee all over my face. Scooter are dog was gone. I looked up to see my brother Andy starring down at me. Wake up and smell the coffee he said helping me up.

Even in the short excerpt, we can see how Ella organized her fiction stories with a setting, characters, and events. She combined dialogue and humor in the sentence "Does

that baby always cry Ella, my dog asked." This use of dialogue and humor did not characterize her classroom notebook entries.

Although Ella wrote about a variety of topics in her classroom notebook, those entries tended to be more serious and reflective pieces. The entries fell into four categories: (a) pieces about relatives (3 entries); (b) entries about news events such as how a man had died but his life seemed insignificant to news reporters and the plight of handicapped people (4 entries); (c) reflective pieces such as her feelings of empathy for a friend who hurt herself and comparing roses dying to keeping people alive through respirators (5 entries); and (d) stories consisting of personal narratives about her own experiences (3 entries). Ella's entries indicate a wide range of interests and an ability to reflect deeply about the world and her experience through writing. For instance, in her entry about the roses, Ella combined description with reflection. She wrote:

Ms. Meyer says those roses Ginas mother sent her are just dried out I say there dead. I mean they were beatiful before and had such a sweet smell but now their just not the same. I can understand her wanting to keep them alive but you just have to let them live and die naturally. They lost there beatifull color and shape. It's just like with people If you put them on one of those breathing systems they may be alive but there just not the same.

Likewise Ella's personal narratives included a chronology of events with some descriptive words. Her narratives became filled with more descriptive language over time. For instance, she wrote this entry on October 11:

Me, my mother and some friends used to go to the catskills in the winter. I remember the chill that ran down my spine when I got there and the fresh aroma of pine trees and evergreen trees. My mothers friend Seth had a house there. We would sit around the fire place and drink hot cocoa. The cocoa tasted so good after being outside. It felt like getting into a jacuzzi after being in an ice cold pool. There was a hill right outside. we would go sleiding every day. But I was nervous because Seth had told me that there were bears. We would come inside with snow on are faces. I felt like Ice when it flew in your face. One day we went cross country skiing. I was miserable. I had just started skiing when I got tangled up in a tree mom tryed to help me but she got tangled up too some guy helped us out. I'll never forget him. He was about 92 and had clusters of white hair. I wanted to puke when I saw his head. Clip. Clop went my skis. Slide my mother kept saying. Clip. Clop. Clip. Clop I went thrue the blue path. Then mom wanted to go on the red path. I wailed I screamed but she dragged me along

Ella told the story of her experiences in the Catskills in this entry. She used description as in the "fresh aroma of pine trees" and the description of the 92 year-old man with clusters of white hair. Additionally, Ella brought her voice into this piece through the use of such words as "Clip. Clop. Clip. Clop." These are all features of "good writing" that the teacher had discussed in class. Ella was able to use these features in her own text, while bringing the quality of voice that is more distinctive in her fiction works into this personal narrative.

Although the previous pieces give us a glimpse of Ella's writing, it is through an examination of Ella's project that we can see what Ella had internalized from the classroom discourse. First, the first writing conference Ms. Meyer held with Ella clearly influenced her selection of a topic and the format of her project. Ella did, in fact, write a letter to her Aunt Dolores. Second, we can trace the changes in her texts from the original notebook entry to the project and see the influence of the teacher's image of good text as exemplified through the aspects of description and imagery, the structure of the text, and voice.

Ella's first entry about her Aunt Dolores formed the first vignette in what became a letter to her aunt. Presented below is Ella's entry from her notebook, dated September 16.

Me and my aunt Dolores have always been close. When we get together we're like Fred and Barney always getting into trouble. like the time we went over to the grocery store. I was about 3 years old. It was winter and there was ice all over the ground. We were walking down the street then suddenly I let go of her hand and started running. I slipped and fell and started laughing. She ran over to help me but she fell down too. We just sat down laughing for awhile. finally we got up. But we fell down again. Although my behind was sore I had a great time.

In this text written early in the year, Ella used little descriptive language. She did include a setting where she wrote, "It was winter and there was ice all over the ground." Ella did not use comparisons, detail, or metaphor. She used a tight narrative structure in which she introduced the relationship with her aunt, set the stage for the event, and told

chronologically the story of falling down and laughing. Ella concluded her story with an ending that tied the story together.

In the first draft of the project, we see a great deal of influence from the classroom discourse on both general and specific levels. The writing conference of October 30 clearly influenced Ella's selection of topic. Ella decided to write to her aunt, crediting the teacher with the idea of writing a letter. Even though she had not written any other entries about her aunt in her notebook, Ella suggested that she had been thinking about this topic. She said "I had a lot of entries in my head about my aunt." Ella had an interest in writing about her aunt, and Ms. Meyer encouraged her to develop that interest.

The text itself reflects some of the broader classroom discourse, including the teacher's emphasis upon description and detail, or as Ella would say, "feeling." In the beginning of the draft, Ella drew heavily from her notebook entry about her aunt, and then added two other vignettes. Ella did not just copy the first draft from the notebook, though she engaged in serious revision as she went along. Her first draft consisted of three vignettes that were separated by a line between each one. The first vignette was the following:

Me and my Aunt Delores have always been close. I love a lot of my aunts but we have a special friendship. We love being together considering the fact that we're always getting into trouble like the time my grandmother sent us to the grocery store. I was about two or three years old and loved her just as much as I do now (well maybe a little less). It was snowing, ice covered the ground. I had to skip to keep up with her. Snow landed on my nose we laughed as we walked. Suddenly I wriggled out of her grasp and started running. I slipped and fell I sat there for a few seconds than burst out laughing. She ran after me and slipped and fell almost landing on top of me we sat there laughing. Finally we got up well at least we tried to get up but we fell down again finally somebody came to help us up. She carried me there and back.

In this first part, Ella used more descriptive language and detail than in the original notebook entry. For instance, she added the phrase "snow landed on my nose", perhaps to give the reader a sense of the scene. She substituted "wriggled" for "let go of

her hand" because she said "it sounded kind of neat." The second part of the piece, displayed below, shows even more description that Ella has included:

Summers were no different something always happened like when I was 1 1/2 my love for sausage had just begun. I was at my aunt Delores's house it was very hot and sunny. We were eating a breakfast of Sausages and eggs. I noticed that she had gotten more than I did. "I want some owange juice pwease" I said with an innocent look on my face. I watched her go to get it before quickly swiping one of her sausages and putting it onto my plate when she came back I stuffed it into my mouth. She sat the orange juice in front of me. "Fank rou" I said trying to swallow it as fast as I could. "Hey" she said looking angrily at me. "Didn't I have 4 sausages?" "Yes" I said. Well where did it go? she asked. I don't know, I answered. "Than that's where your sausage is in my tummy," I said as I stared at her with my big brown eyes." Well how did it get there? she asked. "What is this 20 questions?" I thought. "What does she expect I'm only a little kid!" She picked me up I closed my eyes expecting something bad to happen then I heard her burst out laughing. Grown ups, I thought I just can't figure them out.

In this second vignette, Ella used more descriptive language such as "swiping" and "stuffing." Additionally, she used several adjectives such as "innocent" and "big brown" to describe the look on her face and then her eyes. Ella also brought in a great deal of dialogue which characterized her fiction pieces. Ella's own voice also comes through in the second vignette. She seemed to get into her character--herself as a young child-- "Owange juice pwease" and fictionalize the account of the sausage consumption. The last vignette also shows the influence of the classroom dialogue in relation to the use of descriptive language:

Every morning (when my Aunt Delores lived at my grandmother's house) I used to climb into bed with her. The feeling of her soft skin would feel so good. If I wasn't there I was in my favorite chair. It was an old white chair that I could just squeeze into.

In this final vignette, Ella used several adjectives such as "soft" and "old white" describing the chair. The use of these adjectives suggests that Ella was internalizing certain features of the classroom dialogue and consciously incorporating them into her text.

These three vignettes that Ella had intended to use for her project reflect the emphases of the classroom discourse, but also reflect other voices that Ella seemed to have drawn upon that were not directly connected to the current classroom. Ella seemed to have

developed a distinctive style in her personal narrative that had some commonalities with her fiction. In the first two vignettes, Ella introduced the topic and then set the particular scene, whether it was winter or summer. In each case, a humorous event took place, and was resolved by humor. Ella's narratives display a setting, character, plot format. And she has added her own style of humor to the stories. In this version, Ella combined things she valued as an author such as humor and use of voice, while including the language that the teacher would value such as use of adjectives and descriptive words.

In the final version of the project, we can see again the influence of the classroom dialogue, and specifically hear the voice of the teacher in the revision of the introduction of the letter to her aunt. Here is her final project:

Dear, Aunt Delores.

I finally decided to listen to you. Instead of running up your or Grandma's phone bill I'm writing you a letter. Remember those stories you used to tell me about when I was little. "I know" "I know." Of course you remember them. Well you're going to hear them again. My way! Here's one you've told me only once, you'll remember it once you hear it. Here it goes: It was snowing, ice covered the ground. We were on are way to the grocery store for Grandma. I had to skip to keep up with you. Snow drifted down onto my nose We giggled as we walked even though I had something else on my mind--"mischief"! I waited for the perfect moment then wriggled out of your grasp. I ran with the wind and slipped and fell and sat there for a few seconds then burst out laughing. Meanwhile you had run after me and slipped and fell, almost landing on top of me. "Yikes" I said as I scrambled to the side. Your face turned red as a beet but then you started laughing. We tried to get up but we could'nt. Finally somebody got us up. You carried me there and back.

Ella had, indeed, used the suggestion of starting out with the line, "I finally decided to listen to you." She also added a lengthier introduction and prepared the reader for the stories by adding, "Well you're going to hear them again. My way!" She kept the descriptive language and the essentials of the story, adding the line about having something else on her mind--mischief. In the revision, Ella kept the events and the imagery, but added features of "voice" where you can almost hear Ella telling the story aloud. In the second part of the letter which is separated from the first by a line, Ella inserted a

question about whether her aunt could make it to her recital. Here is the second vignette introduced by "Sound familiar?":

Sound familiar? There's your all-time favorite. Oh by the way could you and a few other family members come to my recital in June? I would really like you to be there and hopefully you'll meet my sister! Well here comes the story. It was a sunny summer day. I was staying at your apartment and we were eating breakfast. I glanced over to your plate and noticed that you had more sausage than I did. "I want some orange juice please" I said. I watched you get the juice. Before I quickly swiped one of your sausages onto my plate, you came back with the juice. 'Hey," you said "how come I only have 3 sausages and you have 4?" "I don't know," I answered. You didn't say anything else after that. I wondered why.

In the second vignette, Ella retained the beginning of the story, but left out the original ending that included the discussion of the sausage ending up in her tummy. Instead, Ella left the ending much more ambiguous, leaving the interpretation more up to the reader. Here, again, Ella's fictional voice came through: Which ending occurred in real life, which took advantage of artistic license? Ella closed her letter with a poem.

Here is her ending:

I love you and I miss you and I hope I'll see you soon.
though times were hard
and we were spread apart
I've always had faith in
you cause you were in my heart.

P.S Please write back.

Love

Ella

P.P.S I know you told me to stop growing, but I couldn't help being 5'2 1/2".

In Ella's final project, she made use of the dialogue from the classroom, her writing conferences with the teacher, and previous experiences with literature and fiction writing. Her letter shows the direct influence of the teacher in using a letter and in the opening line. The description she used reflects the teacher's value on using detail and interesting language. Additionally, Ella made use of her own voice, which seemed to have been most linked to her fiction writing, to tell the stories within the letter. She appeared to have internalized much of the classroom dialogue, while transforming it to fit within her previous experiences and emerging style.

Writing Conference With Eva

Ella conducted a writing conference with a first grader, Eva, at a small table in the hallway. Ella began the conference by requesting Eva to read her the stories. In her stories, Eva made use of conventional spelling and included several illustrations. Here is the beginning of their conversation:

1. Ella: Okay/ read me your stories//
2. Eva: "The Three Little Girls" by Eva// Once upon a time/ there were three little girls// And then the three little girls found a house// Then the three little girls went into the house// And then the three little girls went to play pool// And then they went for a long trip// And then it was night time// And then it was one . . .
3. Ella: Okay/ now how did you get the idea for the story?//
4. Eva: I've got some books/ "The Three Little Bears"/ and I copied them// And I came to school and make them/ And I have another book about the two little/
5. Ella: Oh/ I see// And you did all the illustrations/ all the pictures?//
6. Eva: Mm/ mm/ All those//
7. Ella: Ms. Little said you have to write books/ Is everybody in your class writing a story?/
8. Eva: Umm/ yep/
9. Ella: Umm/ how many books have you written?/

In the beginning of their conversation, Ella asked several questions about where Eva got her ideas, who did the illustrations, and if she had written many books. Ella did not focus on particular aspects of Eva's story, but rather focused on the author herself and her process. After Ella asked how many books she had written, Eva decided to go back to her classroom to collect other books. When Eva returned laden with the other books she had written this year, the two girls continued their conversation. First Eva read several of her stories to Ella. Here is their conversation after Eva had read several of them to her:

29. Ella: Which one's your favorite?/
30. Eva: This one//

31. Ella: Did you get these from books too?//
32. Eva: Uh uh/
33. Ella: You made those up// What about is Marana your best friend?/ (She tries to read it to herself. Eva corrects her at times.) And like umm (pause) You like to write and you like to draw?//
34. Eva: Mm/ mm/
35. Ella: Which do you like better/ writing or drawing?/
36. Eva: Writing//
37. Ella: Alright// Do you want to be an author?// Where's your other rabbit?//
38. Eva: Huh?/
39. Ella: Where's your other rabbit? (pause) Why do you like this one better than the other ones? (Continues to read the piece to herself.)

In this segment of the dialogue, Ella assumed the role of interviewer. She asked Eva several questions about where she got her ideas, which story was her favorite, and if she liked drawing or writing better. It seemed that Ella was trying to get to know the author rather than providing specific help with her writing. Ella continued in this role throughout the conference, asking questions and occasionally agreeing with Eva's comments such as in this section:

41. Ella: Why do you like them better than the other ones?/
42. Eva: Because my rabbit is so cute/ I love rabbits//
43. Ella: So do I/ It's my favorite animal/ Do you like this one?//
44. Eva: Yeah/

After a few more turns of this nature, Ella thanked Eva for sharing her work with her and walked the little girl to her classroom.

What has Ella internalized from the classroom dialogue that she then used in her conference with Eva? In terms of content, we see little attention to description or imagery. Ella did not mention using descriptive language to Eva, nor did she focus on mechanics and spelling. Ella did not really respond to the piece. Instead, Ella tried to get

to know the author and asked the author questions about whether she liked writing and which story was the author's favorite.

Ella's style of conducting this conference had very little in common with the teacher's style of interaction. In Ella's conferences, the teacher had been quite directive at times, telling Ella what she needed to do. The teacher gave explanations and ideas to Ella, suggesting she write a letter or start out in a specific way. Yet Ella did not use any of these strategies with the younger child. At other times, the teacher asked many probing questions, trying to find out what Ella was going to write about. It is this strategy that Ella has used the most in her conference with Eva. Ella seemed to have been trying to find a point of connection with Eva where they could talk about something of interest to the first grader. Yet the tone of the teacher's conferences with Ella and the tone of the conference with Eva were quite different. What was Ella trying to accomplish with Eva?

In Ella's final interview, she revealed something quite interesting in terms of why she had interacted the way she had with Eva. Ella agreed that she had been asking Eva a lot of questions. When I asked her why, Ella responded:

Well, because umm, well because it was to see if she really, really liked writing. Since I know I liked writing when I was younger, but I was really like into growing. . . . If somebody didn't really like what they wrote, they really sometimes they would feel uncomfortable sharing it, but still. And when she, she seemed to open up. I took her back down so she could get the rest of her stories. She's written a lot. She wrote six stories. And umm, and she's not not modest, she's a little bit, but still, she's not the kind of kid that's really shy. Because sometimes kids that age get really shy.

Ella was concerned about the author and tried to connect her own experience to the young child's. When I asked her if the conference resembled any conferences she had with anyone else, she said, "Not really" but then added she got the ideas for questions to ask from me and the trainer, Ms. Henderson:

And from you and from Ms. Henderson and from, especially from you, actually. . . . Like, whenever I think of you I think of this question, this one question--Do you like writing?

So when we look for internalization, we can't always assume it is going to be internalization from the teacher or the classroom discourse! Here Ella revealed that she was essentially playing the role of interviewer with Eva and that she had learned that role from me, the researcher. She remembered the question I had asked her early on about whether she liked writing and used it in her conference with Eva. So we can not assume that Ella did not internalize her teacher's voice or the classroom discourse, but we have some evidence that on the occasion of the writing conference with the younger student that the researcher's voice was a more powerful influence than the teacher's.

What is Significant About Ella's Case?

First, Ella had quality interactions with her teacher during the two writing conferences. In the first conference, teacher and student had developed a temporary shared understanding of what the project was. In the second conference, Ella and Ms. Meyer built on their shared understanding by developing the project into a letter to Ella's aunt. These conferences were pivotal in Ella's subsequent texts. She was clearly influenced by these conversations and included the teacher's ideas in her project.

Second, Ella used several features of the classroom dialogue in her texts. She labelled the use of description and imagery as "writing with feeling," but clearly had the concepts, evidenced by her inclusion of these features in her writing and her ability to articulate what she thought the teacher valued. However, Ella did not use the content of the classroom discourse in her conference with the younger student. Instead, she focused on the student as author and played a role of an interviewer. She transformed her knowledge of writing and her understanding of writing conferences to use in a new way with the younger student.

In conclusion, Ella was skillful at understanding the classroom norms and the teacher's expectations. She was able to combine those features she thought the teacher valued such as writing about the personal and using description, while developing her own voice. Ella could draw from a variety of her own experiences, including her childhood

memories, books she had read, games she played with her friend, discussions with her mother about the tape, and conversations with me. Ella is an example of a student who, in Bakhtin's terms, drew from "multiple voices." She was particularly adept at orchestrating these voices to serve her own purposes within the context of the classroom.

Culture and Conflict: The Case of Anita

This case contrasts with the three previous cases in that more conflict arises between teacher and student. Whereas the other three cases illustrate examples of successful scaffolding by the teacher and internalization by the students, this case illustrates where communication goes awry. The conflict makes more visible the cognitive and social norms that students needed to learn as they participated in this teacher's Writing Workshop. In this case, we see how Anita internalizes some of the classroom norms, yet compromises her original intentions.

Who Is Anita?

This section describes Anita's background, her lack of previous experience in a writing process classroom, and her views about notebook writing. It also describes the topics she wrote about in her notebook and the teacher's perceptions of her.

Background

Anita was an eleven year old African-American girl in the sixth grade. She is of medium height, slender with a warm smile. She often wore different hairdos, very carefully and attractively arranged, and seemed to be going through an adolescent phase of being quite concerned with her hair and personal appearance. Anita was shy at first with adults, but warmed up quickly when they paid attention to her. She especially enjoyed talking to visitors in the classroom and often read her writing to them. She was friends with several girls in the class, especially the girls at her table.

Anita lived with her mother and her older brother in a neighborhood in the Bronx. Anita's mother worked as a housekeeper. Her mother had chosen the school in Manhattan to provide an opportunity for Anita to go to a "better" school outside of the neighborhood.

This was Anita's first year at P.S. 999 and she took the train to school by herself each morning. In the course of discussions about writing and in her notebook entries, Anita revealed to me that she had been abused by her father who no longer lived with her. Anita was born in Jamaica and had attended school there. In a conversation with the teacher that Ms. Meyer reported to me the mother expressed her care for her daughter, but felt Anita was out of control and she did not know what to do with her. The mother suggested sending her back to Jamaica because she had been happier and was successful at reading there. The mother also reported that she was unaware of the abuse from the father, but knew that Anita had slept in the same bed with her father and stepmother. This conversation occurred after Ms. Meyer had sent a letter to the mother threatening to call Social Services if the mother did not respond. Ms. Meyer believed that she had tried to contact the mother several times without receiving any response from the mother.

Anita had many difficulties in school. Her teacher reported that she did very little work, that she had very low achievement scores (9% on the CAT reading test), but that she had not been placed in resource at P.S. 999 or at her previous school. Apparently, Anita had been referred at her previous school, but the paper work had been lost and there was no record of her having received additional help.

Anita was interested in singing and dancing, reporting to me that she often made up songs at home with friends and sang on the train on the way home. Her favorite subjects in school were math and gym, although she did not think she was good at math. Anita read very little in school or at home, although she mentioned two books she had read at home that she did not read at school. She explained that she was not a fast reader so that it had taken her three weeks to read All About Sam. She reported that number of pages of the book and the title determined her selection of books.

Views About Writing

Anita did like to write. She told me on several occasions that in her notebook she had written the most she had ever written anything in her life. At the time of our first

interview she had written thirty three pages and was very proud of that achievement.

Writing in her notebook seemed to have a kind of therapeutic function for Anita. She described it this way:

It helps me put away the memory of what bad things happened to me. I can put it in my notebook so I won't want to remember it so much. Like the time when my uncle asked me to do something with him and I didn't do it.

Anita suggested that her notebook helped her put away the bad memories and yet there were some memories that she did not feel she could write down or share with anyone. These were things that she believed were so personal that they should not be shared with anyone. She said:

I told my mother. But that one I didn't really write in my notebook because I didn't feel like it would be good . . . Because I didn't really like anybody else should know about it except for my family.

Her notebook was also a place where she could write about the good things that had happened to her. She especially liked it when she shared an entry with people at her table and they appreciated it. She told me that it made her "feel good" when other people liked her entries:

It makes me feel good. It's like the entry that I wrote about my grandfather, when he died and he was the only person who ever gave me anything much. That one was really nice because he's the only one that really cared a lot about me anyway. He would give me ...He would give me food. He would give me clothes. He would give me money.

Although she did not describe herself as a good writer, Anita believed that she was "OK" at writing. Anita had had no experiences with writing last year except for a private journal she had kept at lunch time. The teacher she had had at the previous school did not encourage children to write so Anita explained that she had sneaked this private notebook. For Anita, writing in her notebook was easy, not hard, because she could write about things that had happened in her life. She thought it took work, but it was a task she could complete. About her notebook, Anita said:

You have to do a lot of work on it. You can just think of something that happens in your life or something that somebody says that reminds you of something. You can just write it down in your notebook.

Anita was excited enough about her experiences with her notebook to tell a woman she met on the train about what a notebook was. She liked writing in it so much that she had encouraged the woman on the train to keep one. Here is what she reported:

I would say that notebook is something you write stuff in that makes you feel sad, happy, and stuff like that. And I was telling a lady on the train yesterday what a notebook is for because she didn't really know. . . . I told her a notebook is for things that happen to you like if you get, if you think somebody had been trying to hurt you, you just write it in your notebook. And when it happens now anybody could find your notebook and pick it up and read what is in there.

Anita believed that her notebook could provide a place to write both the good things and the bad things that had happened to her, but it could also provide information to other people to help her. Anita did not think that issues related to mechanics were important. In the entry interview, she stated that the most important aspects of writing were to write about something you cared about, and to put things in a story in order.

Topics She Wrote About

Anita's notebook was filled with many entries about incidents that had happened to her. She wrote about good times she had had in a swimming pool, learning to play kick ball, dressing up as a singer, a birthday party, and going to the beach, and a time in Jamaica. She also wrote about her "bully" brother, her grandfather who was good to her, and four entries about her father who had hurt her either physically or emotionally. One example of this type of entry is the following:

it reminds me of my father he dose not think of loving he abouse people and one day he punch my brother right in his heart and we never liked him again

The entries about her father either described his hitting her or had a more neutral emotional tone such as in, "My father had something like an idea to let the chickens lea [lay] some eggs . . . my father hung the dog."

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Anita's longest entry was about Lenox Hill Camp. She worked on this story for two weeks. Most of Anita's writing between October 10 and October 29 (the day of the conference with her teacher) was a continuation of this story, although she did write some additional entries on different topics at home. After the conference, Anita did not write any more entries in her notebook; only responses to reading were recorded. Anita then began to write her project which was about her grandfather; this was based on her original entry in her notebook about her grandfather.

Teacher's Views of Anita

Ms. Meyer viewed Anita as a slow learner who did not achieve in any subject. She described her as a "failing" student who scored in less than the 10%ile on standardized achievement scores. She was frustrated by Anita's lack of completing work in other subjects and this influenced her view of Anita as a writer. At one point, Ms. Meyer described her as a "disturbed child" who was often at the center of classroom conflicts. For instance, one of the girls had a party and did not invite Anita. Anita was upset and called the girl "prejudiced." Ms. Meyer saw this as Anita disturbing the class and creating bad feelings. Ms. Meyer expressed that she did not know whether to believe Anita when she wrote about issues that had happened with her father:

I just don't know if I believe her or not, I just don't know if I believe all this stuff about her father and all that stuff. I have this sense of wanting to feel sorry for her about that, her life, but yet I'm not sure that I believe a lot of it.

Ms. Meyer had little information about Anita because she was a new student on whom there were no records. She said:

She just came to the school; she's brand new to the school so I have no history of her. I have no records on her. I have no other teacher input, so I haven't got a clue. I haven't met her mother, her mother refuses to come to school which is a real indication of you know, I just can't get a fix on her. I just don't like her . . . I think she's very, very slow.

However, the teacher had been concerned enough to choose Anita as one of the students I should study to provide her with more understanding of the student and what she was learning in the classroom.

Appropriation: Opportunities for Social Interaction

This section describes Anita's lack of classroom participation and presents her one, lengthy writing conference with the teacher about selecting a topic for her project.

Classroom Participation

Perhaps because of her lack of previous experience in writing process classrooms, Anita did not contribute to classroom discussions. In the 17 classroom lessons observed, Anita never made a single oral contribution. She did not give ideas, nor did she read anything she had written to the whole group. She was virtually silent during whole group sessions. However, she wrote at the designated times when the whole group was writing on the rug.

At her table, Anita often wrote during the designated writing time, but she also spent time not engaged in writing. During this "off-task" time, Anita talked to the girls at her table, had disagreements with boys at her table, and passed notes or engaged in activities unrelated to her notebook. These actions seemed to occur more frequently during the last two weeks when students were working on projects, rather than the first three weeks in which students were writing in their notebooks. Anita, however, reported that she shared her writing with the people at her table when they were not passing notes or "talking about boys."

Anita had conflicting feelings about sharing her writing with both adults and students. In an interview Anita revealed that she did not like to share her writing with the whole class and would only read if the teacher forced her to read aloud. She also said that she did not like to share her writing with the teacher and that the teacher "never" talked to her. Anita said:

I don't want her [the teacher] to. I just don't want her to. I don't want her to talk to me at all. She yells at people too much . . . especially me . . . She never does [talk to me] so why should I want her to?

Anita seemed to have conflicting feeling about sharing her writing with others.

While not wanting to share with the whole class nor the teacher, she was willing to read some of her work to students at her table. She often sought out visitors to listen to her work, but then said she did not like to read her pieces to visitors because they brought in their own lives too much and did not listen to hers. Anita seemed to have difficulty finding her place in the classroom organization and did not seem to feel valued and accepted, except by a small group of peers at her table. What opportunities, then, did Anita have to participate in the classroom discourse?

Writing Conference

Because Anita rarely interacted in the whole-group sessions and because the events occurring after the conference were so significant, the individual teacher-student conference is an important source of information about Anita's relationship with the teacher. During the five weeks of observation, Anita had only one occasion to talk to the teacher in an individual writing conference.

On this day, October 29, Ms. Meyer had discussed with the class the process of turning notebook entries into projects. Just prior to the conference with Anita, she had held conferences with several other students. The following conference occurred in the rug area. Ms. Meyer sat with her back against the cupboards, had just completed a conference with a boy, and called Anita to sit by her. Anita sat about four feet away from her. At the beginning of the conference teacher and student made eye contact with one another. Ms. Meyer started off their seven-minute conference in this way:

1. T: OK Anita// What do you think? My god/ for somebody who has such an incredible notebook/ it should be easy for you to find a project//
2. Anita: I was thinking about using my--
3. T: Come here-- (motioning for her to come closer.)

4. Anita: you know my Lenox Hill camp--
5. T: Mmhm// And what do you think you would do? Do you think that out of all these entries that one is the most important for you?/ Why?/
6. Anita: Because it was really fun/ We had about 20 minutes to play around/ going in the bathroom--
7. T: Uh huh--
8. Anita: All of that--

In this opening part, the teacher started off by complimenting Anita, suggesting she had an interesting notebook. This is a common opening that teachers familiar with the Writing Project often use. They try to get the student comfortable talking by making a general comment about the student's work. As soon as Anita suggested that she wanted to write about Lenox Hill Camp, however, Ms. Meyer already implied some disapproval by her emphasis on all, that, and important. Her question about was that the entry the most important and her tone implied that she did not think this was a good topic. When Anita continued and explained that she wanted to write about it because it was fun, Ms. Meyer changed the topic to ask what kind of piece would it be, inquiring about genre or form. The section of the conference concerned with genre took this form:

9. T: So you think that is the thing you really want to write about? And what would it be?// What kind of piece would it be?// You see what I'm saying?
10. Anita: It could be a poem/
11. T: A poem?// You would turn that entry into a poem?/ [*emphasis and tone implies some surprise*]
12. Anita: Yes/
13. T: Mmm/ That would be interesting/
14. Anita: Yeah a story/
15. T: Well/ What kind of story?/ You mean just a story about one specific time in your life that was so important?/ When you think about it/ why do you think it was so important? Why do you think that that one time of being away is so important?/

After the brief exploration of genre, Ms. Meyer brought the conference back to the issue of what Anita should write about by suggesting that she write about something "important." Ms. Meyer then tried to get at the issue of what was important by asking Anita why it was important. The implicit message at this point seems to be that having fun at Lenox Hill Camp was not "important" enough to pursue further.

The non verbal actions during this activity were also informative about the teacher-student interaction. Ms. Meyer took the notebook from Anita almost immediately and kept it in front of her, holding it through most of the conference. When Anita began talking about what she did at Lenox Hill Camp, Ms. Meyer began to engage in a series of nervous gestures. She brushed her face with her hand, then scratched her face. Then she began thumbing through the notebook as Anita explained what she had done at camp. Ms. Meyer then scratched her nose, took a piece of hair and brushed it behind her ear. During the next series of questions and statements, Ms. Meyer alternated between looking at Anita and looking through the notebook. Once she looked away from Anita and the notebook to look at the class. While Anita was talking, Ms. Meyer scratched her nose, nodded slightly, and scratched her chin.

The dialogue during this time focused on the events at Lenox Hill Camp. Ms. Meyer asked a question and offered her own interpretation of why Anita liked camp, then Anita disagreed without overtly contradicting her by saying, "Not really" twice. Turns 12 through 28 show how Ms. Meyer seemed to be offering her own interpretations in her search to suggest something else besides Lenox Hill Camp for Anita to write about. Meantime, Anita tried to explain her own feelings about camp while answering the teacher's questions:

16. Anita: I never missed my mother so much/

17. T: Ahhh// And you thought it was really neat to miss your mother?/ You liked it because you missed your mother?

18. Anita: Not really/ I liked it because it was a lot of fun/ We got a free telescope and time with your friends and your class--
19. T: Uh huh-- [*rise-fall intonation implies some interest*]
20. Anita: And (?) with your teacher/
21. T: Ahhh/ so you liked spending time with your teacher?--
22. Anita: Not really/ Not everybody did/
23. T: Not everybody liked spending time with their teacher so you didn't like spending time with your teacher?/
24. Anita: Yeah/ I did/ I was running around with the daughter--
25. T: Uh huh uh huh--
26. Anita: The daughter kept going back and forth/ back and forth to her mother--
27. T: Uh huh--
28. Anita: And her daughter and I/ we/ I was running/we were playing tag/ and I was running to catch her /and/I fell in this little hole in the ground/ and so I called her back/I forgot her name and I called her back/ and/ and I told her about it and she said/ let's make something so every time people try to run past here--
29. T: Mhmmm-- [*flat tone, losing interest*]
30. Anita: They just fall in this hole--
31. T: Mhmmm--
32. Anita: We both made it bigger/

Ms. Meyer and Anita did not ever seem to connect in this portion of the dialogue. First, Ms. Meyer seemed to want to get Anita to get to the "important part" of camp. She suggested that it might be the missing of her mother that was important to Anita, then suggested perhaps it was the time that she spent with her teacher that was important. However, Anita seemed to think it was having fun and participating in the events at camp such as running around with the daughter, playing tag, and falling in holes that was "important." The teacher and student had quite different ideas about what "important" meant. Although the pronoun "it" is used interchangeably with camp, what is important

about "it" was not shared by the teacher and the student. On the one hand, Anita believed that what was important about camp was the enjoyable time she had participating in activities. In contrast, Ms. Meyer seemed to believe that what was important about "it" was the experience of being at camp, away from home. Ms. Meyer was hurrying Anita along to get to what was "important", while Anita prolonged the details of camp and what she enjoyed about the experience which seemed to be having fun.

The lack of shared agenda was also manifested in their body language. While Ms. Meyer was distracted and scratched her face and played with her hair, Anita smiled, looked at the teacher, and used gestures when she was describing the incidents at camp. However, when Ms. Meyer asked questions about what was "important," Anita looked at the rug, but never directly at the teacher. Both the dialogue and the gestures indicate a lack of shared agenda.

Ms. Meyer shifted the conversation and again gained control over it in the next section. She effectively cut off Anita's stories about camp by saying, "It is so interesting." The next part of the conference is presented here:

33. T: It is so interesting/ Anita/ that you you talk about writing that because there are so many entries/ when I look through this/ I would have thought that the thing that would have stood out to you most would have been about your father// You have so many entries about your father in here// [*pace slows down*] (She reads from text slowly with feeling) "When I was living in Jamaica I had a farm/ We had chickens and my father has something like/ an idea to let the chickens"//
34. Anita: Lay eggs--
35. T: "Lay eggs and sell them/" I mean/ I could just see this becoming/all the like/ you know/ either the good times/ [*pace slowed down*] You had a lot of good times and a lot of bad times with your father/ right? [*pace quickened*]
36. Anita: Yeah/ [*agreeing unenthusiatically, falling tone*]
37. T: You know/ It seems to me that/ you have all these entries about the good and the bad times about your father and maybe you should just pick one// You know I'm not trying to tell you what to do/ you know but/ it seems to me that you have more important stuff in here than/ Lenox Hill camp// [*somewhat disgusted tone of voice*] You know what I mean?// Unless you

don't really want to write about it/ Do you have other good entries about your father here besides this one?//

38. Anita: Not really// [*drawn out syllables*]

[They look through the notebook together. Anita puts her hands on notebook and is trying to flip pages)].

39. Anita: That is the first day of school when Nick was bothering me/

40. T: Mhmmm (long pause) So many of your entries have to do with your father--

41. Anita: This is about--

42. T: Mhmmm--

43. Anita: that's the same thing/

44. T: Mhmmm// [*even, noncommittal tone*]

45. Anita: I have another/ not good/ but bad thing about my father/

46. T: Mhmmm// (reads) "My father"/

47. Anita: That is one of the bad things he did/

48. T: Mhmmm/

49. Anita: That is another thing about the maid/

50. T: Mhmmm/

During this portion of the conference the teacher read a line aloud, traced lines with the eraser tip of her pencil, and alternated looking at Anita with looking at the notebook. Several times Anita put her hand on her notebook which was still on the teacher's lap and flipped slowly through the book pointing out specific entries. As soon as the teacher mentioned the entries about her father, Anita's shoulders stiffened and she looked at the ground. After this point, the teacher and student never made eye contact; they would look at one another, but not at the same time.

Anita had pointed out several entries in her notebook that seemed to be of interest to her. However, Ms. Meyer did not follow up on any of those. Instead, she continued to come back to the issue of Anita's father, pointing out how many entries there were. Even

though Ms. Meyer said she was not telling Anita what to write about, the implicit message was that her father was an important issue in her life and Anita should write about him. Ms. Meyer's numerous "mhmmms" suggest a lack of interest in what Anita had said and suggest that Ms. Meyer was anxious to get Anita off of other subjects and onto discussing her father. Anita's responses seem to be a mixture of compliance and resistance. For instance, her "not really" in response to Ms. Meyer's question about were there other 'good entries' about her father suggests that Anita was not interested in finding other entries about her father. Instead, she pointed out examples of different topics she had written about. When Ms. Meyer brought up her father yet another time, Anita complied with the requests by showing the teacher other entries about her father. However, Anita continued to point out the "bad things."

The last segment of the conference shows how Ms. Meyer took control over the conference, providing little opportunity for Anita to respond. This is signified by Ms. Meyer's lengthy turns and her suggestions that Anita find something else in the notebook to write about. The teacher's underlying message was that Anita should not write about Lenox Hill Camp because it is not really "important" or that there is more to the experience of Lenox Hill Camp than just having a good time. The conference ended in this way:

51. T: Mhmmm/ I don't know// (sighs, long pause) I think you need to think// I think you really need to go through this book/ right? /Really go through this book very carefully and read it very carefully/ And take another color pen/ OK/ and underline/ all of the sentences in your book/ all of the places in your book where you think you wrote something so beautifully and that it was so important for you/ OK?/ Because I think/ Anita that you have really really deep and important things/ to say/ about relationships and about your mother and your father and I just don't think/ that Lenox Hill/ is the most important thing for you in here// If you decide that that is what you want to do/ OK/ If it turns that after this you can't find/ some big important idea that comes out of this for you that you would like to write about/ [*pace slowed down, former said very deliberately*] Maybe it's going to be wishing/ you know/ that your father were different/ that you could have more good times like the time in Jamaica// [*pace speeds up*] Maybe you could really really write up that time in Jamaica because that was a really good time/ wasn't it?//

52. Anita: (no audible response)
53. T: Right/ Can you describe what Jamaica looked like/ and/ what it was like being there with your father/ and you know the good times// Maybe for you it's kind of like wishing there were more of those good times/ Are you in touch with your father? Do you know--
54. Anita: All I know is that he is living at my grandmother's/ [*dull, unenthusiastic tone*]
55. T: Do you know where to write to him? I mean maybe you could write--
56. Anita: My mother knows her address/
57. T: So maybe it would be a nice letter to him/ "Dear dad/ I remember Jamaica"/ and you know you could write this whole beautiful thing about Jamaica/ and "I wish we could have more times like that"/ You know/ Maybe that is something you would like to do as a way of contacting your father// you know?/ I mean that is a thought/ You think about it/ I don't want to/ you know/ you decide what you think you want to do// Because somehow with all this important stuff/ you know/ I am wondering whether/ Lenox Hill Camp/ is really important to you/ and if it is/ then you have to decide why it was so important to you/ OK?/ Maybe it is more important than just because you had a good time/ maybe there is more stuff there than just you had a good time/
58. Anita: Because I never left my mother for that long--
59. T: Uh huh--
60. Anita: About two weeks or one/
61. T: No/ you were gone for one week/ like for four days/ that's how long Lenox Hill Camp is// And you think you just had to take care of yourself for the first time and that was why it was so important?/
62. Anita: Yeah/
63. T: Maybe that is what you need to think about/ why Lenox Hill Camp was so important because you did all these things on your own and you never did before// And rather than telling about first I jumped off the log and then I did this and then I did this/ [*used sing-song voice*]
- [Teacher reprimands in a loud voice student across the room].
64. T: So think about that/ and then come back to me if you need some more help// All right?/ Think long and hard//

At this point Anita got up and left the rug as Ms. Meyer handed her the notebook. At the end of the conference Ms. Meyer was still pushing Anita to either write about her

father or to find something "important" about Lenox Hill Camp. Anita seemed to try to find a topic within Lenox Hill Camp that might satisfy the teacher. For instance, she suggested that she had never left her mother for such a long period of time. Having said this, Ms. Meyer immediately, but subtly, undermined Anita's attempts by telling her that she was wrong about the period of time that camp lasted. The teacher continued her pursuit of finding an "important" issue such as the child doing things on her own. Having fun and describing in narrative form seemed inappropriate for a project in Ms. Meyer's view.

As evidenced by their body language and their dialogue, teacher and student never found a place to connect during this conference. They shared neither the same physical space, the same agenda, nor the same conception of good writing. The teacher provided little scaffolding of instruction about how to select topics; she was neither sensitive to Anita's not wanting to write about her father nor did she provide explicit instruction about what elements constitute an appropriate topic. Scaffolding was not evident because she did not start with the child's expressed interest. Instead, she assumed that Anita should write about her father because she had mentioned him in her notebook. How did Anita make sense of this interaction? What effect did the conference have on her and her subsequent interactions and texts? The next section describes Anita's impressions and explains subsequent events that bear on what she actually internalized.

Transformation: How did Anita Make Sense of the Classroom Discourse?

After Anita's conference with her teacher, I was curious to get Anita's viewpoint of the interaction. When I asked her about how the conference had gone, Anita responded that the teacher had told her "how nice my book is to read and how many things in there I have written about my father." When I asked her how she felt about that, Anita answered, "I hate my father a lot" and then leaned down to tell me an example of physical abuse. She further reported that "everything in here [her notebook] is confusing" and said that she did not know what to write about for her project. Her interpretation of the conference was that the teacher wanted her to go through her notebook and find some "good entries" about

her father. However, she stated that she did not have to write about her father if she did not want to. At this point she got giggly and started acting nervous, stretching out against the chair and looking away. Then she told me that she would write about her grandfather because he was the nicest person in her family who had done a lot of nice things for her.

Anita's disclosure resulted in further events that precluded having an exit interview with her. The teacher did not know of the particular events the child disclosed, but subsequent actions were taken on the child's behalf. These complicated relationships and issues seemed to influence what Anita internalized from the dialogue.

In the informal interviews with me prior to the conference, Anita did not seem to be connecting to the classroom dialogue focused on imagery and figurative language. For instance, she rarely responded to probes about "beautiful language." Instead, in responding to pieces or explaining what she liked about certain texts, Anita focused on the topic and events. She resisted giving any examples of imagery and did not use examples of description as indicators of good texts. Instead, she explained her choice of texts in terms of the value of the topic and her personal relationship to the person or event. For instance, she explained that what was good about her writing about Nick on the first day of school was the fact that he was a person who "bugged" her and that she did not like him. When probed about her reason for liking the initial piece about her grandfather, she remarked that it was because he had loved her. She decided to write about this because another student in the class had written about her grandmother which reminded Anita of her grandfather.

When I asked Anita questions about herself or her writing, she often answered them by telling a story about something that had happened to her. Instead of expressing her feelings directly about the teacher or classroom, Anita often answered by telling a story. She almost never answered questions about description except by saying, "I don't know." Description simply seemed beside the point of what Anita considered to be a good text. It was difficult to gain evidence of what Anita had internalized at this point. However, her

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texts and writing conference with the first grader provide information about what she internalized.

Conventionalization: What Has Anita Internalized?

Anita's texts and conference with the younger student are indicators of what she seemed to have internalized from the classroom dialogue.

Anita's Texts

Anita's texts suggest the kind of match that she had with the teacher's conception of "good writing." In the piece that Anita spent over two weeks writing, we can see certain features that seem to characterize her narrative style and compare it to the teacher's vision of a good narrative. The following is the story Anita wrote about her experiences at Lenox Hill Camp. This is the piece from her notebook that she wanted to use for her project, but was discouraged from using by the teacher.

My teacher was saying something and I remember the time when my old class went to Lenox Hill camp we had a lot of fun My bus was the first bus to leave a couple of us was in the bus I'll name the people. Ophelia, Cindy, Jasmin, bosise, Micle, Antony, marcus, patric, Joey, and me our bus was the first to leave After that the other bus came The teacher disided to pick out the rooms for girls and boys We were in scode [squad] one and the other class was in scoude [squad] two well [while] the girls were less [last]. what I mean was that there were less girls. The scond [second] day that we were there the boys were Trying to come in our room. and then we plade [played] a game, spin the botle. it was a realy bad game. I'll tell you how it gose you take a botle and spin it and if it lands on a girl, then they have to wate [wait] and then you spin it agian and if it points at a boy, the girl and the boy have to go in the colset and do something and if you don't you get a slap so when I went in the closet with the boy we acted like we were doing something But we were not and I put spit all over my mouth and came out of there and they said Had fun I was like yes I had a lot of fun. and then our class introctor [instructor] came and brought us outside and we went on the seld [sled] and hade a lot of fun we went down a little hill and went on the seld and then my friend Ophlea and I were talking [taking] some ice out of the water. it was winter. It was realy cool and it was the Biggest piece of ice you ever seen. I Loved Lonx hill camp. it was like we went hikeing and I wore my water baiters [boots] and it had a hole in it and my feet were frezing so much you could do me thing [something] with it. Well then that night my teacher read us a horroure story and I got real Scared and then I could hardly sleep and one Time we aske the teacher to get a drink of water. She looked kind of wear [weird]. When she said yes, I saw some smoke come out of her mouth. I was really sick. I was so scared that the, that she might be smoking crack because she was like acting like strange all the time. Every morning and every day every morning and everybody is like was she

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really smoking at my table the ones that were in my group and maybe a little and the next day maybe a little. The next day we had to go hiking so we went we learned about foot tracks, animals. I don't remember how the squirrel looked and anyway we went on the bridge blindfold and my friend Jasmin was Ok when I did her and when she did me I almost fell off she was so dumb. we went back to the camp it was fun. Fun. we went on the hike but I got really scared because she put me at the edge of the bridge. I was like get this thing off of me and I almost throw up on her. So I took off the blindfold and I was at the edge of the bridge. She was very careless. She put me at the edge of the bridge.

What characteristics of the teacher's conception of "good writing" are evident in Anita's piece about Lenox Hill Camp? Although Anita wrote the piece in the first person and told me that these experiences had happened to her, this piece does not include an emotional response about the event. Anita stated it was fun and in subsequent interviews indicated that her experience at the camp was one of the best times in her life. From the teacher's point of view, there may have been no personal conflict described in the story. There was no "real issue" or nothing that is personally revealing in Anita's piece. Instead, Anita had described a series of events that were connected by occurring at Lenox Hill Camp.

In an interview, Ms. Meyer expressed her view of how she had hoped that Anita would write about something that seemed "important" to her such as her father instead of writing about these series of events from Camp. Ms. Meyer said:

I wanted her to try to see what was the bottom, what was the bottom of all this, you know what I mean, all these horrible pieces that she has, all these bad luck things. . . . I was hoping that she would um, you know she's got all of these horrible stories. . . . And I didn't want to let her do that [write about Lenox Hill Camp] because that would have been just one of those you know, I went to great adventure kind of things, I had a lot of fun, I hid in the woods.

Ms. Meyer had suggested that Anita's story lacked getting to "the bottom" of something which seems to mean for the author to figure out why something occurred or what difference that event made in the child's life. Getting to the bottom of something seems to entail being reflective about an event or person and describing its emotional impact. In contrast, writing about Lenox Hill Camp is of the "great adventure" genre which lacks emotional impact and focus.

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In terms of language and style, Anita had used very little imagery or figurative language. For instance, given the length of the piece there are relatively few adjectives that might "give the reader a picture in his mind." Anita had not used any similes, metaphors, or comparisons of any type. In Anita's piece we do not see any of the reemergence of ideas such as figurative language that were introduced during the whole group sessions.

Additionally, the structure of this piece does not match Ms. Meyer's image of "good writing." Instead of focusing on one small event within the overall experience at Lenox Hill Camp, Anita had chosen to write about the entire trip. There is no overall explicit point of the story or thematic focus. Events are not linked to an overall theme, but instead are linked with the event just prior in time. For instance, she went from playing spin the bottle to sledding with the instructor to getting a piece of ice. The sequence of events seems to be linked temporally in Anita's mind with the thematic focus on "it was fun." Although there is an overarching topic--Lenox Hill Camp--there is no central dramatic theme.

Although Anita's text does not seem to match the teacher's image of a good text, her text contains many interesting features. The most striking feature is that her text resembles "an oral text." It was not necessarily meant to be read as a written text. Instead, imagine Anita telling this story to a group of peers who might share the same frame of reference or discourse style and who might be quite appreciative of the dramatic effect that she could create through her voice and the retelling of several dramatic incidents.

What is the evidence that this might read like an oral text? First, Anita connected her story with several "ands" and "thens" throughout the story, especially as she got further into it. This is a feature of text often found in adults' and children's oral story-telling. Second, Anita used explanatory features in her text reminiscent of oral texts. For instance, she wrote "well the girls were less. what I mean was that there were less girls." This is the kind of data a story teller might include orally to provide an immediate

explanation. Additionally, Anita added conversational features such as "I don't remember how the squirrel looked and anyway." It as if she were telling the audience, "by the way you might be wondering how the squirrel looked, but I don't remember." Also the use of "anyway" is another connective term often used in oral discourse, but less prevalent in standard English written prose.

Although Anita's text may not have an explicit point, it does contain several dramatic points or points of tension. For instance, the explanations of what happened in the closet with spin the bottle, the tension around whether the instructor at the camp had smoked crack, and the ending telling about the incident on the bridge were subplots in her narrative. The story has a structure of its own, but this structure does not fit into the teacher's conception of what makes for a well-organized piece. Instead, Anita's piece has much in common with Michaels' (1981) analysis of African-American girls' topic-association structure of telling stories during "sharing time."

In the analysis of the piece that Anita produced about her grandfather, there is more evidence than in the Lenox Hill Camp piece that she internalized some aspects of the classroom dialogue. She chose a topic, her grandfather, that fulfilled the criterion of writing something personal, yet would not be as painful as writing about her father seemed to be. In this way, she showed that she understood the classroom norm that one should select a topic about a relative. It was not necessarily the content that she understood, but the social expectations about appropriate topics gained from being part of this classroom. Her final project expressed not only a compromise with the teacher's expectations, but showed some evidence of "internalization" of the classroom dialogue. In the following poem, Anita used some of the ideas that were part of the classroom discourse.

The Poem about My Grandfather

The sun shines bright
 The plums smell sweet
 The birds fly high
 and my Grandfather is nice Just like
 you see, Grandpa! Grandpa! I'll never leave

you, Grandpa! Grandpa! I miss you so much
 Grandpa! Grandpa! Come back to me and
 I'll come back to you, Grandpa! Grandpa!
 I'll hear you in my heart! You are Sweet
 like a plum and you are nice like a bird
 I'll keep you in my heart tonight and
 let the stars shine so bright

I MISS you
 Grandpa

In this poem, Anita has used some descriptive words such as "bright" and "sweet." Additionally, she included comparisons such as "You are sweet like a plum and you are nice like a bird." This seems to be the type of language that Anita thought the teacher wanted and expected. An alternative explanation is that Anita believed that the poetic form was an appropriate one for including descriptive language, whereas a narrative form was not. Whether or not Anita had "internalized" the use of imagery and figurative language for use in subsequent texts, or whether she herself valued it and transformed it to make it her own in other settings, is left open to question. What seems to have occurred is that Anita had gone through a process of writing a text consistent with her own beliefs about a good narrative--the Lenox Hill Camp piece, had interactions with her teacher in which her text was not valued or taken up in the public domain, and then tried to match the teacher's image of good writing through the production of a new text, the poem. Her compromise of topic selection and use of description reflects the influence of the teacher and her peers who had written successful pieces about grandparents.

Writing Conference With Ginny

Anita conducted a writing conference with a first-grader, Ginny, in a small room. They both sat at a table and the conference started off by Ginny reading her piece about an adventure. In this story Ginny wrote that she and a friend, Will, were sitting on the front porch when another character, Danielle, came along and ruined everything. The adventure continued in which the three children went to the playground, fell into a hole, and ended up in a graveyard where they were lost. After more adventures, the characters went home. Ginny's story was written in magic marker on construction paper using

invented spelling. Ginny's text contained a combination of words spelled in conventional ways such as "man," "we," "were," "yard" and many words such as "went," and "grave," found that were spelled in less conventional or invented ways.

After Ginny read the story to Anita, Anita said, "That is good, Gin. All you need to do is put the words [inaudible] and make your handwriting a little better." After asking Ginny if she had written the story herself and suggesting that one page should be the cover of the book, Anita proceeded to help Ginny with the spelling.

Almost the entire focus of the conference was on spelling with one small section on correcting a grammatical mistake. In over 200 turn exchanges that the two girls had during the conference, almost all of the turns centered around fixing the spelling or adding periods. Turns 48-72 demonstrate Anita's focus on spelling and grammar:

48. Anita: Well Will/ Just use those/ Will/ you put a comma/ period/ whatever/
comma/
49. Ginny: Put--
50. Anita: Danielle/
51. Ginny: Danielle/
52. Anita: Danielle and I/
53. Anita: Will/ yes I/ Not me/ I//
54. Ginny: Danielle and --
55. Anita: And I/ Danielle--
56. Ginny: And I?
57. Anita: I makes much more sense than me/ Who wrote Danielle and me? Okay/
Let's fix up some of the words you have in here//
58. Ginny: Okay/
59. Anita: Me and Will were--
60. Ginny: Talk--
61. Anita: Ah ha/
62. Ginny: Were on the front porch talking--

63. Anita: Will/ And/ I/ W-E-R-E/
 64. Ginny: Were talking/ On the front porch//
 65. Anita: On the front, F-R-O-U-N-T/ F-R-O-U-N-T// Front, por-- P-O-R-E/
 66. Ginny: Okay/
 67. Anita: What's that?/
 68. Ginny: Talking/
 69. Anita: Will and I were on the front porch talking// T-A-L-K-I-N-G// Just turn it around it around. I-N/ Will and I were/ U-R-E/ um/
 70. Ginny: Why is that wrong?
 71. Anita: Well/ N-T// P-O-R-T/ P-R-E/ front porch/ T-A-L-K-I-N-G// Talking/ Will and I were on the front porch talking//
 72. Ginny: Talking//

This focus on mechanics characterized the entirety of the conference except for three departures into non-text related discussions--one about Anita's T-shirt, one about whether Ginny had eaten lunch yet, and the final one about the tape recorder. Generally in the conference Anita pointed out places where Ginny should add a period or cross a 'T'. Ginny said the word and then Anita wrote it in tiny letters over Ginny's word. Anita then wrote the story all over on a separate piece of paper using her own "invented spelling." On the back of this paper, Anita made two lists using the red dividing line of the paper. The list looked like this:

words for Jenny to spell

adventure	
with	wall
frount	well
porture	Will, Danyal and I
talking	will and I
She	were.
ronead [ruined]	
ever thing	

The list as well as the conversation provides clues about what may have been going on with Anita. How does this conference with Ginny link back to the classroom

interaction? This list seems to resemble school-like lists with rows of words that a student should practice and memorize, yet this is not a task in which the teacher, Ms. Meyer, had ever engaged students. Not once in the four weeks preceding this student-student conference did Ms. Meyer refer to mechanics or grammar. Instead, her focus was on use of imagery and figurative language. Mechanics did not enter into the discussions at all until the last week after the student-student conferences. One possibility is that Anita was responding to the invented spelling of the student in a way that she thought was quite appropriate. If it were difficult to decode the words of Ginny's story, Anita may have been acting in a way that was suitable to the task. She was providing the kind of help she thought was appropriate in the situation.

The style of this conference resembles traditional teacher student roles. Anita was quite didactic in her style, suggesting to Ginny what she should change. Her tone was gentle, while authoritative. Anita was quite explicit about what she thought Ginny should change in her text. Some parallels exist between the teacher's authoritativeness and Anita's.

In Anita's conference with Ginny, we have no evidence that she internalized what had occurred in the classroom dialogue concerning description and use of figurative language. Instead, Anita's focus was on spelling and punctuation. Why might this be the case? Several explanations are plausible for Anita's seeming lack of uptake of the classroom discourse. One explanation is that because Anita did not orally participate in the discussions, she was not attending to the discussions and thus had little opportunity to understand and use the concepts. A competing explanation is that Anita understood what was occurring in the classroom, but actively resisted the content. Because there was little rapport with the teacher and because Anita felt alienated, she chose not to use the ideas that were presented in class as an act of resistance. Yet another possible explanation is that Anita was responding to the constraints of the text that Ginny presented to her; she may have been responding to the text itself. Anita's list of words to spell correctly is indicative

of Anita's orientation to the teaching task itself and her experience with previous schooling.

Anita may have seen herself in a more traditional teacher role whose job it was to impart knowledge about correct spelling and grammar and to provide an opportunity for Ginny to practice the correct spelling. Further evidence that Anita may have constructed the teaching task in a traditional way is that in two instances, Anita asked Ginny, "Am I boring you?" The questions may have been related to Anita's understanding that school is about doing many spelling tasks and being bored by them. Because she had little experience with writing in a process-oriented classroom, Anita had little opportunity to learn the norms of taking on a less didactic role.

What is Significant About Anita's Case?

In neither Anita's piece about Lenox Hill Camp nor in her writing conference with Ginny do we see evidence of reemergence of the classroom dialogue. Instead, the text that she constructed did not include imagery or figurative language. The writing conference with the first-grader, Ginny, contained no references to figurative language. Instead, the text used an oral format and the conference focused on mechanics and grammar. Why might this be the case?

Several factors seem to have influenced Anita's actions and thinking. First, Anita's lack of previous experience in writing process classrooms may have made it difficult for her to internalize both the cognitive and social norms of participating in Ms. Meyer's class. She had been in a Writing Workshop for only a few weeks, a radically different setting from many traditional classrooms, when she was asked to move from writing personal issues in her notebook to selecting a topic that was appropriate to share with a broader audience. Anita may have believed when she wrote in her notebook about her abusive father that this was an end in itself, thus notebook writing was therapeutic. However, when she was asked to select a topic for a larger audience, she was faced with a

difficult personal dilemma. One of the things she may have internalized for future work was the limits of what should be included in a notebook in this classroom.

Second, Anita's own personal/cultural values may account for the lack of reemergence of the classroom dialogue in her Lenox Hill Camp piece and in her writing conference with Ginny. Anita may come from a background in which the teacher's use of traditional literary figurative language and metaphor are not part of the culture.² As we see from her Lenox Hill Camp piece, Anita did not seem to have much experience with traditional literary devices primarily associated with forms of 19th and early 20th-century European and Euro-American realistic fiction which still dominate "middle brow" literature and children's novels. It may be the case that she has had little experience with this mode of narrative tradition, but may have more exposure to other forms of narrative through television, picture books, or oral storytelling. If she comes from a strong narrative tradition that uses other constructions of word play, it may be even more difficult for her to adjust to the Euro-realistic, personal narrative style, especially if the teacher assumes that this is the only appropriate form (Singer, 1991, personal communication). We do not see indications of signifying either in her written text, but that may be because that form of metaphor is primarily used in oral texts, not written ones.

Third, Anita's shaky relationship with the teacher may have contributed to Anita's dilemma. The teacher explained in an interview that she did not like Anita and Anita felt conflicted about whether she wanted the teacher to talk to her or not. As evidenced by the conference with the teacher, Anita's concept of text and the topic she wrote about did not match the teacher's image of a good text. During the course of the writing conference, Ms. Meyer never looked at Anita's story on Lenox Hill Camp; the conversation was never really

²Note for instance the work of Carol Lee in a 1991 American Educational Research Association address about the use by some African-Americans of figurative language in discourse called "signifying" of which "yo mama so skinny, she do hoola hoop in a apple jack" would be an example.

about Anita's text or topic. Instead, the conference revolved around finding an alternative topic about which to write. The implicit messages to Anita were most likely that the text she wrote was not valued and that it was better to write about something "important" such as her father, even if that meant writing about a painful relationship. Yet, the teacher did little scaffolding to help Anita understand how to select what she considered an appropriate topic for a project. Anita was faced with a difficult dilemma: How could she please the teacher and yet still write about something that would not cause her pain?

Anita's response to this situation was to compromise in genre and in topic. Instead of pursuing her piece on Lenox Hill Camp from her notebook, which was clearly not valued by the teacher, Anita chose to write about her grandfather for her final project. Writing about her grandfather seemed to fulfill the implicit criteria held by the teacher. She chose a poetic form instead of a narrative. The teacher had given two clues that a poetic form might be valued. In the conference when Anita had suggested writing a poem, Ms. Meyer had said in a noncommittal way, "That would be interesting." Also, Ms. Meyer suggested that rather than telling about events, Anita should get to what was "important," thereby suggesting that a narrative of events was not the correct format for a project.

Another indication of compromise was Anita's choice of topic--writing about her grandfather. This choice of topic fulfilled the implicit criterion of writing about something "important" which for Ms. Meyer seemed to be linked to writing about a relative or a personal incident such as a relationship. By writing about her grandfather, Anita could avoid bringing up painful memories about her father and sharing incidents that may have been forbidden by her own cultural or family norms. Yet, Anita could still satisfy the teacher's need for writing about something personal and perhaps her own need to write about something "good " that happened in her life.

We can view Anita's conference with Ginny as another example of a compromise. Because she either did not know how to help another student use imagery and figurative language or because she did not choose to focus on these features, Anita discussed mechanics

in her writing conference with Ginny. Discussing mechanics may have been a way to please her teacher by engaging in the type of talk that she thought was appropriate for talking about text in school--focusing on mechanics. It may have been a topic in which she felt that she was the expert and could provide help to a younger student. No doubt previous school norms played a large part in Anita's focus on mechanics and predominated over the current classroom discourse. However, it may be that the previous norms were predominant because Anita felt alienated in her current classroom situation.

Anita's coping strategy of compromise suggests that she did internalize some of the social norms including selecting an appropriate topic and cognitive emphases including the use of imagery. Her case helps illustrate the types of knowledge a student needed to be successful in this classroom.

Summary

The four cases have provided examples of differences in the quality of interaction between teacher and student and the subsequent texts students created and their interactions with younger students. The case of Miguel was an example of a student who contributed often to class discussions and whose ideas were valued by the teacher. He drew upon multiple voices in the classroom to use in his text comparing himself with the killer whale and in his talk with other students. He represents the "ideal" Graves (1983) teacher in his conference with the younger student because he focused on what younger student wanted to express.

Anthony's case was illustrative of a student who was successful at internalizing much of the content of the classroom dialogue. In the teacher's interactions with him, she provided direction and encouragement, acting as a kind of coach. Anthony used extensive description and imagery in his text about his grandmother and took on a didactic role in his writing conference with the younger student.

Ella and the teacher developed a shared understanding of her topic over the course of two writing conferences. Although some conflict arose with the teacher in relation to

her writing of fiction, she and the teacher negotiated the topic and genre of her project-- writing a letter to her aunt. Ella was able to understand the norms of the classroom and the teacher's expectations, drawing from features of the classroom dialogue, while retaining her previously developed "fictional" voice.

Anita offered an example of a student who was less successful in negotiating a shared understanding with her teacher during the conference. Anita had no experience with writing process classrooms before and the teacher did little scaffolding to help Anita understand the classroom norms, ways to select a topic for a project, or the focus on language and style. Anita responded by taking on the traditional role of a teacher, focusing on mechanics and grammar during her conference with the younger student. Although her initial text about Lenox Hill Camp did not fit the teacher's image of good writing, Anita wrote a poem to her grandfather for her project that reflected some of the classroom dialogue.

Chapter 6 compares the cases of the four students in terms of the quality of the interactions with their teacher and what they subsequently internalized for use in their texts and talk with younger students.

CHAPTER 6

COMPARISONS ACROSS CASES

In this chapter, I compare the four case study students in terms of both the cognitive aspects and social norms, which are intertwined, of the classroom. First, I compare their opportunities for social interaction by looking closely at the teacher-student conferences for each student. These conferences allow for a close-up analysis of the factors that contributed to the teacher and student developing intersubjectivity. Second, I compare the conferences that the case study students conducted with younger students. Third, I compare the texts that students produced. The texts and conferences with younger students provide windows through which to compare the students' internalization processes.

Conferences with the Teacher:

Scaffolding and Establishing Intersubjectivity

In the section that compares teacher-student interactions during writing conferences, two different approaches are used. First, I identify the points within the conferences where there is teacher-student uptake. These points are indicators of how the teacher scaffolded instruction for the student and how the teacher and student attempted to establish intersubjectivity, a shared understanding. Second, I place these points within the larger context of the overall interactions between teacher and student within the conferences. As I compare teacher and student interactions in the conferences, I use the features of content and conversational style. By using both the close-up viewpoint and the larger patterns of the conferences, the comparisons among students become clearer.

Teacher-Student Uptake

In analyzing the teacher-student conference data, key points within the dialogue emerged as contributing to whether the teacher and student developed a shared understanding. The teacher and student usually developed this understanding by actively picking up on the other's idea and pursuing it. These key points are also windows into how

the teacher scaffolded instruction for the student. In the section below, I use examples from the conferences to show how the students' and the teacher's ideas were either picked up and pursued by the other or not followed up. One indicator of when and how the teacher and student developed an understanding is listener-speaker uptake. Uptake is evidenced by the listener actually incorporating the speaker's words or ideas in his/her subsequent phrases. Often the inflection that was used by one speaker was mirrored by the other when the teacher and student seemed to be communicating. The example of Miguel serves to illustrate this point.

Miguel's synchrony with the teacher has already been noted. The example below provides an opportunity to see the factors that may have contributed to their developing intersubjectivity. In this conference, Miguel began with noting a phrase from his notebook:

1. Miguel: With a belt/
2. T: Oh/ (she reads) "with a belt /on my"/
3. Miguel: uncle's hand/
4. T: Oh/ God/ [*appreciative sound*] Your writing is so good/ [*whispers*] So you are saying he kind of like/
5. Miguel: Threatened me/
6. T: Threatened you/ Wow//

In turns 1 -2, Miguel emphasized the word "belt" which Ms. Meyer picked up on, echoing his emphasis. Likewise in turns 5-6, a similar phenomenon took place with the word "threatened." The similarity of inflection on the part of the teacher and student here is indicative of developing synchrony. Likewise, in another conference, Miguel and the teacher had the same type of interplay with words. Either the teacher or the student introduced an idea, then the other incorporated it. The following is an example of this incorporation:

45. T: Hmm/ So what do you think you want to do/ Miguel?/ You think you may not be ready/ to do a project yet?/ Nothing really stands out as being important to you in here?// You can't kind of put your finger on what's important to you?//
46. Miguel: Well--
47. T: Okay, so--
48. Miguel: Mostly the killer whale/
49. T: Uh huh/
50. Miguel: It's my favorite whale and/ I like the way it stands out/
51. T: Mhmmm/
52. Miguel: It's// the colors it has//

Here the teacher had introduced the idea of "standing out" which Miguel seemed to pick up on in such a way that he associated the meaning with a killer whale "standing out" among other whales, perhaps because of its colors. Miguel picked up the idea of choosing a topic that was important, while making use of the term "stand out." This is the segment of the dialogue in which the teacher and Miguel seemed to have come to a shared understanding of what the topic of the project would be; it was the pivotal point for subsequent discussions about the project.

In Anthony's case, Ms. Meyer dominated much of the conference, not providing many opportunities for Anthony's input. However, towards the end of the conference, Ms. Meyer focused on description, using his text and pointing out parts of the text she liked. As she was providing suggestions and asking what the clothes looked like, Anthony volunteered that his grandmother had worn blue clothes with hearts. He clearly showed that he understood the point she was making by offering an example. It was at this point at the end of the conference that the teacher and Anthony displayed that they had developed a shared understanding of description:

23. T: . . . Now you can start it like that/ she always/ wore loose clothes/" What did they look like?/
24. Anthony: They were/ I always saw blue with hearts on it//

25. T: Go/ go/ go/ Explain what the embroidery looked like/....

The teacher and student had attained shared understanding about the task of describing Anthony's grandmother. The emphasis upon "looked" seemed to have provided cues to Anthony which he understood and pursued. Ms. Meyer emphasized "look;" Anthony, in turn, emphasized "blue" as a response to what the clothes looked like; and the teacher emphasized again the word "looked" as she departed. These are clues to the ways in which the teacher and student established intersubjectivity.

In the case of Ella, the teacher and student did not start out with a shared understanding of what the project was about. When Ella and the teacher began their first conference, they did not have a shared understanding of what "important" meant. The teacher believed it to be something deeply personal, while Ella believed important had to do with items that were newsworthy.

3. T: Mhmm/ And nothing seems to stand out for you as being important?//

4. Ella: Not really/

However, Ella demonstrated understanding when the teacher used the word "often" as an indicator of something important about which to write. At this point, Ella brought up the topic of herself and later her aunt:

5. T: Mhmm/ Is there something you seem to write about more often than/ than not//

6. Ella: Yeah/

7. T: What do you think that is?//

8. Ella: Ummm/ well/ about ummm/ usually about me and when I was little

Although the teacher and student did not use each others' words in the subsequent sentences, they were responding to one another in such a way that communication seemed to have been clear. Ella had understood the topic of the project as something she wrote about frequently in her notebook.

In their second conference, Ms. Meyer and Ella also developed a shared understanding at particular points in the conversation. In the following example, the teacher suggested what Ella needed to do to turn her entries into a letter form. When the teacher introduced the idea of the letter and needing to address a particular person, Ella picked up on it and provided an example of talking directly to the person:

9. T: But you need to have the whole tone change In other words you have to be/ speaking to her as if it is in a letter/. . . It's kind of like you kind of need to be talking to her as if you would in a letter/
10. Ella: I started doing that/ it was like I was telling it to Serena (laughs)/
11. T: Ahh/ yeah/ it's a good idea/

The teacher emphasized the words "tone," "speaking" and "letter" to convey the idea of changing the form of the written work into a letter. Ella picked up on this idea, giving an example of how she had read her piece aloud to her friend, Serena. The teacher, in turn, encouraged her through the use of her emphasis on "yeah" and "idea." In this example, we see how the teacher introduced ideas that Ella pursued. In the next example which occurred later on in the second conference, Ella introduced an idea which the teacher built on:

14. Ella: My mother said / my mother said/ she um like she got her friend to/ like we are making a tape/
15. T: You are going to tape it and send it to her also?/
16. Ella: Yeah/
17. T: That's wonderful/ [*draws out word*]

Near the end of the conference, Ella demonstrated that she understood the teacher's emphasis upon turning the entries into a letter, expressed through her inflection upon letter as opposed to "phone:"

28. Ella: She is always been telling me "Write me a letter write me a letter instead of running up the phone bill" (laughs)/
29. T: So that could be a good start/

In these selections, both Ella and Ms. Meyer have introduced ideas which the other picked up on and developed. Inflection on certain words seemed to be a key feature in communication between the teacher and student, aiding in establishing intersubjectivity.

In contrast to these examples is the case of Anita. Despite Anita's introduction of several topics, the teacher rarely pursued those topics. Ms. Meyer introduced the topic of Anita's father on several occasions, yet Anita resisted pursuing those leads even though she answered the teacher's questions. We can observe the lack of following up on a topic each speaker had introduced in this series of turns taken by the teacher and student. Ms. Meyer had just suggested that Anita might select entries about her father for her project. She ended the turn by saying:

37. T: You know/ It seems to me that/ you have all these entries about the good and the bad times about your father and maybe you should just pick one// You know I'm not trying to tell you what to do/ you know but/ it seems to me that you have more important stuff in here than/ Lenox Hill camp// [*somewhat disgusted tone of voice*] You know what I mean?// Unless you don't really want to write about it/ Do you have other good entries about your father here besides this one?//

38. Anita: Not really// [*drawn out syllables*]

(They look through the notebook together. Anita puts her hands on notebook and is trying to flip pages).

39. Anita: That is the first day of school when Nick was bothering me/

40. T: Mhmmm (long pause) So many of your entries have to do with your father--

41. Anita: This is about--

42. T: Mhmmm--

43. Anita: that's the same thing/

44. T: Mhmmm// [*even, noncommittal tone*]

Each time Anita introduced a possible topic, Ms. Meyer ignored it. Likewise, when the teacher brought up her father, Anita focused on a different topic. In their inflections, they

emphasized different words. Essentially, no overlap of ideas existed in the conference segments between Ms. Meyer and Anita.

The close-up analyses of where in the conferences teacher and student seemed to develop a shared understanding can now be put in the larger context of the overall patterns of interaction between the teacher and a student in the conferences. These comparisons will be made in the next section. Both the content of what students and teachers discussed during the conferences and the conversational styles that they used during their interactions were important aspects of the social interaction.

Several features of the content such as topics discussed, particular language cues such as the word "important," and indicators of support such as "good idea" were relevant to establishing intersubjectivity . Features of conversational style such as body language, prosodic cues, and conversational moves were related to the quality of their interactions. Students will be compared on these features, beginning with the content, what the teachers and student talked about, during the conferences. Table 4 represents the comparisons among the teacher-student conferences.

Content

Topics of Conferences

What topics did the teacher discuss with the students and why might this be important? Topics of writing conferences may include anything from an exploration of genre, writing topic selection, organization, to spelling and mechanics (e.g., Sperling, 1989). The topic of the conference is an important factor for negotiation and can affect the student and teacher coming to a shared understanding. The topics of the conferences Ms. Meyer conducted with the students in Room 555 tended to be focused on selecting a topic for a writing project, selecting an appropriate genre or form for the project, or developing good leads. The main topics of the lengthy conferences between Ms. Meyer and the case study students followed this pattern.

Table 4 Comparisons of Teacher-Student Conferences

	Miguel	Anthony	Ella	Anita
Class	Working	Middle	Middle	Working
Ethnicity	Latino	Latino	African-American	African-American
Academic Standing	"Excellent"	"Good"	"Excellent"	"Failing"
Number of teacher-student conferences	4	2	2	1
Content				
Project Topic	Comparison of himself to whales	Description and narrative of grandmother	Letter to aunt with narrative	Oral narrative about camp experience; poem to grandfather
Encouraging Words	Many	Some	Many	Few
Conversational Style				
Body Language	Close proximity; eye contact; nods, smiles	Close proximity; eye contact; nods	Close proximity; eye contact; nods, laughter	Distant; little eye contact
Teacher Moves	Open and specific questions; few recommendations	Few open questions; directive	Open and specific questions; summarized; tentative recommendations	Few open questions; directive
Prosodic Cues	Gentle, supportive tone	Became supportive	Supportive (except disapproval of fiction)	Disapproving, bored tone
Student Moves	Agreement with teacher; enthusiasm; initiated topics teacher pursued	Agreement with teacher; didn't initiate topics	Agreement with teacher; some enthusiasm; initiated topics teacher pursued	Some disagreement with teacher; no enthusiasm; initiated topics teacher didn't pursue

Because Anthony had already selected his topic and was well on his way to writing his project, his conference with the teacher focused on organization and elaboration of the piece. In the conference, the teacher selected particular lines to bring to Anthony's attention and made suggestions about how he needed to add more description. Teacher and student had a shared understanding of Anthony's topic, his grandmother, from the outset.

Topics of the discussion between Ms. Meyer and Miguel focused on the selection of the topic he would write about for his project. Most of the conference was about finding an "important" topic to develop into a project with the outcome being Miguel's choice of the killer whale. The conference ended with an exploration of genre--writing a non-fiction piece comparing himself to a killer whale.

Ella had two focal conferences with the teacher. The first centered on selecting a topic--memories of experiences with her aunt, and then moved into a discussion about genre, with the teacher encouraging Ella to write a letter. The second conference developed the focus on genre and included specific suggestions about how to turn the present draft into a letter to her aunt by starting off with a particular lead.

With Anita, a brief exploration of genre took place near the beginning of the conference in which Anita first suggested she would turn her Lenox Hill Camp piece into a poem, then a story. The bulk of the conference, however, centered around the teacher's trying to get Anita to find an alternative topic--namely writing about her father because that is what seemed to have been "important" to the teacher.

In comparing the topics discussed in the conference, we can see how topics fit the teacher's idea of what constituted an appropriate topic for a project. In each case, a personal topic was discussed. Anthony had already selected his grandmother and the deeply personal experience of her death as his topic. The conference picked up on some of the special moments he had selected. The teacher seemed to see the killer whale as a vehicle for Miguel's writing about himself--a personal topic. It was the discussion about moments with her aunt that prompted Ella to write about her. For Anita, the struggle in

the conference occurred around the issue of her writing about a personal, upsetting topic--her father, versus writing about an experience she remembered as filled with fun.

In three of the four cases, then, the teacher and student developed a shared understanding of the topic of the projects within the conference itself. Both the teacher and student came to agree within the conferences that these were "important" topics about which to write. In the fourth case, that of Anita, the student and teacher did not come to an agreement in the conference about the topic she should write about. However, later Anita selected a topic that most likely would have gained the teacher's approval--the topic of her grandfather.

The Word "Important"

Language cues also formed part of the content teacher and students discussed in the conferences. In three of the four cases, the word "important" played a key role in indicating intersubjectivity. With Anthony, where the word important did not surface, there was a tacit agreement that what he was writing about, his grandmother, was already an important topic. In the case of Miguel, the teacher and student came to a shared understanding of what was important with the teacher suggesting he write about himself and the student suggesting the killer whale. Together they decided upon the comparison between the child and the whale as an important topic about which to write. Both seemed to agree that this topic satisfied the criteria for what was "important."

With Ella, intersubjectivity was established over the course of the conference. First, Ella had had a different idea of what was an "important" topic; that is, she believed one had to write about something newsworthy. However, through the conference the teacher and student came to a shared understanding about what constituted an "important" topic. They agreed that Ella should write about her aunt.

In the case of Anita, her definition and the teacher's definition of what was "important" did not match during the conference. Anita believed initially that writing about Lenox Hill Camp was significant, while the teacher assumed that it was her

relationship with her father that was essential to Anita. The word, "important," was key to understanding both the similarities and the differences among students and the degree to which they established intersubjectivity with their teacher. When the student already shared, or came to share the teacher's definition of "important," a greater opportunity existed for a quality interaction in which the participants understood one another.

Words of Encouragement

The teacher's use of supportive words such as "good" or "wonderful" also seemed to be indicators of when the teacher and student had reached a shared understanding of what was important. For instance, Ms. Meyer ended her conference with Miguel by telling him his piece would "really be nice." At the point at which the teacher and Anthony seemed to have reached agreement, she pointed to a particular line and said, "I love that." She ended her conferences with Ella by saying, "That sounds like a nice project" at the close of the first and by saying, "That's kind of great, right?" In contrast, the teacher did not use supportive statements during the conference with Anita, nor did they reach agreement within the conference. Words of encouragement by the teacher were indicators of how the teacher viewed the student's choice of topic and her beliefs about the potential of the piece to be interesting to an audience.

In addition to the content (topic, language cues, and words of encouragement), other factors also contributed to the development of intersubjectivity between teacher and student. These factors are concerned with the ways in which the teacher and students conveyed their messages during their conferences.

Conversational Style

Aspects of conversational style within the conferences relating to the quality of student-teacher interactions include: (a) body language and proxemic cues; (b) conversational moves by the teacher; (c) prosodic cues; and (d) conversational moves by the student. These factors were intertwined and mutually influential, providing evidence

for intersubjectivity. First, I will compare the proxemic cues and other aspects related to body language.

Body Language and Proxemic Cues

Factors such as distance between speakers, amount of eye contact, attention to the other speaker, nods, smiles, and laughter all contributed to the degree of success in the interactions. With both Anthony and Miguel, the teacher came into very close contact with them. She stooped next to them in conferences, occasionally touched them on the shoulder or arm, and made frequent eye contact. Both students nodded in agreement frequently during the conferences. Teacher and students tended to be very attentive to one another, indicated by their looking at one another. Both the teacher and the student smiled during their interactions, and the teacher laughed appreciatively, particularly during her interactions with Miguel.

In the teacher's first conference with Ella, the distance between speakers was about three feet, which is average in American discourse (Hall, 1966). Facing each other during their conversation, they made frequent eye contact. Ella also indicated her agreement through her occasional nods. In the second conference, the teacher and student were even closer together and shared laughter near the ending sequence. The speakers' body language indicated a degree of synchrony between them.

In contrast, in her sole conference with Anita, Ms. Meyer sat at a distance from her and they rarely made eye contact. After the teacher raised the issue of her father, Anita's gaze drifted toward the floor or the rest of the class, rather than toward the teacher. The teacher herself indicated discomfort in the conference by her distracted gaze and through nervous behaviors such as picking lint off her blouse. In their conference, there were few authentic smiles, no laughter, and little physical contact. Ms. Meyer's and Anita's body language lacked any indication of development of synchrony between them.

Conversational Moves by the Teacher

Types of conversational moves by the teacher and frequency of each type differed among her interactions with the students. For instance, Ms. Meyer had four major moves that she made during conferences: (a) interrogatives; (b) commands; (c) statements; and (d) expressive cues. Students tended to produce (a) explanations in response to requests for information by the teacher; (b) agreements with the teacher; (c) disagreements; and (d) topic initiations in which the student introduced a topic for discussion. Requests for information from the teacher occurred in only one case. Within each of these moves, each respondent used several strategies. These differences in moves provide a second way in which to look at how the teacher and student did or did not achieve synchrony.

Interrogatives. As referred to in chapter 4, Ms. Meyer used interrogatives, both open and closed, frequently. Even when she did not preface her sentences with an interrogative format (e.g., using *do*, *how*, *what* *when*, *where*, *why*), she raised her voice at the end of the sentence to indicate she wished a response by the student. Often these questions were framed in such a way that she sought agreement, "Do you want to try that?" Occasionally she used her questions to challenge a student's idea. She used these strategies differently with different students, however.

With Miguel, she asked both general open questions such as "What were you thinking?" and more closed questions requesting specific information such as "Don't you have a lot of entries about dreams?" In fact, most of the teacher's talk with Miguel consisted of questions and follow-up probes as opposed to use of commands or recommendations. Likewise, Ms. Meyer asked Ella many open and closed questions. In contrast, Anthony and Anita were asked fewer questions; these questions tended to be probes requesting specific information. With both Miguel and Ella, Ms. Meyer sought their agreement through a number of questions such as "Sounds like something that might be important to you?" In contrast, she questioned the assumptions of Anita asking, "Do you think that out of all these entries, that one is the most important to you?"

Statements. Frequency and type of statements the teacher made to individual students differed as well. The teacher made fewer factual statements to Miguel and Ella, while providing more statements to Anthony and to Anita. More telling, however, is that within these statements her emphasis was more upon agreeing with Miguel or indicating understanding such as, "I know what you mean." Ms. Meyer's statements to Anthony tended to be expressions of her opinion and advice about his work. She was not necessarily commanding him to organize his piece into three parts when she said, "The way I see it there are three parts to your grandmother piece." Rather, she was providing him with her view of how she saw the piece. With Ella, she summarized frequently what she understood Ella to be saying like, "So you are missing her," but with Anita she challenged her or implied the girl was wrong as in, "No, you were gone for one week like for four days, that's how long Lenox Hill Camp is."

The teacher's use of statements functioned in different ways within the specific contexts of her conferences with the individual students. Saying to a student, "I know what you mean" seemed to function for Miguel as encouragement to continue talking and thinking about his topic. By contrast, the teacher's authoritative correction of what Anita had suggested for the time frame of camp served to cut down on communication and reduce opportunities for developing synchrony.

Commands/recommendations. The teacher's use of commands varied from gentle encouragements to suggestions to strong recommendations, depending on the student and the situation. She made fewer recommendations to Miguel and Ella than she did to Anthony and to Anita. With Miguel and Ella, her suggestions were more tentative, using words such as "could" or "might." With Anita and Anthony she tended to be more directive. For instance, to Anita she said, "Really go through this book really carefully and read it very carefully and take another color pen and underline all of the sentences where you wrote something so beautifully." Here the teacher is being much more directive, telling Anita quite explicitly

what she needed to do. Although she was explicit with Anthony as well, there was a different tone to their interactions. This will be discussed in detail in a later section.

Expressive cues. Ms. Meyer appeared to have a core of frequently repeated expressions, conveying different meanings depending on the context of the conversation. For instance, she used "Mhmmm" and "OK," varying her meaning through intonation and inflection cues. Thus "OK" served as a question, a transition, or an indication of agreement. "Mhmmm" could indicate boredom or encouragement.

With Miguel, the teacher's "Mhmmm's" served to encourage him to read more from his work or to search his notebook for relevant pieces. At one point, early in their lengthy conference, she laughed and emphasized her "Mhmmm" to show Miguel that she agreed with his interpretation and she liked his use of the metaphor "like strangers to each other." In her conference with Anthony, she did not use expressive cues, but rather indicated her interest in the piece by reading aloud from it, pointing out the features she liked. Ms. Meyer used several "Mhmmm's" in her first conference with Ella in which they were trying to find a topic for the project. These expressive cues served as communicating to Ella that she was understanding her. In contrast to the other students, with Anita her "Mhmmm's" were either matter of fact or bored, showing little interest or enthusiasm. Typically, the tone of voice indicated the expression's function.

Prosodic Cues

The teacher, whose style of interaction was often dramatic, used several prosodic cues such as speed, intonation, pitch, and inflection to communicate with the students. With Miguel, Ms. Meyer's tone was gentle. She used a soft whisper on occasion when she was reading his work such as when she said, "Oh God your writing is so good." She also used voice inflection to show her understanding and appreciation of his work, emphasizing "Oh God" and "good." She encouraged Miguel to continue talking and describing his ideas through the ways in which she said, "Mhmmm" which usually included a tone of interest.

For the most part, Ms. Meyer used a supportive tone of voice with Ella. She laughed and was enthusiastic; her tone was marked by change of speed when reading Ella's work and actually taking on the voice of Ella in the letter to her aunt. Giggling together was also an expression of how Ms. Meyer and Ella were establishing intersubjectivity through their voices. These voice indicators expressed Ms. Meyer's enthusiasm for the piece that Ella was writing. By contrast, she expressed her disapproval for Ella's fiction project through her voice change and suggestion to get to work on her letter to her aunt.

Communicated through her tone of voice, Ms. Meyer started out on the occasions of her conferences with Anthony by being annoyed with him. However, on both occasions she became interested once Anthony began to discuss his topic or when she read from his actual text. Once she was engaged, the teacher showed her interest and appreciation by reading his piece with a dramatic flair, whispering when she said, "Thank God." Her voice also conveyed an emphasis upon description as she encouraged Anthony to add more description to his piece.

With Anita she expressed disapproval through her intonation and inflection. When Anita suggested she would turn her Lenox Hill Camp piece into a poem, Ms. Meyer responded with surprise, "A poem? You would turn that entry into a poem?" This seemed to cue Anita to change her mind; she indicated immediately that, no, she would turn it into a story. Similarly, Ms. Meyer's "Mhmmm's" to Anita rarely reflected genuine interest. Instead, they were usually flat, marked by a low-fall pattern. Her directives were also marked by a slower speed, indicating she wanted Anita to pay attention and follow through on her suggestions.

Together, the teacher's body language, conversational moves, and prosodic cues gave students both explicit and implicit messages about the value of their ideas. On each of these dimensions the teacher and student match were slightly different, depending on the student and the context. However, taking all of these factors into consideration, indicators of intersubjectivity included: (a) sitting in close proximity to student and making

frequent eye contact; (b) asking more open-ended questions and making fewer recommendations to the student; (c) using expressive cues as indicators of agreement and encouragement; and (d) using a supportive tone of voice. In contrast, lack of intersubjectivity included: (a) distance between speakers with little eye contact; (b) frequent closed questions with frequent commands or directives; (c) expressive cues that indicated boredom; and (d) prosodic cues that did not support students' ideas.

Because communication involves two participants, the students' conversational moves were also very important. Their initiations of topics and responses determined subsequent discourse within the conferences and contributed to the quality of interaction.

Conversational Moves by the Student

Students tended to have several forms of response to the teacher. The most common conversational move was for the student to explain something in response to the teacher's questions. Another common form of response was to show agreement with the teacher such as "Yeah," "Sure" or "Good" or, less common, disagreement took the form of "No," or "Not really." Sometimes the student initiated a topic for discussion such as looking through their notebooks and bringing up an issue, or in the case of Ella volunteering that she was doing a project with me. Most rare was for a student to request information from the teacher.

What difference did students' responses make in the interactions? All four students spent the bulk of their time answering the teacher's questions, explaining what they had written or were intending to write. Differences among students emerged in comparing their degree of agreement with the teacher. For instance, Miguel's responses frequently agreed with the teacher. Anthony and Ella also agreed with the teacher, while Anita was less likely to agree with the teacher, expressed through either ignoring the teacher or saying, "Not really." The tone of voice also communicated agreements or disagreements. For instance, Miguel used strong positive statements, said in an enthusiastic tone of voice, whereas Anita's agreements consisted of reluctant "Yeahs."

Only Ella asked a question of the teacher, asking when the project was due, which suggests that students may not have seen this as part of their role. Students did initiate topics to discuss with the teacher. For instance, Miguel and Ella brought up topics for discussion during the conferences. Anita, too, initiated topics several times, reading from her notebook and pointing to specific features in her text. Yet, although Anita initiated topics for discussion on several occasions, her topics were never pursued by the teacher. The teacher did not respond to it, but instead introduced a new topic. In contrast, Miguel introduced fewer topics, but each time he did, the teacher built on it.

The building upon ideas appeared to be connected to the development of intersubjectivity. Miguel's ideas were frequently pursued, contributing to intersubjectivity. Ella did not initiate many ideas, but those that were introduced were often pursued by the teacher. Anthony had little opportunity to contribute ideas in his conference, but towards the end when he described his grandmother's clothes in response to the teacher's probes, she encouraged him. Anita's topics were not pursued, nor did they reach a shared understanding during the conference.

These data suggest that the quality of the interaction was determined through a variety of means: body language and proxemic cues, conversational moves on the part of the students and the teacher, and prosodic cues including intonation, pitch, and voice inflection. None of these factors in of itself determined whether the teacher and student developed intersubjectivity. Rather, all of these features played a role in contributing to synchrony between the teacher and student.

Figures 5-8 represent in a holistic way the degree of synchrony the teacher and student developed. The data suggest that the teacher and Miguel had a high degree of synchrony. They developed a shared understanding of Miguel's' project, comparing the whale to himself. The teacher and student sat close to one another and made frequent eye contact. She asked him many questions, including some open-ended ones. She used few factual statements with Miguel, and tended to seek his agreement. Ms. Meyer made fewer

recommendations to Miguel than to other students, and when she did, she used more tentative words such as "might" and "could." The teacher's tone was gentle and supportive with him. Miguel responded by agreeing frequently with the teacher, often with enthusiasm. When he introduced topics into the conference, the teacher usually pursued them. These features led to a high degree of intersubjectivity between teacher and student which is represented in Figure 5.

Anthony and the teacher had a shared understanding of what was important to write about--a personal piece about his grandmother. Although the teacher used only occasional words of encouragement, she focused on particular features of his text that she liked and supported his development of those. They were in close proximity for much of the conference and both focused their eyes on the piece they were discussing. The teacher asked few open-ended questions, providing her own opinion instead. The teacher was quite directive with Anthony, but supportive as well. Although she began the conferences being slightly irritated, she became engaged in his piece, and became quite supportive. Anthony agreed with the teacher during the conference and became more enthusiastic during the course of it. He did not initiate topics, but responded to the teacher's probes. Anthony and the teacher developed intersubjectivity during the course of the conference; their degree of synchrony is represented in Figure 6.

Figure 7 reflects the level of intersubjectivity Ella and the teacher developed during the conferences. Although they initially had differing views of what was "important," they developed a shared understanding of what was involved in Ella's writing a letter to her aunt. While in their first conference, they were not in close proximity, during the second conference teacher and student sat near one another and shared moments of laughter and synchrony. The teacher asked both open and more specific questions of Ella, often summarizing what she had said. Her recommendations tended to be more tentative than directive, interspersed with encouragement. Generally, the teacher was supportive of Ella's ideas, except in the case of the controversial subject of writing a

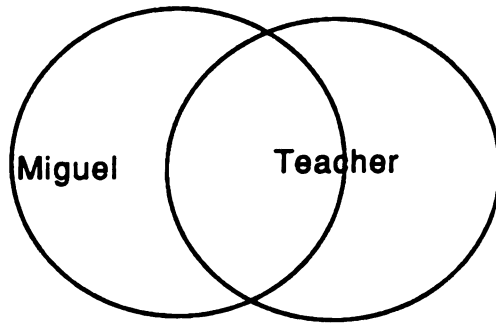


Figure 5 Miguel's Intersubjectivity with Teacher

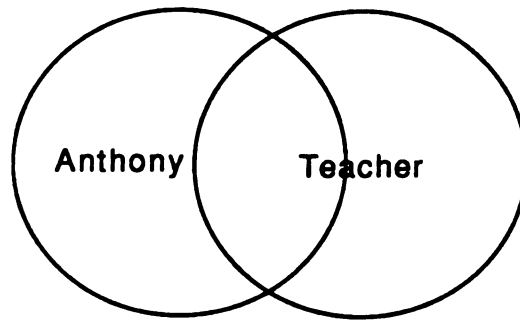


Figure 6 Anthony's Intersubjectivity with Teacher

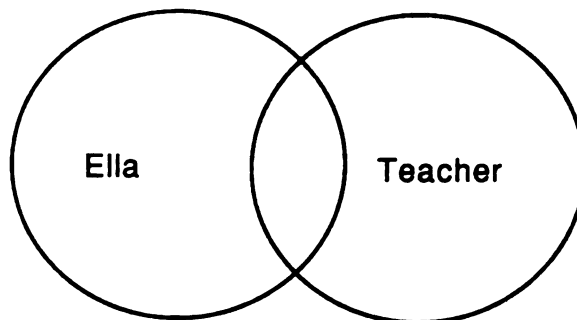


Figure 7 Ella's Intersubjectivity with Teacher

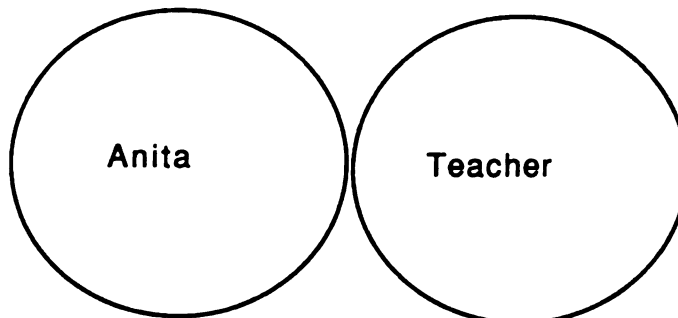


Figure 8 Anita's Intersubjectivity With Teacher

fiction project. In this case, the teacher expressed disapproval through prosodic cues and becoming more directive about what Ella should do in her piece about her aunt. Ella outwardly agreed with the teacher in almost all instances. When she initiated topics, the teacher usually pursued them. The teacher and students had developed a shared understanding within certain realms. When Ella accepted the teacher's definition of writing about something important and not writing fiction, the two were in synchrony.

In contrast to the other three cases, there is lack of synchrony between the teacher and Anita; this lack of synchrony is represented in Figure 8. They did not reach a shared understanding within the conference about the topic. While Anita had suggested the topic of writing about Lenox Hill Camp, the teacher maintained her own view that Anita should write about her father. The two speakers were distant from one another and did not make eye contact. The teacher used few words of encouragement. Ms. Meyer also used fewer interrogatives, relying more on directing the student to do specific things. The teacher also included factual statements and, on occasion, challenged Anita's statements. The teacher's tone of voice was sometimes disapproving or bored. Anita sometimes disagreed with the teacher, and her voice lacked enthusiasm when responding to issues related to her father. When she initiated topics, the teacher rarely pursued those topic, but introduced her own agenda.

Differences in teacher-student interactions are clear from the conferences between the teacher and student. How did these differences in interaction styles among the teacher-student pairs relate to what different students internalized? By comparing the writing conferences the students conducted with younger students, and the texts students created, we can gain some insight into how they used the dialogue from the conferences and other aspects of the classroom.

Writing Conferences with Younger Students

How did the case study students conduct conferences with younger students? What do these conferences reflect about students' internalization processes? The features of

content and conversational styles of conferences with younger students are used in comparing the different students' ways of interacting. Using these categories allows us to link the content and styles of the conferences conducted with younger students back to the teacher-student interactions and the classroom dialogue. Table 5 summarizes the comparisons of students' conferences with younger students.

Content

Of all the students' conferences, Anthony's conference with Will most clearly reflected the content of the classroom dialogue. Anthony clearly focused on the use of imagery, calling it "description." He mentioned description on several occasions and strongly encouraged Will to use it in his own text. Anthony's examples from his own text were illustrative of descriptive pieces. He pointed out which pieces in his notebook were more like diary writing as opposed to notebook writing. He chose two pieces from his own notebook that used descriptive language: (a) the description of his grandmother dying and her scream filling the room; and (b) a description of his grandmother's "old crinkly face that I kissed. And her wet lips hit my face like a drop of rain." Anthony also used an example from literature, The Fox Mare to show description.

Besides using his own notebook which tied directly back to the classroom and the modeling of the teacher and trainer, Anthony also demonstrated how Will could use "post its" to mark important aspects of his text. Anthony often employed the exact words that had arisen in the classroom such as "getting a picture in the reader's mind" or using "good words" like "kissing the top of the leaves like gold coins." Anthony clearly made use of the classroom dialogue in his conference with Will, using the terms and ideas in a way that demonstrated he understood the ideas, even if the younger student did not.

Like Anthony, Miguel brought up description in his conference with Monet. On two occasions, he suggested that she could use description in her piece. In fact, early in the conference he gave her an idea about how she could add description to her piece about the fish. However, his focus was not on description as much as it was on encouraging Monet to

Table 5 Comparisons of Cases

	Miguel	Anthony	Ella	Anita
Content Focus of Conference	Student's interests; description	Description	Author as person	Mechanics and spelling
Style in Conferences With Younger Student	Ideal "Graves" teacher	Didactic; uses own notebook	Interview style	Didactic; makes list of words for student to copy
Text	Imagery, simile	Imagery, metaphor, simile	Imagery, fictional voice	Event-centered, chronological, little imagery

write about additional topics. He frequently picked up on ideas Monet expressed, giving her examples of how she might turn her ideas into text. Much of the content of the conference between Miguel and Monet depended upon ideas Monet mentioned. For instance, when Monet said she had wanted to make her story more adventure-like, Miguel asked her if that were true and then asked her questions about the fish, a character in her story. Unlike Anthony, who seemed to have his own agenda about description to pursue, much of the content of Miguel's conference depended on Monet's initiation of topics.

Ella's conference focused on the author herself and what the author liked. She asked questions about where the younger student got her ideas, who did the illustrations, and how much the class was involved in writing. The central component was on the young writer and her attitudes and experiences with writing. There was no mention of description, nor did any of the content tie directly back to the classroom dialogue. The content of the conference more nearly resembled the interview sessions I had with Ella in which I focused on her interests, her attitudes toward writing, and her former experiences with writing.

Unlike Miguel's, Anthony's, and Ella's conferences with younger students, it was difficult to trace the content of Anita's conferences to any classroom events this year. The content of the conference consisted almost entirely of mechanics such as spelling, grammar, punctuation, and penmanship. Anita corrected Ginny's use of "me" to "I," spelled words for her, explained that she needed a period, and pointed out where she needed to cross her "t." Although Ms. Meyer did not discuss any of these grammatical features before Anita engaged in the writing conference with the younger student, this content is often discussed in many American classrooms. Perhaps Anita's perception of Ms. Meyer's correcting her work prompted her to "fix" Ginny's paper as best she could.

Conversational Style

The styles which case study students used in their conferences with younger students varied widely. Anthony's style tended to be very didactic; he would often tell the

young child what to write or explain the importance of certain features of text such as description or how to use "post its." He used examples from his own notebook and examples from literature to make his points. He even wrote down a new beginning for the younger student, drawing from his experiences in his own teacher-student writing conference in which the teacher jotted down an organizational structure. His occasional questions of Will were quite specific, for instance, asking him if he knew what a "chill down my spine is?" Anthony used these questions and Will's responses to explain his own point of view. Occasionally, he even interrupted Will to pursue an interest of his own. The tone of the conference was supportive, however, and Anthony tried to encourage Will, suggesting that he could become a writer.

Anthony's didacticism resembles the teacher's style of interaction with him. In Anthony's lengthy conference, Ms. Meyer was didactic. She gave very specific advice about how he could improve the organization of his piece, writing down three parts that he should include. She told him which parts to take out such as "Take out this part . . . because we know she was very nice" and gave him very specific directives about how he could fill up the page with description. Her tone was supportive of Anthony, yet she often interrupted Anthony, providing her own view of how he should set up his piece. Her interruptions, her strong recommendations, and her specific questions pointed to a very didactic style.

Anita's style in her conference with Ginny was didactic as well; she saw herself as the source of knowledge about Ginny's text and provided her with specific advice as well as a spelling list of words to copy. She played the traditional teacher role of correcting the younger student's mistakes. For instance, she told her she needed to use "I" instead of me because it "made more sense" and frequently used phrases such as "let's fix up some of the words." Anita's tone was not as forceful as Anthony's, but she used the strategy of giving the student the answers. Making a list for the younger student to go over and change the spelling was perhaps the most telling feature of Anita's strategy in the conference. She

wrote the list for the child, with the implication that the child ought to practice spelling the words. Anita's tone was that of a friendly teacher who corrected work because mistakes were made.

Anita's strategies are puzzling if we try to trace them back to the classroom discourse from Ms. Meyer's classroom because the teacher did not explicitly correct students' work. However, Ms. Meyer did provide many implicit messages to Anita, indicating that her work was not "correct." Anita did not seem to use the specific strategies that her teacher used, but she did give the implicit message to the younger student that her writing was not "right." In a somewhat similar way to Ms. Meyer's suggestion to Anita that her Lenox Hill Camp story was not the "right" one to pursue, Anita continually corrected Ginny, suggesting that she had not spelled words correctly. This mode of interaction seems to have much more to do with the traditional teacher role and how writing is often taught than it has to do specifically with Ms. Meyer's classroom. It may be that the "teacher voice" from past experiences was more powerful than the current teacher's voice. Having not been in a "process writing school" before, Anita may have experienced a teacher's role during writing to be correcting a student and telling her how to fix her mistakes. Or it may be that the teacher's way of "telling" her what topic to write about was not very different from other teachers' voices telling her about grammar and spelling.

Miguel and Ella contrast with Anthony and Anita because their styles of interaction with the younger students were not didactic. Miguel played the role of the interested reader, while Ella played the role of the interested interviewer. Miguel may be the ideal "teacher" Calkins (1986) had in mind when she wrote The Art of Teaching Writing. Miguel was sensitive to the needs of the student, Monet, listened to what she wrote as well as to her explanations, and asked questions accordingly. In the words of Graves (1983), he "followed the child's lead." Miguel also encouraged Monet by giving her many topics about which to write and by praising what she had written. For example, when she

explained she had written a mixed up book, his response was, "Oh that's a really cool thing." He asked questions about the topics she brought up, such as asking who her cousin was and finding out about the fish tank. His interest was genuine when he asked if he could see the piece of writing she had mentioned. His suggestions were consistently couched in the conditional, using phrases such as "you could write about that," never pushing his idea onto her. He explained his role to her as someone who was trying to help her get ideas of what to write about.

How was Miguel's conferencing style similar to or different from the style which Ms. Meyer used with him? With most students, Ms. Meyer tended to be dominating and provide her opinion. With Miguel, she tended to listen to his ideas and to build upon his responses. She still provided many suggestions and was successful at getting him to bring himself into the writing about the killer whale. Thus, with Miguel, she used a combination of strategies--asking him questions, summarizing what he had said, and making recommendations for pursuing his topic, and praising him. Miguel used those same strategies, combining them differently, and focusing even more on the author than Ms. Meyer did. However, traces of the supportive tone and focus on the author, which characterized Miguel's conference with Monet, can be found in Ms. Meyer's talk with Miguel.

The case of Ella is the most puzzling in terms of strategies as well as content. Essentially, she only asked questions. She gave no recommendations, she provided no feedback except to praise the students' work on one occasion, and she gave no explanations about how to write something. Instead, Ella only asked questions. Most questions were of a specific nature such as "Which is your favorite story?" All questions were asked in a gentle, interested, and supportive tone. Although Ms. Meyer asked questions, and often specific questions, her main strategy was not to ask questions about the writer. Instead, she focused on the topics, asking questions where she hoped the student would agree with her. Ella's questions were more open than the teacher's.

How do I account for this? I think Ella's style in this conference reflects much more of an interview style than it does the style of Ms. Meyer conducting conferences. The fact that I very frequently asked questions about the lives, works, and experiences of the case study students influenced Ella. In fact, she suggested that I had given her ideas earlier in the study about what questions to ask through my own questioning of her. In Ella's case, it isn't the teacher's voice that is dominant in this particular situation, but rather another person's voice with whom she had interacted--mine.

Texts: Match Between Teacher's Image and Student's Representation

How do students' texts compare as indicators of what they internalized from the classroom dialogue? The texts that students created represent a longer term, more static situation than the writing conferences with younger students. They embody to some extent students' values, experiences, and background and show how they integrated the classroom dialogue into existing knowledge and beliefs. Additionally, this teacher had a very powerful influence in the classroom dialogue. It is for these reason that it makes sense to compare the students' revised projects along the dimensions of "good writing" that the teacher valued and introduced either explicitly or implicitly in the class discussions. Through this comparison, we can see to what extent there was an overall match between the teacher's idea of text and the student's product. The aspects of good writing that Ms. Meyer conveyed to the students included the features of: (a) valuing of personal experience; (b) elements of language and style; (c) audience; and (d) organization and focus. First, how do students compare on the dimensions of writing from personal experience?

Personal Experience

In chapter 4, I suggested that the teacher believed that the best topics come from personal experience. All four students ended up writing pieces that included something from their personal experiences. However, students' texts varied in the extent which they matched the teacher's image. Anthony's descriptive piece about his grandmother had a

clear fit with the teacher's idea of what a personal piece should be. In Anthony's text he included several memories of experiences he had with his grandmother such as getting piraguas with her, going for Kentucky Fried Chicken, and, finally, the scene of her death. This fit the teacher's idea of a successful piece because it drew from Anthony's own experiences, and included a deep, personal, moving description of his grandmother hugging and kissing him as she lay on her deathbed.

Ella also drew from her own childhood experiences with her aunt. She wrote about an event where she and her aunt slipped and fell into one another and she wrote about an early memory of swiping sausage from her aunt's plate. Her letter to her aunt was also filled with emotion such as loving her and missing her. Ella, however, added fictional elements to her story, using a setting, plot, character format with humor. This piece fit Ms. Meyer's image of effective writing because it drew from Ella's own experience and included emotion such as missing her aunt. The fictional elements were subtle enough and could be considered a vehicle for expressing personal feelings and memories.

Miguel's piece comparing himself to a killer whale fits the criterion of writing from personal experience. Miguel brought himself into the piece at several points: in the beginning haiku where he explicitly compared himself to the whale, in the second section in which he became the killer whale and described the feelings of being followed by a shark, and then where he described how he would take care of himself to become as strong as a whale. In the final section, Miguel did not bring himself into the description at all, but wrote more of an expository section about the whale. Although the piece did not bring in deep emotions or heartfelt memories, Miguel did bring in his own memories of going swimming and imagining being followed by a shark.

Even though Anita wrote about her own experiences in the Lenox Hill Camp text, this piece did not fit the teacher's criterion of writing from personal experience. It seems that the reason it did not fit was that the teacher thought it only focused on "fun" and the good times that she had at a camp. Closer inspection of the text reveals that in the piece

Anita did write about some tense moments where she was fearful: playing spin the bottle, worrying that her instructor was smoking crack, and fearing falling off the bridge. However, the teacher gave no evidence of having read the piece, nor did she see the fearful points as ones that Anita could develop from her personal experience. From her interviews, Ms. Meyer expressed that she hoped Anita would focus on "something that had some substance," not on an event where she had a really fabulous time. Further, the writing conference data suggest that the teacher had in mind Anita's writing deeper, personal expressions of emotion about her father. Therefore, the Lenox Hill Camp piece, though it drew from Anita's experience, did not fit the criterion of writing from personal experience as defined by Ms. Meyer. Her poem to her grandfather was a closer fit with the teacher's image because Anita expressed emotion about how she missed her grandfather and would keep him close to her heart. She also wrote about the good times with a relative.

Language and Style: Imagery and Figurative Language

The students used imagery and description to varying degrees in their texts.

Anthony used imagery extensively in his piece, especially in the beginning where he described the clothes his grandmother wore. Throughout the piece he added details about the ice he ate (piragua), the setting of 181st street where people set out the tables, and the taste of the oily chicken. Anthony also used figurative language in comparing fruit flies hitting him "like a mist of water" and the "scream filling the room." Anthony showed that he had internalized the dialogue by its reemergence in the form of description in his text. His use of imagery and description also fit well with the teacher's idea of a successful text.

Like Anthony, Miguel used many features of descriptive language in his text. He included adjectives to describe the sea and the whale, as well using expressive verbs. In comparing himself to the whale Miguel also included simile. Miguel's text reflects the emphasis upon descriptive language that occurred in the classroom.

Ella also used description in her text, noting the ice that covered the ground, and using language such as "big brown eyes." Ella tended to use precise verbs such as "wiggled" and "swiped" to express her ideas, meeting the teacher's idea of using unusual words and adding detail to make the text interesting to the reader. Ella added humor and voice, which were not explicitly focused on in the classroom, but were encouraged by Ms. Meyer when she saw students using these features.

Anita's Lenox Hill Camp piece reflected little description in the way the teacher emphasized. For instance, there were few adjectives and no metaphors or similes. Anita had, however, included many details such as listing the people who went on the trip, explaining the rules of the game of spin the bottle, and being at the edge of the bridge. However, these were not features the teacher valued in the model of text she had in mind. In her poem to her grandfather, Anita used more adjectives such as "bright" "sweet" and "high" and included some figurative language, "I'll heare you in my hart!" The grandfather piece, then, fit more closely with the teacher's emphasis upon figurative language and imagery.

Audience

In terms of audience the student/authors had in mind, Ella's piece was the closest fit with the teacher's image. Ella wrote a letter and sent it to her aunt; this was a clear audience. The other three students wrote about themselves or about their grandparents with the intended audience classmates and parents with whom they would share these pieces. The students seemed to have developed a concept of audience and could talk about writing the piece with a reader in mind, but they chose to act upon those views in different ways.

Organization and Focus

Ms. Meyer seemed to have the idea that the students' pieces should be focused around a particular event or person, not going from event to event. She communicated this idea through the various mini-lessons conducted about literature as well as through her

conferences with individuals. Students included this feature in their texts to various degrees.

Anthony's piece focused on one person, his grandmother, and centered around two events that they shared: getting piraguas on the heights and her death. This type of focus was valued by the teacher. Additionally, Anthony used the specific organizational structure she had suggested during their conference: description, stories, and heights, while ending with the dying scene. He presented his piece, however, in one long paragraph instead of breaking up the text into paragraphs around several central ideas.

Miguel focused on one topic--the whale, though he brought himself into it. He organized his pieces in four groups. Each part had a slightly different focus and format: first--the haiku, second and third--the description of becoming the whale, and last--the expository details about the whale. Because the pieces of the text were organized into these four sections, the piece appeared to have an organizational structure.

Ella used the letter genre and focused on two memories from her childhood. She introduced the reasons behind the letter to her audience, wrote the stories, and then concluded with statements about how she missed her aunt. The focus on just two memories while using the letter format clearly fit the teacher's view of writing an organized and focused piece.

It was Anita's piece that did not fit the image of what the teacher expected. Her Lenox Hill Camp story was not focused on a particular time at the camp, but rather went from event to event within this experience. From Anita's point of view, she may have been writing about one particular experience--her experience at Lenox Hill Camp. The teacher, though, saw Anita's text as rambling and disjointed, proceeding from event to event without any point or overall theme, evidenced by her stating in the interview that Anita's piece seemed to be one of the "great adventure kind of things--I had a lot of fun." Anita's text was held together by a sequential, plot-centered style not valued by Ms. Meyer. From this perspective, Anita's Lenox Hill Camp piece did not fit the teacher's idea

of a coherent text. Her poem to her grandfather more nearly fit the teacher's idea because it was focused on one person and had more thematic unity, as it addressed her grandfather and told about missing him.

The students, then, varied in how they appropriated the focus on writing and transformed what they experienced in the classroom to write their pieces. The dialogue reemerged in a variety of forms in these texts, but the use of personal experiences, imagery and figurative language, and organization were more likely to occur when the student and the teacher shared these values.

Figures 9-12 take into account the various features of the students' texts to represent in a holistic way the student's transformation with the teacher's image. In Figures 9-11, strong overlap between teacher and students exist. Figure 9 of Miguel reflects a close match between teacher and student in which he included description and comparison, focused the piece on a personal comparison, and imposed an organizational structure upon it. Figure 10 of Anthony suggests his inclusion of the features of the personal topic, description and imagery, and focus and organization in his piece; there is a strong overlap between the teacher and student. Ella is represented in Figure 11. Despite Ella's incorporation of a fictional style into the personal piece to her aunt, her text incorporates the features of writing about important personal events, using description and imagery, writing to a particular audience, her aunt, in a specific genre--the letter, and focusing on two events. These three students incorporated different features of the teacher's image of good writing to differing degrees in their texts. They had transformed their understandings into unique representations. Yet, in each of the three cases there was overlap with the teacher's image of good writing.

Figure 12 represents the match between Anita's text and the teacher's image. When using her Lenox Hill Camp piece as an example, there is virtually no overlap at all. Her focus on a narration of events rather than a deep relationship, her organizational structure connecting these events chronologically rather than temporally, and her lack of

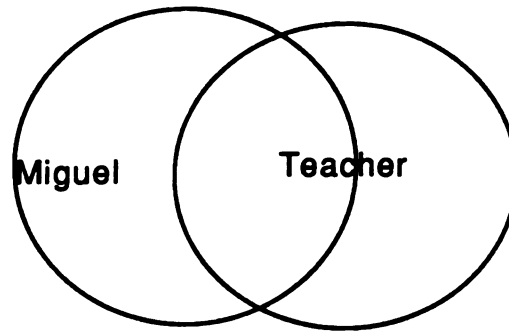


Figure 9 Match of Miguel's Text with Teacher's Image of Good Writing

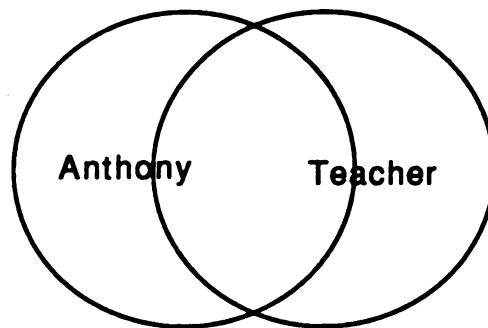


Figure 10 Match of Anthony's Text with Teacher's Image of Good Writing

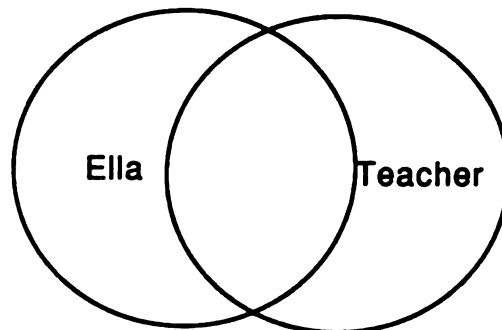


Figure 11 Match of Ella's Text with Teacher's Image of Good Writing

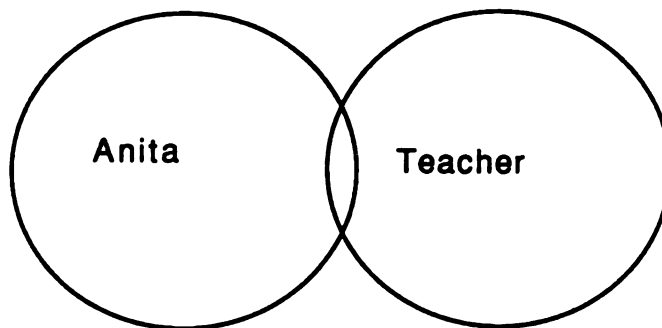


Figure 12 Match of Anita's Text with Teacher's Image of Good Writing

inclusion of traditional literary imagery in the Lenox Hill Camp piece suggest little match between her values and those of the teacher. When considering her grandfather piece, more overlap exists because she included some of the aspects of the personal emphasis by writing to her grandfather who had died. She also included several adjectives and a metaphor, "I'll heare you in my hart." In this piece, Anita had transformed her understanding of the classroom dialogue into a poem that included imagery.

Although students' texts matched the teacher's image of good writing to varying degrees, internalization does not necessarily imply matching the teacher's schema. The students' texts show that they transformed the dialogue in unique ways, drawing from their previous knowledge and experience as well as the current classroom discourse.

Summary

The quality of interactions between the teacher and the case study students differed. The teacher and students developed differing degrees of synchrony within the writing conferences. Although students and teachers did not have to agree for students to internalize the classroom dialogue, developing intersubjectivity, a shared meaning, seemed to enhance students' internalization. The three students who developed a strong degree of intersubjectivity with the teacher used the dialogue in their writing conferences with younger students and in their own texts. The fourth student, who experienced conflict with the teacher, used the classroom dialogue to a lesser extent, but nevertheless internalized some of the classroom norms. The comparisons of the four students suggest that although not developing a shared understanding within the writing conference does not preclude internalization, the quality of interaction does have consequences for students' subsequent work and interactions.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary and Discussion

What did students internalize from the classroom dialogue during writing? What accounts for what they internalized? Theory and research on human cognitive development have focused on its cultural and contextual basis, relating language, learning and literacy (Bruner, 1990; Rogoff, Gauvain & Ellis, 1984). A social constructivist theoretical perspective has emphasized the role of dialogue in learning, focusing on the individual's internalization of social experiences (Bakhtin, 1981; Rogoff, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). One result of the increased attention to the role of culture, context and dialogue has been a shift towards a process approach to writing in which students choose their own topics, participate in planning, drafting, and revising for a particular audience, and engage in dialogue with teachers and peers about their writing (Flower, 1989; Freedman, Dyson, Flower & Chafe, 1987). Understanding what students internalize from the classroom dialogue is essential in refining current theory as well as challenging or supporting current practices in writing instruction.

The study focused on four fifth/sixth grade students from culturally diverse backgrounds: Miguel, Anthony, Ella, and Anita as they participated in a writing process classroom. During the five weeks of the study, the teacher, who had been trained in the Teachers College Writing Project model, used literature to connect reading and writing; established a structure of mini-lessons, writing time, writing conferences, and share sessions; and emphasized the qualities of good writing such as use of imagery and figurative language. Students kept notebooks of their personal experiences and reflections and then selected from those entries to compose a project for a larger audience.

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the cases of the four students and the role that both scaffolding of instruction and intersubjectivity played in students' internalization of dialogue. I suggest that establishing intersubjectivity depended on the

values and norms that students and the teacher brought with them, stressing the importance of the teacher-student relationship. I relate intersubjectivity and the teacher-student relationship to current literature on social constructivist theory and research on writing conferences. I then discuss implications for practice and theory before examining limitations and directions for further research.

Scaffolding, Intersubjectivity, and Internalization

The study suggests that the four students, Miguel, Anthony, Ella, and Anita internalized the classroom dialogue to use in their texts and in their talk with younger students to varying degrees and in different ways. What students internalized differed from student to student and was related to the ways in which they appropriated and transformed the dialogue to fit with their previous experiences. What they internalized was connected to their interactions in the classroom, especially their interactions with the teacher. However, previous experience in writing process classrooms seemed to be a factor in their success at negotiating the social norms and using the dialogue of the present classroom.

Scaffolding. Students varied in the kind and quality of their interactions with the teacher. Miguel, who had some previous experience in writing process classrooms, had favorable interactions with his teacher. She provided suggestions for his topic, yet she built upon his ideas. Although she interjected her own ideas in their conference, they negotiated the topic together. The teacher's conferences with Miguel were examples of successful scaffolding in which she built on the student's ideas, while providing support through questions and suggestions.

Anthony had extensive experience in writing process classrooms and had reached agreement with his teacher about an appropriate project topic--writing about his grandmother. The teacher understood that Anthony needed assistance with including more description and with organizing his piece. By asking questions about what his grandmother looked like and providing a model for organizing his piece, Ms. Meyer successfully

scaffolded instruction for him. By taking on the role of coach, she encouraged his work and extended his thinking.

Like Anthony, Ella had extensive previous experience in Workshop classrooms, especially with fiction writing. Her task was to learn the norms of this classroom to write from personal experience in a new genre. The teacher provided specific suggestions to her to help her succeed in this task, while building on the student's idea of writing about her aunt. Together, teacher and student negotiated the topic and genre of the project.

The case of Anita differs from the others in several ways. First, Anita was a new student who lacked previous experience with writing, and was faced with the complexity of participation in a Writing Workshop. Second, unlike with the other students, the teacher's scaffolding was far less successful. She did not start with the student's suggested topic and build on it, but rather imposed her own topic, based on what Anita had written in her notebook. Ms. Meyer seemed to have misunderstood the student's perspective and believed Anita wanted to write about her father for a larger audience because she had mentioned him in her notebooks. This topic was painful for the student, yet the teacher did not pick up on the student's reluctance to write about her father. The teacher became directive rather than supportive and did not successfully scaffold instruction for Anita. The scaffolding of instruction by the teacher related to the degree of intersubjectivity teacher and student established.

Intersubjectivity. The cases of the four students suggest that the classroom dialogue in which the students engaged was more likely to reemerge when students had established a shared meaning, intersubjectivity, with the teacher. The writing conference in which we can see where they constructed or failed to construct shared meaning acted as a window through which to view the teacher-student relationship. What students internalized was related to the quality and type of interaction and relationships with the teachers and others with whom they interacted. Developing a shared meaning within the

momentary, dynamic setting such as a writing conference seemed to be connected to the teacher's and students' existing values and prior relationships.

Miguel and Ms. Meyer established a shared understanding of his project-- comparing himself to a killer whale. Their interactions in the conferences suggest synchrony and uptake of each other's ideas. Likewise, Anthony and the teacher built on an existing understanding about his topic and the need to include description. Teacher and student agreed upon what needed to happen in further writing. Ella and Ms. Meyer established a shared understanding of topic and genre through negotiation. In these cases, the teacher provided scaffolding and teacher and student established a shared understanding of the project. In the case of Anita, the teacher and student did not develop a shared understanding within the writing conference. However, Anita understood the teacher's expectations, evidenced by her compromising on a topic to satisfy her teacher and herself. Anita did not agree with the teacher's choice of topic, but she did seem to understand later what she needed to do to select an acceptable topic.

Establishing the momentary and temporary state of intersubjectivity seemed to depend on a host of features that each participant brought to the specific task. For instance, the teacher brought in her own expertise in notebook writing gained from participating in the activity herself. She also brought her experience in conducting conferences within a particular Writing Project framework. Influenced by her own cultural norms, the teacher brought her knowledge, beliefs, and past experiences with particular students into the moments of interactions with the students. In a similar way, the student brought her cultural background, past experiences with writing, and beliefs about text to the specific interaction. Students entered the interactions with their own stories and expertise about their particular lives. Both teacher and student brought in, in the words of Bakhtin (1986), the "multiple voices" of their past experiences to bear on the specific interaction.

Both the events during the moments of the specific interactions and what students and the teacher brought to the situation allowed for some students to be more successful than others in their interactions and in what they subsequently internalized. Whether students matched with the teacher's intents and values played a large role in their interactions as well as their texts and talk with others. The study supports other work in writing conferences (e.g., Michaels, 1987; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989) that suggests teachers have dominant interpretive frameworks that influence their interactions with students about text. As in the cases of the students discussed here, these frameworks have consequences for student learning.

Internalization. Students varied in the degree to which they used the dialogue from the classroom in their text and in their talk with other students. Although the discourse they used in their texts and with younger students was connected to the teacher's and to the classroom interactions, it was not imitative. Students had transformed the dialogue to meet the constraints of a new situation.

To what extent were students responding, in Bakhtin's (1981) words, to an "authoritative voice," which is more imitative and to what extent were they finding an "internally persuasive voice," which is both unique and reflective of past interactions? In Anthony's case, the teacher's voice is clearly reflected in both the didactic quality of his tone with the younger student, but also in his use of description and imagery and his ease in talking about it. However, Anthony seemed to have found an "internally persuasive" voice by using description in a unique way. It was his grandmother he wrote about, his descriptive language, and his examples he provided for the younger student. The voice of his teacher was clear in Anthony's case, but he had made it his own.

Miguel, too, included the teacher's voice in his work. Yet, his work reflected other voices--that of a peer, Rom, with his suggestion of using a haiku, and a voice of a past teacher who taught them haiku. Miguel had drawn upon multiple voices to use in his text, reflecting a uniqueness in the product. The voice of "the ideal writing teacher" was

apparent in Miguel's talk with the younger student; he had transformed his expectations about what a conference should be to create something different from what the teacher had established.

Ella not only used the voice of the teacher in her beginning of her letter to her aunt, but also "ventriloquated" the voice of the researcher, or others who may have interviewed her, to use in her conference with a younger student. Additionally, Ella showed evidence of an "internally persuasive" voice through the use of her "fictional voice" in her texts, gained from previous experiences.

With Anita, the case is less clear. There is less evidence that she has drawn from the classroom dialogue or developed an "internally persuasive voice." In her conference with a younger student she focused on mechanics and spelling, issues that were not part of the current classroom dialogue. However, she seemed to have drawn from other past experiences, which may have emphasized those features. Anita may also have been influenced by voices from her own culture if she were linked to a background in which oral narrative was more likely to be emphasized; yet this voice was not encouraged in the classroom by the teacher. However, Anita's compromise of writing about her grandfather and including imagery in her poem demonstrate that she did internalize some of the cognitive aspects and the social norms of the classroom.

Teacher-Student Relationship

The study highlights the importance of the teacher-student relationship. It is not only the teacher's expertise, the student's knowledge, and the nature of the task as Brandt (1990) suggests, but rather the prior relationship between the teacher and student that is important. Further, aspects that contributed to establishing intersubjectivity and the relationship with the teacher included affective components as well as the cognitive ones delineated by Wertsch (1985).

The importance of the relationship between teacher and student and the match or mismatch between them raises a host of questions about voice, authority, and power. How

much authority did students in Room 555 have over their texts in this classroom? Did teacher and student really co-construct meaning? Was the teacher forcing her interpretation and framework upon the students? Were the students just trying to please the teacher? Did the teacher guide and extend students' writing or did she take it over?

Agreement and conflict. Were students just complying with the teacher's expectations? What role does conflict play in establishing intersubjectivity and internalization? Although three of the case study students seemed to reach a shared understanding with the teacher, which may look like agreement, the study does not suggest that students and teachers must agree for internalization to take place. In the case of Anita, she was able to internalize aspects of the cognitive and social norms without reaching a shared understanding within the conference itself. However, the conference itself did have consequences for her and what she subsequently wrote.

With each of the students there was some small or large conflict with the teacher that surfaced in their interactions. With Miguel, it was the reprimands of the teacher about the playground that caused some conflict. The teacher expressed some annoyance with Anthony at the beginning of each of the two conferences. Ella received the teacher's disapproval when she mentioned doing a fiction project. Anita and the teacher did not agree on a topic. However, students resolved these tensions in a variety of ways; yet they were not just compliant.

In terms of their writing, each student seemed to have gone through an internal negotiation in which they transformed the teacher's expectations to write something meaningful. Miguel found a way to make the comparison between himself and the whale meaningful; he also added an expository paragraph, adding a piece that reflected his own intentions. Anthony used the teacher's organizational structure, but did not just write what the teacher had suggested. Ella interwove her fictional voice into her work. Although Anita did not actively resist the teacher and did write a poem about a topic she believed would be pleasing to the teacher, she did not comply. She did not write about her father

despite the teacher's best efforts to get her to focus on those entries. The students were able to find ways to meet the teacher's expectations without totally giving up their own intentions.

Power and authority. Teacher-student relationships are inherently asymmetrical by virtue of the fact that teachers have power and students have little. Chapter 2 suggested that teacher-student writing conferences were examples of changing traditional discourse patterns that had the potential to transform norms and to provide students with opportunities to have more authority over their texts. In this study, the teacher did not succeed in changing the power differential nor in substantially altering the traditional patterns of discourse. She controlled the dialogue, not only in whole group mini-lessons and share sessions, but also within individual writing conferences. She did not encourage peer conferences where students have more opportunities to change traditional patterns and share authority more equally. The teacher only provided these opportunities to Miguel and another student who she thought were responsible and could teach each other. However, despite a largely teacher-controlled environment, Ms. Meyer did encourage students to contribute ideas which she then extended. She made efforts to understand the student's point of view at various points in the conferences.

As the "expert" in the area of traditional literary language, the teacher asked questions, provided feedback, and made recommendations to students--scaffolding instruction for them (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). Falling within a social constructivist model, these are all aspects of teaching that a knowledgeable member of the culture can do for a less knowledgeable member. Yet, students were also "experts" about their own topics and their own experiences. In the ideal model of writing conferences, students would initiate talk and determine topics; the teacher would have responded to the student's concerns. In effect, students and teachers would have the opportunity to "trade conversational places" (Florio-Ruane, 1991). In this classroom, the teacher initiated talk for the most part, generally determined the topics except at some moments where

students introduced topics, and provided the students with explicit recommendations. While scaffolding for the students, there was never any question that students and the teacher had traded "conversational places." Students, for the most part, did not have the opportunity to be in control of the dialogue and have the teacher respond to their topics, questions, or issues.

Although in general the teacher and students did not change conversational places during the writing conferences nor in the other types of speech events in the classroom, some students did seem to have greater opportunity to participate more fully in the classroom discourse than did others. This differential treatment supports Freedman and Sperling's (1985) study of college students in which differences between the teacher's and students' synchrony were related to ethnicity and achievement level.

Privileging. At particular moments in their conferences or when they shared work in the larger group sessions, the students in Room 555 seemed to have been "privileged" in Wertsch's (1991) sense that the social languages they employed were appropriate in specific situations. Because the teacher connected better with some students than with others, those appeared to be the ones who were privileged. For instance, Miguel's voice was "privileged" because he had the opportunity to have a peer conference sanctioned by the teacher. Anthony's voice was "privileged" when the teacher became excited about his use of "the pineapple filled my mouth with joy." Ella, too, was heard when the teacher used her piece as an example to the class. But what about Anita? Her voice was never privileged.

It is unlikely that in any situation there will be total equity, with all student have equal access to the discourse. However, the notion of privileging as a dynamic, ever-changing phenomenon might allow for students to have more voice at certain times. If, for instance, it is not always the teacher's voice that is considered privileged, or if different students have opportunities to participate in various speech events, then privileging could be more equitable. For instance, if Anita's "oral text" were valued in the classroom at

some point, she might have greater access to the classroom discourse, and thus more opportunities to learn from it.

Implications for Practice and Theory

The study raises questions related to current practices in writing process classrooms and questions of a theoretical nature. This section addresses issues of practice by exploring the potential risks and benefits of the current focus on writing from personal experience; discussing the advantages and disadvantages of focusing on language and style, audience and organization; and examining the difficulties of changing norms in classrooms. Implications for theory follow the discussion on practice.

Practice

Proponents of writing process programs suggest that students need opportunities to choose their own topics, write for real purposes and audiences, participate in revising and publishing their work, and talk to teachers and peers about their work (e.g., Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1979). Some implementations of "process" approaches suggest that instruction should build on students' interests, fluency ought to be developed before skills, and writing is a way to learn about oneself (e.g., California State Department of Education, 1987). Even if process writing practices are not widespread as Applebee (1986) has found, students have most likely benefited from the movement away from teaching decontextualized grammar and other skills; giving infrequent, assigned topics; and the "one draft" mentality.

Critics of process approaches claim that process writing excludes many black students and others of color from the "culture of power" (Delpit, 1988). When the focus is on process rather than explicitly teaching children language skills, children of color have little access to written language codes which would help them succeed in dominant, white middle class society. A study by Reyes (1991) suggests that, in fact, this lack of explicitness about how to select book to read or topics for writing in whole language/process writing classrooms contributes to failure for many Hispanic students.

Lensmire's (1991) study of his own teaching using a process writing approach suggests that current practices such as "author's chair" and choosing one's own topics present many risks to students. Because process approaches tend to have a romantic conception of the child and the social context and have not considered the content of what children write, students may use writing to hurt one another. One issue that has not been raised, however, that relates to this study is the relative risk versus benefits associated with writing from personal experience.

Writing from personal experience. This study raises questions about writing process programs that focus almost exclusively on writing from personal experience as the genre most appropriate for young writers. To some extent, Ms. Meyer's emphasis upon writing from personal experience was her individual appropriation and transformation of the Teachers College Writing Project; however, the Writing Project strongly influenced her conceptions of writing instruction (McCarthy, 1990b). Calkins (1986) never explicitly states that students not be allowed to write fiction; rather, this interpretation seemed to be specific to Ms. Meyer. Calkins has a ten page chapter (in a 329 page book) at the end of The Art of Teaching Writing about the teaching of fiction. In the chapter, Calkins suggests that she herself has had difficulty teaching students to write fiction, noting that the quality of children's writing goes down as they often produce pieces that are rehashed television shows. Such writing is both long and difficult to revise. It is conceivable that such a message implicitly discourages teachers from including fiction in their writing curriculum. Despite her lack of enthusiasm for fiction, Ms. Meyer planned to introduce students to other genres such as poetry during the rest of the year. Even if the teacher introduced students to other genres, writing from personal experience poses problems as well as the potential to help students become better writers.

In the case of Anthony, we see a student who drew from his personal experience and relationship with his grandmother to produce a detailed, deeply moving account of her death. We can all identify with and respond to his piece. In the case of Anita, we see

something quite different. Encouraged to write about her confusing, upsetting relationship with her father, she is faced with a dilemma: how to please the teacher and avoid a painful situation. In these two cases we see both the potential and the risk of writing from personal experience. Anthony's piece reflects some of the benefits associated with writing from personal experience. Reflecting his close relationship with his grandmother and his memories of their shared experiences, his piece is authentic. He seems to have found his own voice to express his experience to a larger audience. Perhaps it was also therapeutic for Anthony to write about his deep, sad feelings about witnessing his grandmother's death and his subsequent loss of her. Anthony was ready to transform his experience of her into the writing of a coherent piece.

On the other hand, Anita's experience raises questions about potential risks of writing from personal experience including: (a) unintended consequences from what is revealed; (b) possibilities of limiting students' voice; (c) potential cultural conflicts; and (d) lack of readiness for some students. First, the focus on deep, personal response may create unintentional emotional consequences in a classroom. Unfortunately, physical and emotional child abuse appears to be widespread. Yet, many teachers have had little experience or training in handling issues that emerge through children's writing. If the teacher is not prepared psychologically or emotionally to respond to the painful elements of students' lives and find the appropriate support, it is questionable whether teachers should encourage their students to write deep, personal pieces. At the same time, teachers may feel pushed into the role of therapist without adequate preparation or outside support. To provide students with mixed messages, encouraging them to write "deep, important things about relationships" while at the same time not being prepared for the consequences, may be confusing and a source of discomfort to students.

Second, a focus on writing from personal experience may limit some students' voices. Other genres of writing (e.g., fiction) may provide students with opportunity to make sense of their lives in a way that does not necessarily require them to reveal deep

personal issues, or may provide outlets that make them less vulnerable to the consequences. Process writing programs may be limiting some students' access to another form of knowledge. In this sense, process programs emphasizing writing from personal experience may have "institutionalized" this genre in such a way that students are discouraged from using other forms such as expository or fiction writing as vehicles to communicate with other audiences.

A third problem in promoting writing from personal experience, or notebook writing, is that teachers may come into conflict with values of students from other cultures. Process writing programs may appear to be "culture free"--that is, they are presumed to be appropriate for all students, regardless of culture or class. For some students, however, writing about their own personal relationships or experiences may conflict with cultural values. If the model presumes to transcend cultural and personal differences, it can perpetuate the dominant culture and alienate members of minority groups just as traditional instructional models have done (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). Like the whole language and writing process classrooms that Reyes (1991) and Delpit (1988) describe, this model may assume that "one size fits all" and disengage minorities who do not fit the model.

Fourth, some students may not be ready to transform their personal experiences into writing for a larger audience. Because students learn in different ways and bring different background knowledge and experience with them, some students may not be ready to transform their experiences into writing for a larger audience. Unlike Anthony who wanted to write about his sad experiences, Anita, who was new to notebook writing and project writing, most likely did not understand initially that her notebook writing would be made public to the teacher or to others. When she realized her that she was expected to draw from her painful experiences hinted at in her notebook, she selected a safer topic. She was not ready to share her upsetting experiences with others.

In researchers' and practitioners' quest for ways to change writing practices, we may have embraced a model without questioning the underlying assumptions of a model. We may have come to assume that talking about literature with students, having them keep notebooks, and conducting conferences with them is somehow inherently good. In being enamored with classrooms that look different from traditional ones because students are allowed to write about their own experiences, and talk about their writing, we may be assuming positive outcomes.

This study suggests that the fundamental relationship between teacher and student has important consequences. Students not only internalized the cognitive aspects such as using figurative language and organizing their writing, but they internalized the social norms for participation in a social setting such as a writing conference. This suggests that teachers and researchers need to be cautious about what values, norms, and beliefs about writing they embrace because these values are conveyed either explicitly or implicitly to students.

Language and style, audience, and organization. In Classroom 555, the teacher emphasized language and style, writing for a real audience, and organization of writing. These seem to be valuable components, relating literature to writing and helping students to become better writers. However, these aspects of writing, which appear to be very beneficial, need to be considered as well. In the cases of Miguel, Anthony, and Ella students were successful at understanding how to include these aspects in their writing. Their values and previous experiences seemed to support the inclusion of such features. Their values matched those of the teacher and they were able to successfully use those features. In the case of Anita, however, the suggestion to write for a real audience, her father, may have been inappropriate, given the nature of the father-daughter relationship. In this case, there was a mismatch of values. Likewise, the emphasis upon traditional literary language to the exclusion of other forms of figurative language may have alienated Anita. The implication for practice is that teachers need to be sensitive to a range of different

cultures and backgrounds of students, understanding that language in many children's books may not be congruent with all students' cultures. While many students may benefit from a focus on a particular kind of figurative language, writing to a real audience, or organizing text along certain features, other students may not. Caution, reflection, and a weighing of alternatives are necessary as we consider the variety of students and what they bring to the classroom setting. Many factors contribute to making it difficult for teachers to consider all of their students as they make decisions about their writing curriculum. The following section delineates some of those problems as they relate to the study.

Difficulty of changing fundamental relationships. The roles of power and authority are mitigating factors against changing the fundamental relationship of teacher and student (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). They are interwoven within the other factors that contribute to maintaining traditional patterns of discourse and relationships. Much has been written already about the difficulty of changing school norms. Teachers cite class size as a major roadblock in changing the discourse (Devaney & Sykes, 1988). In addition to the number of students with whom teachers are expected to conduct conferences, the diversity of cultures, differing experiences and fluencies with writing that students enter classrooms with all serve to make the task of teaching writing in purposeful ways an overwhelming one.

One of the things that the teacher in this study may have been responding to in her own classroom was a pressure to get to all of the students about their writing. She was attempting to hold individual conferences about their notebooks with 28 students and then moving them into projects. One reason for her pace and controlling behavior in the conferences may have been a belief that she had to get students to select a topic so they could get on with their writing and she could meet with other students. As McNeil (1986) suggests, the teacher may have been controlling the dialogue in her own classroom in response to the lack of control she felt about larger decisions of content, school structure, and larger societal issues. Although she had difficulty communicating and finding a

common ground with one of the case study students, it is notable that she was able to connect successfully with three of the students and move them on to revising their projects.

School and organizational factors such as the rest of the school day and how it is structured contribute to the difficulty of teaching writing to diverse students. Is it realistic for writing programs to expect that teachers might change the way they teach writing without substantially altering the larger contexts in which they teach?

Organizational factors such as loss of funding compound the difficulties. For instance, the Teachers College Writing Project was having an effect on teachers' practices and beliefs (McCarthy, 1990b; Mosenthal, 1989), yet the district cut the funding in December. How can teachers be expected to alter their practices when they can not trust that their staff development programs and other support systems will continue?

School and organizational issues are, of course, imbedded within larger societal structures of power and authority. Bakhtin's (1986) notion of voice being "half-ours and half someone else's" implies that the "someone else's" voice may have as much or more power. Decisions about funding for staff development, class size, and mandated curriculum are made by those who have authority. As Marxist critics (e.g., Apple, 1978; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Giroux, 1981; Willis, 1977) point out, schools reproduce the power relationships in the larger society. These power relationships with their inequitable distribution of power and access to knowledge mitigate against changing relationships between teachers and students. The fundamental relationship between teacher and student, which is central to learning, is difficult to change because it is imbedded within larger social structures of power and authority. While this section has focused on the difficulties of changing practices within the larger organizational and societal contexts, the next section focuses on theoretical issues that the study raises.

Theory

The study highlights several features of social constructivist theory that could benefit from further explication: (a) definition of scaffolding; (b) enculturation versus transformation; and (c) the Harre model of internalization. In the study, the teacher attempted, on the one hand, to make explicit the issues of imagery and figurative language she thought were important, while, on the other hand, being responsive to the students' interests. These two features may come into conflict with one another, even though in both cases, the teacher could be considered "scaffolding" instruction for the learner.

It appears that a range of definitions and interactions can fall within the term scaffolding. At one extreme, the person doing the scaffolding would provide the model, initiate topics, and make recommendations to the student about text. At the other end, the person doing the scaffolding might rely totally on students' responses and allow the student to initiate the topics and work through the problems with support given only when he or she asked for it. Other researchers including Palincsar & Brown (1984) who use the scaffolding metaphor to describe reciprocal teaching rely heavily on models and initial teacher control; students have control of the dialogue only after the teacher had given it over to them. Graves (1983), on the other hand, advocates students' control over the dialogue in writing conference early in the process. When in the learning process should students have control over the dialogue and how much control should they have? This study highlights the difficulty of both providing models or suggestions for the student and yet listening to the student, "following the student's lead." It also suggests that much more theoretical work needs to be done in defining what is meant by "scaffolding" to prevent the term from being used as a new buzzword that has little meaning to researchers or practitioners.

Difficulties in defining scaffolding and in explicating the role of the teacher are reflected in the tension between enculturation and transformation. Should schools be involved in merely enculturating students into values of the dominant culture? Should

schools provide students with tools for transforming the society? Clearly, answers to these questions are well beyond the scope of this study; however, the study raises these issues because of the role the teacher played in influencing these students. Though strongly impacted by the teacher, students did not just enculturate the norms of the teacher and the values she had. They were able to transform their experiences. However, the students who shared the values of the teacher were more likely to succeed in internalizing the dialogue in a visible way. Both theoretical and empirical work is needed to explicate the tension between enculturation and transformation.

In this study, the Harre (1984) model of the cycle of internalization from public to private to public again has served as a means to investigate what students have learned from the classroom discourse. The model has been especially helpful in visually tracing what happens to the dialogue as students appropriate and transform it to use in their own work. The idealized version of how an individual takes from social interaction and changes it until it reappears in the public domain under a new guise seems to fit well the cases of Miguel, Anthony, and Ella where we can trace the dialogue through to their conferences and texts. However, the model serves the case of Anita to a much lesser extent, at least when tracing internalization within a particular time frame. What is happening when the dialogue does not reemerge? Although the idealized version of internalization is less helpful when reemergence does not occur, the lack of reemergence can encourage researchers and practitioners to examine what is happening and suggest other models.

Significance, Limitations, and Future Research

The study contributes to both educational theory and practice. By focusing on the dialogue that students internalized from the interactions during the writing period, the study both supports social constructivist theories and points out some of its weaknesses. The study also provides data about the process of internalization and the role of dialogue in learning to write, while providing a greater understanding of the role of the teacher in facilitating students' construction of text through dialogue. The analysis of how the

students used the dialogue from the writing period, especially the dialogue from the writing conferences, to guide their thinking supports some practices within current writing programs, while questioning others.

Although the study uncovered several examples of differing interactions among the teacher and her students and their consequences, this study had a number of limitations including the following: (a) limited number of teacher-selected participants; (b) length of study; (c) examination of only one genre; (d) setting; and (e) researcher's perspective. First, because of the focus on only four students, it is not possible to generalize to other students in other classrooms. Additionally, the teacher selected the participants, contributing to potential biases.

Second, although much was revealed in a five-week time frame about what students internalized, the study was limited to a short period of time in the fall. Students were in the process of learning the norms of participation in the classroom and may not have had sufficient time to internalize them. Tracing students' learning over the course of a school year may have revealed ways in which they used the focus on qualities of good writing in subsequent texts.

Third, data for this study focused on one genre--notebook entries written from personal experience. Following these students as they wrote in a variety of genres may have revealed differences in what they internalized, depending on the nature of the genre itself.

Fourth, this study took place in a particular classroom using a specific approach to the writing process. The teacher had a particular view of good writing based on her interpretation of a program and her own beliefs; therefore, what students internalized from the classroom dialogue may have been specifically related to her views within a specific context. Studies in other settings might reveal that students internalized different aspects of the classroom dialogue than did these four students. Further, I observed and interviewed students only within a school setting; students' previous experiences with and

beliefs about text most likely influenced what students internalized from the school setting.

Finally, because I developed a close relationship with each of the case study students, my interpretations and analyses reflect much more of the students' "side" of the story rather than the teacher's. In trying to understand what students gained from the experience of being in this writing process classroom, I have been sympathetic to the students' perceptions and even "put myself in their shoes" at the cost of not being as understanding of the teacher's perspective.

While a close analysis of a writing process classroom in New York City provided details about the teacher and students within a particular context, more research is needed in a variety of settings. In a social constructivist theory of learning and development, it is the interaction of individuals with a specific context that constitutes knowledge. It follows that future studies should continue to study learning within particular social and cultural contexts.

Future studies could build on the present study by following students over a longer period of time such as over the course of a school year to trace the dynamic pattern of internalization over several genres of writing. While this study focused on students in a fifth/sixth grade classroom, other studies might look at relationships between dialogue and learning to write in high school classes.

The study also suggests the importance of the ideas, experiences, and beliefs about text gained from students' previous interactions and from their family and cultural backgrounds. Extensive observations and interviews of students in settings other than classrooms could investigate the links between home and school learning about text and the impact of those experiences in shaping their learning in schools. In conclusion, I suggest that through additional studies relating dialogue to literacy, we can build more "concrete universals" (Erickson, 1986) to understand individuals learning about text in a variety of contexts.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEACHER INTERVIEWS

First Teacher Interview

1. a) Tell me a little about the neighborhood and school.
 b) Where do most of the students come from?
 c) What type of desegregation plan does New York City have?
2. a) What have been your goals for having students keep notebooks this year?
 Why?
 b) Where did you get these ideas about students being chroniclers of their
 lives?
3. Have notebooks been successful this year? Why?
4. a) What is the next step you plan to with the students?
 b) Why Projects?
 c) How will students go about deciding on the form their projects will take?
5. a) Tell me about the idea of qualities of good writing.
 b) Where did you get these ideas?
6. How do you think the students are progressing with their writing?
 Can you give me some examples?
7. Please tell me about your goals for the particular students I am studying.
 What kind of progress is this student making?

Second Teacher Interview

1. Could you tell me about why you do not want students to write fiction?
 (Probes based on her responses)
2. a) How do you think students' notebooks are going?
 b) How about their projects?
3. a) Why do you think it is important for students to write for a specific
 audience?
 b) Have students had experience with that before?
4. Please tell me about the students I am studying.
 (Probes based on teacher's responses.)
5. Tell me about your conference with Anita the other day. How did it go?
 (Follow up probes based on her responses)
6. Would you encourage students to write about certain situations that might be difficult
 for them?
7. I noticed you have had students gather in small groups to have conferences with them,
 why have you done this?

8. What are your goals for having conferences with students?
9.
 - a) What are your expectations for students during writing time?
 - b) Should students be talking to one another?
10.
 - a) Tell me about the situation with Terry sharing his writing with other students today.
 - b) What about with Miguel and Rom talking about their work?

APPENDIX B

STUDENT SEMI-STRUCTURED ENTRY INTERVIEW

Part I: Personal History

General Background

Family and Neighborhood

1. Please tell me about your family and where you live.

Interests

2. What are some of the things you like to do when you are not at school, like at home or at a friend's house? (Probe for things such as reading, drawing, sports, writing, games, computers, tv.)

Favorite Subjects in School

3. What are your favorite subjects or things you like to do at school?

Literacy History

Reading Habits

4. Do you enjoy reading?
5. What kinds of books do you like to read?
6. Can you tell me the names of books you like or favorite authors?

Writing Habits

7. How often do you write?
8. Do you write at home?
9. At school?

Technology

10. Do you use a computer or hand write?
11. Do you like one better than the other? Why?

Audience

12. When you are writing, whom do you like to share your writing with (parent, teacher, friend, classmates)?

Self-esteem

13. Do you like to write?
14. Does it seem easy or is it something that is hard for you?
15. Do you think you are a good writer?
16. What does it mean to be a good writer?

Experiences with Writing in School

17. Tell me about writing in classrooms where you were last year.
18. What is writing like this year in your classroom?
19. How is it different or the same as last year?
20. What are some of the things you have learned about writing this year in your class? (Probe for definitions of "description," "notebooks," ask what student means by term.)
21. How do you think you learned those things? (From the teacher, talking to other children, listening to other people's stories, writing a lot, reading and talking about other authors.)
22. Do you have writing conferences with the teacher? How about with other students? Describe those.

Topics, Themes, Genres

23. What kinds of things do you write? (Probe with letters, journals or diaries, stories--fiction or non-fiction, "teaching books", poetry, lists of things to do or buy.)
24. Tell me some of the topics you have written about this year in school or at home?

Part II: Writing Knowledge

Response to Student's Own Text

(Student should bring an example of a text s/he has written recently.)

25. Please tell me about your piece.

Source of Ideas

26. Where did you get your idea to write about _____?

Audience

27. When you wrote about _____, did you write it for anyone in particular?

Purpose

28. Did you write it for any reason such as did your parent or teacher ask you to write it or did you just want to?

Revision

29. When you wrote about _____, did you just write one draft or a few drafts?
30. If you wrote more than one draft, what did you change?
31. Why did you change those things?

Orientation to Writing

32. When you were writing this, what did you think about while you were writing?
33. What are some of the things you like about your piece of writing? Why?
34. Are there any things you do not like? Why not? What would you change?

Plans for Next Piece

35. I am interested in what kind of story or piece of writing that you are planning to write next.
36. What will it be about?
37. What things will you think about as you write your piece?
38. Do you think you will have any particular problems with what you will write?
39. How will you solve those problems? (Will you ask the teacher, go to a peer, look at a book, think about it yourself?)

APPENDIX C

STUDENT SEMI-STRUCTURED EXIT INTERVIEW

Qualities of Good Writing

1.
 - a) How would you describe good writing?
 - b) Could you give me an example from a book you are familiar with? Why is that good writing?
 - c) Could you give me an example from another student? Why is that good writing?
 - d) Could you give me an example from your own writing? Why is that good writing?
2.
 - a) Who do you think are good writers? Why?
 - b) Published?
 - c) In your class?
3. Here is a list of things some people consider important to writing. Which ones do you think are important? Why?

audience

choosing a topic that is really important to you
writing about your own experiences

spelling

having a strong beginning

keeping the reader on his toes

giving the reader a picture in their mind

putting events in order

using time in different ways

punctuation

character

description

Classroom Events

4.
 - a) What have you learned about writing this year?
 - b) From whom? (Ms. Meyer? Ms. Henderson? other students?)
5.
 - a) What are some of the books, events, or things that have happened during writing that have helped you? (I provided examples of events if student could not remember.)
 - b) What things seemed to help the most?
 - c) Ms. Henderson's visits?
 - d) Books?
 - e) Conferences with your teacher?
 - f) Talking to other students?
6.
 - a) Could you describe to me what this classroom was like during writing?
 - b) Describe an event during writing that was good.
 - c) Any events that were not so good?
 - d) Tell me about one of your conferences with the teacher? What was it like?
 - e) Do you talk to your classmates during writing? Why or why not? Is it OK to do that?

Notebooks and Projects

7. How do you see the difference between notebooks and projects?
8. How did you select the topic for your project?
9. Are there notebook entries that led up to that? Which ones?
10. Who is your audience? Why did you choose that audience?
11. Describe your process of selecting your entries and then writing your project.
12. What changes have you made? Why?
13. What has affected those changes? (teacher conferences? group discussions? books? talking to other students?)
14. What will you do next to finish your project?

Writing Conferences With Younger Students

15.
 - a) Tell me about your conference with (named the student) the other day.
 - b) What was it like?
 - c) Why did you do things you did? (gave examples if necessary)

APPENDIX D

INFORMAL STUDENT INTERVIEW

A form of this interview was given to participating students about every three days or if they had a writing conferences with the teacher that day.

- 1. Please tell me a little bit about what happened during writing class today? (I probed each event the student mentioned.)**
- 2. [If a conference took place] How did the conference go with your teacher? What are some of the questions, suggestions or comments the teacher made? What did you think of the teacher's comments or questions? Why or why not?**
- 3. Did you talk with any students about your writing today? What did you talk about? Were those comments or questions helpful to you?**
- 4. Let's talk about your notebook or project. How is it going? What did you work on today?**
- 5. Where did you get your ideas to write that?**

APPENDIX E

LIST OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS USED IN CLASSROOM

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- Little, J. (1987). Little by little: A writer's education. New York: Viking.
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