



**UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY**

**Reading in the margins: EAP reading
pedagogies and their critical, postcritical
potential**

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Table of contents

LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
LIST OF TABLES.....	IX
GLOSSARY.....	XI
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY.....	XII
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XIII
ABSTRACT	XIV
CHAPTER ONE: EAP - CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES.....	1
1.1 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	5
1.1.1 Internationalisation	5
1.1.2 Curriculum responses in EAP.....	8
1.1.2a The skills approach	8
1.1.2b The socialisation approach.....	10
1.1.2c An academic literacies approach.....	12
1.2 CHALLENGES IN TEACHING READING IN EAP.....	14
1.3 THE FOCUS OF THIS STUDY	16

1.4 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE THESIS	18
1.5 AN OUTLINE OF THE THESIS	19
CHAPTER TWO: TOWARDS A DIALOGIC MODEL OF CRITICAL READING IN EAP	21
2.1 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON READING PEDAGOGY IN EAP.	23
2.1.1 The componential, skills-based approach.....	23
2.1.2 The cognitivist approach.....	29
2.1.2a Reading strategies	32
2.1.2b Teaching reading strategies.....	33
2.1.2c Summary of the cognitivist approach	35
2.1.3 The sociocultural perspective	38
2.1.3a A social view of text and reading practices.....	38
2.1.3b A social view of learning	45
2.1.3c Scaffolding and the ZPD.....	48
2.1.3d Emergences and affordances.....	53
2.1.3e Affect in learning	55
2.1.3f Summary of the sociocultural turn in reading pedagogy	59
2.1.4 Summary of three theoretical perspectives on reading	59
2.2 CRITICAL READING IN EAP.....	61
2.2.1 An analytical perspective on critical reading	61
2.2.2 The social justice perspective on critical reading	64
2.2.3 A dialogic model of critical reading in EAP.....	71
2.3 CONCLUSION.....	74
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	76
3.1 DESIGN OF THE STUDY: AN ECOLOGICAL-ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH	77
3.1.1 Locations	79

3.1.2 Participants	81
3.1.3 Boundaries of the study	82
3.2 DATA COLLECTION	83
3.2.1 Classroom observations	84
3.2.2 Interviews with teachers and students	85
3.2.3 Students’ written work	86
3.2.4 Research diary	86
3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	86
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS	87
3.4.1 Analytical tools: Curriculum macrogenres	88
3.4.2 Analytical tools: Activity Theory	90
3.4.3 Analytical tools: band descriptors for assessing critical reading practices	98
3.5 SUMMARY OF THE METHODOLOGY	106
CHAPTER FOUR: ACTIVITY IN THREE EAP LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS	108
4.1 Sandstone College	109
4.1.1 Sandstone College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres.....	110
4.1.1a The reading diary macrogenre.....	111
4.1.1b The macrogenres of the cultural and academic strands.....	112
4.1.2 Sandstone College: Activity Theory analysis	115
4.1.2a Goals and objects	116
4.1.2b Conventions (Rules).....	118
4.1.2c Roles.....	122
4.1.2d Community	124
4.1.2e Tools.....	125
4.1.2f Sandstone College: Summary of the activity system.....	131
4.1.3 Understandings of critical reading at Sandstone College.....	132

4.2 Newgate College.....	133
4.2.1 Newgate College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres	134
4.2.2. Newgate College: Activity Theory analysis	139
4.2.2a Goals and objects	139
4.2.2b Conventions (Rules).....	142
4.2.2c Roles.....	146
4.2.2d Community	151
4.2.2e Tools.....	153
4.2.2f Newgate College: Summary of the activity system	163
4.2.3 Understandings of critical reading at Newgate College.....	165
4.3 City College	168
4.3.1 City College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres	169
4.3.2 City College: Activity Theory analysis.....	173
4.3.2a Goals and objects	173
4.3.2b Conventions (Rules).....	176
4.3.3c Roles.....	180
4.3.3d Community	183
4.3.3e Tools.....	185
4.3.3f City College: Summary of the activity system	196
4.3.3 Understandings of critical reading at City College.....	199
4.4 Conclusion.....	202
CHAPTER FIVE: CRITICAL READING OUTCOMES.....	207
5.1 Sandstone College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices.....	210
5.1.1 Microgenetic development at Sandstone College	210
5.1.2 Ontogenetic development at Sandstone College.....	217
5.1.2a Increased ability to answer the IELTS style questions: improvements in attending	217
5.1.2b the students' changing attitudes to text: improvements in engagement	219
5.1.2c the students' self-assessment: increases in attending, engaging and externalising.....	220
5.1.2d the students' ability to externalise their understandings from text, in particular their ability to summarise.	223
5.1.3 Summary of development at Sandstone College	225
5.2 Newgate College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices.....	226
5.2.1 Microgenetic development at Newgate College	226
5.2.1a The <i>Marketing Concept</i> task	227
5.2.1b The <i>Polygamy</i> task.....	231
5.2.2 Ontogenetic development at Newgate College.....	237

5.2.2a Newgate College students' self assessment.....	237
5.2.2b Newgate College students' text-responsible writing.....	240
5.2.3 Summary of development at Newgate College.....	245
5.3 City College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices.....	247
5.3.1 Microgenetic development at City College.....	247
5.3.1a Evidence from classroom discourse.....	247
5.3.1b Evidence from the students' written summaries of <i>The Spatial distribution of employment</i>	253
5.3.2 Ontogenetic development at City College.....	254
5.3.2a City College students' self assessment.....	254
5.3.2b City College students' text-responsible writing.....	258
5.3.2c City College reading exam.....	269
5.3.3 Summary of development at City College.....	269
5.4 Summary of students' emerging critical reading practices.....	271
CHAPTER SIX: AFFORDANCES FOR CRITICAL READING.....	275
6.1 GOAL SETTING FOR CRITICAL READING IN EAP.....	278
6.2 TOOLS: TEXTS, TASKS AND TALK FOR CRITICAL READING.....	283
6.2.1 Texts.....	283
6.2.2 Tasks.....	286
6.2.3 Talk.....	289
6.3 CRITICAL READING PRACTICES.....	293
6.4 TEACHER-STUDENT ROLES IN CRITICAL READING CLASSES.....	295
6.5 CLASSROOM COMMUNITIES: CONNECTIVITY AND CRITICAL READING.....	298
6.6 THE IMPACT OF NEIGHBOURING ACTIVITY SYSTEMS.....	299
6.7 THE SUBJECTS.....	300

6.8 CONCLUSION: TOWARDS AN ACTIVITY SYSTEM FOR CRITICAL READING IN EAP	301
CHAPTER SEVEN: TOWARDS CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT	305
7.1 SUMMING UP THE FINDINGS	306
7.1.1 Participation in critical reading practices	306
7.1.2 Affordances for critical reading in EAP	307
7.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS	309
7.2.1 Activity Theory as a framework for analysis	309
7.2.1a Problems of categorisation.....	310
7.2.1b The role of subject	311
7.2.1c Problems of representation.....	312
7.2.1d The role of contradiction: two contrasting forms of development.....	313
7.2.1e Activity Theory summary	315
7.2.2 Revisiting the dialogic model of critical reading.....	316
7.2.3 Implications for EAP pedagogy.....	319
7.2.3a Critical pragmatism.....	319
7.2.3b Critical, post-critical engagement	321
7.2.3c Materials development.....	323
7.2.4 Implications for the international education industry	324
7.3 FINAL REFLECTIONS	326
7.3.1 Teaching EAP reading as a moral endeavour.....	326
7.3.2 Where to next?.....	327
APPENDICES.....	329
Appendix 1: Sample semi-structured interview sheet.....	329
Appendix 2: Inventory of interviews.....	331
Appendix 3: Sandstone College questionnaire: sample page.....	332

Appendix 4: Transcription conventions 333

Appendix 5: An example of analysis of logogenesis in the Polygamy debate 334

Appendix 6: Newgate College: summarized analysis of students' essays 335

Appendix 7: Newgate College: summarized analysis of students' exam essays 337

Appendix 8: City College: summarized analysis of students' essays 339

Appendix 9: City College: summarized analysis of students' exam essays 341

REFERENCES 344

List of figures

Figure 1: Meyer's hierarchy of text structure	30
Figure 2: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP	73
Figure 3: Triangulation of the data	83
Figure 4: Prototypical model of a curriculum macrogenre	89
Figure 5: Engeström's model of Activity Theory	91
Figure 6: Four levels of contradiction within activity systems	91
Figure 7: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP	99
Figure 8: The 'Russian dolls' of curriculum macrogenres and genres	109
Figure 9: Sandstone College overall curriculum macrogenre	110
Figure 10: Reading diary macrogenre	112
Figure 11: Macrogenre of academic and cultural curriculum strands	113
Figure 12: Learning moment genre	115
Figure 13: Sandstone College activity system	116
Figure 14: The Newgate College curriculum macrogenres	135
Figure 15: The activity system at Newgate College	140
Figure 16: City College Curriculum Macrogenre	170
Figure 17: The activity system at City College	174
Figure 18: Proportion of words spoken in CC04_26a: <i>The spatial distribution of employment</i>	187
Figure 19: Percentage of turns in CC04_26a	188
Figure 20: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP	208
Figure 21: Polygamy task: Note-taking tool	232
Figure 22: Engeström's model of Activity Theory	278
Figure 23: Scaffolding critical reading: student-teacher-text roles	296
Figure 24: An idealised activity system for critical reading in EAP	302
Figure 25: A revised Activity Theory diagram	315
Figure 26: The dialogic model of critical reading revised	318

List of tables

Table 1: Curriculum responses in EAP.....	8
Table 2: Affect and agency in reading pedagogy	58
Table 3: Three theoretical perspectives on teaching reading.....	60
Table 4: Summary of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.....	61
Table 5: Overview of the three research settings.....	80
Table 6: Participants	81
Table 7: Hierarchy of tasks in a language learning activity system	93
Table 8: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse	101
Table 9: Sandstone College texts and task types	114
Table 10: Teacher roles at Sandstone College.....	122
Table 11: Sandstone College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre.....	128
Table 12: Newgate College assessment items	134
Table 13: Interweaving of curriculum macrogenres and genres in an early lesson [NGC03_09]	137
Table 14: Macrogenres and genres in the Polygamy Class [NGC05-04].....	139
Table 15: Newgate College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre	156
Table 16: The reading texts and essay question at City College	171
Table 17: Curriculum macrogenres and genres in a reading lesson at City College: ‘The spatial distribution of employment’ [CC_04_26a and b].....	171
Table 18: Teacher responses to student turns in CC04_26a.....	188
Table 19: City College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre.....	190
Table 20: Comparison of the activity systems of the three learning environments...204	
Table 21: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse	209
Table 22: Comparative readability of Xenotransplantation and Cannibalism texts ..218	
Table 23: Student feedback on the texts and associated tasks at Sandstone College	221
Table 24: NGC: Teacher's notes from the <i>Marketing Concept</i>	229
Table 25: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse	241

Table 26: Paragraph taken from Hari's second draft.....	262
Table 27: The equivalent paragraph taken from Hari's final essay.....	262
Table 28: A paragraph from Austin's draft essay.....	265
Table 29: The equivalent paragraph from Austin's final essay.....	266
Table 30: Emergent critical reading practices in the three environments.....	271

Glossary

ANESB	Australian non-English speaking background
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ESB	English-speaking background
ESL	English as a Second Language
GPA	Grade Point Average
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
L1	First language
L2	Second language
SFG	Systemic-Functional Grammar
SFL	Systemic-Functional Linguistics
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
NESB	Non-English speaking background
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Certificate of authorship/originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

International students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) commonly undertake preparatory classes in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), delivered in language institutes which exist as independent commercial colleges on the margins of the university. EAP has been criticized for taking a purely pragmatic approach of ‘skilling up’ students rather than taking a critical, ‘literacies’ approach appropriate to the rapidly globalising, ‘liquid’ contexts of the twenty-first century (Doherty & Singh, 2005; Lea & Street, 2006; Luke, 2002b). In this thesis, I explore the ways in which EAP reading pedagogies in Australian universities are responding to this call for a more critical approach, asking the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices, and if so, how?**

In seeking answers to this question, I used an ethnographic-ecological methodology (van Lier, 2004b) to gain an understanding of reading pedagogy in three EAP learning environments. The study inevitably generated vast amounts of ‘messy’ data, including transcriptions of classes, observation notes, interviews and examples of students’ written work. Using Christie’s tools of Classroom Discourse Analysis (Christie, 2002) in combination with Engeström’s third generation Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) it was possible to generate a holistic analysis of the interaction between the multiple, intersecting elements of each environment.

I argue that more attention needs to be paid to ‘critical engagement’ in EAP pedagogy. The data suggest that conditions for such a pedagogy entail a negotiation of goals; texts and tasks which present high challenge as well as high support (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005); and a positive and productive classroom community (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). The study challenges teachers to see their role not as

‘arbiters of meaning’, mediating texts FOR students, but as setting up learning environments which scaffold students’ direct engagement and dialogue WITH texts, so that they themselves can experience legitimate participation in constructing meaning, and develop an emerging identity as critical readers.

Finally, I argue that the constraints of EAP in its marginalised position on the periphery of increasingly commercialised universities militate against the possibility of a richly critical, postcritical pedagogy. EAP can, however, begin to sow the seeds of critical reading practices, orienting students towards an active, dialogic engagement with the texts they will meet in the coming years at university.

Chapter One: EAP - context and challenges

In my work as a language and learning lecturer in an Australian university I meet many students both local and international, native speakers and non-native speakers, who are struggling to develop new identities in academic contexts. Perhaps the greatest challenge for these students is coming to terms with the social and cultural practices of intertextuality in academic writing. Participating in text-responsible writing, that is, writing with reference to sources, is predicated on knowing how to read and, furthermore, how to read critically: students need to be able not simply to reproduce knowledge from textual sources but also to synthesise, critique, construct and present new understandings on the basis of their reading.

Many international students, especially those for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL), enter the university via courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which aim to prepare students for the language and learning challenges ahead. However, while much research has been devoted to the analysis of academic writing and writing pedagogies in such settings, relatively little has been written about the more fundamental aspect of academic literacy pedagogy: the teaching of reading, and particularly the teaching of critical reading. In this thesis I contribute to filling this gap by asking the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices, and if so, how?**

Critical reading, I will argue, involves an orientation towards text which is essential in the dynamic context of the twenty-first century in which social communities and the knowledges they embody are developing, re-shaping and re-emerging at an unprecedented pace. As Luke (2002) maintains, globalisation and modern technology are dissolving traditional knowledge boundaries and territories with such rapidity that individuals can no longer take refuge within particular, clearly defined paradigms.

Such ‘liquid modernity’ (Doherty & Singh, 2005, p.3) means that it is no longer sufficient in any walk of life to recite the dominant canon of accepted wisdom; and university students are no longer expected simply to possess knowledge of key concepts. Rather, they must be prepared to forge personalised professional or disciplinary identities which can be constantly renewed and re-examined. For this reason, ‘critical thinking’ is now valued in Australian university rhetoric above knowing what, knowing how, and even knowing why; and ‘critical reading’ practices have become essential in enabling individuals to open windows on to diverse knowledges and perspectives, and thence to construct and re-construct their own positions. The University of Queensland Teaching and Learning Plan 2005-6, for example, states:

The provision of a high-quality experience for students requires an environment that fosters critical inquiry as well as innovation and creativity. The environment must build a depth of knowledge that will provide a foundation for later endeavour and support independent learning that will allow a graduate to adapt to new challenges and situations. (University of Queensland, 2007)

Similarly, the University of Canberra Learning and Teaching policy states:

The University of Canberra is committed to graduating creative professionals who are capable of developing innovative solutions to problems facing society. This will require graduates to possess analytical and critical capacities as well as the ability to synthesise ideas and adapt to new situations. (University of Canberra, 2002)

However, the focus on the ‘critical’ in these university policy documents remains ill-defined. The terms ‘critical thinking’, ‘critical literacy’ and ‘critical reading’ are dynamic and fluid terms drawing on a range of disciplines and perspectives (Iyer, 2007; Luke, 2000), ranging from an analytical, cognitive perspective (eg Bloom 1956, 1984), through to an emancipatory, post-structural perspective which calls into question the hegemony of dominant discourses (eg Pennycook 1993). My own perspective on critical reading, which is developed more fully in Chapter 2, derives largely from the sociocultural theories of language and learning developed by theorists such as Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Wertsch, and Wells whose work has been

brought into the field of second language learning by Lantolf, Norton, van Lier and others. Like Iyer (2007), I see critical reading as fundamentally dialogic in nature. On the one hand, critical reading entails attending to the voices of the text – not simply the individual voice of the text-author, but the multiplicity of voices behind that author (Bakhtin, 1994). The act of reading implies a responsibility to listen attentively to these voices and to struggle to understand concepts through their eyes. At the same time, however, reading (like writing) is a constructive activity (Patrikis, 2003): each reader builds his/her own understanding of text within his/her own mind through ‘intramental’ dialogue (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). These internal understandings are more fully and richly realised as the reader externalises them, reconnecting with social contexts through writing or speaking (see Wells, 1999, 2000, for example). Hence, critical reading is defined in this thesis as the ability of individuals to **attend to**, **engage with** and **externalise** meanings from academic texts.

My interest in the topic of critical reading derives from two sources. First, in my own experience of teaching academic reading, I have frequently been confronted with the difficulty of developing students’ learning in the essentially private, internalised zone of reading activity. Unlike teaching writing, where there is a tangible outcome and direct evidence of students’ developing abilities, in teaching reading it can be difficult to ‘hear’ what goes on in students’ minds as they interact with text. The difficulty of obtaining insights into students’ internal meaning-making may be one reason why there is relatively little research in the teaching of reading in EAP, while research on writing abounds, and why EAP teachers may be tempted to hope that simply ‘practise, practise, practise’ will build students’ reading ability. A major contribution of this thesis is the model of critical reading presented in Figure 7. 2, which by redefining reading as both internalising and externalising meanings, foregrounds students’ voices and offers teachers greater access to students’ meaning-making. The thesis challenges teachers to distinguish between the roles of ‘master’ and ‘facilitator’, suggesting that teachers need to both support and listen to their students as they struggle to make meaning. The thesis will argue that reading classes need to be collaborative sites of co-construction in which teachers support meaning-making rather than imposing it. As Iyer (2007, p.161) maintains, a pedagogy of critical

literacy requires an inclusive classroom ‘allowing the ongoing repositioning of stakeholders so that the voices of students as well as teachers are heard.’

Secondly, my Masters thesis, which investigated in detail the academic writing process of six non-native speakers, suggested that students who were unable to read effectively were locked out of interaction within the academic discourse community of their subject area (Wilson, 1998a). These students were, in effect, ‘mute outsiders’ (Penrose & Geisler, 1994) to the subject. The study suggested that helping international students to develop successful reading practices would be a key to their academic success. More recent studies by Moore and Morton (2005) and Turner (2005) in Australia and New Zealand respectively confirm that assessment at universities across all disciplines involves synthesising knowledge derived from multiple textual sources. While Biggs (1993) might argue that students can take a surface approach to reading in order to ‘suffice’ the task requirements, successful synthesis requires more than mix-and-match. It requires an incorporation and reconstruction of knowledge and ideas into the student’s own understanding. Recent research in the use of appraisal in academic writing (Charles, 2006; Hood, 2006; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Hyland & Milton, 1997) emphasises that students need to be able not only to summarise and interrelate others’ work, but also to evaluate it, demonstrating how they are positioning themselves as writers vis-à-vis the position of others. In other words, they need to read not only for information but to read with a critical eye (C. Wallace, 1995), constructing new meanings as they do so.

The teaching of academic writing has progressed substantially in the past two decades under the influence of research into contrastive rhetoric (for example: Connor, 1996; Hinds, 1987; Kaplan, 1966, 1987; Kirkpatrick, 1997); genre analysis (for example: Bhatia, 1993; Paltridge, 2001; Swales, 1990); concordancing (for example: Charles, 2006; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Starfield, 2004); Systemic Functional Linguistics (for example: Hood, 2006; Macken-Horarik, 2005) and sociocultural pedagogy (for example, Canagarajah, 2002a; Ivanic, 1997; Lillis, 2001). However, this rich flourishing of research into academic writing has not been paralleled by research in the area of academic reading. This thesis contributes to filling this gap by investigating the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices, and if so, how?**

1.1 The context of the study

1.1.1 *Internationalisation*

This study of the teaching and learning of reading in EAP settings in Australia is located within the context of the internationalisation of education. In the past two decades, the number of international students enrolling in higher education in Australia has increased from very small beginnings to 178,000 in 2007 (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008). In many Australian universities more than 25% of students are from overseas, most coming from countries where English is a second or foreign language. In 2007, international education contributed \$11.7 billion to the Australian economy, and was the third largest export industry behind coal and iron ore (Australian Education International, 2008).

Arguably, these demographic changes have brought about substantial improvements in tertiary pedagogy; universities are generally proud of their record of internationalisation and educators have been forced to reinvent their pedagogies – at least to some extent - to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. However, internationalisation has also raised disquieting questions. One recurrent concern has been: are international students adequately prepared for tertiary study in a foreign language and foreign culture? In particular, questions have been frequently raised about the literacy readiness of international students. Most recently, Bretag (2007), interviewing 14 academics across 10 universities found that all 14 respondents considered that international EAL (English as an additional language) students generally do not have adequate English language competence for tertiary study in Australia.

The point is also made that international students may not be prepared culturally for the new educational environment (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988; Singh & Doherty, 2004). Singh and Doherty (2004) and Cadman (2005) stress that university preparation programs are frontline sites of cultural flow in a rapidly globalising world. EAP

teachers are ‘expected to commodify versions of Western pedagogy, learning styles, study skills and academic English for consumption by EAP learners’ and develop ‘the culturally suitable demeanours, dispositions, and behaviours of a Western academic student’ (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p18-19) while also valuing the cultural diversity students bring with them. However, globalisation and the rapid increase of international education itself mean that international students, like local students, can no longer be imagined as a clearly demarcated group, representing fixed, static cultural identities (Doherty & Singh, 2005, p.1): cultural boundaries and contact zones in the globalised world are dynamic and fluid, such that assumptions can rarely be made about individuals’ ‘propriospect’ – their individual cultural perspective (Wolcott, 1991).

Concerns are also frequently raised about increasing rates of plagiarism among students for whom English is an additional language (for example: H. Alexander, 2007; Bretag, 2007; McGowan, 2005b; Susskind, 2006). Charges of plagiarism have dogged the field of international education in Australia consistently over the past fifteen years. In some cases, this has had seismic repercussions for individual students and for their institutions and has led to student failures and the dismissal of academics (H. Alexander, 2007). It is now widely understood that writing from sources is a developmental skill, which takes time for students to acquire (Angélil-Carter, 2000; McGowan, 2005c; Wilson, 1998b). Importantly, it is now recognised that the concept of plagiarism is culturally bound, and that understandings of plagiarism vary not only across cultures, but also across sub-cultures (Angélil-Carter, 2000; McGowan, 2005c; Pennycook, 1996; Scollon, 1995). While many authors argue that learning to avoid plagiarism is a matter of enculturation (McGowan, 2005c; Pennycook, 1996; Scollon, 1995), some assume that simply informing students of the need for referencing will overcome the problem (McGowan, 2005a). Others, more realistically, recognise that students need more than explanation of the ‘rules’. Writers such as Currie (1998) argue that, in order to write successfully in the target genres, students need sustained training in the use of referencing practices, combined with exposure to and analysis of the discourse conventions of the discipline. However, the data in my Masters study (Wilson, 1998a) indicate that this is still not enough. The ‘mute outsiders’ in this study were adept at using the surface features of writing from sources: they formatted

their in-text references appropriately and created perfect bibliographies. However, they were not able to construct meaning from their reading and consequently could not even begin to express concepts in their own words without relying heavily on the language of the sources, let alone to synthesise and critique these concepts. The fundamental problem for these students was a lack of critical reading resources.

However, the demand for adequate preparation for international students on the one hand is countermanded by commercial pressures on the other. As universities have come to rely increasingly on international students for essential revenue (Bretag, 2007), competition has become intense. Entry standards have been gradually eroded (Birrell, 2006), and students have increasingly selected shorter academic preparation courses within Australia, often preferring the cheaper option of undertaking IELTS or TOEFL classes in their country of origin. Although many British universities still insist on compulsory, in-country, pre-sessional academic English preparation courses, this has not been the practice in Australia, allowing Australian universities to keep fees lower and maintain a competitive edge in the global international education market. These commercial pressures have forced many EAP providers into re-examining their offerings, with many turning towards direct entry programs designed to prepare students in a cost effective manner for university while short-circuiting gatekeeper English tests such as IELTS and TOEFL.

Commercial pressures have not only affected curriculum but also employment practices in EAP. In order to compete, providers have gradually undermined employment conditions in the EAP industry, demanding longer teaching hours, cutting contract length, decreasing preparation time, and expecting teachers to teach the same module over and over again. Combined with shorter contracts and low pay, these conditions have had the effect of undermining the professional core of the EAP teaching profession. Increasingly, teachers are forced to rely on pre-prepared materials with little time or incentive to develop an understanding of the needs of their students or to respond proactively to these needs.

The pressures resulting from internationalisation pose enormous challenges, as well as great opportunities, for EAP providers.

1.1.2 Curriculum responses in EAP

Hyland (2006), citing Lea and Street (1998), identifies three contrasting EAP curriculum responses to the context of internationalisation: study skills, socialisation and academic literacies. Others, such as Pennycook (1997), Harwood and Hadley (2004) and Dunworth (2006), distinguish between ‘vulgar pragmatism’ and a critical approach to EAP. There has also been a shift from curriculum responses which position international students as outsiders to an apparently monolithic culture of western education, to a more pluralist view, which recognises disciplinary differences as well as the complexity of individual student identities in a rapidly globalising world. Table 1 represents a synthesis of these curriculum responses.

Table 1: Curriculum responses in EAP

Test-taking skills/ Study skills	Socialisation	Academic literacies
Pragmatic ←-----→ Critical		

1.1.2a The skills approach

As suggested above, the commercial pressures of EAP have tended to push providers towards an instrumental, pragmatic approach - offering students the quickest and most cost-effective pathway into tertiary study, while tending to ignore the longer-term critical literacy needs of such students once they reach university. Providers are pressured by their stakeholders – the student-clients and their parents, as well as the commercial arm of the tertiary institutions to which they are allied – to prepare students with test-taking skills in order to gain the requisite score as quickly as possible in university gate-keeping tests such as IELTS (the International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (the Test of English as a Foreign Language) (Dunworth, 2006). The sooner students can pass these hurdles, the sooner they can gain their Australian tertiary qualification, and the less they will have to spend on expensive tuition and living costs in Australia. However, these tests are merely language proficiency tests, rather than preparation in themselves for tertiary study: as

Singh and Doherty (2004, p.10) put it, they are ‘manageable proxy measures of academic readiness for mainstream university study’.

In Australia, most institutions favour the IELTS. Developed in collaboration between researchers in Australia and the United Kingdom, IELTS is seen to have more relevance to the Australian context than the American TOEFL, as well as having more relevance to tertiary literacy, as it is a test of English usage rather than of grammatical knowledge. However, while it was intended to have positive washback on EAP, the design of the IELTS was strongly influenced by the ‘study skills’ approach to tertiary literacy which was dominant in the 1980s. In terms of reading, in particular, this was the era in which a cognitive strategies approach to reading was favoured. Based on research by authors such as by Carrell (1985, 1987, 1988), Oxford (1990), and Block (1986), the IELTS tests reading strategies such as picking out main ideas; scanning for information; and identifying text structure. While useful in themselves, approaches that focus primarily on such skills can be criticised on the grounds that they tend to reduce text to a series of unchallengeable propositions rather than promoting students’ ability to interact critically with text. Furthermore, the IELTS segregates the four macro-skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking; this segregation of the skills is often reflected in EAP course design, so that the intimate links between reading and writing in academic literacy have largely been ignored in many traditional EAP courses. As Moore and Morton (2005) point out, the IELTS fails to test the ability to synthesise material from text, although there was an attempt to do this in the original versions of the test.

A number of tertiary institutions in Australia have now introduced their own direct entry pathways and/or foundation programs for international students, partly in an attempt to circumvent the powerful pressure from students for test-taking preparation rather than university preparation per se. Foundation and pathway programs are usually designed to use ‘authentic’ academic assessment procedures. In EAP courses of this nature, in which teachers and students are freed from the tyranny of test preparation, there is more opportunity to develop authentic academic skills. On the other hand, abandoning the IELTS may have left something of a curriculum vacuum in some institutions.

While moving away from a focus on test preparation may appear to be a shift away from ‘vulgar pragmatism’, it is not necessarily the case. In fact, the move to direct entry pathways is also motivated by the need to improve the marketability of EAP courses in the face of increasing competition from offshore providers.

Students/clients are keen to reduce the time and cost of acquiring an Australian tertiary qualification by cutting down on preparation courses, which are often perceived by potential students to be expensive and irrelevant. Furthermore, pathway courses may also adopt a pragmatic rather than a critical approach in their curriculum design. Dunworth (2006) points out that the domination of summative assessment practices in universities encourages EAP courses to focus on fulfilling the instrumental need for students to gain study skills for success rather than academic practices which foster deep engagement with content. As Dunworth suggests, the brevity of EAP courses makes it hard for teachers to engage their students in a truly critical approach.

1.1.2b The socialisation approach

More recently, the pragmatic test-taking and/or study skills approach has been enriched by sociolinguistic and ethnographic understandings of academic literacy, leading to what Lea and Street (1998, 2006) call the ‘socialisation’ approach to EAP. Two main streams of research have stimulated this approach: cross-cultural work on contrastive rhetoric, and inter-disciplinary work on genre analysis.

Work on contrastive rhetoric emphasises cultural differences in approaches to education and literacy. Writers such as Ballard and Clanchy (1988) and Fox (1994) are among those who have helped educators to understand how academic thinking and writing may be understood differently in different cultural contexts. Their insightful contributions were stimulated by seminal research by Robert Kaplan (1966) who identified typical cultural patterns of rhetoric in English, Russian, Arabic, ‘Asian’ and Romance languages. Subsequent researchers have refined these understandings of cultural differences in writing style and reader-writer roles (See for example: Hamp-Lyons & Zhang, 2001; Hinds, 1987; Kirkpatrick, 1997). Other research has investigated the mismatch of cultural expectations between international students and their lecturers (Cotton, 2004). Such research has underpinned an

approach to EAP which emphasises acculturation: the cultural adaptation of international students to the ‘foreign’ learning environment in Australia.

The implied view of EAP as acculturation, in which students - and institutions - need to compensate for cultural difference has been strongly criticised by authors who claim that cultural variations in rhetoric and putative cultural differences in thinking style imply gross generalisations which are increasingly irrelevant in this age of globalisation in which individuals are subject to myriad intersecting cultures (Singh & Doherty, 2004). Biggs (1997), for example, saw the emphasis on cultural difference as an ‘emic’ perspective, rather than an ‘etic’ perspective, and emphasised that ‘good students’ displayed universal characteristics: a deep, and/or achieving approach to study involving deep engagement with content, commitment to success, and hard work. Rather than highlighting the specific needs of non-native speakers, teaching in EAP has been increasingly influenced by research on academic literacies (now understood to be a plural concept rather than a unitary, one-size-fits-all view of literacy) and the teaching of literacies in the mainstream to all students. Such research has developed deeper linguistic and sociolinguistic understandings of academic language, bringing particular insights into the differences between disciplines, rather than highlighting interesting but often stereotypical views of transnational differences in literacy.

The second area of sociolinguistic research to influence curriculum responses in EAP derives broadly from work on genre analysis. Introducing the concept of genre analysis into the teaching of academic literacy, Swales (1990) revolutionised the teaching of research writing by deconstructing the typical moves of thesis introductions. This seminal text was closely followed by work by Bhatia (1993), and later by Paltridge (2001) and others (for example: Hyland, 2002; Kapp & Bangeni, 2005; Love, 2002; Samraj, 2002). Importantly, genre analysis highlighted interdisciplinary differences in academic text, picking up from Becher’s (1989) provocative work, *Academic Tribes and Territories*. One of the earliest publications coming from this perspective, for example, was Buckingham and Nevile’s (1995) analysis of referencing conventions in three different disciplines. Recently, there has been an increasing awareness of the rapidly increasing range of genres expected from

students within disciplines, especially in professionally-oriented courses such as Nursing and Education (Dovey, 2006).

Arising from this heightened awareness of the language specific to particular disciplines, some authors argued that a generalist approach in EAP was not appropriate, and that international students needed to be prepared not for university in general, but for the specific literacies of their own field of study (for example: Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003; Johns, 1997; Snow, 2005). However, as Clapham (2001) has pointed out, this is not generally practical in EAP classes which rarely have the possibility of working with a homogenous group of students preparing for a single discipline. Furthermore, it can be hard to identify texts of a suitable level of complexity in a range of disciplines, or for generalist EAP teachers to develop sufficient insights into the rapidly changing genres which may be required. For this reason, Clapham argues that EAP classes should focus on ‘common core EAP’. Nevertheless, this lack of specificity is clearly a problematic issue in EAP as it raises the vexing question of content: what is the appropriate content for EAP courses?

1.1.2c An academic literacies approach

Research work on genre analysis by Swales, Bhatia and others has converged with understandings of literacy emerging from Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Halliday emphasised the sociocultural contexts of language, and the ways in which these contexts constrain the language choices available within particular social registers. Meanings are created and shared through the macro-functions of field (experiential meanings); tenor (interpersonal meanings) and mode (textual meanings). A heightened understanding of SFL can enable learners to gain a greater appreciation of how meaning is constructed, and how readers can be included or excluded from discourse communities (Martin & Rose, 2003; C. Wallace, 2003).

Such linguistic understandings are complemented by a focus on critical pedagogy arising from the work of writers such as Freire (1972) and Canagarajah (1999, 2001, 2002a). The overwhelming emphasis on writing rather than reading in EAP which was dominant throughout the 1990s has been redressed to some extent by a

convergence of interest in the ways in which language is used to create relationships between reader and writer (tenor), to create meanings within a particular discipline area (field) and to create coherent chains of meaning in written and spoken language (mode). In other words, ‘literacy’ and ‘literacies’ have become the focus of attention rather than the discrete skills of reading and writing (and speaking and listening). Wallace (2003), Luke (2002b) and others argue that understanding the ways in which language is used to influence others enables readers to become ‘text-resistant’ (Macken-Horarik, 1996), and can help students to recognise and resist powerful forces of cultural imperialism which have persisted in international education generally, and in EAP in particular (Canagarajah, 1999; Fairclough, 1989; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992).

The literacies approach is based on an understanding of literacy as a profoundly social, situated activity in which text is seen as dialogic and multi-voiced. Both author and reader are intimately entwined in a negotiated, dynamic process of meaning-making. Theorists in this area recognise the sociocultural nature of discourse: that communication is impossible without shared frames of reference, and patterns and conventions of language with which to mediate meaning. Yet they resist conformity to restrictive constructs of genre and grammar, viewing these conventions as liberating archetypes rather than as rule-bound constraints. They understand discourse as being closely related to identity: for EAP students, acquiring new discourses means acquiring new identities as they learn to participate as meaning-makers within the academic discourse community (Doherty & Singh, 2005; J. P. Gee, 1990; Ivanic, 1997; Norton, 2006). In order to develop such new identities, students need to develop ‘critical language awareness’ (Wallace 2003). Wallace, using insights from authors such as Bakhtin (1994), Fairclough (1989) and Kristeva (1986) as well as Halliday (1993), demonstrates how the tools of SFL, including analysis of field, tenor and mode, can be used to enhance students’ understanding of the hegemonic power of discourses and of their own potential as legitimate, critical meaning-makers in academic discourse.

1.2 Challenges in teaching reading in EAP

While reading is undoubtedly a major factor affecting students' success at university, it is by no means easy to teach. Reading is an essentially private, internal, cognitive activity happening inside students' heads, and it is almost impossible for teachers to get direct evidence of how their students are reading and what their stumbling blocks may be. In teaching writing, on the other hand, teachers derive insights into their students' mental activity through their drafts at various stages in the writing process. Moreover, linguistic analysis of the written 'product', both of the target genres and students' attempts to reproduce these genres, gives teachers a tangible basis on which to plan curricula and give feedback to individual students. In teaching reading, however, there is less direct, concrete evidence of students' engagement with text.

A further problem with the teaching of reading is the long-standing tradition of testing rather than teaching reading: reading classes are traditionally organised on the basis of a reading text accompanied by a set of comprehension questions (Nuttall, 1982, p.124). Students gain considerable practice in performing this type of exercise, becoming adept test-takers, but there may be little connection between the testing activity and students' ability to construct penetrating and meaningful understandings from text that they can use in relating to the discourse community (Alderson, 2000). A common criticism of traditional reading comprehension exercises has long been that they allow teachers little insight into students' actual comprehension of texts, and that they do little to develop good reading practices.

EAP teachers also struggle to reconcile test preparation with academic preparation. Students are often obsessively concerned with gaining the required university entry scores and teachers feel obliged to meet their demands, while recognising that test preparation is not necessarily appropriate academic preparation. Although test designers are aware of the powerful effects of washback (Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996), many test designers claim that, in the interests of test reliability, it is necessary to use objective marking systems relying on items such as multiple choice, cloze, and labelling diagrams or mindmaps (Alderson, 2000). While these items can be tested for

reliability, their face validity as a diagnosis of the student's ability to read academically would appear to be limited, as they test primarily students' ability to decode texts – not their ability to construct personalised meanings from text, let alone their ability to use texts constructively for their own academic purposes. Although the original IELTS test included an attempt to have students link their writing to the texts in the reading section, this was abandoned as high levels of 'plagiarising' (Whitaker, 1993; Wilson, 1997) made it hard to assess students' writing reliably (Moore & Morton, 2005). Thus, the IELTS reading test now focuses entirely on decoding skills such as identifying main ideas and supporting detail, summarising, matching vocabulary, and scanning for specific information. Interestingly, Reberger and Anderson (2005), who correlated university entry mechanisms with GPA, found that the most positive relationship between IELTS scores and GPA was in the reading sub-test. This finding may suggest that the decoding items of the IELTS do have some validity in terms of subsequent academic success. However, it also points to the centrality of reading in academia, and particularly for EAL students.

A further challenge for EAP teachers is the need to adapt to new demands as universities adopt new approaches to learning and assessment. As discussed above, universities (at least according to their rhetoric) no longer require students simply to learn static bodies of knowledge. In this new environment, a transmissive 'skills' approach to literacy, which simply requires students to draw information from sources, is no longer applicable. EAP teachers now need to be able to develop curricula and teaching practices which foster critical reading practices, lying at the 'literacies' end of the Lea and Street spectrum. However, while there is a considerable body of research on transmission approaches to teaching reading in EAP, there is still relatively little investigation of EAP teaching practices from a literacies perspective. In the new teaching-learning environment of the twenty-first century, the EAP profession is still searching for understandings about how to encourage students to become readers who engage critically with sources. There is still a paucity of textbooks, for example, which support a 'literacies' approach to reading. Most standard EAP texts, such as the widely used *Writing Academic English* (Oshima & Hogue, 2006), still embody a structuralist, transmission approach to

learning. In other words, while university contexts are rapidly changing, EAP teachers' perspectives may not be keeping pace.

EAP practitioners are also faced with the dilemma of how to balance skills and literacies. Lea and Street (2006) suggest that the approaches are not mutually exclusive, yet having students engage with substantial knowledge would seem to require a certain level of language resources. The question is frequently raised: at what point can the critical, literacies approach be introduced? Hand in hand with this dilemma run arguments surrounding language deficit. The very nature of EAP institutions suggests that international students are lacking in resources for tertiary education in western settings. Wallace (2003) counters this by suggesting that international students, by virtue of their status as outsiders to dominant discourses, are in a privileged position to be able to critique texts.

However, perhaps the greatest challenge for EAP, as mentioned above, is in selecting appropriate disciplinary contexts in which to situate student learning. In other words: what is the appropriate content for EAP? Typically in EAP classes, students will be intending to enter a wide range of disciplines. They also come to the EAP context with a wide range of educational and experiential backgrounds, and in some cases with very limited knowledge of the world. Choosing content that will 'speak' to such students, present them with substantial intellectual challenge, and be relevant to their future needs can be highly problematic.

1.3 The focus of this study

Thus, there is a need for EAP providers to understand more about how a critical approach to reading can be incorporated into EAP curricula. The thesis asks:

Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices, and if so, how?

To answer this question, I chose to explore in depth the teaching of reading in three EAP learning environments. By examining in detail the teaching approaches and student learning in the classrooms of three well-regarded and experienced teachers,

the study aimed to tease out teaching-learning practices that contributed to the emergence of critical reading practices.

The research question called for an ethnographic-ecological approach to data collection, in that it called for a description of human activity in social settings, rather than attempting to answer a narrowly defined, positivist question by setting up a hypothesis and testing it (Freebody, 2003; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p.121-122). I aimed to develop a holistic, ecological description of teaching practices in EAP reading in the three settings, recognising the situated and complex nature of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As van Lier (2004b) points out, the complex nature of learning and teaching means that every aspect of the learning environment is interrelated: the institutional context; the teachers' beliefs, experiences, approaches and feelings; the students' goals, previous knowledge, affective and cognitive behaviour; the materials and learning activities. All of these factors contribute to the quality of the learning environment, and ultimately to the quality of learning. An ethnographic study such as this cannot, therefore, generate a blueprint for teaching critical reading in EAP, but, rather, seeks to generate understandings which can inform other teachers as they reflect on their teaching practices. As Eskey puts it:

There are no magic approaches or methods for the teaching of learning of second language reading, but good teachers and students, working together, sometimes get the job done successfully. (Eskey, 2005, p.577)

Thus, the research question is broken down into four contributing limbs as follows:

- 1. What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**
- 2. What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?**
- 3. How did the affordances available in the three settings contribute to students' emergent practice of critical reading?**
- 4. What implications can be drawn about the nature of effective learning environments for fostering critical reading in EAP?**

1.4 The contribution of the thesis

The thesis makes several important contributions.

1. First, the thesis contributes to the ongoing development of reading theory by offering a dialogic model of critical, postcritical reading which constructs reading as practices of **attending to**, **engaging with** and **externalising from** text (see Figure 2 in the following chapter). These practices involve individual readers in collaborative dialogue with the multiple voices of the texts they read, critically appropriating the language and ideas of texts in ways which meet their own purposes and goals. In addition, a tentative assessment tool based on this model is proposed (see Table 8 in Chapter 3).

2. Secondly, the thesis contributes to reading pedagogy in EAP, calling on EAP teachers to establish collaborative learning environments in which meanings are genuinely co-constructed through dialogue between students and texts, privileging wherever possible the voices of the students themselves so that they can develop ‘internally persuasive’ identities as critical readers. The study challenges teachers to see their role not as arbiters of meaning, mediating texts FOR students, but as setting up learning environments which scaffold students’ direct engagement with texts, as legitimate participants in constructing meaning.

The findings of the study show that EAP classes currently provide only limited opportunities for students to develop critical reading practices, despite the strong intentions, goodwill and dedication of teachers. The thesis argues that, while international students may be limited by their emergent language resources, it is never too early to start engaging students in critical reading: critical reading is not a skill to be acquired, but an orientation to text. If students have developed a critical orientation to text in EAP, it is likely that they will continue to read critically as they progress through university.

3. The thesis makes a contribution to research methodology in its use of third generation Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) in

combination with curriculum genre analysis (Christie, 2002) to handle the ‘messy’ and abundant data generated through ethnographic study of classrooms. The use of Activity Theory in this thesis served to highlight the complex interaction between features of the classrooms which were the focus of the study. Surprisingly, well-defined critical reading goals, challenging teacher talk, and in-depth text analysis did not necessarily lead to the expected learning outcomes. The holistic nature of Activity Theory analysis offered insights into why apparently excellent teaching practices were not as successful as could be hoped.

4. The thesis also contributes to the international education industry in Australia. It argues that the current competitive and commercialised context of international education militates against the acquisition of critical reading practices by international students before they enter university. As Wallace (2005, p.86) reminds us, critical reading is not a unitary competency that, once acquired, will be a sufficient qualification for tertiary study. Hence the thesis argues that, like other students, international students need to continue to develop their critical reading practices as they progress through the university. Students will continue to develop as critical readers long after they have completed their EAP courses – provided they are given challenging learning opportunities and adequate support. The question is therefore not ‘Are students adequately prepared before entering university?’ but rather ‘How can universities provide on-going challenges and support for students as they progress through their tertiary courses?’

1.5 An outline of the thesis

The next chapter presents an overview of the literature on reading pedagogy in EAP; compares competing constructs of critical thinking, critical literacy, and critical reading pedagogy; and develops the dialogic model of critical reading in EAP which underpins this thesis.

In Chapter 3, the methodology of the study, an ethnographic-ecological study of three EAP learning environments, is described and justified.

Chapter 4 presents a rich, ecological description of each of the three learning environments, using Christie’s notions of classroom discourse analysis (Christie, 2002) and Engeström’s third generation activity theory (Engeström, 1999; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; van Lier, 2004) as tools to provide detailed insights into the complex, intersecting characteristics of the three settings. Finally, the understandings of critical reading embodied in each environment are discussed.

Chapter 5 presents evidence of the students’ developing practice as critical readers, analysing data drawn from the students’ spoken and written texts, as well as retrospective interview data and my observational research notes and diary.

Chapter 6 discusses the nature of the affordances offered by the three learning environments and their impact on students’ developing practice.

Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the implications of the findings for the EAP profession: curriculum designers, material developers, and EAP teachers themselves.

Chapter Two: Towards a dialogic model of critical reading in EAP

The aim of this chapter is to develop a model of critical reading which can be used as a framework for this study – a lens through which to understand the critical reading practices at play in the EAP learning environments which form the focus of this study. However, before looking specifically at what it means to read critically in EAP, it is necessary to provide an overview of prevailing methodologies in the teaching of reading in EAP which will help to understand activity in these environments.

In the first section of the chapter, I present three approaches to reading pedagogy: the componential, skills-based approach to reading; the cognitivist approach; and the sociocultural approach, sometimes referred to as the ‘sociocultural turn’ as its proponents eschew prescriptive ‘methods’ and ‘approaches’ of teaching (see, for example, Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Kern, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2002). The three theoretical positions distinguished in this section are summarised in Table 3. The first two of these approaches sit at the ‘skills’ end of the Lea and Street (2006) spectrum of ‘skills-socialisation-literacies’ (see Table 1), while the sociocultural approach sits at the ‘literacies’ end of the spectrum.

Under the skills-based approach, text is treated as a set of static and unitary meanings which students can decode and subsequently reproduce in a testing situation. The principal aim of reading classes in a foreign language learning context is to impart structural knowledge about grammar and vocabulary, with text content having a secondary, disembodied role.

In contrast, the cognitivist approach emphasises the reading process – a process which can be enhanced by mobilising particular readings strategies, especially those used by successful readers. This approach was developed in the L1 (first language) literature by proponents such as Smith (1978) and Goodman (1967), and brought into the L2 (second language) literature by Carrell (1985; Carrell, 1987, 1988; Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 1988), Oxford (1990) and Chamot and O’Malley (1994) among others. Rather than being a passive recipient of knowledge, the student is seen as an active participant in the reading process. Texts are seen to contain propositions which readers must decode and assimilate, with the principal goal of reading being to process information.

A sociocultural perspective, however, suggests a different orientation to text: reading is seen as social practice, involving collaborative, co-authored construction of meanings between the (multiple) voices of the text and the reader (Bakhtin, 1994). Texts do not exist in isolation, but rather in relation to both the reader and the writer’s contexts and in relation to other texts, through complex webs of intertextuality (Hirvela, 2004, p.18). Readers are ‘socialised’ into ways of reading and interpreting texts (Hood, Solomon, & Burns, 1996, p. 23).

These three perspectives represent paradigmatic shifts in the understanding of the teaching of reading. However, as Woodward (1996) points out, new paradigms do not necessarily run directly counter to previous perspectives, but represent shifts in perspective as fresh understandings are brought to bear on existing prevailing knowledge. The literature, and indeed this literature review, may be at pains to place such shifts at counterpoint with each other; however, in terms of teachers’ praxis, which comprises the focus of this study, different perspectives tend to co-exist and laminate one on to the other. Praxis, influenced by the multiple parameters of context, beliefs, and experience, is rarely as clear cut and purist as the theoretical perspectives it represents, as Amy Tsui’s (2003) study of ESL teachers in Hong Kong has demonstrated (see also Bailey, 1996; Blanton, 1998, for example).

In the second section of this chapter, I go on to focus more specifically on ‘critical’ reading and critical reading pedagogy. I tease out different understandings of critical reading: on one hand, critical reading is sometimes understood as an analytical

‘downward-looking view’ (A. Jones, 2006) of texts using cognitive processes such as those suggested in Bloom’s taxonomy of educational objectives (Bloom, 1984; Bloom, Engelhart, Frost, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956); alternatively, critical reading may be perceived as an inherently political ‘upward-looking view’ which recognises the hegemony of western education systems and the ‘othering’ of international students (Doherty & Singh, 2005; Luke, 2002a; Pennycook, 1997). I review several examples of critical reading pedagogy in practice, paying particular attention to Luke and Freebody’s ‘four reader resources’ (Luke, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999). Iyer (2007), however, asserts that a ‘postcritical’ view of literacy is more appropriate in the twenty-first century, as students are participants in a rapidly changing, globalising world in which structuralist views of society are no longer applicable. Readers bring multiple identities to their interactions with texts, and have multiple purposes and goals. The focus of educators, Iyer suggests, should be on encouraging students to engage with text as individuals with a strong sense of agency.

Arising out of this survey of the literature, in the final section of the chapter I distil a dialogical model of critical reading in order to provide a framework to support my investigation of the teaching of critical reading in EAP. This model is derived largely from the work of Bakhtin (eg. Bakhtin, 1994), Vygotsky (1978, 1987) and Luke and Freebody (Freebody, Luke, & Gilbert, 1991; Luke, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999). This model will serve as a lens through which to view reading classes in EAP as I attempt to answer the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices and dispositions, and if so, how?**

2.1 Theoretical perspectives on reading pedagogy in EAP

2.1.1 The componential, skills-based approach

The traditional approach to teaching reading is still thriving in many foreign language classes around the world, and continues to influence English language teaching in the

most contemporary of settings, as most teachers themselves have experienced learning in this way. Traditional reading pedagogy is based on the premise that texts contain static, definable and quantifiable units of meaning. From this perspective, texts are seen as unitary artefacts which exist in their own right, irrespective of the existence of writer or reader (Hirvela, 2004, p. 29; van Lier, 2004, p. 26).

The traditional, skills-based approach to English language teaching views language as consisting of a set of grammar rules which can be applied in conjunction with the vocabulary bank of the language to produce correct sentences in the target language. van Lier (2004, p. 26) refers to this as the ‘componential assumption’ of language as a set of building blocks. Most English language textbooks published prior to 1980 – and many still published today (for example, the new Vietnamese high school English textbooks) – include reading texts which have been written specifically to demonstrate this articulation of grammar + vocabulary. The role of reading in the curriculum is to increase students’ stock of grammar + vocabulary, rather than to focus on meaning. Students are typically asked to identify instances of particular grammar points, to parse sentences, or to transform the grammar, and to link vocabulary to given definitions or translation equivalents.

The link between reading and translation is strong in this approach. There is an underlying belief that meaning is static: that there exist objects and concepts in the real world which can be labelled in any language. Thus, meanings can be translated directly from one language to another, and translation into L1 may be practised both as a means to support comprehension, and as a test of comprehension (Alderson, 2000). This view of language suggests that if students can read in their first language, the skills they have acquired can be transferred automatically into a second language, providing they have reached a requisite level of linguistic knowledge in the L2: the short-circuit hypothesis (Clarke 1980, cited in Eskey, 2005, p.566). A threshold level of language proficiency, assumed to be vocabulary and grammar knowledge, is regarded as necessary to enable reading proficiency. Having reached this level, students can then apply first language skills in second language reading.

Thus, vocabulary learning is seen to be centrally important. As Koda (2005, p.48) puts it: ‘Successful comprehension is heavily dependent on knowledge of individual

word meanings. The widely recognised relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension attests to the crucial role word knowledge plays in text understanding'. Learners themselves attest to this relationship (Burns & de Silva Joyce, 2001, p.viii), and numerous studies have been carried out to shed light on the role of vocabulary in academic reading. In particular, several researchers have attempted to establish lists of the most common vocabulary in English. One such list, Nation's 'General Service List' of 2000 words, has been found to account for 80% of vocabulary in most texts (Cobb & Horst, 2001). In addition, Xue and Nation (1984) devised the University Word List comprising 800 'sub-technical words' such as *increase, suggest, contrast*. According to Cobb and Horst, these words comprise 10% of the vocabulary in academic texts. Further research by Hirsch and Nation (1992, cited in Cobb & Horst, 2001), using standardised comprehension tests and word recognition tests, established that an unsimplified text could be understood if 95% of the vocabulary was 'known'. This equation offers the tantalising prospect that if a learner can know sufficient vocabulary, s/he will be easily able to understand any academic text. Cobb and Horst suggest that if students 'know' the 2000 words identified in Nation's General Service List plus the 800 words of the University Word List, they will then know 90% of the words in any academic text. Only another 5% of domain specific words need to be understood in order to be able to decode text.

In this approach to reading, word-meanings tend to be reified: 'words' are learned by heart, either from pre-prepared vocabulary lists, selected by the teacher, or from translation equivalents located in a dictionary or vocabulary list. The purpose of reading itself is often seen as a means of collecting vocabulary, rather than reading for meaning; alternatively, texts may be written for the express purpose of displaying vocabulary for students to learn. Vocabulary learning is thus strongly controlled by the teacher, with little choice or flexibility for the students. The teacher (or textbook) determines which words students are expected to learn, when to learn them, and what L1 meanings will be assigned to the new vocabulary. Even where students are required to engage in 'extensive reading', the vocabulary may be determined through carefully staged simplified readers (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.66-67).

This approach to vocabulary learning is highly contestable. As many students complain, 'I know every word on the page, but I can't understand the meaning'. First

of all, words occur in characteristic collocational strings, not in isolation, bearing different meanings and values depending on their context (Carter, 1998; Richards, 1980). More importantly, there is little agreement on what it means to ‘know’ a word (Carter, 1998; Richards, 1980). Some words may be easily understandable from translation equivalents; others may be much harder to interpret, perhaps because they convey unfamiliar concepts. Learners may look up the meaning in the dictionary and meet the word many times before it begins to have a meaningful resonance for them. Furthermore, words are pressed into service by speakers with different communicative intents and their conventional meanings are continually shifting as discourse communities use them for different purposes. Words, as Merrell (cited in van Lier, 2004, p.66) puts it, ‘leak’ and ‘pour forth’ into each other.

Koda (2005, p.60) contrasts the ‘vocabulary-supports-comprehension’ approach with the ‘mutual dependency view’. Although research shows that direct vocabulary instruction enhances comprehension (Koury 1996, and Ryder & Graves 1994, cited in Koda 2005, p 256), Koda maintains that the gains made from such instruction are short-term, while long-term benefits can be gained more effectively by teaching vocabulary through comprehension, that is ‘how to learn’ words. For Koda, understanding vocabulary in context requires more than simply ‘knowing’ the word: it requires visualisation, cross-cultural knowledge, and schematic networking of concepts. She concludes that the two approaches (vocabulary first as opposed to context first) are not mutually exclusive.

Grammar is the other side of the reading equation in the skills-based approach. As with vocabulary, texts in a skills-based pedagogy are often written specifically to illustrate the use of selected grammatical structures, such as passive voice. This approach to language is underpinned by a view that grammar (structure) exists as a separate system from meaning: the ‘either-or assumption’ (van Lier, 2004, p.29), the purpose of language learning being to focus on the former. Thus, in EAP reading classes, there may be an implicit assumption that ‘real’ meaning-making can be postponed until students have enrolled in their university courses. Spack (1988), for example, argued that teaching academic discourse should be the province of the disciplines rather than the EAP class.

The distinction between teaching and testing in a skills-based pedagogy is very thin. Generally, classes conducted using in this approach are located in contexts which are heavily exam-oriented, and reading classes tend to be focussed more on exam preparation than on reading for any other purpose. Furthermore, the test-types associated with the approach are designed to be as objective as possible: they tend to use multiple-choice, true-false, or blank-filling exercises, which are carefully constructed to allow only one correct answer. In cultural contexts where texts are regarded as containing incontrovertible truths, reading is treated as a kind of treasure hunt for ‘correct’ meanings. For this reason, students can become concerned with reading for exact understanding, and accumulating stocks of vocabulary items, like Hirvela’s early students, ‘too busy checking their dictionaries to figure out what the words actually meant’ (Hirvela, 2004, p.11).

The nature of the texts selected is also significant. Proponents of the traditional skills-based approach feel that students should be introduced to texts of high cultural merit: for example, informational texts about great scientists or significant social issues. Alternatively, texts with cultural merit could be literary texts, or extracts from the work of famous essayists. Such texts would allow students to gain cultural knowledge, and to develop ‘aesthetic appreciation, literary sensibility, and a cultivated spirit’ (Kern, 2003, p.45).

In a skills-based pedagogy, students have little or no control over text selection. The choice of texts is made by the teacher – or, more probably, the textbook writer. This constraint is characteristic of a hierarchical institutional context in which students are subordinated to teacher; teachers are subordinated to school principals/ heads of department; and heads of department are subordinated to the Education Department. In such a system, choice is of little consequence; teachers themselves are positioned as technicians, or robots, delivering a pre-prepared syllabus (Johnson, 1989). In contexts where access to L2 materials is severely limited, and/or where teachers have little training or skill in the target language, this approach had merit, but such contexts are becoming more and more rare now that students themselves have ready access to a wide range of L2 reading materials in print and on the internet, and teachers, even in the most deprived contexts, have access to multiple sources of professional development.

A further problematic feature of the skills-based approach to reading described in this section is the typical lack of connection between reading and writing highlighted by Hirvela (2004). In academic contexts, as explained in chapter one, an essential feature of assessment is synthesis of material from reading in written tasks. However, in a skills-based curriculum, reading and writing are usually treated quite separately, although there has long been a belief that reading supports writing and vice versa. An early review of research on reading/writing correlations by Stotsky (1983, cited in Hirvela, 2004, p.13) showed that the ability to read well was connected to good writing: better readers tended to be better writers producing ‘more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers’. Better writers also tended to read more. Nevertheless, writing and reading were firmly segregated in traditional EAP curricula, with reading generally being relegated to the status of the ‘poor relation’ in the equation (Wilson & Bell, 1994). As Hirvela writes:

As I saw many of my students struggling with the essays they were writing, I was thinking, as I had in the 1970s, that they were experiencing writing problems (as well as language-related difficulties). And then, for one particular assignment that was proving problematic, I asked the students to bring their copies of the assigned readings to their writing conferences with me...That’s when I became aware of the reading problems many of the students were having and when I recognised in a half-formed way, that some of the writing difficulties I had observed were in fact reading difficulties. Or, to be more accurate, they were composing difficulties. (Hirvela, 2004, p.10)

To sum up, in a skills-based approach, texts are regarded as unitary cultural artefacts embodying quantifiable meanings. The teachers’ role is authoritative and all-knowing, while the student’s role is to accumulate sufficient grammar and vocabulary in order to pass the final exam and to graduate into ‘real life’ contexts. With sufficient componential knowledge of L2 grammar and vocabulary, in combination with L1 skills in reading, it is assumed that students will be able to succeed in future academic settings.

2.1.2 The cognitivist approach

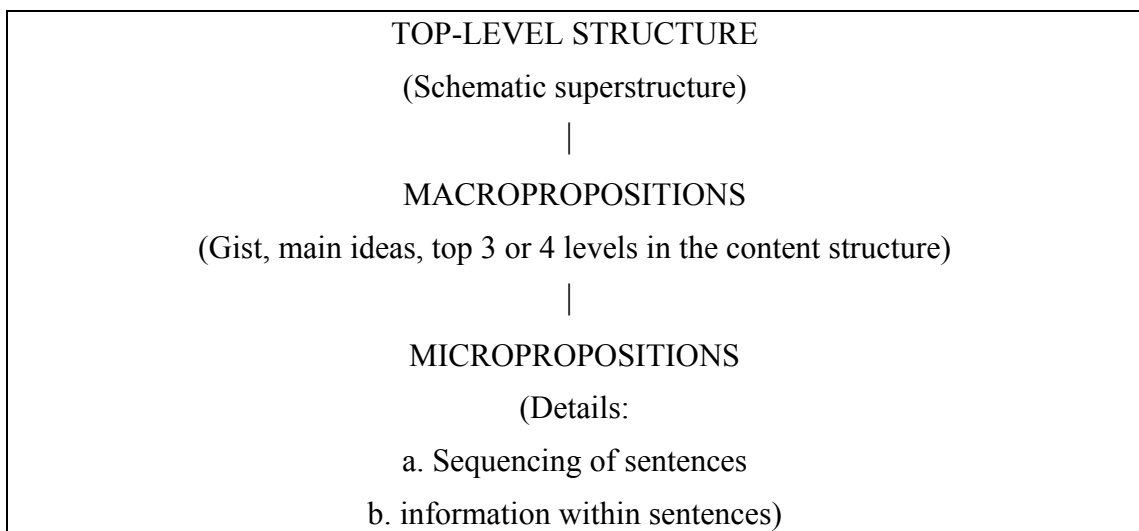
Developments in cognitive psychology in the 1970s and 1980s brought a new conception of reading pedagogy in EFL which focused on reading as process (procedural knowledge), as well as product (declarative knowledge). In other words, the goal of reading pedagogy was to teach students HOW to read, rather than using reading exercises as a vehicle for increasing students' bank of knowledge about vocabulary and structures. Psychologists such as Anderson (1985) and Ausubel (1968) developed the theory that readers assimilate knowledge by constructing schema in their minds: new knowledge is linked into these schema as it is processed. Smith (1978) went so far as to claim that nothing is understood if it does not relate to what is already known. Effective readers utilise cognitive and metacognitive strategies to facilitate this process.

From this perspective, the role of background knowledge in reading became seen as crucially important. Its relevance in EAP contexts was demonstrated by Patricia Carrell in a series of experiments which pointed to the need to activate background knowledge in the teaching of reading (Carrell, 1987). Carrell demonstrated that Moslem readers understood texts based on Moslem traditions better than Catholics and vice versa. A related study by Nunan (1999, p. 260), in which students were asked to insert missing words in complex sentences, demonstrated that background knowledge was more influential than grammatical complexity in determining NNS secondary school readers' level of comprehension of expository texts. Research demonstrating the importance of background knowledge has led to a strong emphasis in EFL reading pedagogy on pre-reading (Koda, 2005, p.260-262).

In addition to background knowledge of content (content schema), Carrell (1987) established the importance for NNSs of knowing how texts are structured (formal schema). She asked EFL students to read texts organised according to standard chronological principles, and virtually the same texts in which the chronological order had been disturbed. Students gave better recall protocols and performed better on multiple choice questions about the well-organised texts. In L1 contexts, the work of Meyer (1984) led to a focus on the role of 'top-level structures' in text processing. Meyer claimed that texts comprise a schematic superstructure, within which the

content is expressed as macropropositions (main ideas), supported by clusters of micropropositions (supporting detail) (see Figure 1). Links between propositions are signalled by discourse markers such as *in contrast*, *however*, *while*. Top-level structures include causation, description, comparison, evaluation, response (problem and solution) and so on. Meyer found that skilled readers concentrated more on top-level structures and macro-propositions, while less skilled readers picked both high and low level propositions as being important.

Figure 1: Meyer's hierarchy of text structure



Source: (Meyer, 1984, p.4)

The importance of identifying text structures in EAP classes, in particular, was highlighted by research into contrastive rhetoric (Kaplan, 1966, 1987; Kirkpatrick, 1997) which showed that texts are structured differently in different languages. Hinds (1987), for example, found that English speakers found it difficult to understand a text organised according to Japanese rhetorical style, as they lacked formal knowledge of Japanese text structure.

Cognitive psychologists view reading as a highly active process. In order to access information in texts, learners can apply various cognitive strategies which would facilitate their processing of information. These strategies could be divided into top-down and bottom-up strategies. Top-down strategies take a bird's eye view of text, using the top-level structure and prior knowledge of the topic to process information from text. Bottom-up strategies, on the other hand, use knowledge of vocabulary and

grammatical structures to process meaning at the word and sentence level. It was maintained that students needed to activate both top-down and bottom-up strategies in order to read effectively. In EAP, this approach was called the ‘interactionist approach’ (Carrell et al., 1988).

Strong proponents of top-down strategies in L1 reading were Frank Smith (1978) and Kenneth Goodman (1967), who claimed that reading is a ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’ in which the reader uses background knowledge and knowledge of language to make predictions about what s/he will read, guessing the meanings of unknown words from their context. Goodman’s work influenced writers in the EFL field, such as Christine Nuttall (1982, 2005). Nuttall stressed that readers in a foreign language should be active in using background knowledge, predicting and guessing meaning from context. Nuttall did warn, however, that there were dangers in this, as readers could make false assumptions about the meaning of texts. Her warnings were supported by further research by Carrell (1988), who demonstrated that over-reliance on top-down processing could lead to misunderstanding.

Nevertheless, the ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’ paradigm of reading in EAP remains very pervasive, with students frequently discouraged from using dictionaries (especially bilingual dictionaries) and strongly encouraged to use top-down strategies such as skimming and scanning, and relating content to background knowledge. Cognitive psychologists argue that readers have limited processing capacity, and should avoid focussing on individual words, especially unknown words, and instead focus on integrating main ideas. As Koda maintains:

...working memory’s limited capacity restricts effective knowledge use during L2 text comprehension. ...beginning L2 readers often expend their attentional capacity on local information extraction without reserving sufficient resources for knowledge incorporation. (Koda, 2005, p. 261)

However, Chamot and El-Dinary (1999) found that while more proficient learners relied more on discourse processing strategies than word-level strategies, less proficient readers tended to use bottom-up processing. This suggests, as Pressley (2002) argues, that a balanced approach to teaching reading is necessary, recognising both top-down and bottom-up skills in text-processing.

2.1.2a Reading strategies

Intense interest in the role of cognitive processing, and in particular in the role of cognitive strategies in language learning, gave rise in the late 1980s and 1990s to a raft of studies aimed at identifying the particular reading strategies that are used by ‘good readers’, on the premise that these strategies could then be taught to less competent readers.

Productive reading strategies which have been identified include:

- clarifying the task (Fischer & Mandl, 1982)
- self-monitoring, re-reading and making connections (Block, 1986; Padron & Waxman, 1988);
- identifying top-level structures (Carrell, 1985; Meyer, 1984; K. Smith & Edwards, 1997),
- concept-mapping (Amer, 1994; McCagg & Dansereau, 1991),
- summarising (Padron & Waxman, 1988; Sarig, 1987)
- self-generated questions (Padron & Waxman, 1988);
- underlining and margin notes (Sarig, 1987; Amer, 1994).

On the other hand, some reading strategies have been identified as having negative effects on reading comprehension and recall. These include:

- focusing on oneself, one's own experience and abilities (Block, 1986; Fischer & Mandl, 1982; Padron & Waxman, 1988)
- focusing on details rather than main ideas ((Fischer & Mandl, 1984; Meyer, 1984; Block, 1986; Padron & Waxman, 1988);
- reading as fast as possible (Padron & Waxman, 1988).

In an interesting study by Wyatt et al (1993), reported in Pressley (2002), ‘good readers’, who were in fact university lecturers, were invited to think aloud as they read articles in their own field of expertise. These good readers made predictions about the texts they were reading; looked for information that was relevant to their own interests; scanned ahead and also checked back to look for information; tried to clarify sections they found confusing; summarised sections of text, commenting on why certain sections made sense or not; and monitored their reading frequently.

Interestingly, these readers demonstrated intense affective reactions to the text, making frequent evaluative comments, laughing, making exclamations like ‘That’s right!’, ‘Rubbish!’ and even blowing raspberries!

2.1.2b Teaching reading strategies

Cognitive research, then, showed that good readers use a range of strategies very actively, and also a certain amount of consistency in the strategies they use. The question remained as to whether these strategies could be taught to novice readers with positive effects.

Numerous studies have been conducted which support this premise. For example, Carrell (1985) taught 25 upper-intermediate ESL students to identify top-level structures, based on Meyer's categories. In particular, the top-level structures of ‘comparisons’ and ‘collection of descriptions’ were taught. The control group was taught by more traditional reading comprehension techniques, such as identifying new vocabulary, explication of complex grammatical structures, work with discourse connectors and focusing on the content of the passages. The students were tested by immediate free recalls and open-ended questions. The experimental group remembered more units of meaning than the control group and organised them according to top-level structure. Carrell warned, however, that while teaching the strategy of identifying top-level structures had positive effects on NNS's reading comprehension, it is only one of many strategies which can help students to acquire meaning from text.

Amer (1994) conducted an empirical study with three groups of NNS college students at an Egyptian university: one group was taught to use underlining, one to use knowledge mapping and a control group was taught by conventional methods focusing on vocabulary and structures. The students were given two tests in reading scientific texts: open-ended questions and summary-writing using free recall. On both tests the underlining and the knowledge mapping groups showed improvement whereas the control group did not. On the second test, the knowledge mapping group made significantly more improvement than the underlining group. Amer's conclusion was that visual information processing strategies had more impact on memory than

traditional methods of processing text. Another interpretation could be that more complex cognitive processing (transposing written concepts into visual concepts) is more effective than underlining which is a simple, reproductive technique. Whatever the explanation for the difference, it appears that teaching the reading strategies of underlining and knowledge-mapping can improve both the reading comprehension and recall of NNS students.

Many reading strategy instruction approaches are derived from the SQ3R study strategy: Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Recall. This approach, first proposed by Robinson in 1946, pre-dates the cognitive processing research of Anderson and Ausubel, but has been picked up enthusiastically by reading strategy proponents, and has re-emerged in many guises (King & Eilers, 1996). What unifies the many variations on this technique is a focus on interactivity (for example, generating questions before reading); on multiple readings of the text (skimming, reading in detail and re-reading); and on the role of memory aids (for example, using note-taking schemes such as mind-mapping).

One particular teaching technique in reading strategy training which has been shown to be effective is known as mental modelling. This technique is derived from the think aloud research methodology (Faerch & Kasper, 1987), in which subjects are asked to verbalise their thought processes as they read to allow researchers to gain insights into the reading strategies they are using. Pani (2004) reports on a small study in which she used the mental modelling technique with a group of trainee EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers at upper-intermediate level, demonstrating word attack skills of guessing the meaning of words from their context. She claimed that her use of mental modelling demystified the reading process, made explicit the concept of reading strategies, raised students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, and helped the trainees to understand how others read. The trainees were able to imitate the strategy use in their own subsequent reading, but there was no evidence as to the long-term transfer of the strategies to other reading contexts. Pani was also concerned that trainees might feel that they had to emulate the teacher's strategy use exactly rather than personalising the strategies. Mental modelling can be very powerful, as it provides a very immediate example of reading strategy use, breaking down some of the mystique surrounding reading. Students can realise that

even teachers often do not understand clearly, that they have to refer back, seek for clarification as they read, and struggle to construct meaning. However, as Pani points out, the technique may lack authenticity if the teacher has (sensibly) prepared the passage beforehand.

The reading strategies view of reading gave rise to a widely accepted formula for foreign language reading classes: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading (Hood et al., 1996; Nuttall, 1982, 2005; Papalia, 1987). Pre-reading strategies aim at activating prior knowledge, identifying text structure, stimulating interest, establishing a curious, questioning orientation to the text, and defining the purpose for reading. While-reading strategies include identifying main ideas by using key words, topic sentences, and rhetorical structure; relating new information to known information; locating detail; working out the meaning of new words; visualising; enumerating; seeking comparisons; and physical behaviours such as highlighting and making margin notes. Post-reading strategies included summarising, taking notes, relating new to known information, comparing, and evaluating.

The strategies approach to reading pedagogy gave rise to particular assessment tasks which reflect the approach. While the skills-based approach tested ‘comprehension’, vocabulary identification and grammatical transformation, under a cognitivist pedagogy, students are tested on their ability to identify text structure, pick out main ideas and supporting evidence, fill in the blanks in diagrammatic representations of the text, guess the meaning of unknown vocabulary, and choose the most effective summary. All of these tasks assume interactive processing of a given set of meanings within the text.

2.1.2c Summary of the cognitivist approach

The cognitive-constructivist approach revolutionised the teaching of reading and contributed many important insights into the practice of teaching reading in EAP, most importantly, that students could expedite the process of reading by using certain cognitive behaviours. From an EAP perspective, these insights came like a burst of adrenalin: rather than learning lists of vocabulary and grammar structures and simply practising reading, students could be empowered by learning text processing

strategies which would help them to read independently in their own areas of study. As Chamot and O'Malley wrote:

Language strategy instruction requires a thoughtful reconsideration of the teacher's role. Once students regulate their own learning through a strategic approach to learning tasks, they are no longer dependent on the teacher. Because of this, successful learning strategy teachers undergo an important shift in their instructional approach. Simply using ample amounts of language and conveying information and skills are insufficient methods to support learning. Instead teachers should be aware of students' approaches to learning and expand students' repertoires of strategic approaches by involving them as collaborators in developing the knowledge and processes needed to attain common goals. (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994, p.6)

In other words, the locus of control for reading was shifted, to some extent, from teacher to student: instead of teachers transmitting knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to students, they transmitted text processing strategies, such as guessing the meaning of unknown words, which would enable them to process text autonomously.

Nevertheless, under the cognitivist approach, teachers (or coursebooks) rather than students still largely determine what sort of texts are read, what sort of information should be gleaned, and how students should read. For this reason, the cognitive approach is regarded by many contemporary theorists to be fundamentally flawed, as it retains a structuralist, unitary view of texts as embodying meaning in unassailable form. There is an assumption that a text can only be understood in one particular way; and that every competent reader will construct the same (or largely similar) meanings from the text, as intended by the writer. It takes a utilitarian view of texts as vehicles of information and assumes that the function of texts is to transmit meaning from the writer to the reader: failure to understand the text as the writer intended it is a failure to read 'correctly'. This transmission view of reading is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The transmission model of communication



Source: Wertsch (1991, p.75)

Furthermore, the notion of learner strategy training remains contentious. Biggs and Moore (1993), for example, warn that strategy training may lead to surface learning if it is not associated with a deep learning environment. Similarly, Wharton-McDonald and Hampston (2002) stress that strategy training must be accompanied by an emphasis on metacognition, so that students become aware of the strategies they are using, and when and how to apply reading strategies flexibly depending on their purpose for reading and their individual learning preferences.

In addition, strategy knowledge does not necessarily lead to successful learning outcomes. As Alexander and Murphy (1999, reported in Alexander & Jetton, 2000, p. 300) found in a study of learner profiles among Psychology students, a large proportion of students resisted learning from demanding texts in their field, while others, the 'Effortful Processors', reported a high level of strategy use that was not converted into achievement. Alexander and Jetton point out that students must develop not just strategic capability, but also motivational interest and goals in order to succeed. They require a powerful combination of 'skill, will and thrill' (p.296).

In summary, the cognitivist approach to teaching reading has been shown to assist students in learning information from text. Importantly, a strategies approach can empower learners to take autonomous control of their reading, so that they can read efficiently, effectively and with self-awareness. Through the conscious use of reading strategies, students can interact vigorously with text, pulling out key ideas, evaluating them and associating them with prior knowledge.

On the other hand, a strategies approach can be reductive and formulaic in nature as it is typically based on a structuralist ideal of language which may not relate to real life texts and contexts. For example, the strategy of picking out main ideas by identifying and highlighting topic sentences assumes an idealised text-type which rarely exists in reality. Furthermore, there is an assumption that text is a container, or repository of fixed transmissible chunks of information, and that by acquiring competence in language processing strategies, learners will be able to decode these information 'bytes'. Finally, a reading strategies approach assumes that what works well for good students will work well for all students. In reality, students may be resistant to trying

out new strategies, preferring to develop their own idiosyncratic ways to approach reading tasks.

Although the teaching of reading strategies has been thoroughly researched and has been shown to promote effective reading outcomes, the basis of this research must also be questioned. ‘Effective reading’ is usually operationalised as recall of macro- and micro-propositions. However, this type of test remains superficial: it does not investigate the reader’s personal interaction with the text or his/her ability to construct, situate and articulate new understandings from the text.

2.1.3 The sociocultural perspective

So far, I have presented the traditional, skills-based approach to reading and the cognitivist approach. Both of these approaches sit towards the ‘skills’ end of Lea and Street’s (1999, 2006) spectrum of approaches to EAP in Table 1, although the cognitive approach in focussing on text structure encompasses to some extent the ‘socialisation’ approach, recognising that texts have different purposes and that readers themselves read texts for different purposes, using different reading strategies. Both approaches are highly pragmatic in that they aim to equip students with skills, strategies and linguistic knowledge for the coming challenges of academic reading.

The sociocultural approach, in contrast, lies at the ‘literacies’ end of Lea and Street’s spectrum, and opens the way for a more critical view of reading and reading pedagogy, as it calls upon readers to participate as co-constructors of meaning in engaging with texts. Rather than isolating the four macroskills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, a sociocultural, literacies approach sees all four skills as intimately entwined in the activity of critical meaning-making.

2.1.3a A social view of text and reading practices

From a sociocultural perspective, texts are not represented as coffers of information. Instead, reading is regarded as a collaborative, dialogic activity in which readers create meanings through the mediation of texts in partnership with authors (Hirvela,

2004). Meanings can never be shared in their entirety, as every reader brings their own perspective to the text, distils out meanings which are most relevant to them, and shapes meaning through their own sociocultural lenses (Bakhtin, 1994). As different readers bring their own voice into dialogue with the multiple voices of the text, they both construct meanings, and are constructed by text (Patrikis, 2003; Foucault, cited in Luke, 2002, p.452). Thus, different readers will construct different meanings from any one text. Furthermore, different readings by the same reader of any particular text may give rise to the construction of different meanings, according to the reader's purpose or state of mind. The activity of reading, then, is more to do with the **process** of 'interpreting' a text (C. Wallace, 2003, p. 13) than with an end **product** consisting of a set of propositions decoded from the text.

A sociocultural approach suggests that, while written texts exist as artefacts, their meanings are constantly shaped and reshaped by readers in different contexts and for different purposes. It derives from a view of language as a social exchange of meanings between authors and readers (or speakers and listeners). The text itself has 'meaning potential', and meanings emerge as readers dialogue with the text (or rather, with the voices within the text) on the basis of their experience of the world and the language. Words do not have isolated, unequivocal meanings attached to them: rather the meanings invoked by words are fluid, dynamic and subject to construction and reconstruction by individual readers. Lähtenmäki (1998) contrasts this view of language with a Cartesian view of the world in which meaning is literal, unitary and static, and in which a text is simply 'a faceless and voiceless *package* of propositional information' (Lähtenmäki, 1998, p.85).

However, this is not to say that making meaning from text is completely idiosyncratic. Meaning is also shaped – even constrained – by the understandings and experience shared by members of the speech community in which a text is located. The meanings that we draw from words and texts are based on our experience of how others have used those words in earlier social contexts. On the basis of our exposure to language in context we build rafts of meaning which give flavour – or 'sense' ('smysl') (Bakhtin, 1994) to words, and limit the possible interpretations we can make. Lähtenmäki explains the social construction of meaning as follows:

...the rejection of an absolute distinction between communication and miscommunication, as well as of the idea of fixed invariant meanings, does not presuppose a relativistic stance according to which 'anything goes'. The fact that linguistic expressions are considered meaning potentials does not imply that they are open to ANY interpretation, or that the listener would be entitled to interpret the speaker's utterances in any way he or she wishes. Interpretation is always guided by various mutually shared social and cultural conventions (eg knowledge of speech genres) as well as situations and contextual information, all of which significantly limit the scope of possible and probable interpretations' (Lähteenmäki, 1998, p.90-91. Emphasis original)

Similarly, Wallace (2003, p.13) argues that texts do carry certain meanings – albeit complex and multi-layered – and that it would be ‘perverse to disregard’ such meanings. Similarly, Gee (1990) writes:

...no one would say anyone could read a given text if he or she did not know what the text meant. But there are many different LEVELS OF MEANING one can give to or take from any text, many DIFFERENT WAYS in which any text can be read. You can read a friend's letter as a mere report, an indication of her state of mind, a prognosis of her future actions: you can read a novel as a typification of its period and place, as vicarious experience, as 'art' of various sorts, as a guide to living and so on. Thus, whatever literacy has to do with reading, reading must be spelled out, at the very least, as multiple abilities to 'read' text of CERTAIN TYPES in CERTAIN WAYS or to certain level. (Gee 1990, p. 43. Emphasis original)

The degree to which readers are invited to interpret meaning varies with text-type. Some text-types are inherently dogmatic — insistent that readers do not misinterpret the author's intent. Texts of this genre include instruction manuals and medication labels, for example, although Gee (1990) argues that, even in the case of the text on an aspirin bottle, readers vary in their interpretations. At the other extreme, some text-types are much more open to interpretation: poetry, for example. Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2003) has provided analytical tools which give insights into the ways in which authors demand

acquiescence from their readers. Analysis of tenor, in particular, reveals the degree to which authors assert their authority: short factual statements, especially centered around existential processes, imply inalienable propositions, while the use of modal verbs and qualifiers allows more room for interaction and reflection on the part of readers. Academic disciplines vary in their cultural uses of tenor: while Science tends towards a dogmatic assertion of truths, the Humanities in general may be less authoritarian in presenting concepts (Wallace, 2003).

Thus, the activity of reading is very much a matter of social practice. These reading practices are deeply embedded in sociocultural patterns of behaviour which are woven through many layers of social interaction. As Gee (1990) explains:

One has to be socialised to read texts of type X in way Y, a practice other people have already mastered ... [T]he practices of social groups are never just literacy practices. They also involve ways of talking, interacting, thinking, valuing and believing.... Literacy practices are almost always fully integrated with, woven into, constitute part of, the very texture of wider practices that involve talk, interaction, values and beliefs. You can no more cut the literacy out of the overall social practice, or cut away the non-literacy parts from the literacy parts of the overall practice, than you can subtract the white squares from a chess board and still have a chess board. (Gee, 1990, p43)

One of the most influential studies of literacy practices was conducted by Shirley Brice Heath (1983). Her study highlighted the contrasting literacy practices of three social groups in an American town. Each group constructed the practice of reading with children quite differently in terms of what, where, when, and how to read. Heath's seminal study laid the ground for a wealth of ethnographic research into literacy practices (for example: Blanton, 1998; Fox, 1994; Ivanic, 1997).

One recent study which has highlighted the nature of reading practices amongst NNS students has been reported by Bell (2007). Bell conducted a longitudinal study of the reading practices of six Thai postgraduate students at an Australian university using interviews, paired think aloud protocols, and retrospective interviews. She found that the students' practices changed over time as they gained field knowledge, confidence and skill. They translated less, used bilingual dictionaries less, and were able to use

intratextual framing to support their meaning making. They were also able to evaluate texts and draw inferences more effectively and to discuss the texts with their supervisors more confidently. The students talked about the difference between reading practices in academic contexts in Thailand and Australia, claiming that students in Australia are expected to be much more independent: for example, one student reported that ‘In Thailand lecturers GIVE ideas but now in Australia I have to GET idea by myself’ (Bell, 2007, p.55). Another interesting difference was that reading in Thailand was practised as a more sociable, ‘group consultative’ activity, whereas in Australia, ‘No-one going to tell you how to do that; no-one care; you have to do it [the reading] yourself - quite private.’ (p.58).

To a large extent, it seems that the readers in Bell’s study continued to be outsiders to the discipline community they were aspiring to enter. The students remained anxious and tentative in their reading, feeling as if they were ‘riding on the tiger’s back’ (p 66). As texts are written with an idealised audience in mind, readers who do not fit the social profile of that audience may struggle to participate in shared meaning. In the case of Bell’s Thai participants, they lacked the breadth of experience in English language contexts, as well as some social practices which may have made academic texts more accessible to them. Students, whether native or non-native speakers, may often find themselves to be outsiders in academia, struggling with texts written for experts in the field while they are mere novices.

Wallace (2003, 2005), however, suggests that novice readers may have an advantage in terms of ‘critical interpretation’ of texts precisely because they are outsiders to the discourse community. As such they are less likely to conform to ‘convergent’ readings of a text. She argues that the ability to read critically is not confined by expertise in the language or the discipline, or by automaticity, but by ‘enhanced reflectiveness’, which may be gained through increased language awareness (C. Wallace, 2005, p.101).

The social nature of reading practices involves not just a one-on-one relationship. Bakhtin (1994) argues that texts are richly intertextual as all utterances are drawn from earlier contexts, and carry the overtones of other voices. Thus written texts comprise a rich fabric of intermingled voices. Insiders, or experts, in the discourse

community are well aware of the complex, intertextual network underpinning texts in their field. Their pre-existing knowledge of the linguistic-conceptual frames of the field enables them to construct meaning easily from discipline-specific text and to identify the voices which resonate, compete and harmonise within a text. Novices, however, lack this experience and may struggle to make meaning from apparently arcane terminology, or to recognise the competing voices within a text. For Bazerman, recognising intertextuality is a key aspect of acquiring literacy practices, both in reading and writing:

Intertextuality forms one of the crucial grounds for writing studies and writing practice. Texts do not appear in isolation, but in relation to other texts. We write in response to other writing, and as writers we use the resources provided by prior writers. When we read we use knowledge and experience from texts we have read before to make sense of the new text, and as readers we notice the texts the writer invokes directly and indirectly. Our reading and writing are in dialogue with each other as we write in direct and indirect response to what we have read before, and we read in relation to the ideas we have articulated in our own writing. (Bazerman, 2004, p.53)

As students become familiar with the voices embodied in academic texts in their discipline they begin to acquire new Discourses (Gee, 1990). However, for many students this entails an enormous intellectual and emotional challenge. The concept of a Discourse, for Gee, is profoundly social, embodying not just language but ways of being, thinking and doing. Children are born into social settings in which they acquire a Primary Discourse, but as they meet new social demands they need to acquire new secondary Discourses. Privileged students come from backgrounds with high ‘social capital’ (Bourdieu, cited in Carrington, 2001), and may find that the Discourses of academia do not diverge too markedly from their own primary Discourse. However, many students are ill-prepared for the demands of secondary academic Discourses. Such students, according to Gee, require explicit scaffolding to enable them to participate in reading texts in a secondary Discourse.

Becoming literate in different Discourses, then, involves students in taking on new voices – voices which can interact confidently with the voices of the texts they are reading. Academic texts, in particular, are often written in powerful voices whose

hegemony is hard to resist (Fairclough, 1989). The overwhelming force of such ‘authoritative discourse’ (Bakhtin, 1994) can make it hard for students to participate in genuine dialogue with texts whose language bears little relation to their own ‘internally persuasive discourse’. In such circumstances, students may be pushed into ‘ventriloquating’ in the voice of the source texts with little internalisation of these voices. In order for students to develop the strength to ‘talk back’, as it were, to the texts, they need to develop maturity within the field of discourse, but also to develop a critical positioning – what Macken-Horarik (1996) calls ‘text-resistance’.

To sum up, a sociocultural view of reading understands meaning-making from text as a profoundly social and dialogic activity. Reading is not a passive or receptive activity; it involves active, dynamic collaboration between readers and writers. As Kern (2003) explains:

Writers write for an audience....Their decisions [about how to write] are based on their understanding of the audience. Readers, in turn, must contribute their motivation, knowledge and experience in order to make the writer's text meaningful. (Kern, 2003, p.49)

As such, reading, like writing, can be regarded as an act of composition (Patrikis, 2003), as readers re-invent in their own voices the meanings which are proposed by the voices of the text. These voices emerge from communities of practice which have their own histories, cultures, beliefs and ways of talking – their own Discourses. With experience and exposure, as Bell (2007) describes, readers become increasingly able to participate as legitimate members of these discourse communities.

The viewpoint proposed by sociocultural theorists is contentious, however. As Zuengler and Miller (2006) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p. 53-55) point out, the cognitivist and sociocultural perspectives on language, and hence language learning, are based not just on conflicting epistemologies but on conflicting ontologies: the former viewing individuals and their behaviour as potentially predictable, rational and generalisable, while the sociocultural view is of individuals embedded in infinitely variable and constantly developing social contexts.

2.1.3b A social view of learning

The social view of language and text proposed by Bakhtin and others has close synergy with sociocultural perspectives on learning, in particular with the work of Vygotsky (see for example: Ivanic, 1997; Kamberelis, 2001; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Norton, 2006; Patrikis, 2003; van Lier, 2004; Wells, 2002; Wertsch, 1991). Vygotsky (1978, 1987) considered language to be a tool of communication used to mediate meanings in social contexts. Unlike his contemporary, Ferdinand de Saussure, who conceived of an arbitrary, yet static, association between *signe*, *signifié* and *signifiant* (de Saussure, 1972), Vygotsky believed that words and meanings were situated in particular sociohistorical settings. For Vygotsky, understandings of language depend on the social experience of the reader; thus texts will be understood differently by different readers depending on their world experience.

Vygotsky emphasised that learning, too, is socially situated. He hypothesised that individuals learn principally through talk as the most common form of mediation, maintaining that all learning takes place on two planes: first through ‘intermental’, ‘social’ speech, and secondly through a process of internalisation in ‘intramental’ or private speech. Intermental speech exposes learners to new meanings through interactions with others in social settings: for example, in mother-child; master-apprentice; teacher-student; student-student, or author-reader interactions. However, for individuals to make sense of such interactions, intramental dialogue, or ‘inner speech’ is also essential; that is, inner speech allows the internalisation of new meanings. Through inner speech we are able to reason, to learn, to solve problems, and also to formulate new utterances.

Wertsch (1991) juxtaposes the Vygotskian notion of internalisation through inter- and intra- mental speech with the Bakhtinian notion of ‘appropriation’. For both these authors, asserts Wertsch, there is a tension between the social nature of language and learning, and the individual nature of learning. Bakhtin highlights the social nature of dialogue: the ways in which individuals depend on others in their social environment to make meaning through language. As we meet the words of others, we appropriate their ‘words’ – or more generally, their ways of talking, gradually making them our own. Bakhtin writes:

...the word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!) but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one's own. (Bakhtin, 1994, p.77)

Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.161) argue that appropriation may be performative in that the words may be appropriated at a superficial level, giving the example of Jewish children learning a Christmas carol, while internalisation implies a deeper reconstruction or shift in human thinking. Bakhtin, however, would call this unconvinced, superficial mouthing of words ‘ventriloquation’ rather than ‘appropriation’. The dialogic model of critical thinking presented later in this chapter will define ‘internalisation’ as the construction of meaning through intermental speech, while ‘appropriation’ refers not just to the internal construction of meaning but to the entire dialogic process of being able to both internalise and then externalise newly created constructs derived from reading in social exchanges. Such learning can be seen as truly ‘transformative’, in that learners are able to transform their own frames of meaning through interaction with text and with others (Mezirow, 2000).

Because of the social nature of meaning making, sociocultural theorists argue that collaborative learning is one of the most powerful tools in education. If students are given opportunities to solve problems in pairs or groups, they can engage in dialogue with each other thereby developing their own understandings. In the domain of second language learning, group and pair work have long been advocated as an important element in developing students’ ability to use language to communicate. Since the advent of the communicative approach to language teaching, it has been argued that students need opportunities to use L2 in class for communicative purposes. Thus, social-constructionist notions of collaborative learning, sit well with the prevailing methodologies in EAP.

However, recent work in the language learning field suggests that pair work should be viewed not simply a means of practising language use in order to build fluency, but as

an opportunity for students to learn from each other as they participate in intermental and intramental dialogue (Swain, 2000). That is, learning occurs in and through participation. Participation, in turn, leads to the emergence of new identities. As Cowey (2005, p. 10) explains, in a reading class, ‘Students, in taking on the role of literate reader with the support of their teacher and other class members, actually become that literate person.’

Donato (2000) gives a range of examples of student-student and student-teacher co-constructed dialogues in language classrooms (with examples from French, Spanish, Japanese, and English classes) in which the participants are actively challenging themselves and each other to use the target language more effectively to express their meanings. As these dyads or groups interact and ‘puzzle through’ communication challenges (Donato, 2000, p.31), they push each other to extend their language use to produce more complex, and more target language-like expression. In the following example, taken from a second year Japanese language class, a student is supported by peers and teacher as she struggles to find the correct linguistic form of the verb ‘to eat’:

(Teacher shows a picture of a boy eating an apple)

T: Hai.

S1: Denisu wa ringo o tabemasu. Masu!

T: Denisu wa ringo o tabemasu, ii desu ne. Mary? (Mary = S2)

S2: Denisu wa ringo o tabe...

T: Tabe...?

S2: Tabemasu.

S3: (directed to S2) Tabetai. Tabemasu. Tabemasen.

(Teacher begins singing the ‘I want’ song.)

T: Remember this song? Tai, tai, tai.

(Other students begin singing along with the teacher.)

T/Ss: Tai, tai, tai, nomitai, tabetai, hon yomitai, netai, kaitai, terebi mitai.

T: Haaai, tabetai! Ii desu ka? Tabetai.

Ss: Tabetai.

S2: Denisu wa ringo o tabetai.

T: Hai, ii desu ne!

(Takahashi 1998, cited in Donato 2000, p. 38)

The examples presented by Donato show how learning can be ‘made visible through the increasing participation and emergent communication of these learners with their teachers and each other’ (p.41).

Analysis of classroom discourse, as in the above example, can reveal learning in action: what Vygotsky calls ‘microgenesis’. According to Vygotsky (1978), development has three dimensions. At the macro-level, the human race and human societies specifically develop over time: ‘phylogenesis’. Individuals themselves also develop over time: ‘ontogenesis’. Ontogenesis is far from a smooth predictable process, but takes place in revolutionary, possibly even regressive, transformational steps as well as by small incremental steps: ‘microgenesis’.

Recent literacy research includes a number of studies of ontogenesis and microgenesis (Bell, 2002; Donato, 1994; Platt & Brooks, 2002). One particularly well-documented example is presented by Macken-Horarik (1996, 2005). Macken-Horarik tracks the literacy development of a Vietnamese student in a high school science class engaged in a unit of work on reproduction. At the start of the unit, the child can produce only minimal text in a stumbling, inarticulate voice. During the unit of work spanning several weeks, the child is drawn into participation in a broad range of literacy activities including paired writing, explanations, and letter-writing. The teacher carefully introduced and rehearsed the language of the field, as well as giving explicit guidance about the mode of texts that students were participating in as readers and writers. By the end of the unit, the student was able to produce coherent, complex text which demonstrated a sophisticated command of concepts as well as language.

2.1.3c Scaffolding and the ZPD

The Vygotskian view of learning, then, suggests that learning is developmental, though not necessarily incremental; ecological rather than linear (van Lier, 2004). That is, there is not necessarily a specific, lock-step order in which concepts need to be learned, as could be inferred from work on processability theory, for example by Pienemann (1998). Rather, learning takes place within what Vygotsky called the

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In other words, students learn through engaging in challenging tasks with support from a teacher or a more experienced other.

van Lier (2004, p.146) contrasts Vygotsky's notion of ZPD with innatist views of learning, such as those deriving from Chomsky's 'Language Acquisition Device', Piaget's notion of developmental stages, and Krashen's 'i + 1', which imply that students' knowledge and abilities will develop naturally if they are allowed to develop in a propitious climate little by little. Vygotsky, rather, argues that teaching should be ahead of development; that students can be challenged to achieve well beyond their current capacity, provided they are given adequate support.

Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) introduced the metaphor of 'scaffolding' to refer to this Vygotskian notion of stretching students into their ZPD while also providing support. Perhaps because of the vivid nature of the metaphor, the term 'scaffolding' has become widely interpreted, sometimes with the simple meaning of 'helping'. One attempt to interpret the term was proposed and empirically tested by Palincsar and Brown (1984) in the reading pedagogy they called 'reciprocal reading'. The technique involves a sequence of stages through which students interact with a text. The process is initially modelled by the teacher, and then handed over to autonomous groups of students. The group leader begins by posing a question, based on the title or a quick overview of the text, to which other members respond. The group leader summarises their ideas, and asks the group to pose more questions predicting the content of the text. The students then read the text and present their individual summaries: through negotiation, the group finally agrees on a joint summary. The role of the teacher is conceived of as facilitator – not holder of knowledge or interpreter of texts, as in more traditional reading pedagogies. The teacher models the technique and then provides support while students struggle to negotiate meaning for themselves. Students learn through collaboration and through intermental dialogue: questioning, elaborating and co-constructing summaries. The technique entails a gradual move from teacher modelling, to peer support, to individual acquisition of reading strategies. Although various studies have shown the technique to be successful in raising students' comprehension and recall of reading texts (Palincsar & Brown, 1984), it has also been criticised from a number of viewpoints. First, the technique, as

specified by Palincsar and Brown, is seen as too prescriptive both in its cycle of sequences and its view of text. Secondly, it has been shown that students often generate poor questions and superficial summaries (Rosenshine & Meister, 1994, cited in Pressley & Wharton-McDonald, 2002).

Another pedagogy of scaffolded reading has been proposed by David Rose (Rose, 2003; Rose, Gray, & Cowey, 2000) who espouses a philosophy that ALL students MUST experience success. Rose proposes the following cycle:

- An initial preparation phase (text orientation), in which the ensuing reading activity is set up so that readers will inevitably experience success. During this phase, the teacher introduces the text-type and the language of the field. S/he also signals to the students where to find relevant wordings and the meaning of particular wordings.
- A detailed reading phase, in which students identify wordings and ideas within the text, for example by highlighting sections indicated by the teacher.
- An elaboration stage, in which students relate the text to their experience and discuss meanings as a group.

This cycle can be enhanced for academic purposes by adding phases of note-making, joint re-writing, individual rewriting and independent writing. The examples used by Rose to illustrate his work (Martin & Rose, 2005; Rose, 2003; Rose, Lui-Chivizhe, McKnight, & Smith, 2003) suggest a form of scaffolding that is strongly teacher-directed. While it supports and nurtures student reading, allowing them to access texts normally beyond their reach, it leaves little room for the individual student voice, or for personal engagement with the text, thus suggesting a unitary static view of meaning which conflicts with a Bakhtinian perspective on reading. Rose would argue that experiencing success is fundamental to ensuring students' on-going determination to engage in dialogue with texts, and that his scaffolded reading cycle benefits weaker as well as stronger readers, thereby espousing a strong social justice agenda and working to develop students' identity as readers. In contrast, Wells (2002) argues that if the teacher retains the role of 'primary knower', students fall into the role of passive recipients and their ability to participate in communicative

engagement with texts is limited. Clearly, Rose's method has merit – but only if meaning is genuinely co-constructed by all members of the classroom community.

Scaffolding was also a key element of Buranapatana's (2006) attempt to engender critical thinking among a group of Thai university students enrolled in a reading program. The students were asked to create a website presenting issues of their own choice. They worked collaboratively in groups to decide on the issues, to research them, and to present them online. This 'macro-task' was scaffolded by a system of teacher support, through formal and informal discussions with peers, and through direct instruction in the practices of critical reading. A feature of Buranapatana's project-based learning was the strongly learner-centred nature of the learning environment which was created. Learners chose their own topics and searched for their own source material. They made decisions on when to ask for support from the team of teachers, and what sources of information to use. They took responsibility for creating the final product. This strong learner focus was also accompanied by high motivational aspects of the learning environment: the stakes were high as the website would be made public and would invite open discussion. Furthermore, the team of teachers provided encouragement and demonstrated interest in the students' topics. Also the students were able to choose topics which interested them and in which they became passionately involved as they learned more and more about the issues through their research. The students' critical thinking practices developed steadily over three iterations of the learning cycle, as they asked more and more searching questions, consulted a wider variety of sources, and expressed their views with greater subtlety.

The concept of 'scaffolding' has been made more precise by Hammond and Gibbons (2005). For Hammond and Gibbons, scaffolding has two facets: contingent and designed-in scaffolding. Designed-in scaffolding occurs through the planned selection and sequencing of tasks; the choice of mediational texts and semiotic systems that can link in to students' prior knowledge and enhance their metacognitive awareness of how language works. Contingent scaffolding occurs in the moment-to-moment interaction between teacher and students: teacher talk. The teacher facilitates learning through making explicit links with the students' prior learning; elicits student talk; appropriates and extends student talk; uses metalanguage to recap and reinforce learning; and increases 'prospectiveness' by affording opportunities for students to

voice their understandings and questions. Such teacher talk is what van Lier (2004, p.11), after Wittgenstein, talks about as ‘sowing’ rather than ‘reaping’: teacher talk which affords opportunities for learning, rather than testing what students already know.

A crucial, and perhaps controversial, aspect of the concept of the ZPD, is that learners need to be challenged with tasks which are significantly beyond their present capacity: ie. with ‘high challenge’ (Mariani, 1997). Low challenge tasks will result in busy work, and/or bored students, while high challenge tasks can be powerfully motivating, and will help students to make strides forward in their learning. To successfully complete high challenge tasks, however, students also need ‘high support’. The ‘art of teaching’ (Hammond, pers. comm.) is in maintaining a balance between too much and too little support. With too much support, students will be reliant on the teacher, but with too little support they will become frustrated, lose interest, or perhaps resort to compensation strategies (Adamson, 1993) such as ‘plagiarising’ (Whitaker, 1993).

A key concept in scaffolding theory is mediation. Vygotsky maintained that all learning is mediated by the use of tools, including signs. Language itself is the ultimate mediational tool as it provides the most far-reaching means by which members of a community can understand, share and act upon artefacts, concepts and events. Similarly, instances of language use (for example, texts, instructions, tasks) and other semiotic means such as graphic organisers, pictures, music and so on all provide tools which mediate our understanding of the world. Within a classroom context, texts have a binary role: they can be both the means by which we understand phenomena, and the object of study itself. Wells (2002, p.45) highlights the dual status of instructional objects: on the one hand, they have a material status which allows them to become the object of activity; at the same time they have a symbolic, abstract status which mediates students’ understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Teacher-talk and student-talk, that is classroom dialogue, has a crucial role in mediating learning within classrooms. As Wells (1999) points out, this is particularly so in abstract learning in which language is at the heart of learning, as opposed to

practical learning (for example, learning to weave) in which cultural modelling forms the basis of apprenticeship (Rogoff, 1995, 2003). Research on teacher-talk and student-talk has not been conclusive, particularly with regard to the ubiquitous IRE (Initiate – Respond – Evaluate) pattern, in which the teacher asks a question to which she already knows the answer, the student(s) respond, and the teacher evaluates the response (‘Good’; ‘That’s right’) before reiterating the cycle (Wells, 2002). For Wells (2002, p.50), this is ‘the antithesis of the way in which knowledge is co-constructed in settings in which knowing-in-action is consequential for the activity-in-progress.’ Similarly, Weissberg (1994) found in a case study of five ESL classes that writing teachers in EAP classes tended towards a transmissive style of teaching, predominantly using the IRE pattern of talk, especially when they were using the textbook. Only when they turned to generating ideas for writing did teachers encourage students to participate more fully and collaboratively. Weissberg suggests that allowing students more opportunity to participate in collective construction may enable them to ‘gain more conscious control over their writing processes’ (p.136). More recently, Walsh (2002) and Clifton (2006), in detailed studies of teacher talk have also concluded that the IRE pattern ‘greatly restricts learning opportunities and minimises learner involvement’ (Walsh 2002, p19). On the other hand, Wells (2002) and Hammond and Gibbons (2005) assert that the IRE pattern of teacher talk can also be used as a means of contingent scaffolding: to increase prospectiveness; to probe, extend and elaborate on students’ turns; and to check for understandings.

Ultimately, good scaffolding leads to what Michell and Sharpe (2005, p.49, after Brown & Ferrara, 1985) refer to as ‘teacher fade out’: a point at which students are able to perform the task unaided, and move on to the next cycle of scaffolded learning.

2.1.3d Emergences and affordances

To understand the concept of high challenge in language learning, it is necessary to move away from the linear ‘banking’ view of learning espoused by earlier traditions of learning. From a sociocultural perspective, learning takes place organically, or rhyzomatically; it ‘emerges’ (van Lier, 2004). According to van Lier, the ‘emergence’ of learning occurs through interaction with the environment. The role of teachers,

then, is to enhance the learners' environment through the introduction of mediational tools: texts and tasks which will 'afford' stimulating opportunities for students' learning. Texts which are selected or written on the basis of Krashen's 'i + 1' hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) may tend to restrict student learning, whereas authentic materials, chosen for their interest, relevance or affective impact, have the potential to offer powerful learning opportunities or 'affordances' (van Lier, 2004). Patrikis (2003 p.3), for example, describes the thrill experienced by students reading self-selected materials from the Internet at levels of difficulty well beyond their notional 'intermediate' level of competence.

From the social-constructionist perspective, tasks are seen as crucial 'affordances' for learning (van Lier, 2000). Tasks have been a key feature of language learning classrooms since the 1980's because of their potential to mobilise communicative language use in the classroom. However, in early conceptualisations of task-based learning, tasks were regarded as opportunities to practise grammar and vocabulary, whereas in social-constructionist classrooms, tasks offer affordances for learning itself.

According to Nunan (2003), tasks should have a goal or purpose, preferably one which has authenticity in the 'real world' beyond the classroom and is related to learners' long term needs. While the immediate goal (for example: 'To make a presentation to your class about a newspaper article that you have read') has a product focus, the long-term language learning outcomes are derived from the process of engaging with the task (in this example: interpreting main ideas, reading between the lines, expanding vocabulary knowledge and so on). As far as possible, according to Nunan, tasks should also involve the learner in contact with authentic materials: that is, materials which have not been created specifically for the purposes of language learning, but which engage the learner in interacting with instances of the language as it is used in naturally occurring communicative events. The challenge of organising curricula around the completion of tasks is that of sequencing tasks to scaffold the learner towards more and more sophisticated ways of making meaning. Nunan (1999, p.29) calls this the task-dependency principle: 'a kind of pedagogical ladder... enabling the learner to reach higher and higher levels of communicative performance'.

Michell and Sharpe (2005) in their discussion of scaffolding as ‘task-enabling support’ (p.32) identify several factors which contribute to successful task fulfilment:

- a. Task conditions: students have ‘ownership’ of the task. They struggle with the challenges it poses, but at the same time they need to know that the teacher is committed to their success.
- b. Task engagement: provided the task is interesting and relevant to the students. Engagement can be sustained if the task is both challenging and sufficient support is provided.
- c. Task trajectory: the task is arranged so that students can gradually achieve autonomous control.
- d. Task context: some aspects of the task take place publicly so that all can benefit, while others are performed individually.
- e. Semiotic resources: task enactment is supported by a range of resources: graphical/ inscriptional (eg writing on the board); interactional (teacher and student talk); and indexical (the teacher points out important features).

2.1.3e Affect in learning

Affect is an aspect of scaffolding which is currently under-theorised. Buranapatana’s (2007) research demonstrated the importance of ‘sanuk’ (deep enjoyment) to the Thai students in her project, likening it to the concept of ‘hard fun’ proposed by Janks (2002). The students enjoyed challenging themselves and each other, as well as collaborating (in most cases) harmoniously, productively and with humour. They were also strongly interested in the topics they had chosen to explore themselves. The more they read and discussed the topic, the more their interest grew.

Janks (2002) describes a reading class in which teenage girls similarly chose topics which were powerfully interesting to them. Janks argues for the use of humour and the transgressive in the literacy classroom: ‘the territory of desire and identification, pleasure and play, the taboo and the transgressive’ (p9). Unless students are stimulated in the affective realm, they may learn how to perform critical deconstruction of texts, and yet remain aloof and untransformed by their encounters with text.

Affect is particularly crucial for language learners, as language goes to the core of identity. As Norton (2000, 2006) has made clear, adopting new languages involves taking on new identities. For many learners this is a confrontational experience, involving potential loss of status and confidence. For this reason, building a supportive classroom community is essential as a platform for learning. There has also been growing interest in factors such as learner anxiety (Oxford, 1999); tolerance of ambiguity (Ehrman, 1999); intrinsic motivation; and classroom dynamics (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), Lave and Wenger (1991), Wells (2001) and others argue that establishing a productive and positive learning environment is essential to student learning.

One of many examples in the literature which describe how positive learning communities can form the basis for powerful literacy learning is presented by Landay (2004) who describes a drama production class in a US high school in which teachers and professional actors collaborated with students to produce a performance. Fundamental to the success of this class was the positive community of practice which was created. Landay describes this community as being vibrant and full of vitality. Official and unofficial discourses interpenetrated, and expectations were high as participants shared ideas, talked, and listened to each other. Most important, perhaps, was the strong sense of shared purpose in the group as they worked towards the high stakes goal of a public performance. Landay's description mirrors the position of Dörnyei and Murphey (2003, p.42), who point out that, although a classroom comprises many individuals, the influence of the teacher is substantial – s/he has the key role in establishing the learning community.

The importance of classroom climate can be illustrated by a small research project noted by Dörnyei and Murphey (2003, p.26): Kenny (1994) divided his class into two groups: he learned the names of the children in group A, whereas he did not learn the names of Group B. Group A children not only found the class more interesting (4.28 vs 3.54 on a scale of 1-5), but also spoke more in class, enjoyed English more and evaluated their progress much higher: 80% thought they had improved as opposed to 44% for Group B.

Wells (2001) considers that one important characteristic of building a positive learning community is to stimulate interest and curiosity. He suggests that an effective classroom is a 'community of inquiry' in which affective, cognitive, ethical and scientific realms are all engaged. When students are intimately involved and engaged in inquiry, as in the case of the primary school classroom he describes in which all the children eagerly awaited the emergence of a butterfly from its chrysalis, there will be a powerful context for learning to take place. According to Fisher (1994) one way to build such a community of inquiry is through exploratory talk, or, as Dufficy (2005, p.63) puts it, 'substantive conversations'.

Central to the concept of affect is the notion of motivation in language learning. Early theorists in motivation, such as Bruner (cited in Arnold & Douglas Brown, 1999), contrasted extrinsic and intrinsic motivation; later, Gardner and Lambert's (1972) seminal work on motivation in language learning focussed on instrumental versus integrative motivation; sociocultural theorists, however, are concerned with two interlinked constructs: goal orientation and engagement. Learners with a clear goal orientation, especially if it is shared by their learning community, are also more likely to be engaged. Engaged reading is also strongly associated with achievement: so high achievers become better readers, and better readers become more engaged (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Cambourne (1995, cited in Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000, p.404) defines engagement as 'holding a purpose, seeking to understand, believing in one's own capabilities, and taking responsibility for learning'. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) in their review article of engagement and motivation in reading identify ten key factors: shared learning and knowledge goals; real world interactions; encouraging autonomy and choice; interesting texts; strategy instruction; collaboration; praise and rewards; opportunities for evaluation; teacher involvement and interest in students; and coherent instructional processes. As Guthrie and Wigfield point out, engagement is still a poorly understood construct in reading pedagogy, although as Platt and Brooks (2002, p.1) claim: 'the portal to the ZPD is task engagement'.

Closely associated with affect in learning is the construct of agency – a cornerstone of sociocultural ontology. Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.234) define human agency as 'the mediated capacity to act'. They point out that this capacity is both constrained and enabled by the social and cultural contexts – the complex activity systems – in

which individuals participate. In particular, agency is closely associated with personal motivation, as well as the tasks and communities in which individuals participate and the mediational tools available to them. Thus, while agency is fundamentally located in the individual, it is made possible through social contexts.

The area of affect and agency in reading pedagogy is riddled with somewhat vague, interlinked and merging constructs, as shown in Table 2. There is a need for research to unravel some of these concepts and investigate how they relate to actual classroom practice. This study contributes in particular to a clearer understanding of the role of ‘engagement’ in reading.

Table 2: Affect and agency in reading pedagogy

Goal orientation	(Carr, Mizelle, & Charak, 1998; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Donato, 2000; Landay, 2004)
Community of inquiry	(Landay, 2004; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Putney, Green, Dixon, Duran, & Yeager, 2000; Rose et al., 2003; Wells, 2000)
(Positive) feedback	(Carr et al., 1998; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000)
‘Hard fun’	(Janks, 2002; Buranapatana, 2006; Alexander & Jetton, 2000)
Self-confidence/ self-esteem/ attribution/ self-efficacy	(Carr et al., 1998; Dufficy, 2005; Rider & Colmar, 2005)
Identity	(Gilyard, 2000; Ivanic, 1997; Norton, 2000, 2006)
Tolerance of ambiguity/ will	(Alexander & Jetton, 2000; Ehrman, 1999)
Learner anxiety	(Oxford, 1999; Bell, 2007)
Classroom dynamics	(Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Civikly, 1992; Ives, 2004)
Challenge	(Carr et al., 1998; Dufficy, 2005)
Choice/ sense of control	(Carr et al., 1998; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000;
Flow	Csikszentimihalyi, 2000)
Motivation	(Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Arnold & Douglas Brown, 1999; Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003)
Interest/ engagement	(Alexander & Jetton, 2000; Dufficy, 2005; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Littlewood, 2004; Platt & Brooks, 2002; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000)
Agency	(Coughlan & Duff, 1994; Iyer, 2007; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006)

2.1.3f Summary of the sociocultural turn in reading pedagogy

From a sociocultural perspective, texts are imbued with multiple voices: the voice of the writer and the many voices that have contributed and shaped the text. The reader comes to the text as a collaborator, struggling to understand the voices of the text but also responding in his/her own voice. Reading pedagogies, then, need to develop the reader as a dialogic participant in engaging with text. Reading cannot be reduced to a set of skills or strategies; it entails a personal engagement in both the cognitive and the affective realm. In other words, development as an ‘academic reader’ means developing a disposition for academic reading, and an identity as a participant in academic discourse.

Scaffolding pedagogies enable the reader to engage with texts that may have been beyond their reach by providing high challenge tasks in combination with high support. This support takes the shape of both contingent, on-the-spot interaction with teacher and peers; and also ‘designed-in’ tasks which lead the student towards independent practice in more and more demanding activities. The social nature of learning means that scaffolding works best in social contexts in which a community of learners committed to inquiry has been established. Students’ development, both microgenesis and ontogenesis, can be seen in their developing practice.

2.1.4 Summary of three theoretical perspectives on reading

The skills-based, cognitivist and sociocultural approaches to the teaching of reading in EAP are summarised in Table 3. In praxis, these approaches are likely to laminate one on to another, despite the conflicting ontologies underpinning them. As Lea and Street (2006) maintain, a socioculturally inspired, literacies approach does not necessarily preclude other pedagogies. In fact, development of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, understandings of text structure and genres, and metacognitive awareness of top-down and bottom-up processing are all likely to facilitate the development of students’ emerging identities as readers.

Table 3: Three theoretical perspectives on teaching reading

(adapted from Hood et al., 1996; Nunan, 1999; van Lier, 2004)

	Skills		Literacies
	Skills-based approach	Cognitivist approach	Sociocultural approach
View of the text	Embodies prescribed meanings and/or a sample of the target language for analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary	Aims to impart information	Meaning negotiated in dialogic interchange between writer and reader(s) in social contexts
Aim of reading in L2	To learn more about the language itself (grammar and vocabulary)	To understand the content presented in the text. Depends on purpose for reading.	Readers construct meanings from text depending on their sociocultural context and motivation
Theoretical underpinnings	Grammar-translation approach to L2 learning	Communicative language teaching Transmission model of communication Cognitive learning principles (information-processing; reading strategies)	Communicative language teaching Meaning-based models of communication Sociocultural learning principles
Locus of control	Teacher-centred 'Empty jug' model	Student-centred, but teacher-directed 'Coathanger model': linking new information to prior knowledge	Strongly student-centred, active role as meaning-makers Teachers create conditions for learning
Aim of reading classes	Guided/ structured learning of vocabulary and grammar rules will enhance the learner's ability to read Bottom-up approach	Students learn strategies which will help them to read effectively. Emphasis on top-down strategies: Psycholinguistic guessing game	Students enter into dialogue with the text and with each other. Students learn to use framing devices: extratextual, intertextual, circumtextual and intratextual to develop their capacity.
Teaching-learning techniques	Vocabulary often taught inductively Reading aloud Grammatical analysis Vocabulary exercises	Pre-reading activities > background knowledge, activate schema While-reading activities > skimming and scanning, picking out main ideas and supporting details etc Post-reading activities > note-taking, recalling	Scaffolded learning modeling, groupwork/ collaborative learning to share meanings, reading contextualised in wider tasks, teacher as a resource Students choose texts and define own purposes
Assessment	Objective: reading comprehension questions (aimed at surface features of the text)	Objective: Reading comprehension questions (aimed at text content/ different purposes for reading)	Subjective: Reading journals, essays etc Derived meanings used in constructive tasks such as reviews, projects etc

2.2 Critical reading in EAP

The discussion of three contrasting reading pedagogies presented so far in this literature review has not yet directly addressed the construct of ‘critical’ reading. In this section, I explore contrasting understandings of critical reading in the literature: the first deriving from psychological conceptualisations of ‘higher-order thinking’ - an analytical approach located towards the ‘skills’ end of the Lea and Street spectrum of EAP pedagogies; the second, a social justice perspective on critical reading which is enhanced by developing critical language awareness. Finally, I propose a dialogic model of critical reading based on sociocultural understandings of language and learning, located at the ‘literacies’ end of the spectrum.

2.2.1 An analytical perspective on critical reading

Still very influential in tertiary pedagogy is the taxonomy of cognitive abilities published by Bloom and his colleagues over 50 years ago (see Table 4) (Bloom, 1984; Bloom et al., 1956). Much of the discussion and understanding of the place of critical thinking in academia in the late twentieth century has arisen from this taxonomy, and similar inventories appear also in descriptions of learning strategies in EAP such as those presented by Chamot and O’Malley (1994). Surjosuseno and Watts (1999) maintain that understanding the importance of such processes and being able to apply them is fundamental to the teaching of critical reading in EAP.

Table 4: Summary of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation and recall of information • knowledge of dates, events, places • knowledge of major ideas • mastery of subject matter
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding information • grasp meaning • translate knowledge into new context • interpret facts, compare, contrast • order, group, infer causes • predict consequences
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use information • use methods, concepts, theories in new situations • solve problems using required skills or knowledge

Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing patterns • organisation of parts • recognition of hidden meanings • identification of components
Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use old ideas to create new ones • generalise from given facts • relate knowledge from several areas • predict, draw conclusions
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compare and discriminate between ideas • assess value of theories, presentations • make choices based on reasoned argument • verify value of evidence • recognise subjectivity

(Adapted from: University of Victoria Counselling Services, 2004)

However, the application of Bloom's taxonomy has been criticised for its mechanistic, depersonalised, devoiced approach to learning. Students are asked to think critically about information and ideas which are static, quantifiable and which apparently bear no relation to their own lives, identities and viewpoints. Kern (2003, p.46) and others refer to this as the 'reification' of literacy.

Although Bloom's taxonomy appears to generalise critical thinking practices, many authors have argued that critical thinking is, in effect, cultural thinking (Atkinson, 1997). In the first place, critical thinking is cultural in that it is inextricably bound to particular disciplines: what counts as critical reading in one discipline may be different from another. McPeck (1981), for example, argued that critical thinking can never be divorced from its specific field: that thinking is always about something, and that, for this reason, the teaching of critical thinking must be linked to content areas. In a similar vein, Becher (1989) demonstrated that different disciplines have their own cultural mores, such that arguments can only be judged from within their own field. These distinctions in modes of critical thinking are reflected in the language of the discipline at every level: from the specific terminology and ways of categorising or describing the field; to the way arguments are mounted, the rhetorical devices and structures that are used; the type of evidence that is taken as permissible; what questions may legitimately be asked, and who is accepted as authoritative. As Candlin (1998, cited in Moore, 2004, p.14) claimed, 'Disciplinary cultures are extraordinarily differentiated in almost any respect one might name'.

The disciplinary differences route is not an easy path for EAP, not least because of the practical difficulties of bringing together heterogeneous groups of students. Furthermore, there is a danger in this approach of reifying discourse communities and their critical thinking mores. Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) assert:

Clearly, we need to avoid framing discourse communities as determinate, static, autonomous, and predictable arenas of shared and agreed upon values and conventions, steering clear of the idea of "discursive utopias" (Harris, 1989). But nor do we want to denude the concept of its explanatory and predictive value by reducing communities to aggregates of competing and indeterminate voices.

In addition, the transferability of critical reading practices from one discipline to another has been frequently challenged in the literature (Atkinson, 1997). Moore (2004) counters this assertion by suggesting a qualified relativism: critical thinking skills are discipline-specific and need to be taught within a disciplinary context but are, to some extent, transferable. In other words, critical thinking dispositions and practices do not have to be learned completely anew in every discipline. He quotes Taylor (2000, p158) who asserts that ‘the attempt to articulate what transcends particular discipline specific knowledge and technique is one that cannot be shirked’ (Moore, 2004, p.14). Davies (2006) takes this argument further by claiming that the generalist-specifist argument is a fallacy: that critical thinking can be seen as both general and discipline-specific.

Davies’ (2006) generalist argument itself can be seen as a cultural perspective on critical reading and thinking, as it derives in large part from the disciplines of Philosophy and Logic. It rests on practices such as analysis of inductive and deductive reasoning; testing assumptions; identifying false arguments, ambiguities, syllogisms; assessing the validity of definitions and the reliability of evidence; and identifying logical conclusions (Ennis, 1962). Moore (2004) suggests that the danger of such an approach is that it leads to ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ solutions to syllogistic problems, which encourages positivist, dichotomous and reductive thinking.

The discipline of literary studies has also affected the teaching of critical reading in EAP, as many language teachers are themselves previous students of literature.

Notions of stylistics, for example, can be seen as underpinning the work of Wallace (2003), Patrikis (2003), Kern (2003) and others.

The ‘critical thinking = cultural thinking’ argument has been applied not just to disciplinary differences in thinking styles but to broader cultural groupings, such as ‘Confucian Heritage Cultures’ (Biggs & Watkins, 1996), ‘South Asians’ (Shaw, Moore, & Gandhidasan, 2007) or even ‘non-Western’. Ballard and Clanchy (1988), for example, asserted that different cultures approach critical thinking in different ways; some cultures (principally collectivist cultures) take a more ‘conserving’ view of knowledge and therefore question and challenge sources of knowledge (such as tribal elders, lecturers and textbooks) less openly and vigorously than others. The implication of the Ballard and Clanchy perspective was that students from certain cultures were less prepared to think critically, and that, for this reason, students from non-Western cultures needed special induction into the western culture of critical thinking.

Research in contrastive rhetoric has also demonstrated that languages differ in the way they organise and express propositions, as well as the kind of support and evidence which is called upon to justify a position (Hinds, 1987; Kaplan, 1966; Kaplan, 1987; Kirkpatrick, 1997). EAP has an important role in helping students to understand and produce the forms of rhetoric which are commonly used in English academic discourse.

Others have argued, however, that critical thinking itself is not culturally bound: human beings everywhere engage in thinking practices which involve the skills in Bloom’s taxonomy (classifying, comparing, relating, evaluating and so on). However, the degree to which critical thinking can be overtly expressed may vary: in repressive political environments, or strongly collectivist cultural environments, it may not be acceptable to voice individual opinions or to criticise overtly (Richmond, 2007; Ryan & Louie, 2007).

2.2.2 The social justice perspective on critical reading

Treading the line between ‘cultural difference’ and ‘cultural deficit’ is treacherous. Fox (1994) was intrigued by the different approaches to critical thinking that are

brought by students of diverse cultural backgrounds to postgraduate courses in the US. Her ethnographic study highlights, but also values difference. For example, she talks with utmost respect of a female African community health worker's concern for practical application which made dealing with western theory a frustrating experience. On the other hand, Gee (1990), Freire (1972), Fairclough (1989), Luke (2002b), Zipin and Brennan (2006) and others emphasise that certain Discourses have greater 'social capital' than others within particular social settings. Literacy education can assist students to gain access to powerful social discourses, while also engaging them in questioning the ideologies underpinning text, looking behind the text to see whose agenda is being served by its message (Bean, 2001). As they move into new cultural/ disciplinary arenas, international students, like their L1 classmates, need to acquire the Discourses of power within the academic communities to which they aspire.

A second approach to academic reading, then, is a critical pedagogy which recognises the close connection between literacy practices and identity. Critical pedagogy owes its origins in part to authors such as Freire, Bourdieu and Bernstein. For Freire (1972), education was a way of liberating the oppressed from social disadvantage. This call is also taken up in the work of Bourdieu, who has argued that literacies are socially situated, and valued differentially by members of different cultures in different contexts. The ability to manipulate these literacies is a form of 'cultural capital'. Individuals acquire this capital through participation in particular social 'fields', each individual occupying their own particular 'habitus' as a result of their social experiences, and in particular their experience of literacy events. From this perspective, literacy is a sociohistorical construction, its potential 'deeply embedded within and mediated by sociohistorical context' (Carrington, 2001, p.266). The ways in which individuals read are a direct result of their particular habitus, and may not always be appropriate to participation in certain fields. It is the role of teachers to make explicit the cultural capital demanded in these fields, and to facilitate students' acquisition of this capital. However, through this process teachers may become complicit in the reinforcement of social advantage and disadvantage, endorsing the valuing and devaluing of certain literacy practices within privileged discourses.

Educators who take a critical pedagogy stance recognise the importance of inducting students into the discourse of socially valued literacies, particularly academic literacies, while also recognising the students' own habitus and identity. Ivanic (1997), for example, throws light on the way in which 'people's identity is implicated in and constructed by their literate activities as well as their linguistic choices' (Ivanic, 1997, p.64). Literacy, according to Ivanic, 'is not a technology made up of a set of transferable skills, but a constellation of [heterogenous] practices which differ from one social setting to another' (p. 65). Her qualitative study of non-traditional L1 students in a British university shows how these students took on new identities as they began to acquire new literacy practices without sacrificing their primary identity and Discourse. In other words, literacy is a highly personalised and affective activity.

For international students, the challenge of taking on new identities as they move into academic literacy is doubly confronting. Not only are they moving out of one broad cultural context to another (from their native country into the English-speaking environment), but also into a new culture of education, and further into a new disciplinary culture. This means that they are facing cultural shifts which entail interactions with new kinds of text — texts which embody a raft of culturally embedded assumptions about reader-writer relationships, student-teacher relationships, about what is considered important and worthwhile and what is not; and about who can/should say what to whom, and how. For these students, it is important not only to understand these relationships and to begin to see into some of the underlying cultural assumptions, but also to see how the language of texts embodies such assumptions, and how texts position them as readers. From this perspective, critical reading is a highly politicised activity. For many international students, and indeed for many L1 students, adopting a critical stance is an unaccustomed, uncomfortable and potentially taboo zone of intellectual participation. Nevertheless, Wallace (2003), Norton (2006) and von der Emde and Schneider (2003) claim that international students, as outsiders to the broad culture, are in a privileged position to critique the hegemonic stance of western academia.

Phillipson (1992), Benesch (1999), Pennycook (1997), Norton (2000), Canagarajah (2002a) and others argue that EAP teachers need to grasp the challenge of critical pedagogy. In order to resist the cultural hegemony of western education, international

students need to understand the ways in which they may be influenced by the cultural dominance of the English language itself as well as by the western perspectives embodied in the academic literature they will meet. Only with an enhanced awareness of the imperialistic nature of western education will students be able to make choices about the values and ideas in the texts to which they will be exposed. By developing students' understanding of the discourse and therefore the power relations embodied in texts, teachers can empower students to challenge cultural hegemony. Jones (2006) refers to this politicised view of critical reading as an 'upward-looking criticality', as opposed to the 'downward-looking' analytical, Bloomian view.

Pohl (2005) describes an innovative EAP course which attempted to raise students' critical awareness of the sociopolitical power relations embedded in text. The starting point was for students to reflect on their individual sociohistorical learning experiences, their current identities as English language learners, and their motivations for seeking a western education. He then introduced students to a jigsaw reading exercise using a text *Can Asians think?* by Kishore Mahbubani, which dealt with the appropriation of western values into Asian cultural contexts. Other challenging texts on the theme of linguistic and cultural imperialism were also discussed. The students then worked together on projects exploring their English language learning identities. While the course achieved its aim of raising awareness of the sociohistorical context of English language learning, Pohl was disappointed by the students' reluctance to challenge power relationships, although he believed that the unit was 'a useful counterpoint to the traditionally more pragmatic view of EAP evident in the rest of the EAP program' (p.7). However, it could be argued that the students in this unit were displaying a healthy resistance to Pohl's attempts at 'transformative' critical pedagogy.

Pohl's paper reveals the ironic potential flaw which overshadows critical pedagogy: that western educators with a critical pedagogy agenda may be keen to impose their own sociocultural beliefs about cultural imperialism on to their students while at the same time urging students to resist the authority of teachers and textbooks. Rather than being a liberating pedagogy which allows students to position themselves as they wish, critical pedagogy runs the risk of attempting to impose its own set of values on students.

Wallace (2003) takes critical pedagogy one step further, by including critical language awareness in her definition of critical reading. In a teacher-based research project, Wallace attempted to teach critical reading to a small group of volunteer international students in London. Her approach was to use the tools of systemic functional linguistics, particularly the contextual variables of field and tenor, to raise the students' critical language awareness of newspaper texts. It could be argued that newspaper texts are not 'authentic' in academic contexts, as they are generally not regarded as acceptable sources in academia. However, because of their limited length and overt use of appraisal to position readers, newspaper reports made a useful source of texts for Wallace's goal of raising critical language awareness. Wallace drew the students' attention to aspects of tenor such as the use of inclusive/ exclusive pronouns (for example, who is 'we') and the use of appraisal (for example, emotive adjectival phrases). In terms of field, they examined the writer's choice of value-laden nominal groups. She had students reflect on the intended readership for the article, asking five key questions:

Why has the text been written?

To whom is the text addressed?

What is the topic?

How is the topic written about?

What other ways of writing about the topic are there? (C. Wallace, 2003, p.115)

Wallace encouraged students to bring in texts from the media that had caught their attention, or related to the students themselves in particular ways. This evocation of the realm of affect in her work was powerful — and even dangerous. As Luke (2002a, 2002b) asserts, this approach to critical literacy has two sides; one side is intellectual, cognitive, deconstructive and textual; the other side confronts anger, alienation and othering. In fact, several Arabic students abandoned the course after Wallace introduced some controversial texts on Islam. Students' response to the course, however, was generally positive, though Wallace is wary about making claims about student 'progress' (Wallace, 2003, p.192).

The most thoroughly developed theory of critical reading pedagogy in currency in Australia is Luke and Freebody's model of 'four reader resources' (Luke & Freebody,

1999), previously described as four reader ‘roles’: decoder, text user, text participant and text analyst (Freebody et al., 1991).

- As decoders, or ‘code breakers’ (Luke & Freebody, 1999), readers need to be able to understand words, sentences, paragraphs and texts. Decoding recruits an integrated set of resources using both bottom-up and top-down processing using both knowledge of language (its vocabulary, grammatical and rhetorical conventions) and reading strategies (picking out main ideas, selecting what to read, skimming and scanning, using visual cues etc).
- As text participants, or ‘meaning-makers’ (Luke & Freebody, 1999), readers enter into engagement with the text, relating content to their own background knowledge, engaging emotionally and intellectually with the content, challenging themselves and the text to justify points of view. They become involved in making meaning from text —meanings which are relevant to their own needs, interests and contexts.
- As text analyst, or ‘text critics’ (Luke & Freebody, 1999), readers stand back from the text and analyze how the language is being used to position the reader. Who is the author and what are their biases, their purposes and their strategies of communication? The ‘text critic’ uses understandings about language to read with a critical eye, as in the critical approach to reading proposed by Wallace (1995, 2003). As Freebody and Luke emphasise, texts are not ideologically natural or neutral. They represent particular points of views while silencing others.
- As text user, the reader enlists the text to serve his/her own (possibly multiple) purposes. In general reading contexts, this may mean using information to solve problems (for example, to plan a vacation); reading for entertainment; reading to gain information about world affairs, and so on. In EAP, the resource of ‘text user’ is particularly vital as this resource is at the heart of the academic practice of synthesising from sources.

The four reader resources model has been widely applied in school contexts in Australia, though it is less well known in EAP. One application of the model is seen in Donnelly’s (2007) proposed reading format in which she involves middle school

children in pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities that are designed to focus their attention on vocabulary and language development as well as higher-order thinking processes, using a four-part table:

Vocabulary	Summary
Visualise	Q and Do

The questions proposed by Donnelly for ‘Q and Do’ echo those used by Wallace (2003):

1. *What was the author's purpose - what was the text all about?*
2. *Why did the author compose that text?*
3. *Verb-based Qs (does/ is/ will/ who did what and why)*
4. *Adverb based Qs (where, why, how, when)*
5. *3 level guides (Suominen & Wilson, 2003): the author said it, meant it or would agree with it?*

And:

1. *If so... what?*
2. *How should I respond?*
3. *How could I use this in my own work?*

Donnelly maps these activities against Luke and Freebody’s reader resources as follows:

Phase of Reading Workshop	Strategy	Code breaker	Meaning maker	Text user	Text analyst
Before reading	Concept mapping		✓		
	Question generation		✓		✓
During reading	Vocabulary	✓	✓		
	Summary		✓	✓	
	Visualisation		✓	✓	
	Q and Do		✓		✓
After reading	Reading response	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: (Donnelly, 2007, p.5)

2.2.3 A dialogic model of critical reading in EAP

The social justice perspective on critical reading brings a sharp focus to bear on to some fundamental issues in EAP, particularly the hegemony of western education and disciplinary discourses. However, in the twenty-first century, the structuralist dichotomies between western and non-western, native and non-native speaker, local and international students are becoming increasingly blurred. As argued in Chapter 1, these are times of ‘liquid modernity’ (Doherty & Singh, 2005) in which national, cultural, ethnic and knowledge-based boundaries are less and less relevant. Rather, individual students bring their own complex ‘propriospect’ (Wolcott, 1991) to their readings of text and have to forge for themselves identities which will serve them well as readers in the dynamic, globalising contexts of their futures.

In this section, then, I propose a ‘postcritical’ (Iyer, 2007), dialogic model of reading which values the individual’s engagement with text, while acknowledging the powerful role of dominant discourses in society and in academia. The model (shown in Figure 2) derives particularly from the sociocultural perspective of Vygotsky (1978, 1987) and Bakhtin (1994) described in section 2.1.3, and is also influenced by Luke and Freebody’s four reader resources (Freebody et al., 1991; Luke, 2002b; Luke & Freebody, 1999). It is strongly influenced by Bakhtin’s notion that reading involves a complex dialogic process by which readers engage with the multiple voices of the text; construct and reconstruct meanings through internal dialogue; and finally externalise the meanings they have constructed through dialogue with others.

In the first place, readers need to **attend** to the voices of the text. This may involve struggle on the reader’s behalf, as s/he attempts to comprehend the meanings intended by the author. As Gee (1990) argues, it may never be possible to fully share an author’s attempts to mediate meanings through text. However, to invoke Grice’s Cooperative Principle, the very activity of literacy implies a commitment to sharing meanings with others. By physically picking up the text (or opening the website), the reader is expressing an intent to listen to the voices embodied in the text. For its part, the text embodies the writer’s voice – and that of many others standing behind her, beside her or, indeed, in front of her, clamouring to be heard. Thus ‘speaker and listener are mutually committed’ (Lähteenmäki, 1998, p.91). It can be argued then that the reader has a responsibility to listen attentively, attempting to hear as the

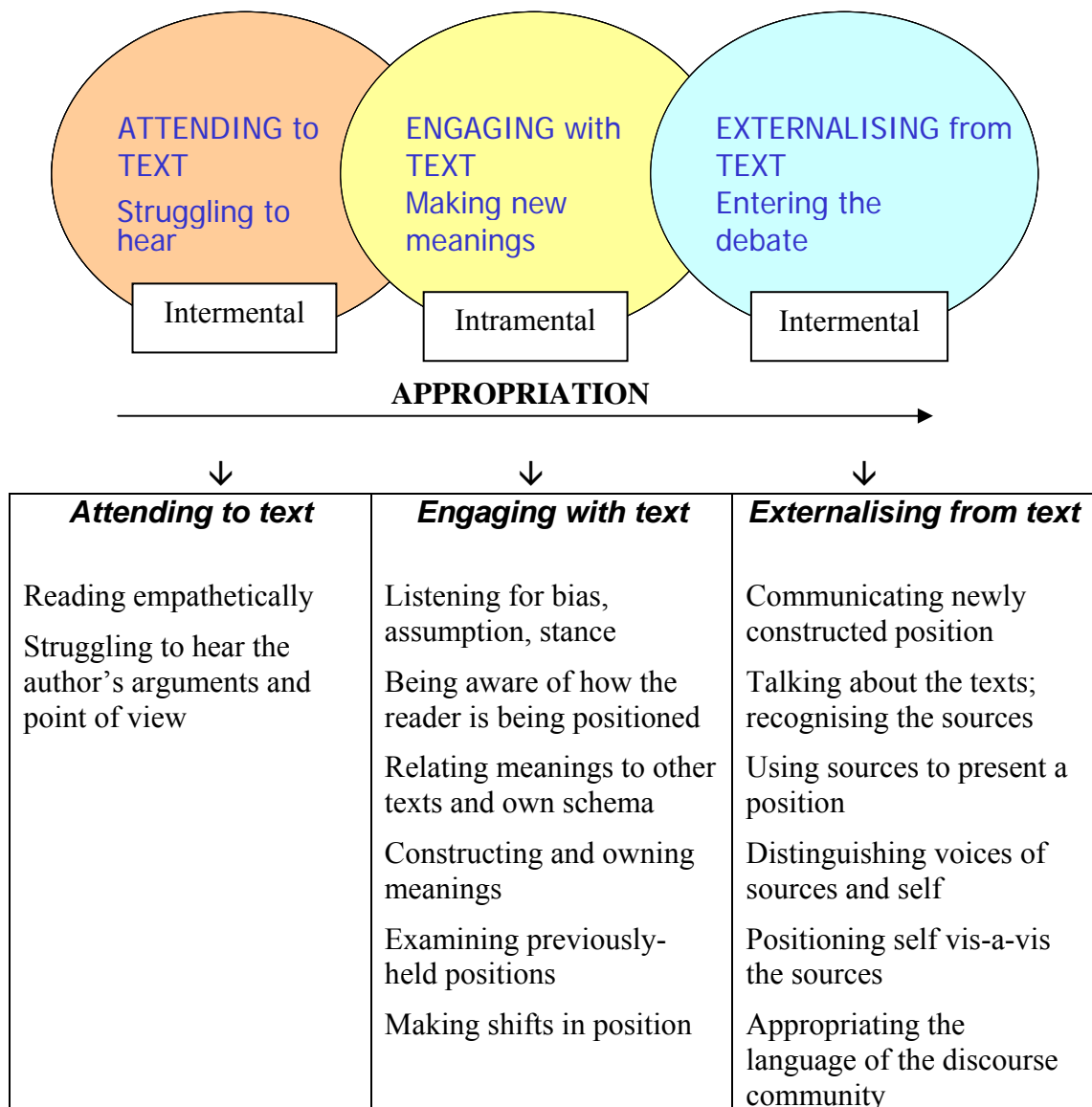
writer intended: to engage in ‘empathetic’ reading. This phase of the reading process is similar to the Luke and Freebody’s ‘decoding’ resource. Such empathetic listening is similar to Elbow’s critical thinking construct of ‘the believing game’ (Belenky & Stanton, 2000, p.56). It requires a linguistic approach, using background declarative knowledge about vocabulary, text structures and grammatical awareness as well as procedural knowledge about decoding. It also requires the activation of relevant content knowledge, and may be helped by understanding something of the writer and the context in which the text was written.

Inevitably, however, the reader listens with her own ears, from her own position, and with her own purposes, and with the voices of many others resonating around her. She must learn to listen as attentively as possible, while withstanding the pressures of the writer to position the reader in certain ways, becoming, as Mary Macken-Horarik (1996) puts it, ‘text-resistant’. This may subsume what Elbow called ‘the doubting game’ of questioning the intent of the voices of the text and the validity of their reasoning (Belenky & Stanton, 2000). At the same time, she reads for her own academic purposes: exploiting the text for ideas, insights, information, or perspectives which contribute to her own shifting constructs within the discipline. This reflective, internalising stage is in a sense a ‘talking back’ to the text; however, the distant nature of text (the author is not actually present and cannot respond in person) means that this dialogue is now no longer external (‘intermental’), but internal (‘intramental’) (Vygotsky, 1978): it involves the reader in internal dialogue as she constructs and reconstructs meaning in relation to the text. Palincsar (1998, p.366) talked about this view of learning as the ‘appropriation of socially derived forms of knowledge that are not simply internalised over time but are also transformed in idiosyncratic ways in the appropriation process’. Although the dialogic model does not map directly on to Luke and Freebody’s four reader resources, this process of internalisation is similar to their ‘text participant’ and ‘text analyst’ roles.

Importantly, ‘engaging with text’ is not the end of the critical, academic reading process, as INTRamental dialogue is of little value in academic terms unless it can be re-expressed through further INTERmental exchange. In other words, readers must also be able to externalise the meanings which they have constructed from text in new social contexts: seminars, tutorial discussions, essays and so on. In doing so, the

reader adds her voice to the debate, learning to take her place with growing confidence in the discourse community, and to distinguish her own voice from those of the source text. Importantly, this externalisation of concepts also helps the reader to gain a fuller, richer understanding of the meanings she has constructed intermentally. The externalising zone of the dialogic model is in some ways similar to Luke and Freebody’s ‘text-user’ resources.

Figure 2: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP



Underpinning this dialogic understanding of critical reading is an understanding of individual agency within social exchange. Although texts and readers are located in

social contexts, development occurs through interaction between the individual, the diverse voices of the texts, and the environment in which they are located. It entails an understanding of readers as ‘participants engaging in actively shaping and being shaped by discourses’ (Iyer, 2007, p166), bringing multiple perspectives to dialogic participation. Overall, critical reading practices contribute, in Bakhtin’s terms, to the constructive, critical appropriation of ideas and language by individual agentic readers, which in turn can lead to transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000; Rogoff, 2003).

2.3 Conclusion

In this thesis, I ask the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices, and if so, how?**

In this chapter, I have reviewed three dominant theories of the teaching of reading in EAP which will contribute to understanding the learning environments which form the focus of this study (see Table 3). In brief, the skills-based approach to language learning presents reading as deciphering and ‘collecting’ vocabulary + grammar. The cognitivist, information processing approach relies on developing students’ cognitive and metacognitive strategies as a means to decode and assimilate propositions. The sociocultural perspective, located at the ‘literacies’ end of Lea and Street’s spectrum (see Table 1), involves collaboration and dialogue between the multiple voices of text and the readers as they participate in constructing meaning.

The sociocultural perspective on language and learning converged with the ‘postcritical’ perspective on reading pedagogy presented in Section 2.2.3. Rather than taking an analytical approach to text as suggested in Bloom’s taxonomy, or an emancipatory approach to critical reading as empowering readers to break free of social structures, a dialogic model of critical, ‘postcritical’ reading was proposed (see Figure 2).

While the dialogic model is emancipatory, in the sense that it can empower individual students to make choices in how they relate to text, it goes beyond understandings of literacy which potentially locate international students as ‘other’, and sees reflective

engagement and individual agency as lying at the heart of literacy practice in social contexts (Iyer, 2007). This dialogic model of critical, postcritical reading provides a lens through which to view the activity of ‘critical reading’ in EAP learning environments in the following chapters.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The literature review in the previous chapter contrasted theoretical perspectives on reading and critical reading in EAP, as well as a range of empirical pedagogical interventions. However, no previous studies could be identified which investigated the question of current praxis in EAP reading classes, particularly in the Australian context. This study, therefore, asks the question:

Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices and dispositions, and if so, how?

The study uses an ethnographic-ecological methodology to answer this question, investigating three different EAP settings. In particular, the study asks:

- 1. What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**
- 2. What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?**
- 3. How did the affordances available in the three settings contribute to students' emergent practice of critical reading?**
- 4. What implications can be drawn about the nature of effective learning environments for fostering critical reading in EAP?**

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and justify the methodology that was used to seek answers to these questions.

3.1 Design of the study: An ecological-ethnographic approach

Because the focus of the study is the learning environment as an integrated activity system rather than one single aspect of the environment, the study used an ethnographic-ecological approach to data collection and analysis. According to van Lier, ecological research in education ‘looks at the entire situation and asks ‘What is it in this environment that makes things happen the way they do? How does learning comes about?’ (van Lier, 2004, p.11). Like ecology in environmental studies, ecology in education is interested in the interrelations between contributing elements of the activity: social, physical, and historical. van Lier proposes ten principal characteristics of an ecological approach to language learning research:

1. **Context** is crucial: not just as a backdrop to understanding language learning but as the ‘heart of the matter’.
2. **Relations** between people, and between people and the world provide **affordances** that open up potential for, or inhibition of action, including learning.
3. **Patterns and systems** shape action, but are not static, predetermined or immutable like rules and structures.
4. **Emergence:** language learning takes place as simple elements are transformed into more complex systems. Emergence occurs through participation in activity.
5. **Quality** of learning is more important that quantity and standards.
6. **Values** underpin all practice and all research. Rather than trying to separate science (knowledge) from belief (understanding), language learning research should recognise that teaching and learning, as well as research, are imbued with values which may or may not be overtly stated.

7. **Critical perspectives** on language learning entail a moral and ethical stance. Teachers and researchers alike need constantly to evaluate the outcomes of their work, not just in terms of language learning but in terms of the student as a whole person, cognitively, socially, politically and affectively.
8. **Variability** is another crucial factor: learners are all different, as are the contexts in which they learn. Language, too, is variable, although it involves shared patterns and systems which enable communication.
9. **Diversity** enriches our classrooms and societies. It is an essential feature of the health of biological ecosystems and also of learning systems.
10. **Activity** can provide a useful focus of research in language learning. Groups of learners come together to form a ‘community of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.79), working together or side by side in particular learning contexts. Learners are viewed not as passive recipients of knowledge but as autonomous, free-willed participants within this community of practice.

(van Lier, 2004, p. 4-8)

An ecological study of learning environments requires rich data, which in the case of this study were gathered through a longitudinal, ethnographic approach to data collection. Ethnographic inquiry in education offers deep insights into teachers’ and learners’ practices in the contexts in which they occur naturally. By immersing myself in three teaching-learning environments, and observing and recording the activity in those environments over an entire module of study, I aimed to generate ‘thick’ descriptions in order to understand WHAT was occurring and WHY.

Ecological-ethnographic research is necessarily value-bound, as the researcher inevitably interprets the data through his/her own lens. As Bloome et al. (2005, p.xix-xxii) point out, such research does not seek to determine a ‘truth’ or ‘reality’; rather, it is ‘‘semitransparent’ bringing the researcher into view as well as the classroom event’. Ecological-ethnographic studies in education ‘both REFLECT and CREATE an image of the classroom’ (Bloome et al., 2005, p.xxii). Nevertheless, ethnographic research seeks to understand phenomena as far as possible from the insiders’ perspectives (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p.504), which this study achieved by eliciting

the diverse views of teachers and students, and through spending extended time immersed in the three learning environments.

Ethnographic research typically focuses on a single environment. However, the aim of this study was to explore contemporary EAP contexts in Australia more broadly, and so three locations were selected. Although direct comparisons between these different contexts could not be made, exploring a range of learning environments contributed to a richer understanding of the teaching of critical reading in EAP and provided a measure of triangulation.

3.1.1 Locations

To select locations for the study, I approached the Directors of Studies of three well-established EAP institutions attached to universities in different Australian cities: two ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) colleges and one foundation college. The three institutions all offered EAP courses, but under slightly different conditions. It was hoped that the different conditions in ostensibly similar organisations would provide comparable, but also contrasting environments, and this indeed turned out to be the case. An overview of the three settings is shown in Table 5. The three settings have been given the pseudonyms: Sandstone College, Newgate College and City College.

Sandstone College is an ELICOS college attached to a prestigious university. It is located on the edge of the campus in pleasant, leafy surroundings, with well-equipped classrooms. Students are able to congregate in a coffee room during breaks and tend to socialise with each other after class. The College uses IELTS as an entry point for its university preparation programs; students must reach IELTS 6 before being allowed to commence these programs. Although classes are organised according to 5-week modules, the same students usually stay together for longer, often with the same teacher, forming cohesive communities of practice.

Newgate College, although an independent entity, is co-located with its parent university, with classrooms dispersed across campus. Newgate College is not an ELICOS institution; rather, it teaches academic English as a concurrent course with

sheltered first year university units in order to fast track students into second year university courses.

City College is located in an inner city environment with buildings integrated through the cityscape, but with little sense of place within the parent university. Classrooms are adequately equipped, but are noisier, stuffier and more cramped than at Sandstone College. Students tend to disperse into the city during breaks and after class. The College has its own direct-entry curriculum carefully structured towards university entrance, using both continual assessment and end-of module exams, but not geared towards IELTS. Like Sandstone College, modules last for 5 weeks, with the week split between two teachers working from the same curriculum.

Table 5: Overview of the three research settings

	Sandstone College	Newgate College	City College
Institution	ELICOS college attached to prestige university	Foundation college attached to Newgate university	ELICOS college attached to Newgate university
Level of curriculum	Pre-EAP (ELICOS)	EAP – Exit level award course, concurrent with other Diploma subjects	EAP – Commencing (ELICOS)
Length of course	5 week module: 20 hours/week Reading = 3 hours/week (incl 1 hr/week ‘Wider Reading’)	13 week semester: 6 hours/week Concurrent with other subjects Reading integrated	5 week module: 20 hours/week 12 hours with Lucy (8 with another teacher) Reading integrated
Hours observed	12 hours + 2 hours with General English teacher	20 hours	41 hours
Classroom	Clean, light, airy, quiet, comfortable, well-equipped	a. vast, impersonal, large desks, no windows b. No desks, scruffy, awkward but flexible	Stuffy, cramped, inflexible, equipment occasionally fails

3.1.2 Participants

With the permission of the Directors of Studies, the teachers in each institution were informed about the study, and volunteers came forward. From among the volunteers, I selected teachers who were experienced, highly recommended by their Director of Studies, and who were timetabled to teach reading and/or academic literacy. This procedure is identified by Freebody (2003, p.78) as ‘purposeful selection’. The participants, the teachers and their respective students, are represented in Table 6. I use pseudonyms throughout this thesis to protect the participants’ identities.

- At Sandstone College, the teacher, Mark, has a doctorate in cultural studies. He has experience of lecturing in Communication as well as teaching in ELICOS.
- At Newgate College, Andrea studied for an MA in TESOL in the late 1990s and has long experience in the institution, including teaching a number of adjunct courses which have given her close insight into the university contexts to which her students were aspiring. She is also a senior teacher.
- At City College, Lucy has a recent MA in Applied Linguistics and also teaches in content units in the foundation program. Her previous experience of TESOL was in South America, but she has taught for a number of years in Australia. Like Mark and Andrea, Lucy is a senior teacher in the institution.

Table 6: Participants

	Sandstone College	Newgate College	City College
Teacher	Male, PhD, cultural studies background, university teaching experience, little TESOL training, >8 years EAP experience	Female, MA TESOL (1990s), substantial teaching experience in concurrent EAP, >8 years EAP experience	Female, recent MA Applied Linguistics, teaching experience in South America, university teaching experience, >8 years EAP experience
Students	N = 12 East Asian: China 3, Taiwan 2, Japan 3, Korea 3, Thai 1 8 women/ 4 men Young adults, most with some university experience 50% postgraduate	N = 12 Diverse group: Kenya 1; Sri Lanka 2; Japan 2; USA 1; UAE 1; Pakistan 2; China 3 6 women; 6 men Undergraduate	N = 18 Largely Chinese: China 8; Taiwan 3; Macau 1; India 1; Thailand 3; Korea 1; Indonesia 1; Sri Lanka 1 6 women/ 12 men 50% postgraduate

In each setting, the students were all young adults (average 23 years old) and, in all three contexts, the students were intending to go on to the associated university, although the Sandstone College class included a number of non-academic students. Characteristic of EAP classes, the students were going into a range of different courses, although Information Technology and Management predominated. Although the classes were ostensibly at different levels, pre-IELTS (Sandstone College), upper-intermediate (City College), and advanced (Newgate College), the students were in fact very similar in terms of their language skills: approximately at IELTS level 6.0. The Newgate College class also included a native English speaker from the US, whose learning was not taken into consideration for this study. This class was the most heterogenous with students from Kenya, United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, China, Japan and the US. The City College class had a high proportion of Mandarin speakers (12), three students from Thailand, and only one each from Korea, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. This class also had a higher proportion of male students. The Sandstone College class students were all from East Asia (Japan, Taiwan, China, Korea and Thailand).

3.1.3 Boundaries of the study

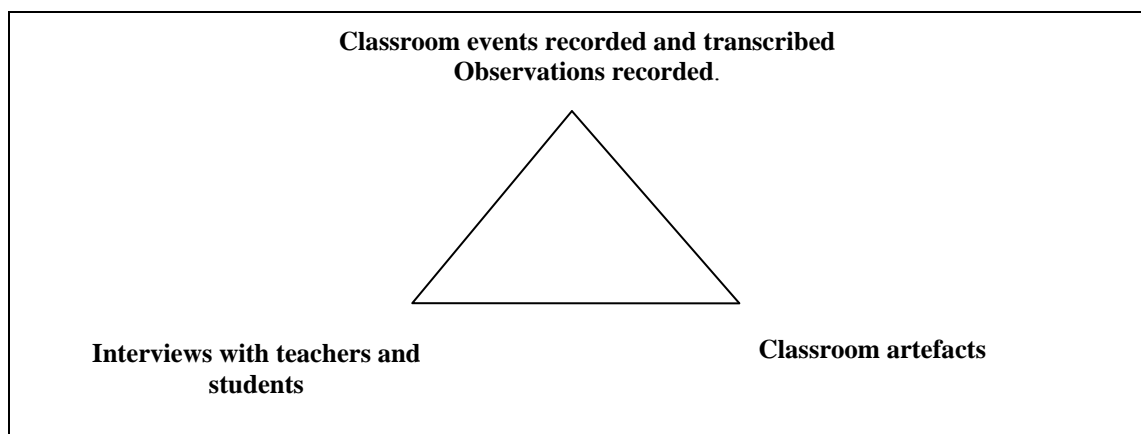
van Lier (2004, p.194) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p224) discuss the problem of setting boundaries for ecological research. In the case of these EAP classes, the unit of study fell neatly across the five-week module, or in the case of Newgate College, the 12-week semester. At Sandstone College, Mark was specifically timetabled to teach reading, so his classes fell within a reasonably clear boundary which resulted in 12 hours of observation. At City College, however, academic reading was integrated into the curriculum, so it was necessary to observe as many of Lucy's hours as possible during the 5 week module: 41 hours in total. Similarly at Newgate College, reading was integrated into the curriculum; in this case, however, Andrea advised me ahead of time which classes would include a reading component so that I could limit my observations: a total of 20 hours were observed. In each location, I was aware that these boundaries were permeable and made efforts to see through these membranes. At Sandstone College, the class had only 3 hours/week with Mark, whereas they were

with a second teacher, Kirsten, for 17 hours/week. Kirsten kindly gave me permission to observe some of her reading classes too, so that I could gain an insight into the broader learning context of these students. At City College, I participated in several professional discussions between Lucy and her co-teacher which also enabled me to see through the boundary that I had set. At Newgate College, Andrea was the sole English teacher and she discussed with me what had transpired in the classes which I had not been able to attend.

3.2 Data Collection

As Freebody (2003, p.30) advises, qualitative researchers have to make pragmatic decisions about the degree of detail, both spatial and temporal, that they wish to record. In this study, data were gathered from a range of sources to enhance reliability through triangulation of the data (see Figure 3). The sources included audio-recordings of classroom interactions; classroom observations and field notes; interviews with teachers and students; the students' written work and other realia from the classroom; and a research diary. In particular, gathering students' and teachers' perspectives as well as spending extended time in classes would make it possible to develop the 'emic' perspective characteristic of ethnographic research, thus ensuring what van Lier calls 'ecological and phenomenological validity' – correspondence between the researcher's and participants' situation definitions (van Lier, 2004, p. 193).

Figure 3: Triangulation of the data



3.2.1 Classroom observations

Each class was audio-recorded using a high quality digital recorder. The recorder picked up clearly nearly all the whole-class dialogue, although some quieter turns, especially private comments or sub-vocalised comments were lost. When the students were working in groups, the recorder was placed with a randomly chosen group. Again, the quality of the recording was very good in most cases. Originally I had considered using video-recording, but the complex logistics of video-recording in classes as a single researcher made me decide to opt for audio-recording only. Furthermore, video-recording would have been impossible in the cramped conditions of most of the classrooms. Instead, I made copious field notes during the classes, being sure to note down significant body language.

The presence of the tape-recorder, and my own presence in the classroom, inevitably affected the learning environment to a certain extent. The teachers, of course, were more self-conscious of their teaching than they would otherwise have been. My on-going attendance in their classes must have been stressful, and I am deeply grateful to them for allowing me to observe. Participant observation might have been a less stressful option, and the teachers did involve me to a certain extent, especially during groupwork, but generally my role in the classes was not participatory as I was keen to observe the differences between the learning environments that the teachers themselves established rather than affecting the learning context with my own teaching style and preconceptions.

Obviously the students too were aware of my presence as researcher. During groupwork I placed the microphone with a randomly chosen group, but the students generally continued with their conversation seamlessly. On one occasion, however, a student jokingly commented about the microphone: *It makes me not dare to say* (CC_George_04_24b).

For the observation notes, I developed a format which enabled me to capture as full a picture as possible of the shape and interactions of each class, as suggested by

Gebhard (1999). The format included columns for teacher behaviour, student behaviour and a column for running comments. Gebhard warns that observation should be non-judgmental and precise, descriptive rather than prescriptive, and that researchers should avoid vague terms such as ‘Students are involved’. I was careful to note down anything that could not be captured on the audio-recording, such as significant body language used by the teacher and students, writing from the whiteboard, students’ use of dictionaries or other tools, and students’ interpersonal behaviour.

3.2.2 Interviews with teachers and students

In addition to observing classes, I also interviewed the students and teachers towards the beginning and towards the end of the course. Generally the student interviews were conducted in small focus groups, as students seemed to prefer this format, but in some cases, it was difficult to organise group interviews and so individual interviews were conducted instead. At each institution, I elicited a range of views, interviewing a range of students including male and female, undergraduate and postgraduate, and students from different language backgrounds and with differing levels of linguistic competence. At Sandstone College I did not include among the interviewees students who were not intending to continue to university study. Before each interview I compiled a set of questions as a guide so that the interviews were semi-structured. The questions generally related to the recent classes and particular events which I was interested to explore in greater depth. This procedure was similar to the ‘stimulated recall’ procedure suggested by (Bailey & Nunan, 1996), as I was able to use my notes, the classroom handouts and the recordings to remind the interviewees of particular events. An example of these semi-structured interview guides is included at Appendix 1. The interviews were conducted in private spaces after or between classes. A range of perspectives was explored in this way. An inventory of the interviews is attached at Appendix 2 (pseudonyms are used throughout this thesis).

In conducting the interviews, I took care to establish a good rapport with the interviewees (Field & Morse, 1985) and to maintain an ethical stance. I was also aware of Freebody’s (2003) warning that interviews may not be a reliable method of gaining insights into the interviewee’s constructs of classroom interaction, as

interviewees will always construct themselves in particular ways with an underlying, and possibly unrecognised, desire to please the interviewer. Interviewers may also lead their interviewees unwittingly towards particular responses. In this way, interviews can lead to ‘data generating’ rather than ‘data gathering’.

In addition to the interviews, the students at Sandstone College completed a final questionnaire to compensate for the paucity of written work (see below). A sample page of this questionnaire is shown at Appendix 3.

3.2.3 Students’ written work

Wherever possible, I kept copies of the students’ notes, submitted written work, tests and exams. At Sandstone College, reading was separated from the rest of the curriculum so it was difficult to gather much written evidence. In contrast, at Newgate College and at City College, the students allowed me to keep copies of essay drafts, final essays, summaries, and exams.

3.2.4 Research diary

In addition to in-class observations and formal interviews, I kept notes of other incidents or conversations which added depth to my ‘emic’ understandings of the research context. At City College, in particular, I enjoyed regular, in-depth conversations with the participating teacher. For this reason it was not necessary to conduct a final interview.

I also kept copies of all the coursebooks and handouts that were used in each setting.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Before data collection began at each institution, the research project was explained in person to the managers and Directors of Studies at each institution and the ethics information sheet was distributed. An authorised person was asked to sign the ethics form. It was agreed that the institution could withdraw from the project at any time. In writing up the thesis, I have taken steps to conceal the identities of these

institutions while presenting sufficient data to draw out the relevant characteristics of each one. I have also taken care to preserve the copyright of materials belonging to each institution. For this reason, examples of the institution's materials are not included in the appendices. During the data collection process, I was careful to disrupt the flow of activity in the institutions as little as possible.

Similarly, I made sure that the teachers who agreed to participate were fully informed, orally and in writing, of the project, its aims and the proposed data collection methods before signing the ethics consent form. It was made clear to the teachers that they could withdraw from the project at any time. During the data collection period, I ascertained that the teachers were comfortable with my presence and gave them the opportunity to read the transcribed data. I maintained a positive and professional relationship with each teacher throughout the project. Where possible, I also tried to lighten their workload, for example by marking objectively scored tests.

The students, like the teachers, were fully informed about the project and, having read the information sheet, were asked to sign consent forms. It was made clear to the students that they were not obliged to participate and that they could withdraw at any time. In each case, the students were happy to agree. At each institution one or two students joined the group after the commencement of the module/semester, and these students were carefully informed of the project and their consent obtained.

In the data analysis and in writing up the thesis, pseudonyms have been used throughout so as to preserve the anonymity of the participating teachers, students and institutions.

3.4 Data analysis

A major challenge of this study, like many classroom-based qualitative studies, was managing and analysing the vast amount of 'messy' data generated. This required the use of various tools, both material and semiotic. In particular, the combination of Christie's (2002) theory of curriculum macrogenres, which was used to map the overall structure of each learning environment over time, and Engeström's (1999)

Activity Theory, which was used to understand the complex interrelationships between the elements of each environment, made it possible to generate a rich, holistic, ecological analysis of the three learning environments providing ‘not just thick description, but thick description in motion’ (Bloome et al., 2005, p.52).

In preparation for analysis, the digital data were backed up, filed and transcribed following the conventions of broad conversation analysis, as used for example, by Donato (2000) and Hammond and Gibbons (2005) (see Appendix 4). These conventions aimed to show the intent of the utterances as well as the words themselves, so, for example, an upward questioning intonation is shown by a question mark, and words spoken with particular emphasis are shown in capitals. As the recordings were of fairly formal classroom language there was little overlapping, although this is shown by the symbol ‘= =’ where it did occur. Some hesitations were overlooked, and irrelevancies were occasionally omitted and are shown by (...). Extralinguistic information drawn from my observation notes is enclosed in brackets. Not all the digital data were transcribed as this was a vast and time-consuming job; for some lessons, only the salient parts of the data were transcribed as suggested by Bailey (1996).

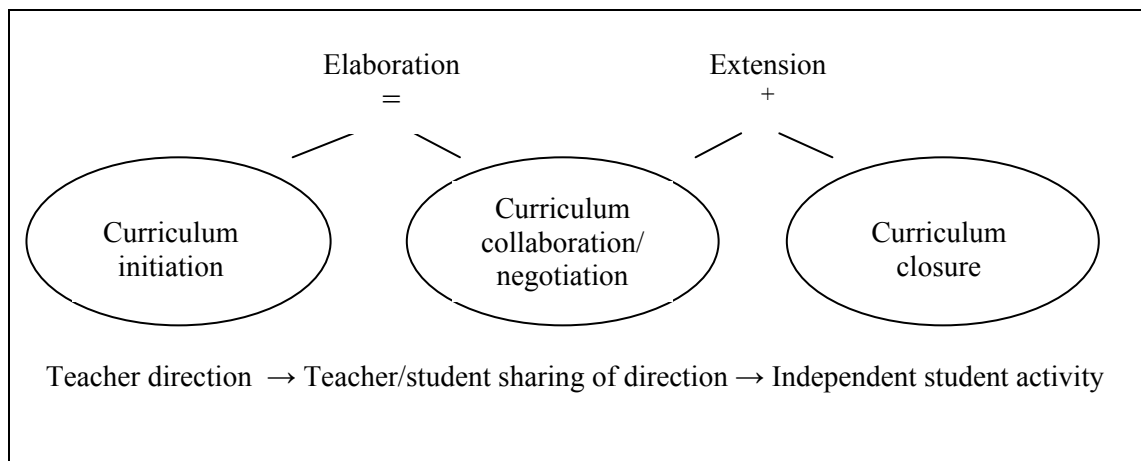
The transcriptions of interviews and classroom interactions were saved into *NVivo* for analysis. *NVivo* served as a useful basis for the analysis as data could easily be coded, categorised and retrieved. *Word* tables were also useful, however, in facilitating analysis of the macrogenres and genres, as was the concept mapping tool, *Inspiration*.

3.4.1 Analytical tools: Curriculum macrogenres

In order to capture a complete picture of each of the three teaching-learning environments, it was important to map the unfolding nature of events in each setting. The tool that I chose for this purpose was the construct of curriculum macrogenres (Christie, 2002). Christie defines curriculum genres and macrogenres as ‘staged, goal-driven activities, devoted to the accomplishment of significant educational ends’ (2002, p.22).

Classroom genres are complete units of work, each with a defined beginning, middle and end. Genres are nested within macrogenres, which may span several lessons, weeks or even an entire semester. The over-arching macrogenre also has an initiation, a middle and a closure (see Figure 4). The middle section comprises a sequence of genres which may be organised in a linear fashion, leading hierarchically towards an ultimate goal; or in an orbital fashion, with each genre instantiation connected to the ultimate goal though not necessarily in a sequential order. Often the middle genres are recursive in nature, so that students learn what is expected of them and fall into the expected roles with little introduction. In particular, Christie identifies ‘task collaboration’, in which students work either individually or collaboratively on tasks, and ‘task negotiation’, in which the teacher takes a leading role working with the class as a whole, as prototypical genres (see also Sharpe, 2004). Christie stresses that it is essential to analyse the entire macrogenre, though it may only be possible to present selected samples, as it is only with a complete picture of the teaching-learning cycle that judgements can be made (p.23).

Figure 4: Prototypical model of a curriculum macrogenre



(Source: Christie, 2002, p.100)

Christie, strongly influenced by the work of Bernstein (2000), distinguishes two registers of teacher talk: regulative discourse and instructional discourse. Regulative discourse concerns the process of running a classroom: organising activities, establishing classroom behavioural norms, calling on students to participate and so on. Instructional discourse concerns the content of what is being taught: for example,

explaining concepts, modelling language use, and asking content questions. Christie (2002, p.25) suggests that the regulative register *projects* the instructional, and that:

a successful classroom discourse will be one in which the regulative register appropriates or speaks through the instructional register, functioning in such a way that a form of 'regulation' occurs, in the sense that Bernstein intended. Such regulation, working through the authority which is invested in the regulative register, operates to position pedagogic subjects to address questions and/or to reason in particular ways, or to adopt certain values and/or habits of working. (Christie, 2002, p.173)

In this study, the macrogenres of each learning environment were identified as a starting point for analysis. Then instances of particular nested genres were selected from each setting and their stages defined in order to derive a finer platform for more detailed analysis.

3.4.2 Analytical tools: Activity Theory

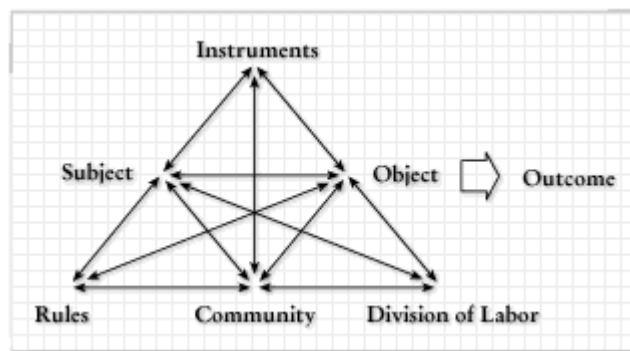
Having mapped the overall shape of learning activity in the three settings, as well as the stages of some selected classroom genres from each setting, a second level of analysis was needed to explore the detailed relationships between elements of the learning environment in order to answer the first limb of the research question for his study: **What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**

The heuristic tool chosen for this level of analysis, as proposed by van Lier (2004) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006), was Engeström's third generation Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999). As an external tool to frame the analysis, Activity Theory provided an 'etic' tool through which to construct 'emic' descriptions. As van Lier (2004, p.195) proposes, 'Ideally *etic* tools and *emic* sensitivity should go hand in hand in contextualised research.'

Activity Theory originates from the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky and was substantially developed later by Leont'ev. More recently, Engeström (1999) has

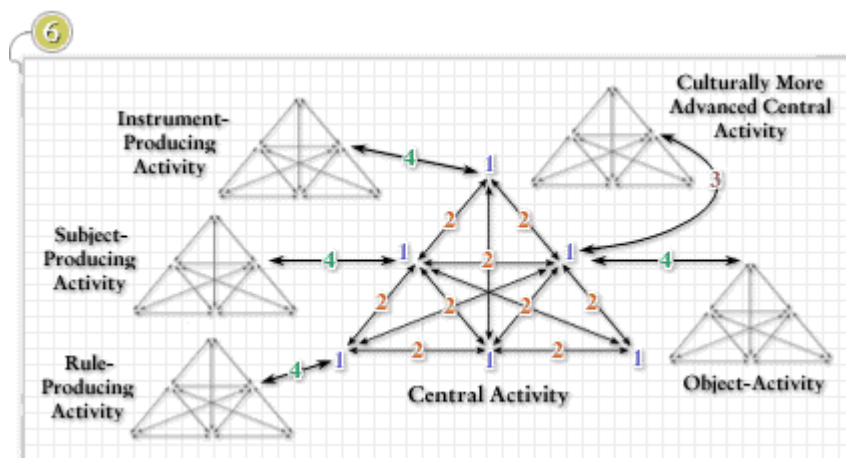
elaborated the theory, proposing a triangular diagram of the model (see Figure 5) which represents the complex interactions between the disparate elements of activity systems: the participants (or subjects); their goals; the social conventions or rules of interaction between them; the roles taken by different members of the community; and the semiotic and material tools which they put to use. Engeström (1999, p.9) defines activity systems as ‘object-oriented, collective and culturally-mediated human activity’. The activity system itself comprises a longitudinal, bounded system in which participants (subjects) are working towards long-term goals, often by means of producing intermediary objects which provide the motivating force for activity (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004b, p.3).

Figure 5: Engeström’s model of Activity Theory



Source: (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a)

Figure 6: Four levels of contradiction within activity systems



Source: (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a)

Activity systems are highly complex, heterogeneous and multivoiced. They are constantly in flux: participants come and go; goals change; new mediational tools are introduced; the community builds cohesion or tensions. In addition, although activity systems have boundaries, these boundaries may be permeable. Systems are jostled and impinged upon by other external systems, as represented in Figure 6. All of these interactions, or contradictions, between elements both within the activity system and externally between neighbouring systems afford opportunities for change and development.

Engeström (1999) claims that Activity Theory provides an effective means of investigating causation within the social sciences. He points out that linear, monocausal explanations of social development are inadequate to explain the dynamic and interconnected multiple sources of change and development in society. In contrast, Activity Theory brings into play the complex interaction between individuals and communities, the tools and instruments which they use to act on their environment, the cultural norms of behaviour and interaction within the community, and the goals and objects to which they aspire. For this reason, Activity Theory provides an appropriate hermeneutic tool for ecological research.

In terms of attending to text, it was necessary to identify features of discourse which would indicate that students had listened attentively to the voice(s) of the texts, in Bakhtin's sense of voice as 'the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness' (Wertsch, 1991, p.51): that they had 'understood' the propositions of the sources. An important indicator was the students' ability to select, paraphrase and summarise propositions showing an empathetic appreciation of the author's point of view. In some cases, students paraphrased isolated propositions well, but failed to summarise the overall idea effectively where it was appropriate to do so. In others, students relied too heavily on quoting rather than summarising, simply repeating the words of the source rather than demonstrating an understanding. A problem which could not be resolved effectively was the degree to which students' lack of language resources inhibited them from expressing their understandings of the sources.

Activity Theory is particularly pertinent as a heuristic for understanding learning in educational settings. We learn through interaction with others in social settings, using

culturally derived, mediational artefacts. According to Cole (1999, p. 89), such tools may be primary artefacts, such as computers, hammers, pen and paper; secondary artefacts, which are semiotic systems like language or painting representing the natural and social world; or tertiary artefacts, that is ‘ways of seeing the world’, theories and imagination. These tools allow us to act on and in the natural and social world; they also shape the way we interact in and interpret the world, and influence the goals and purposes that motivate our participation. They constitute ‘affordances’ for action and development (van Lier, 2004).

Table 7: Hierarchy of tasks in a language learning activity system

Level of analysis	Unit of analysis	Oriented towards	Carried out by	Examples
ACTIVITY	Activity system	Outcomes Transformation: ie. enhanced participation in target language events	Community of learners	An EAP course, a summer camp, a university course, a workshop
ACTION	Macrotasks	Goals Production of substantial objects with specific communicative purposes	Group or individual	Create a poster, radio broadcast, website, class magazine Write a research essay
	Mesotasks	Goals Participation in short-term communicative events In-class or homework	Group or individual	Write paragraphs or short essay; Read a newspaper article and discuss it; Perform a role-play
	Mini-tasks/ exercises	Goals To automatise linguistic routines Little or no communicative content	Group or individual	Drills, classroom routines. Comprehension exercises
OPERATION	Linguistic routines	To practice already automated linguistic routines	Individual	Use of language chunks, instantiations of wordings

(Adapted from: Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a, p.4; Engeström, 1999; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.217; Leont'ev, 1981))

In addition, Activity Theory accounts for the essential element of motivation within learning contexts. Leont'ev, developing on Vygotsky's work, focused particularly on the object-oriented nature of human activity, emphasising that all human activity is driven or energised by motive (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006 p.218). Leont'ev distinguished between activities, actions and operations (see Table 7). Activities take place at the ‘macro-level’ of human collaborative activity: in tertiary education

settings this could be a university subject, a course or even a discipline, depending on the perspective of the analysis. Activities are made up of many discrete, but interconnected actions: for example, specific tasks. While activities are directed towards broad transformational objectives—becoming a fluent speaker of Chinese, for example—actions have more immediate, concrete and specific goals: for example, an educational goal could be task completion, a test, the production of a website, or a written essay. Traditionally, in educational settings many of these actions have been carried out by individuals working within the social context of a classroom. More recently, however, collaborative work both in-class and out of class has become increasingly common. Particularly in language teaching contexts, the interest in communicative language teaching has fostered the use of highly interactive teaching methodologies (see, for example: Harmer, 1991; Hedge, 2000) which involve learners in group action as well as individual action. Operations, which are carried out by individuals, occur within actions and are performed more or less automatically or habitually. In terms of language learning, performing grammar exercises or producing pre-fabricated chunks of language in a conversation could be regarded as occurring at this operational level. Clearly, the levels in Leont'ev's hierarchy of activity cannot be regarded as discrete and inflexible. As Lantolf and Thorne point out:

Human activity exhibits constant transformations and is inherently unstable. Though there is a definite structural bent to Leont'ev's version of Activity Theory, he repeatedly argues for the plasticity of the activity-action-operation hierarchy and is quick to point out that this macro-structure system [activity-action-operation] is not meant to balkanise activity into discrete elements.
(Lantolf & Thorne, 2006 p. 220)

The distribution of labour, that is, the distributed roles within activity systems, as well as the rules or conventions of behaviour, are also key elements contributing to the achievement of goals and objects: who does what and with what authority, who speaks/acts and when, who uses the available tools and how. However, Engeström constantly emphasises the dynamic nature of activity systems. The participants' roles and practices are constantly developing and shifting as they acquire new ways of interacting with each other and with the tools in their environment. The tools themselves are being developed and modified through use by community members.

In many ways, activity systems are similar to Bourdieu's notion of social 'habitus' (Collins, 1993). For Bourdieu, individuals act and react in certain ways according to sets of dispositions which are derived from the social settings which they inhabit. Such social practices may be powerfully normative without being consciously rule-bound. They are, according to Thompson (cited in Gutierrez and Stone 2000, p 156) 'inculcated, structured, durable, generative and transposable'. In other words, when individuals move into new learning contexts, their tendency is to take with them the practices of their Primary Discourse (Gee, 1990). Collins (1993) points out that social structures, such as activity systems, are not givens, but 'ways of seeing' which shape individuals' outlooks in powerful ways. As Donato (2000) explains, participants in an activity system may bring conflicting expectations of the goals and outcomes they are expecting to achieve. In addition, learners who are working from a different social habitus are also likely to have different perceptions of the distributed roles of the learning environment, the tools with which they are working and the social and linguistic conventions implied. They may be working from an entirely 'different song sheet'. As Gutierrez and Stone (2000 p.151) point out, 'social settings are not discretely circumscribed phenomena but instead occur as a part of laminated, overlapped, and interwoven social phenomena that occur in the moment and across time and space'. The ensuing contradictions can be a site of pain and alienation, but also a site of learning. One of the main goals of EAP is to enable international students to make the transition into new social settings as smoothly and productively as possible: acquiring the ability to practice within the social conventions of the discourse communities to which they aspire; making effective use of the mediational tools available to them; and understanding the roles that they will be expected to fulfil within the academic community.

The multivocal nature of activity systems is one of Engeström's main concerns. The heterogeneous nature of an EAP classroom, in particular, brings a multiplicity of cultural and idiocultural voices and perspectives to the communal activity. Within the activity system of an EAP classroom, every subject will bring their own motives and expectations, contributing to the contradictions within the system and to the unfolding actions and activity. To account for the interaction between individual subject and the

collective nature of activity systems, Engeström stresses that the analyst must view the system from multiple perspectives:

The activity system as a unit of analysis calls for complementarity of the system view and the subject's view. The analyst constructs the activity system as if looking at it from above. At the same time, the analyst must select a subject, a member (or better yet, multiple different members) of the local activity, through whose eyes and interpretations the activity is constructed. This dialectic between the systemic and subjective-partisan views brings the researcher into a dialogical relationship with the local activity under investigation. The study of an activity system becomes a collective, multivoiced construction of its past, present and future zones of proximal development. (Engeström, 1999 p. 10)

Some authors have claimed that subjects may be involved in different activities if their motivation is different. Roebuck (2000, p.79) takes this claim further by suggesting that ‘subjects involved in the same task are necessarily involved in different activity, since they bring to the task their unique histories, goals, and capacities.’ If teachers try to impose uniformity of task performance on students they are denying individual agency and thus treating students as objects to be transformed, rather than as subjects participating in shaping their own learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.239).

Activity Theory, then, can provide a productive lens through which to view learning in social contexts. From an Activity Theory perspective, learning is made visible in developing participation, as individuals resolve contradictions within the activity system. As shown in Figure 5, the tensions or juxtaposition between elements in the system create contradictions which enable (or constrain) development. Engeström (1999 p.3) refers to development in Marxist terms as ‘revolutionary practice’, rather than using the capitalist metaphors often used to describe learning: the ‘accumulation’ or ‘acquisition’ of knowledge and skills. In his definition of learning, Wells (2002) includes enhanced understanding as well as more advanced practice. However, it can be argued that ‘understanding’ is only apparent in action; that is, learning is made evident through transformed practice. Donato (2000 p.41) in discussing the interaction in three foreign language classrooms shows how ‘learning was made

visible through the increasing participation and emergent communication of these learners with their teachers and each other’.

It is important to note that participation in activity systems does not necessarily lead to transformation: participants may be resistant to change, unable to resolve contradictions, or may use their power to exclude others from active participation (Wells, 2002 p.42). Thus the outcome may be stagnation and alienation. Similarly, Nakahama, Tyler and van Lier (2001, cited in van Lier, 2004:162) demonstrate that tasks can limit participation as well as facilitate it; they found that a communication gap task led to less productive and less complex language use than general conversation. In other words, the task constrained rather than promoted learning.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.233) also point out that development and enhanced repertoires contribute to the development of new social identities and roles, which can in turn impact on the activity system. Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.222) believe this aspect of Engeström’s model to be under-theorised, although recent research by Ivanič (1997), Norton (2000), and Janks (2002), for example, has begun to explore notions of emerging learner identities in literacy development (see Chapter 2.3.7).

Engeström differentiates the view of learning within Activity Theory from its cousins in theories of socioculturally mediated action (eg. Wertsch, 2000) and legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991). While Activity Theory emphasises the collective nature of learning communities, Wertsch focuses on sign-mediated action at the level of the individual. On the other hand, although Lave and Wenger’s theory of legitimate peripheral participation, focusing on the community of practice as the unit of analysis, acknowledges the social nature of learning, Engeström (1999 p. 12) criticises this model as ‘primarily a one-way movement from the periphery, occupied by novices, to the center, inhabited by experienced masters of the given practice’. In contrast, Activity Theory recognises the interplay and tension between all elements of the system as contributing to learning and development.

To sum up, the major contribution of Activity Theory in learning contexts is its acknowledgement that learning is affected not just by mediational tools, or by the teacher’s actions and beliefs, but by the totality of affordances in the learning environment. Engeström’s triangulated diagrams offer a useful heuristic for

understanding activity systems although they do not adequately represent the constantly changing and multivoiced nature of activity systems. Learning and development, which can be understood as individuals' developing practices and identities, is promoted or constrained by the dynamic interplay of internal and external contradictions between the diverse elements of the activity system.

3.4.3 Analytical tools: band descriptors for assessing critical reading practices

The tools of curriculum macrogenre analysis and Activity Theory described in the previous sections provided a strong framework of analysis of the nature of learning environments under investigation in this study, in answer to the first limb of the research question:

- 1. What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**

However, further tools were required to answer the second limb of the research question:

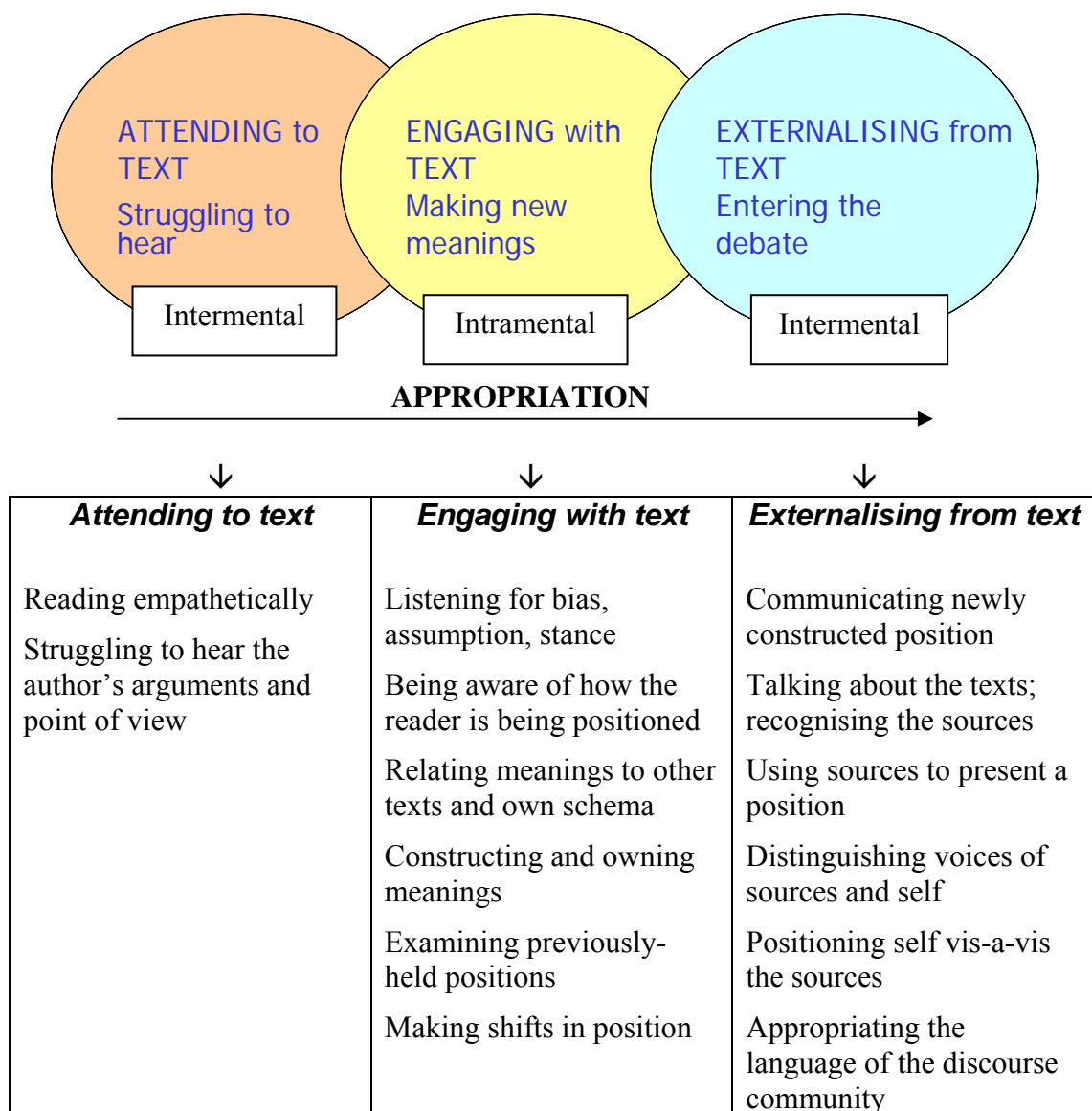
- 2. What is the evidence of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?**

The problem of identifying the students' emerging critical reading practices was perhaps the most challenging issue to resolve in this study. Previous measures of reading could not be applied readily to the sociocultural definition of critical reading developed in this thesis (see Chapter 2.2.3) and represented in the dialogic model of critical reading in Figure 2 (shown again here for ease of reference in Figure 7).

Under earlier approaches to reading pedagogy, assessment techniques included identifying or recalling main ideas and supporting propositions; completing summaries; matching paraphrases with the original text; cloze tests; translating into L1; and comprehension questions (Alderson, 2000; Nuttall, 2005). Such quantitative techniques, however, only address the 'attending' zone of the critical reading model proposed in Chapter 2. Think aloud protocols have been used to elicit information about cognitive reading strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1987), but were not appropriate

as a form of analysis in this ethnographic-ecological study, as the test-like nature of conducting such protocols does not represent an authentic pedagogic context. Other sociocultural researchers in critical reading, such as Wallace (2003), have been wary of assessing their students' development.

Figure 7: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP



In the absence of other appropriate assessment tools, then, I sought behavioural indicators of the students' participation in reading practices from within the naturalistic setting of the study. As Platt and Brooks (2002), point out, behavioural indicators are always indirect measures of cognition, but as yet they offer the only insights into internal activity. The students' in-class discussions offered one window into their reading practices, especially at the level of microgenesis (moment –to-moment development – see Chapter 2.1.3b). However, their text-responsible writing was the most tangible form of evidence and gave greater understanding of the students' ontogenetic development (longitudinal development) (Vygotsky, 1978).

For this reason, a set of band descriptors was developed as a qualitative assessment tool to assess students' emerging critical reading practices through the medium of their written texts (see Table 8). In developing and applying the band descriptors, care was taken to focus on indicators of the students' participation in reading, rather than their knowledge and practice of writing conventions. Although reading, writing and critical thinking are all intimately entwined in text-responsible academic writing, this study attempted to distil out indicators of reading practices, in contrast to, but informed by, the many studies which analyse students' writing practices (such as: Hood, 2006; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Hyland & Milton, 1997). Details of referencing conventions (eg Harvard vs APA) and poor sentence-level grammar were not included as criteria. However, features of coherence and cohesion, such as paragraphing, were used in order to indicate, for example, whether students were simply juxtaposing sources rather than synthesising (ie. relating the sources to each other and to their own previously held positions). Other coherence markers, such as conjunctive adverbs, anaphora, and lexical cohesion, also played a part in analysing students' texts as an indicator of critical reading practices, as they provided indicators of the student's understanding of, and ability to control and critique, propositions and stance in the source texts.

Engaging with text was the most difficult zone of critical reading to assess, as this zone entails intramental activity which is not necessarily made evident through overt behaviour. Two indicators were applied: evidence of synthesis and evidence of critique. Some students were able to draw together propositions from different sources and relate them to their own logically developed argument. Many students,

however, merely juxtaposed ideas from different sources with little attempt to make links between the ideas, commonly using the one paragraph-one source pattern of development. In terms of critique, it was not expected that students would necessarily refute propositions from the sources, but that they would use them analytically to contribute to their argument. Engaging with text was more easily assessed through observation of in-class behaviour, as it was possible to assess how students were reacting to the texts through their level of participation in classroom activity. The interviews and the questionnaire at Sandstone College also contributed useful insights.

Table 8: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse

BAND	Zone of critical reading		
	Attending	Engaging	Externalising
Excellent 4	Shows detailed understanding of source texts: summarises/paraphrases clearly and empathetically	Synthesises effectively Demonstrates a critical stance (eg listening for bias, questioning assumptions, questioning evidence or argument)	Presents an ‘owned’ position in relation to the sources. Refers to the sources appropriately, distinguishing own voice and the multiple voices of the sources. Appropriates language of the ‘field’.
Good 3	Shows some understanding of source texts; summarises/paraphrases but with some inaccuracies. Does not appreciate the author’s position	Juxtaposes but does not synthesise effectively Little critical awareness.	Presents a position but without strong justification Tends to plagiphastic writing; frequently uses lexical bundles from the source texts. Voices of texts dominate and may not be clearly distinguished
Reasonable 2	Little understanding of source texts demonstrated. Simply repeats the sources. Some misunderstandings evident.	Does not relate the sources to each other No critical awareness shown	Plagiphased: Copies whole clauses or sentences. Own voice not evident Refers to sources but does not develop a coherent position OR Own voice evident with little use made of sources
Poor 1	Many misunderstandings and/or no evidence of understanding	No evidence of engagement	Plagiarised: Repeats strings of sentences OR the reader is unable to make sense of the answer.

In terms of externalising, a key indicator of critical reading was taken to be the extent to which the student was able to distinguish the ‘voices’ of the source texts and to position him/herself vis-à-vis these texts. The interpenetration of multiple voices in academic writing is highly complex, and needs much more elaboration in the L2 literature. Ivanic (1997, p.25-26), merging Bakhtin’s definition of voice as ‘the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness’ (Wertsch, 1991, p.51) with Goffman’s theory of self-representation, identified two aspects of voice: ‘the discursual voice’ (who/ what do I want to sound like) and the ‘self as author’ in the sense of the writer’s position, opinions and beliefs. In academic writing, as in many other genres, students need to negotiate this dual territory cautiously, giving due deference to the dominant voices of the discipline community, while at the same time making clear their own position. I have used the term ‘critical appropriation’ to indicate this negotiation of territory between the voices of the text and the student’s own voice in text-responsible writing. Features of the students’ texts which indicated their ability to critically appropriate text included the use of:

- a. explicit citations (both integral¹ and non-integral) distinguishing ideas as derived from a particular source
- b. transition markers distinguishing one writer’s voice from another
- c. evaluative language indicating the student’s opinion of the source text, such as evaluative reporting verbs (eg. claims, distorts); adverbial or adjectival phrases (interestingly, correctly, another very important point); and clauses overtly demonstrating the student’s position vis-à-vis the texts (eg ‘and I agree’) (Hood, 2006; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Hyland, 2002)
- d. Statements of personal opinion (for example, ‘in my opinion’, ‘I will argue that...’)
- e. Unattributed statements which do not derive from the source texts, and were therefore taken to be the student’s own opinion

¹ The term ‘integral’ is borrowed from Hyland (2002) to refer to in-text citations where the name of the author is foregrounded as an integral part of the grammar of the sentence, as opposed to ‘non-integral’ citations where the author’s name is inserted in brackets or as a footnote.

- f. Appropriation of the language of the discourse community while avoiding plagiarism.

Negative evidence included plagiphastic writing (Whitaker, 1993; Wilson, 1997) in which the student echoed large chunks from the source texts, and poorly developed argument, suggesting that the student had been unable to develop his/her own logical position in relation to the topic and the sources.

To illustrate how the band descriptors were applied, some brief examples of the students' texts are shown here. These examples are paragraphs drawn from the final exam in the Newgate College data. In this exam, the students were given three short source texts on the topic of plagiarism which they were required to use in writing their own essay on the topic: *Can plagiarism ever be justified, particularly in the university environment? Discuss.* The students' texts are reproduced as faithfully as possible, including the original punctuation and spelling. The extracts are not necessarily representative of the student's entire essay, and the bandscore here is shown for that particular extract, not for the assignment overall.

Example 1:

Although plagiarism should not be tolerant in university, it still happen in each piece of students' work. Let's exam what kind of reasons cause students to plagiarise. In the research (Why do students plagiarise 2004) shows many examples of reasons why students might plagiarise.

The first reason is bad time management skills which is means , the students left their work to the last minute; so that they don't have enough time to complete an assignment. Nevertheless, this is not the strong excuse for student to plagiarise. Every student should have the ability to complete their work by themselves on time if they want to graduate from the university. If the students only can pass the subjects by plagiarise, that means it's not the student's pass the subjects, that the information which is cheated by the students pass the subjects. As a university student, they should learn how to manage their time and how to develop their skill to pass the subjects not through plagiarise to pass. [NGC_Carol_ Final exam p.2]

Attending: 4 Engaging: 3.5 Externalising: 4

Attending: Although the idea here is very simple (that some students plagiarise because they run out of time to write their essay), Carol explains the idea by paraphrasing from the source, but also by appropriating the expression ‘leave it to the last minute’.

Engaging: She then goes on to critique this idea, explaining why this is not a valid excuse for plagiarising, but she does not take the opportunity to synthesise from one of the other given source texts which made the same point.

Externalising: The point she makes here contributes logically to the argument that she builds through her essay: that plagiarism can never be justified. Although the source text was answering another question (‘What are the causes of plagiarism?’), Carol has been able to take the point and make it serve the purpose of her own essay. Her use of the conjunctive adjunct ‘nevertheless’ functions as a connector between her summary of the source text and her own comment on that text, clearly distinguishing between her voice and the voice of the source text.

Example 2:

Writing a proper essay and well organised ideas is more important than referencing the ideas, these ideas might not be the author who wrote the book, he might stole them from someone else without anyone knowing. Therefore it is “clear that the significance of an idea and where it came from are separate” (Riegle, R.P. n.d. May 19, 2006). Chen, L said students who plagiarise will invite faculty and future employers to question their integrity and work ethics, while Riegle, R.P saw the employers are intrested in results, not the foot-note or in-text citations and that’s true. [NGC_Hussein_Final exam, p. 6]

Attending: 3 Engaging: 3.5 Externalising: 3

Attending: The references to Riegle and to Chen both appear to demonstrate a good understanding of the original texts as they are coherently incorporated into an argument. However, the underlined sentences are taken directly from the sources with no attempt to paraphrase.

Engaging: Hussein took the courageous stance of arguing that plagiarism should be condoned. He makes two points: first, the idea itself is more important than its source; second, that employers are more interested in the idea than in where it came from. In doing so, he synthesises opposing points of view from Chen and Riegler using the connector ‘while’. However, despite the connectors ‘while’ and ‘therefore’, the ideas seem to be patched together – juxtaposed rather than synthesised.

Externalising: The paragraph contributes to a clearly positioned answer to the essay question in which the student presents a reasoned, ‘owned’ position in relation to the sources, albeit somewhat awkwardly. However, the writing tends to be ‘plagiaristic’; that is, it relies heavily on wordings from the sources with little connection between one idea and the next. For example, the student juxtaposes but does not explicitly make the link between the first proposition in the extract (propositions may not have originated from the source being used) and the second proposition (that employers are more interested in the idea than its source). The voices of the sources are distinguished from the student’s voice by the use of in-text citations, and also by the sudden change in level of formality: ‘that’s true’. However, this inability to control the academic style suggests that the student has not yet fully ‘appropriated’ the language of the discourse community.

Example 3:

There is a world-wide web which gives the all the knowledge about the world. This is called Infosphere, which knowledge has been stored virtually. This Inforspre has both positive and negative factors. For example terrorists or other bad people can use internet in terrorism and other bad purposes. [NGC_Amar_Final exam, p.3]

Attending: 1 Engaging: 1 Externalising: 1

Attending: Although the student has used one of the source texts, his attempts at paraphrasing (eg sentence 1) suggest that he has not properly understood the source, which was in fact arguing that students have to learn how to access information on the internet.

Engaging: The paragraph is unrelated to the other paragraphs or ideas in the essay, and does not contribute to answering the question. No critical analysis is evident.

Externalising: The third sentence is copied exactly and the others are only slightly adapted from the original. No references are given, so it is impossible to distinguish the student's voice from the source.

3.5 Summary of the methodology

The research methodology in this thesis uses an ethnographic-ecological approach to explore and analyse the teaching of critical reading in three contrasting EAP settings, based on the premise that learning occurs not just IN activity but THROUGH participation in activity (Lantolf & Thorne, p.215). The data comprised transcripts and observations of classes on a longitudinal basis over the course of a module or semester in each setting; interviews with teachers and students; examples of the students' written work; and the paper-based tools used in the activity.

The data analysis used three levels of analysis:

1. identification of the curriculum macrogenres and genres to gain an overall map of the activity
2. analysis of the activity systems at the level of macrogenre and genre using Activity Theory
3. detailed analysis of students' development as seen through their written work, classroom interaction and interviews.

The first two levels of analysis aimed to answer the first limb of the research question: **What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**

The third level of analysis aimed to answer the second limb of the research question: **What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?**

These two questions will be addressed in the next two chapters respectively (Chapters 4 and 5). In Chapter 6, I will address the third limb of the research question: **Did the affordances available in the three settings contribute to students' emergent practice of critical reading? And if so, how?**

Finally, Chapter 7 will address the fourth limb of the research question: **What implications can be drawn about the nature of effective learning environments for fostering critical reading in EAP?**

Chapter Four: Activity in three EAP learning environments

The aim of this chapter is to answer the first limb of the research question: **What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**

Each learning environment is considered in turn: Sandstone College; Newgate College; and City College. Considering the similar level and pragmatic goals of the students in the three environments, the chapter draws out some surprising differences. Each environment expresses a rather different approach to curriculum, different teacher-student roles, and different understandings of critical reading.

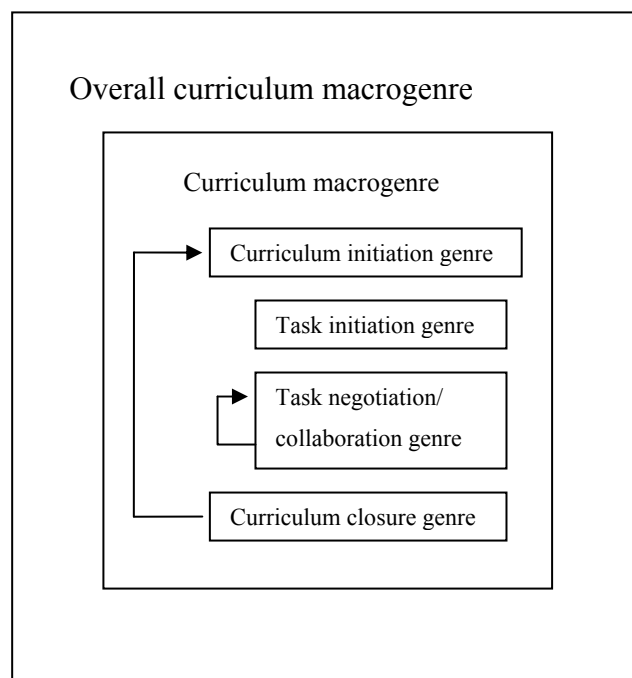
The chapter uses two tools, as described in the previous chapter, in order to build a rich and deep description of the ecology of the three learning environments. The first tool follows Christie's (2002) theory of curriculum macrogenres. This tool provides a means of 'zooming in' (Sharpe, 2004, p.269) from the overall map of the curriculum, down to the macrogenres of specific section(s) of the activity, and finally down to the detailed picture of nested and recursive curriculum genres. This 'Russian Doll' approach provides a way of understanding how the discrete segments of each activity system correlate longitudinally with each other (see Figure 8).

Secondly, Engeström's third generation Activity Theory is used to understand the inter-relationships between constituent elements within each of the three activity systems: the overall motives for the activity as perceived by the various participants; the short-term product objectives of the activity; the distributed roles and patterns of behaviour of the participants as their community forms and reforms; and the tools that were used as the basis of action. It is through this analysis that I endeavour to create a

rich description of the activity system which existed in each of the three environments that were observed for this study. Finally, the description of each activity system focuses in on the contradictions inherent in the system which can provide the basis, according to Engeström (1999, p.9), for transformative learning.

Each section concludes with a summary of how critical reading is understood by the participants in the learning environment.

Figure 8: The ‘Russian dolls’ of curriculum macrogenres and genres



In the subsequent chapter, Chapter 5, I will examine more closely the evidence of students’ developing practice of critical reading in each of the three learning environments, seeking to understand this development at both the microgenetic (moment-to-moment) level and the ontogenetic level (development over time) (Vygotsky, 1978).

4.1 Sandstone College

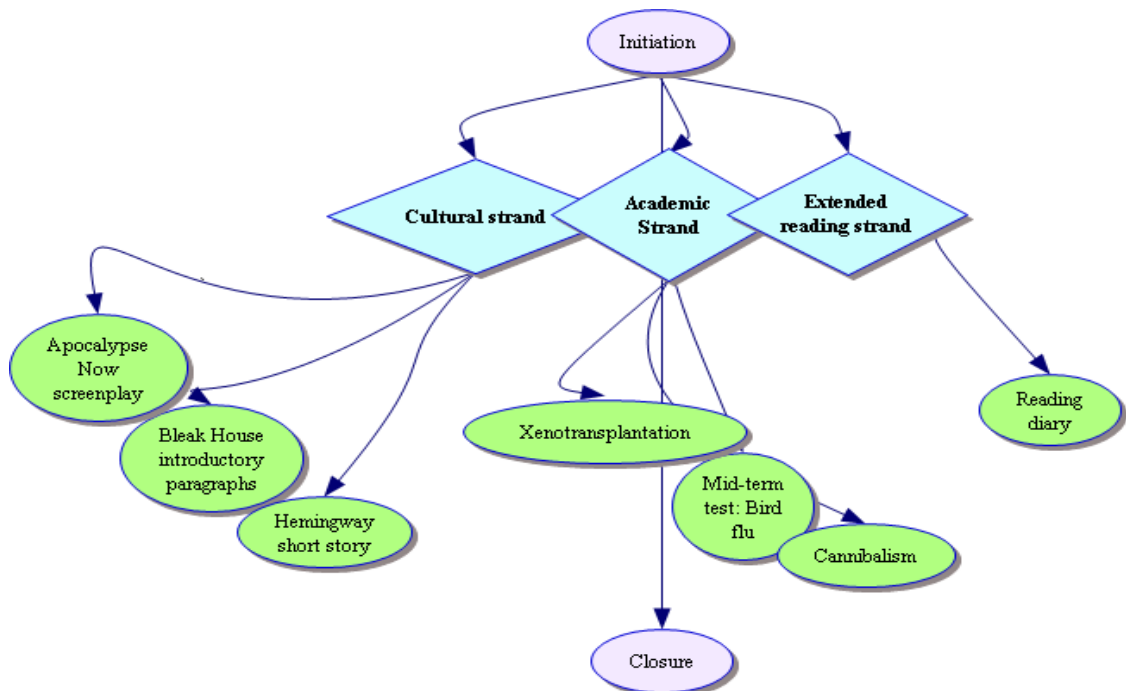
As described in Chapter 3, Sandstone College is an independent ELICOS College associated with a prestigious university, set in pleasant, leafy surroundings. The 12 students, including 8 women, were all from East Asia, and the majority were

intending to go on to university study. Fifty percent of the class had already had at least two years of undergraduate study in their own country. The teacher, Mark, had a PhD in Cultural Studies, but little formal training in TESOL.

4.1.1 Sandstone College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres

The reading classes conducted by Mark at Sandstone College formed a sub-component of the overall curriculum for the five-week module. The main component of the curriculum focused around the core textbook: *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* (Soars & Soars, 2005) and was taught by Mark's colleague, Kirsten. Mark, as the reading teacher, was asked to teach the group only twice a week: a two-hour class in academic reading, and a one-hour class in 'Wider Reading'. The curriculum macrogenre for these reading classes had an 'orbital' structure (Christie, 2002) consisting of a non-sequential series of instantiations of reading activities which can be clustered under three separate strands: cultural reading, academic reading and extended reading. Each instantiation of cultural and academic reading focused on a particular text (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Sandstone College overall curriculum macrogenre



4.1.1a The reading diary macrogenre

I will first briefly describe the reading diary macrogenre (see Figure 10) which began with the curriculum initiation genre: Mark explained the task and distributed a proforma to the students to use for their reading diary. Mark explained that his aim in asking the students to produce a reading diary was to encourage the students **to read widely** in a range of genres, and **to read for pleasure** in whatever areas interested them. He encouraged the students to record examples of anything they read, be it shop signs, women's magazines, websites, junk mail, novels or newspapers. His stipulation was that they should record a comment about the text – what interested them, amused them, puzzled them, attracted them to the text, and so on. In this way, the task emphasised the students' interaction with texts, unlike Day and Bamford's (1998, p.87) view of a reading diary as simply a way of recording the length of time spent reading.

The second stage of the macrogenre, task collaboration, called for the students to:

- identify texts that they wanted to read,
- read them (or at least skim them)
- write a comment on the proforma.

Mark checked the students' reading diaries in class sporadically, at times when the class was involved in groupwork and he could go around and talk to students individually, making comments which showed an interest in each student's cognitive or affective response to the texts, as well as to the quantity of their reading. For example:

(Students working in pairs on another task. Mark circulates looking at students' diaries)

Mark: (to Annie) You reading Titanic? From downstairs (the Resource Centre)? Have you seen the movie?

Annie: Yeah.

Mark: (Chuckles and sings theme tune.) Is it better than the movie?

Annie: The movie is better.

(Mark moves on to next student)

Mark: (to Lili) Women's Day? You're reading lots of articles. What sort of articles?

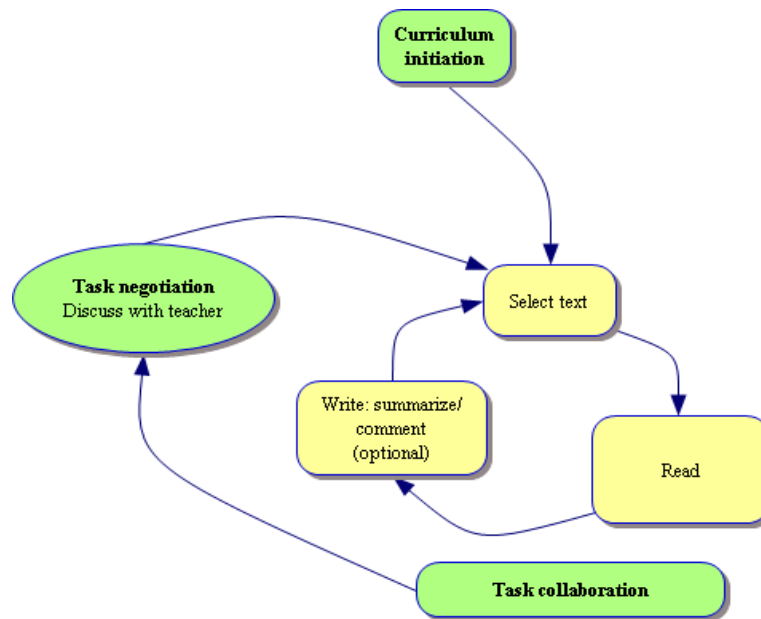
Lili: Brad Pitt, dieting.

Mark: You don't need to diet!

Lili: (laughs) [SC_02_21_1.4]

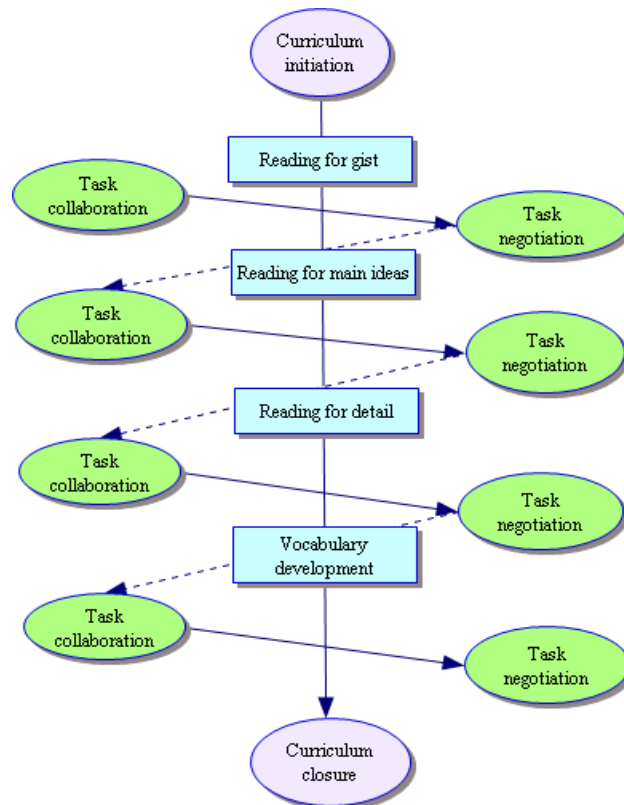
While Mark insisted that the students bring their reading diaries to class, his jovial, 'chatty' (Nuttall, 2005) comments were consistent with the goal of this macrogenre: 'read widely' and 'read for pleasure'.

Figure 10: Reading diary macrogenre



4.1.1b The macrogenres of the cultural and academic strands

Both the cultural and academic macrogenres had similar stages, and both aimed broadly to help the students develop their ability to read in English. However, while the cultural strand, according to Mark, aimed to expose students to a wide variety of genres and writing styles in order to increase their aesthetic appreciation of English as a cultural medium, the academic strand had two distinct aims. On one hand, it aimed to prepare students for the long-term goal of participating in academic study, but more immediately it focused on the mid-term goal of achieving the required IELTS score.

Figure 11: Macrogenre of academic and cultural curriculum strands

Both strands followed the same pattern of stages, represented in Figure 11, with each iteration of the macrogenre focussing on a particular text (see Table 9). The macrogenres usually spanned several classes, and sometimes overlapped chronologically if there was homework to be checked. Each iteration began with a **curriculum initiation** phase in which the teacher introduced the text: either by engaging students in a preliminary discussion of the topic in the academic strand, or by explaining the authorial context of the text in the cultural strand. Students then skimmed through the text independently, looking, as Mark said, for the *gist*. The next phase of the macrogenre, **task collaboration-task negotiation**, comprised a recursive iteration of short tasks. Each task consisted of comprehension questions of various forms on a task worksheet: students usually attempted these independently at first, either at home or in class, and then discussed their answers in pairs: **task collaboration**. A reporting phase followed, in which the teacher called on individual students by name to give the answer to each question. Often this consisted of simply calling out the number of the multiple choice answer which they had selected. If the student's answer was incorrect, the teacher called for alternative answers, but rarely

gave explanations as to why an answer was incorrect. This is represented in Figure 11 as the **task negotiation** genre. Curriculum closure was signalled by completion of all the tasks and moving on to the next instantiation of the macrogenre.

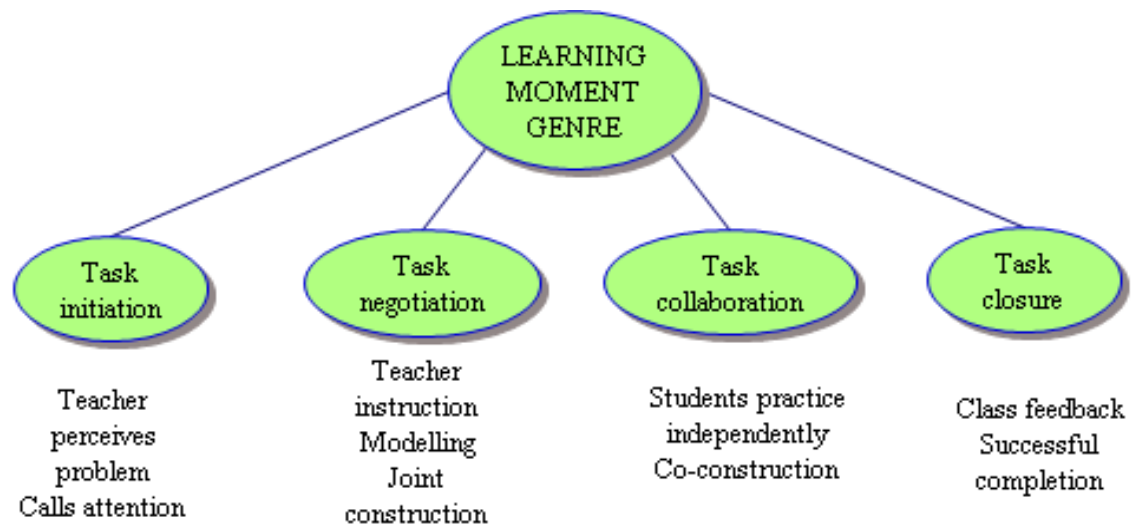
Each instantiation of the curriculum macrogenre, in both the academic and cultural strands centred around a particular text, chosen by Mark. The texts were presented on a worksheet, accompanied by a set of tasks. The majority of these tasks followed patterns taken from the IELTS testing format: beginning with reading for main ideas, progressing to more detailed understanding and then to matching vocabulary items with synonyms (see Meyer's (1984) hierarchy of propositions presented in Chapter 2). In each case a final, more open task concluded the macrogenre: writing a summary in the case of the academic texts, or a more creative exercise for the cultural texts such as rewriting in a different genre. The texts and task types are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Sandstone College texts and task types

	Cultural strand	Academic strand
Text 1	Opening scene of the <i>Apocalypse Now</i> screenplay	Two 400-500 word texts on the topic of Xenotransplantation adapted from ABC Radio National 's <i>Perspective</i>
Text 2	Opening paragraphs of Dickens' <i>Bleak House</i>	400 word text on Avian flu adapted from the <i>Economist</i> (mid-module test)
Text 3	Short story by Hemingway <i>A very short story</i>	1500 word text on Cannibalism adapted from ABC Radio National's <i>Ockham's Razor</i>
Task types: Closed (multiple choice)	Understanding main points Choosing synonyms	Identifying the main ideas Reading for detailed information (selecting paraphrases or True/ false) Choosing synonyms, filling blanks
Task types: open	Discussing a short video Reading aloud Rewriting in a different genre (eg fragments >> whole sentences)	Summarising and commenting

Every iteration of the task collaboration – task negotiation cycle was fairly predictable. However, one realisation of this cycle stood out from the rest. This occurred when the teacher realised that the students were unable to perform the first summarising task. The summarising task differed from the standard IELTS-style multiple choice questions: rather than simply selecting a multiple choice option or filling in the blanks, the students had to voice their own understanding of the meanings of the text, followed by a critical comment. At this point, the teacher initiated a new, much more actively scaffolded task negotiation genre, which I call the **learning moment genre**, taking a more didactic role with longer turns, using the whiteboard as a semiotic tool, posing questions which increased prospectiveness (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) (see Chapter 2.1.3c), and calling on students to contribute more sustained responses than in the other instances of the task negotiation genre. In effect, the unmarked pattern of collaboration-negotiation was replaced by the marked, opposite pattern—negotiation-collaboration—which allowed the teacher to offer greater support through joint construction of the task, followed by students working together in co-constructing the next phase (see Sharpe, 2004).

Figure 12: Learning moment genre

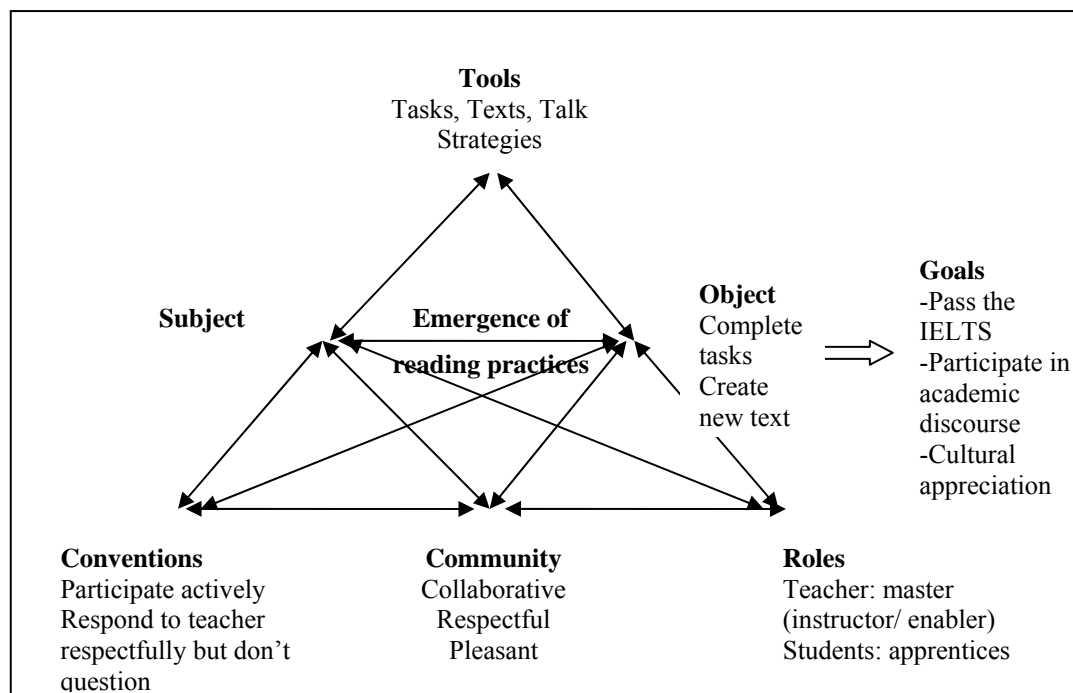


4.1.2 Sandstone College: Activity Theory analysis

To turn now to Engeström's Activity Theory as a tool for analysis, the activity system of the Sandstone College classroom manifested few tensions or contradictions. The community cooperated harmoniously under Mark's firm but benign guidance;

students understood their roles, and a shared set of goals emerged. The only significant source of tension was the challenging nature of the source texts, which appeared to be a long way beyond the students' ability. However, the carefully structured scaffolding provided by Mark enabled them to draw meaning from the texts and to work at the outer limits of their ZPD. An overview of the activity system in the Sandstone College class is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Sandstone College activity system



4.1.2a Goals and objects

The teacher and the majority of the students shared the pragmatic goal of passing the IELTS, though for Mark this was a secondary goal. More important, from his point of view, was for the students to improve their general ability in English:

Mark: ... you don't want to train for a test – you just want to help them learn English – learn to work within English [SC_Mark_Interview1]

Mark frequently referred to *the tyranny of the IELTS*, but recognised that for some students the immediate goal of passing the IELTS is a strong driving force, and that they need to be *placated* with overt IELTS practice exercises. He claimed that many

students are looking for *the magic bullet which is going to help them pass* [SC_Mark_Interview1].

Mark also communicated to the students his own more aspirational goal of increasing their appreciation of English as a cultural medium, and this was accepted enthusiastically by some of the students from Korea and Japan who had previously studied literature. Mark explained this goal to the class as follows:

Mark: I'm just trying to draw your attention to the fact that English is not just a function – a way of communicating. It has all of these other things, which are not basic communication, they are additional, artistic potentials. Just like in your own language, there's the ordinary language, and then there's the language of literature and the artistic language. I think it's important that you understand this. If you could understand, if you could reasonably read Shakespeare's Hamlet, and four or five of his most famous sonnets – the poems. And understand them. And read them fluently. If you could get to that stage in English – you could do anything! [SC03_08_2]

Mark made a point of balancing general language learning goals with academic language learning goals:

Mark: Now. SUMMARISING. Two things about summarising. One is that it's a very important skill full stop. Particularly for those of you who are going to do more academic work. If you have to do a research paper, and you've got to review a lot of articles that have already been written, OK, you can't when you write your own paper just REPRODUCE what has been written. You have to do two things: you have to SUMMARISE and you have to PARAPHRASE.... So it's a very important academic skill. But generally just in your reading they're important skills anyway because if you can sum up in one sentence or so an article of this size, then you go away knowing that you've understood generally what the article was about. ... One sentence. That's what the article was about. A really important skill for anything. ... What I'm saying is that it's a social skill... [SC_02_21-8]

Mark re-iterated this goal at the initiation of the **learning moment genre**:

Mark: Very, very, very important skill, summarising. EXTREMELY important (stretching arms akimbo) [SC_02_28-2]

And at the closure of the learning moment genre, he again emphasised the relationship between the immediate goal of summarising and framed it in terms of the longer term goal of academic literacy:

Mark: OK ... [Summarising] is something that when you move into the university system here you will be required to do frequently and you will need to think critically about these texts and form your own point of view in relation to them. [SC_02_28-2]

In this way, Mark attempted to develop a shared understanding of the long-term goals.

At the level of immediate objects of specific actions (see Table 7), the students were never in any doubt of what they were trying to achieve. The classroom macrogenre for each text was shaped by the worksheets, and the five or six tasks they contained. Completion of these tasks gave closure to each iteration of the task collaboration/ task negotiation cycle. All the tasks were completed, and the task negotiation phase ensured that all the students knew the correct answers (if not why they were correct).

4.1.2b Conventions (Rules)

The conventions of classroom behaviour were also clearly established. Mark controlled the progress of the macrogenre through his predominant use of concise and unequivocal regulative discourse. He used frequent closed (yes/no) questions, nominating students to give a response, ‘jolly along’ the discourse with positive feedback, and ensuring that students knew the correct answer (though not necessarily WHY it was the correct answer). For example:

*Mark: OK. Well, let’s talk about task 3 (Reading for detailed comprehension). These are always pretty hard, aren’t they? These ‘yes’ ‘no’ and ‘not given’ ones. So let’s have a look at number 7.
Hong, what was your answer?*

Hong: ‘Yes’

Mark: Yes? Did you all agree? You don't agree? Is there anybody who had 'no'? Is there anybody who had 'not given'?

Students: [loud silence]

Mark: Very good! Consensus! Well done! Good stuff. OK, number 8. What have you got, Rina? ...

Rina: Yes (very quiet)

Male student and one or two others: I agree

Mark: 'Yes'. Do you all agree?

Lili: Yes (very quiet)

Mark: Anybody disagree?

Students: (No answer) [SC_02_21-2]

Mark established rules for classroom behaviour (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003) by giving clear instructions for homework and task collaboration. If students contravened his rules, for example by arriving late to class or forgetting their homework, he used humour to ensure that they were aware that this behaviour was unacceptable, by good humouredly teasing or pretending to shoot miscreants. This would recruit smiles or laughs from the class, invoking a shared understanding of classroom conventions, so that by the second week of the module, none of the students forgot their homework. They had become accustomed to the unswerving routine of doing homework after each class and bringing it for the following class.

However, Mark was not able to shift the students' attitude to asking questions in class. Although Mark encouraged students to ask questions and to interact spontaneously in the task negotiation phase, only one student regularly did so: Lili. While some of the students admired her courage, others resented this behaviour suggesting that it showed a lack of focus on accuracy:

Miho: (impatiently) Like Lili ... she's keep talking... Not correct, but fluent. She's talking, talking.

Hong: She's very courageous! [SC_finalint_2]

Perhaps this resistance to speaking up in front of the whole class stemmed from students' previous experiences of education, together with their respect for Mark.

During the task collaboration phase, however, the students verbalised their ideas in English without hesitation. Working in cross-linguistic pairs or triads they set about the tasks in a focused and even enthusiastic manner, appearing to be quite comfortable to share their answers with each other and ‘puzzle through’ (Donato, 2000) the tasks together. In the following extract, Hong and Miho are working out how to summarise the Oogjes argument against xenotransplantation:

Hong: I think the major words are “animals are not just things” ==

Miho == (inaudible) Yeah, this is right.

*Hong: Yep. (more inaudible interchange, drawing breath between teeth)
So?*

Miho: animal rights?

Hong: It want transfer this sentence in a noun.

Miho: But not like that

Hong: Or just write like this

Miho: Like that? (Hong writes) ‘Animals are not just things’

Hong: Maybe too long.

Miho: Just say: ‘alternative means’

Hong: Yes. [SC02_28_2]

The literacy practices established by Mark similarly caused little tension. The routine of the classroom—skim the text, work through the set tasks, get feedback on the answers—meant that students did not question the practices set up by Mark. It appeared that previous learning experiences had prepared them for this routine, following, as it did, the pattern set up by the IELTS reading test.

The tasks called upon students to use some very specific reading strategies, either explicitly or implicitly; for example:

- identifying main ideas and/or topic sentences
- picking out detailed information
- guessing the meaning of words from their context and/or morphology.

In addition to these standard tasks, Mark also asked the students to paraphrase and summarise main ideas. The sequencing of the tasks, starting from broad skimming tasks and working down towards detailed vocabulary exercises, involved the students

in moving from top-down reading strategies to bottom-up reading strategies as they decoded meaning more closely (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Nunan, 1999).

In some cases, students' attention was drawn to these strategies. For example, in the following extract, Mark is reminding students to use the strategy of re-reading the text for main ideas:

Mark: So we get back to main ideas. What it comes back to is, once you've read and you've understood the text, it's a really good idea to go back to and just remember what the main ideas are. Skim for the main ideas to begin with, but you must go back and look at the overall picture again and come away thinking, 'Well what was that author trying to say?' In this one (pointing to the Cowan summary) he was trying to say that xenotransplantation is a good and exciting idea, while in this one (pointing to the Oogyes summary), she's saying 'Hang on a minute. Let's not rush into this because of all of these things'. [SC_02_21_1.3]

However, often the strategies went unremarked. For example, the task-types, especially those that involved filling in the blanks, relied heavily on paraphrasing the ideas in the passage. Answering such questions depended on recognising the equivalence of the paraphrase in the question and the original text. However, students' attention at a metacognitive level was not drawn to this fact. This finding is similar to Pressley and Wharton-McDonald's finding that, although children in US schools practise the use of cognitive skills regularly, there is little explicit teaching of strategies at a metacognitive level (Pressley & Wharton-McDonald, 2002, p.241). The relative lack of attention at a metacognitive level fits with Mark's conviction that the students would learn through practising; as he told them:

Mark: We're actually trying to make it easier for you by doing these exercises. The more you do them, the better you'll get, and the more you'll get out of your reading. [SC_02_21_3]

In summary, the reading practices set up by Mark were anchored in the cognitive strategies approach to reading privileged by the IELTS. These practices were

generally embedded into the classroom activity system at the level of operations rather than conscious actions (see Table 7). While Mark did occasionally draw students' attention to the reading strategies underpinning the classroom tasks, in general students were expected to acquire these reading practices by practising rather than conscious, metacognitive reflection on action.

4.1.2c Roles

The distributed roles in the Sandstone College classroom were clearly defined. Mark acted as **enabler**, setting up and controlling the tasks for the task collaboration genre, and as **master**, retaining a strongly authoritative role throughout, instructing students on reading strategies, increasing prospectiveness and arbitrating on meaning (see Table 10).

Table 10: Teacher roles at Sandstone College

Role	Examples
Directing the tasks	<i>Mark: OK. Let's do Task 5. Did anybody do Task 5 (for homework)? The optional task 5 (...) Nobody chose the option? Ok do it now, then please. Do task 5 now. [SC02_21-2]</i>
Confirming correct answers	<i>Lin: The answer is 'no'</i> <i>Mark: 'No'. Do you all agree? [slight pause] Yes, that's quite right, the answer is 'no' ..[SC02_21-2]</i>
Controlling behaviour	<i>Mark: And so the answer to number 12? Miho?</i> <i>Miho: No ideas!</i> <i>Mark: You didn't bring it (the homework)?</i> <i>Miho: I brought it yesterday. And she proved it (patting her neighbour on the shoulder! Smiles and laughter all round)</i> <i>Mark: Yes, but that doesn't help for the reading class! (chuckles) Please folks, try to remember to bring the right ones for the class. [SC02_21-2]</i>
Explaining answers	<i>Mark: It might be happening we just don't know – not from this text anyway. ... There's nothing in the text that talks about the different sizes of the pig heart and the human heart. There's actually nothing there that talks about the different sizes of the pig heart and the human heart. So that's why – although that might be the case – we don't know from this text. [SC02_21-2]</i>
Instructing - metacognitive	<i>Mark: I will say again, that ultimately – and the sooner the better – that you can use English-English dictionary rather than the translating dictionary. It's much better for you, because it can get you out of the habit of translating. The ultimate goal for you to aim for is to be thinking in English. Once you start thinking in English, then the rest will be easy. And that's your aim eventually. So the more you translate, the more you will be stuck in a mentality of translating.</i>

	<i>So when somebody says something to you, you will be translating in your head. That slows you down. If you're translating all the time, that in itself makes you work more slowly. [SC_02-21_3]</i>
Increasing prospectiveness/ building field	<i>Mark: Taboo is a really powerful word, OK. It means absolute. If something is taboo it's a law which must NEVER be broken. So if it's (cannibalism) taboo in your culture, why? Why do you think it is? [SC_02_28-1.6]</i>

The students' roles included: answering the task items individually and collaboratively; practising strategies (eg guessing meaning from context); responding to the teacher; initiating comments/ questions (which they did rarely). Importantly, there was an expectation from Mark, which was met willingly by the students, that they would all participate actively in the class – more or less 100% of the time. During the task collaboration genre, they all worked on the tasks without hesitation, although sometimes the tasks were very demanding. Occasionally, they would sigh or comment on the level of difficulty, but none of the students gave up on any of the tasks. They willingly shared their answers with each other and 'puzzled through' (Donato, 2000) the tasks together. During the task negotiation genre Mark would call on different students to respond, or occasionally call on the whole class, so that all students were involved in following closely in case Mark called on them. There was never an occasion when a student who was called on did not know where the class was up to. Inevitably, some students contributed more overtly than others, particularly during the task negotiation genre. Overall, the level of participation was remarkable.

The power relationship in the classroom hardly swerved. Mark was totally in control: a firm, but caring, father-figure in a class which he likened to a family:

Mark: It's just like a big family really. This is going to sound terribly mushy — I think in the broader sense you have to love your students. It's a funny word 'love'..., and I'm not a dedicated Christian, but I mean in that Christian sense of actually really caring — that every student is important. [SC_MarkInt1]

Mark controlled the texts that were read, the way they were read (ie what reading strategies were applied), and who was to speak and when. Significantly, he also controlled the meanings that were shared, taking the role of 'arbiter of meaning', especially when the students gave answers to the task questions. The students were

only able to express their own understandings of the texts during the two brief summarising tasks. The relationship between Mark and the students can be likened to Lave and Wenger's master-apprentice model (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As the students participated more in the community of practice set up and controlled by Mark, they became more and more familiar with the task-types and the strategies needed to fulfil them. Their main assigned role was to practise:

Mark: But as you can see from the materials, my intention is that I think it's important for a class like this, many of whom are going to do IELTS for them to get practice in that sort of questions and that's why they're there. [SC_MarkInt1]

Mark: Just practising and doing it and they do get good at it (paraphrasing) – there's no question. [SC_Mark_Int2]

In general, then, it can be said the Mark played the role of **master-enabler** (setting up tasks for task collaboration, controlling, instructing, arbitrating on meaning), while the students played the role of **participant-apprentices** (acquiescent, respectful, performing within set guidelines).

4.1.2d Community

The classroom community at Sandstone College worked harmoniously and productively. Students were rarely off-task; they showed great respect for Mark, as well as respect and liking for each other (even for Deng, *the koala*, [SC_02-21] who had a tendency to fall asleep). Lessons always started promptly on time and finished on time, and there was hardly any absenteeism. Mark's warm sense of humour and firm but jovial demeanour contributed positively to the atmosphere of the class, and there was a palpable sense of satisfaction in having completed the tasks. Mark stressed that this class was remarkable – different from his other group of *ferals* [SC_Mark_FinalInt]. He considered that:

Mark: ... they've been a joy to teach. The fact that you can challenge them, and that they respond. [SC_Mark_FinalInt]

It was clear that all the students were highly motivated, and despite the occasional sigh of frustration, they persevered remarkably well with the extremely challenging tasks that Mark produced for them.

The only moments at which the students' level of attention wavered were the occasional times when Mark talked at length on topics which had no relevance to the students. For example, during the task negotiation phase of the Bleak House vocabulary matching task, which happened in the class immediately after lunch on a warm autumnal day, Mark gave several long explanations of vocabulary items: for example, he spent 3 minutes explaining the meaning of 'parapet'. During this explanation two students apparently nodded off, and I wrote in my notes *a pall of sleepiness settles on the room* [SC_03_01_observation notes].

At other times, however, the class could be riveted by Mark's explanations. For example, in the Cannibalism macrogenre, Mark assigned the students to paraphrase the summary of the text which he had prepared for them. He spent over 32 minutes explaining this task, and its relation to the technique of referencing in academic writing. Most of this explanation was presented as a monologue; yet students asked spontaneous questions and remained engaged more or less throughout.

4.1.2e Tools

Under this heading, I will first discuss the texts and tasks which formed the basis for action in the Sandstone College activity system; secondly, I will analyse Mark's use of teacher talk, a crucial determinant of the learning environment.

Texts and tasks

The activity was built around a series of texts selected by Mark on the basis of his own interest, the goals of the activity, and his assessment of the students' level of ability. The texts, listed in Table 9, appeared at first to be far beyond the students' level of comprehension, but as the students worked through the tasks, they gradually began to make meaning from the texts – at least to some degree. Mark chose texts that would challenge the students in terms of content as well as language, selecting

provocative topics, rather than the *bland* texts that he felt characterised the commercial EFL coursebooks.

Mark: I read a LOT of these things and choose things – yes, that interest me, I guess, but also that I – oh – it’s hard to know, maybe some of it’s just GUT feeling – and experience, that you’ve got a sense of where the class is about. [SC_Mark_Int1]

Mark: – a lot of the stuff that’s in the textbooks, it just seems bland. And if we’re encouraging critical thinking skills and so on, then some things which challenge in the content as well as in the language. [SC_Mark_Int1]

None of the texts were authentically academic, and the texts in the academic strand were not even authentic written texts, as they had been adapted from transcripts of radio broadcasts. This meant that they sometimes lacked the typical generic structure of written academic texts. Interesting content took precedence over textual authenticity.

The progress of the activity was structured around the tasks associated with each text. The task sheets provided a concrete tool which provided structure for the macrogenre, including the students’ homework; gave the students a clear focus and structure for the task collaboration genre; and enabled the students to experience a sense of task completion.

Mark had devised the task items himself, though not specifically for this group. The tasks were based on IELTS task types, as Mark said, to *placate* those students who were strongly IELTS-focused. To these tasks, he added some extra items, especially summarising and commenting. In the case of the Xenotransplantation texts, he asked the students to contrast the arguments presented by the two authors for and against the topic and to add their own statement of position.

Another important feature of the task items, set in the regular task collaboration-task negotiation cycle, was that the students were able to obtain timely feedback on their reading. Mark did not usually elaborate on why particular responses might or might not be appropriate: they were either correct or incorrect. Mark’s practice coincides on

this point with Walsh's (2002) recommendation for *economical error correction*. An interesting example of the opportunities for feedback on reading came when the students were debriefing after the test. It was plain that many students had misread the question '*In which African countries, ...*', missing the plural form of the noun:

Mark: One question that many of you ... had trouble with ... was the question about in which African countries is avian flu already a problem? Quite a number of you put down 'Egypt' or put down 'Nigeria'. That's just simply a question of not reading the question, I think. Because the question says 'In which African countries' (frisson amongst students). OK? Some of you put Egypt; some of you put Nigeria – that's only half right. There are two countries: Egypt AND Nigeria. You must always read the questions carefully. OK. There's a difference between 'country' and 'countries'.

[SC_03_08_1]

Teacher talk

As already mentioned, Mark's use of teacher talk can be categorised in Christie's (2002) terms as either regulative or instructional (see Table 11). Mark used regulative register to sustain and control the classroom interactions, driving the pace of the lesson forward by limiting the length of his turns, and calling upon students to respond so that all students were obliged to participate. He used the instructional register to develop content knowledge (the field of the various texts); as well as to develop metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and practices. In both registers, he used humour and occasional *self-deprecation* [SC_MarkFinalInt] to maintain a positive classroom climate.

In the curriculum initiation genre, Mark used the instructional register to stimulate students to think about the topic of the text they were about to read. This was a very important function of teacher talk as it activated their schema not only cognitively but affectively. For example, before beginning the cannibalism reading, Mark engaged the students in thinking about the topic through a series of highly provocative questions, thereby 'increasing prospectiveness'. For example:

Mark: So I'm going to pose a question for you: (to Rie) you might eat pork meat, and you might put a pig heart in a human; and you might use a human heart, would you eat a human? (All laugh) Would you? Does that not mean that there's a difference? [SC_02_28_2]

In the case of the cultural reading strand, Mark used the curriculum initiation genre to inform students about the author, their period and their style.

Table 11: Sandstone College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre

Genre	Register	Function	
Curriculum initiation	Regulative	Giving instructions Establishing class norms	
	Instructional	Setting up background knowledge (ie building field knowledge) Increasing prospectiveness	
Task collaboration	Regulative	Monitoring progress Positive feedback	
	Instructional	Advising on strategy use	
Task negotiation	Regulative	Calling on students to answer Giving feedback Calling for questions/ comments	
		Instructional	Explaining answers Establishing goals Building field knowledge Building metacognitive awareness of literacy practices/ reading strategies Building test-taking strategies

NB Humour was used intermittently at every stage in conjunction with the regulative register, and occasionally the instructional register.

In the task collaboration genre, Mark used teacher talk sparingly, apart from an occasional jocular comment in the regulative register, or some very brief strategic advice in the instructional register. He sometimes used the task collaboration phase to go round and talk to students about their reading diaries, or simply to observe

students' progress with the tasks. In this way, he knew when the students were ready to progress on to the next task performance cycle. This meant that the students were only very rarely waiting or off-task.

The task negotiation genre, on the other hand, was characterised by much more teacher talk, predominantly using the classical IRE (initiate-respond-evaluate) discourse pattern in the regulative register. The genre typically began with Mark getting the students' attention and then calling on them individually, randomly selecting students to give the answer to each question. The following extract is typical of Mark's jovial, fast-paced progress through this phase of the genre. It is interesting that, although he nominates individual students, he simultaneously attempts to recruit participation from the whole class:

Mark: OK! So who would like to volunteer to tell us? Every time I look at somebody they look away! Lily!

Lily: The vocabulary?

Mark: Number 41 is?

Lily: 'Extremely severe'?

Mark: 'Extremely severe' (as a synonym) for ethics? Do you agree? (to all) No?! What do you think, Angela? (...)

Annie: F.

Mark: Yes. 'Morality' – 'ethics'. They're not perfect synonyms but they're near. Now I don't know why there's no question number 42. Sometimes Microsoft Word does all sorts of weird things with formatting. So there IS no question number 42. Aren't you lucky! (Ss laugh)

So, Hong, what do you think for question number 43?

Hong: G.

Mark: G? D'you agree? No, it's not G. What do you think Tommy?

Tommy: (mutters uncertainly) C?

Mark: D'you agree?

Some students: (quietly) Yes.

Mark: Are you sure? Absolutely sure? Yeah alright. OK. Number 44, Miho? [SC_02_28_1]

An interesting feature of Mark's use of teacher-talk in the task negotiation genre, as seen in the extract above, is that his WH-interrogative questions refer back to the task: he defers to the task, allowing the questions in the task to pose the WH-interrogative 'demand' questions. Thus, the task questions take an important role in instructing the students, allowing Mark to occupy more of an enabler role than an instructor role.

The task negotiation genre often concluded with some positive feedback, also in the regulative register, which encouraged the students to deal with the very challenging texts and tasks that he had set.

Mark: You've done pretty well, on the whole. Anybody have any questions?

Students: (Sighing and stretching) [SC_02_21_1.3]

The instructional register also featured during Mark's discourse in the task negotiation genre when a student asked a question, or there was a clear misunderstanding. The instructional register worked at two levels: building field (that is, content knowledge), and building mode (that is, literacy practices). For example, in the extract above, Mark's feedback to Lili — '*Morality*', '*ethics*'. *They're not perfect synonyms but they're near* — includes both field (content) and metadiscourse on literacy practices (the use of synonyms).

Often Mark's use of the instructional register to talk about literacy practices merged with a pragmatic focus on test-taking strategies. In the following extract, Mark is focusing on the important literacy practice of decoding anaphora. However, he couches this literacy instruction within the pragmatic frame of IELTS test-taking strategies, tapping into the students' short-term goals to teach an essential long-term reading practice:

Mark: The answer is 'Yes', isn't it? ... And the evidence is in paragraph F, OK? And here this is one place where you have to be careful about pronouns. Because there's a number of 'its', all of which refer to the Canadian Public Health Association, 'IT said we should look at a number of alternative means' - meaning the Canadian Public

Health Association. And then later on, ‘IT fundamentally challenges..’ which is again the Canadian Public Health Association. OK Umm. So you have to be aware of what the pronoun refers to in this case, and that will help you work out what the answers are. [SC_02_21_6]

Underline = regulative discourse

Bold = instructional discourse (meta-literacy)

Bold + underline = instructional discourse (test-taking strategies)

4.1.2f Sandstone College: Summary of the activity system

The activity system at Sandstone College comprised an outstandingly harmonious learning environment. The community cooperated productively, with mutually understood goals and common practices. Mark used his authority, while closely observing the students’ learning pace, to move the tasks forward and reach completion. In return, the students accepted Mark’s role as ‘enabler’ (setting up and controlling actions) and respected him as ‘master’ (instructing them about reading strategies and arbitrating on meaning’. Mark’s approach was clearly in harmony with his co-teacher and the institution, and the College had established a physical and institutional environment which was conducive to study. The learning environment was somewhat new for the students, but not so much as to cause conflict for them.

There was one substantial tension: the extreme difficulty of the texts that Mark selected. The students struggled with these texts, yet the contingent scaffolding provided by Mark verbally, and the designed-in scaffolding through the sequenced and clearly laid out tasks, allowed the students to overcome this challenge (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). In resolving this contradiction, as will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the students were able to increase their skills, self-confidence and gain a burgeoning sense of identity as ‘academic readers’.

An interesting point of contradiction occurred in the Xenotransplantation macrogenre when the students were unable to attempt the summarising task which Mark had set. Mark immediately set about resolving this contradiction by swinging into the ‘learning moment genre’ (see Figure 12). This involved abandoning his initial lesson

plan and calling in more teacher-led contingent scaffolding to support the students' development of the necessary practices.

4.1.3 Understandings of critical reading at Sandstone College

Although the primary goal for the students as well as the teacher at Sandstone College was pragmatic, Mark was keen to extend the students beyond simply plundering the texts for information, as was implied in the IELTS style exercises he felt constrained to offer them. With each iteration of the macrogenre, Mark made sure to include a critical component.

At one level, critical reading from Mark's point of view had a cultural element. He wanted to open students' minds, and help them to understand that the English language was not just a repository for information, but provided a rich cultural medium for the exchange and construction of meaning.

Mark: ... opening minds a bit and ... [making] some impact about the notion that English like any other language - is a complete language and not the narrow kind of functional stuff that they've mostly been taught.
[SC_MarkInt1]

He also saw critical reading as about developing a position, or stance. He encouraged the students both in the curriculum initiation genre and through iterations of the task collaboration and task negotiation genres towards the end of each macrogenre to develop a critical 'owned' position in relation to the texts. Again, open-mindedness was a key feature of Mark's interpretation of critical reading:

Mark: So I guess I choose things which are impossible to walk away from without forming some position about, because I want that challenge. Because that is the challenge to them to think critically. 'I don't agree with this'. Perhaps it might even persuade people to change their views. I mean, I don't WANT people to change their views, but it might prompt people to think about the possibility that they might change their view. And that's the first step towards a whole critical thinking culture anyway. The idea of the mind being open to possibilities that other people may be able to persuade you on. [SC_MarkInt1]

He was also keen for students to see texts as authored, and spent time introducing the authors of the texts he had selected, the context from which they were taken, and to some extent the purpose for which they had been written.

Above all, however, for Mark, critical reading was about passionate engagement with ideas (see Wyatt et al (1993), reported in Pressley (2002) in chapter 2). He chose texts on topics such as transplanting pig organs into humans and cannibalism precisely because of their affective impact, rather than relying on what he considered to be the *bland* texts found in most conventional EAP textbooks:

Mark: that text kind of challenges conventional wisdom ...And again that's one of the reasons for choosing such a text, because it does in some way, engage you - almost forces you to engage a critical faculty.

[SC_Mark_FinalInt]

To sum up, Mark's view of critical reading was about passionate engagement with text and the voices within it. By engaging in dialogue with text, student readers would be able to open their minds to new ideas and develop new and more informed positions.

4.2 Newgate College

Newgate College, as explained in Chapter 3, offers a diploma course including academic preparation from which students can articulate into third year university. The diploma course has an entry point of 5.5 on IELTS.

The students in the class that I observed were a diverse group from the Sub-continent (4), Africa (1), Japan (2), China (3), United Arab Emirates (1) and the USA (1). The class was evenly divided in gender. The teacher, Andrea, has a Masters degree in TESOL.

The College holds classes on the main university campus. The classes I observed took place either in a vast and soul-less basement room, or in an awkward, though flexible, space furnished with chairs with arm-rest desks. Lessons were punctuated with these desks collapsing and students' books crashing to the floor.

4.2.1 Newgate College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres

At Newgate College, Andrea had complete control over the curriculum of the *Academic English* unit that she was teaching. It was an accredited subject within the diploma course taught by her institution, and most of the students were concurrently studying three other subjects to make up a full-time load. The subject had a major gate-keeping function: students had to pass the unit in order to complete the Diploma and enter the mainstream university. Unlike Sandstone College and City College, where the students were studying English full-time, at Newgate College *Academic English* was timetabled for six hours/ week over a thirteen week semester. Andrea was responsible for designing the unit; preparing and collating the materials; implementing the curriculum; setting the assessment and marking it.

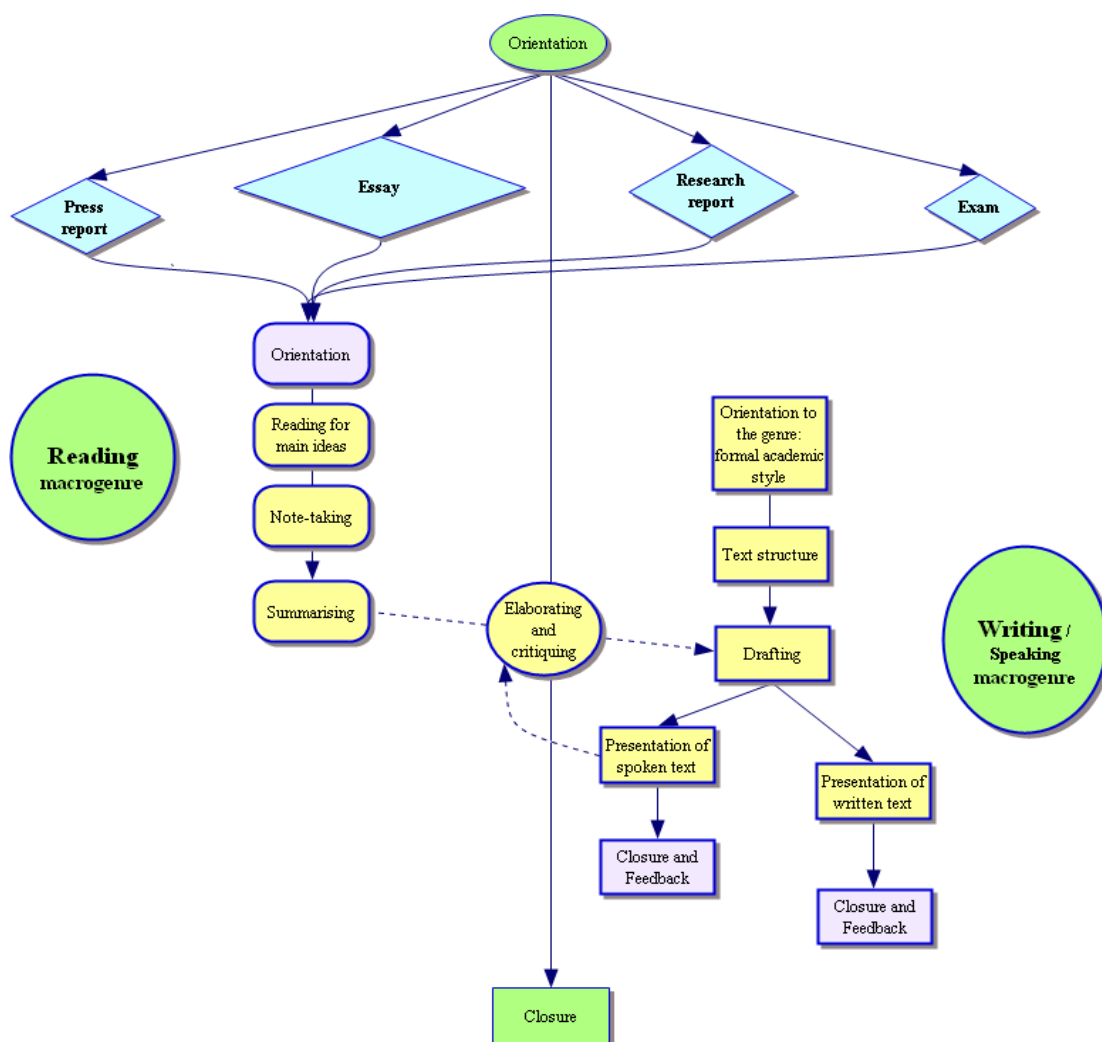
The aim of the subject was to prepare students for their future university study. For this reason, Andrea had designed the curriculum macrogenre of *Academic English* in an orbital structure around four significant pieces of assessment which were designed to mirror authentic university assignments: a major essay, a press report, a research report and a final exam (see Figure 14). The essay and the press report also required an associated oral presentation. Classwork focused on developing the necessary skills to produce these assignments, particularly the ‘jewel in the crown’, which was the academic essay. In this respect, the curriculum could be said to be product-focused and genre-based, with an emphasis on form, structure, skills and socialisation. Details of the four assessment genres are given in Table 12.

Table 12: Newgate College assessment items

	Assessment item	Description
1	Press report – oral presentation and brief written summary	Summary and critical comment on a newspaper article 3 minute presentation + question time Students’ own choice of article
2	Major essay	1500 words Students’ own choice of topic
	Seminar	5 minute presentation + question time
3	Research report	Survey of international students’ experience Common topic and background readings
4	Exam	1000 word essay based on three short readings

The Newgate College curriculum reflected an eclectic lamination of contributing EAP theories. The skills-based approach to EAP (Lea & Street, 1998) evidently informed the curriculum: Andrea addressed all four macroskills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and attempted to incorporate all four into nearly every class. Her main focus, however, was on reading and writing, and these two skills underpinned each of the four assignment genres. To some extent, the ‘socialisation approach’ (Lea & Street, 1998) also affected the curriculum, as attention was given to the generic textual features of the four contrasting genres; however, the social context of different academic disciplines was not addressed at all.

Figure 14: The Newgate College curriculum macrogenres



Cognitive theory strongly informed the curriculum. Andrea’s approach to reading was predominantly based on cognitive strategies: for example, guessing meaning from

context, reading for main ideas, comparing and contrasting, identifying problems and solutions. The macrogenres of the curriculum were also shaped by an understanding of the academic writing process, as proposed by M. Wallace (1980). Andrea specified a format for each stage of the assignment-writing process, in an attempt to imbue the students' writing with 'clarity, rigour and discipline' (Canagarajah, 2002b). Every stage of the assignment-writing process was intimately scaffolded through workshopping, sub-tasks and teacher feedback. Hirvela (2004, p.172-177) refers to this as the 'sequential' pedagogical model. For example, in preparation for the essay, students were asked to submit one-by-one a proposed topic, a reference list, an annotated bibliography, some samples of their note-taking, an outline, a draft, and eventually the completed product. Thus, the reading process and the writing (speaking) process formed separate but interlinked components of a highly structured, linear academic reading-writing macrogenre, as shown in Figure 14.

As the course progressed, and the students became more closely socialised into Andrea's systematic approach, the academic reading-writing macrogenre became more compressed. At the beginning of the course, each stage of the macrogenre was rehearsed in detail (see Table 13), while in the last two weeks of the course, the entire macrogenre could be completed in a single lesson (see Table 14). In the final exam, students were expected to complete a compressed iteration of the entire macrogenre.

The four main iterations of the macrogenre overlapped: in a two-hour lesson, the activity might shift from one assessment item to another, and from one stage of the macrogenre to another, so that the tissue of the course became a complex interweaving of skills, strategies, texts, and language development. For example, the two hour lesson represented in Table 13 began with a segment on writing, specifically sentence level punctuation, in which Andrea referred back to a previous lesson, and referred forwards to the homework which was due shortly. This 'janus-like' feature of classroom discourse of looking back and looking forward, which was used regularly by Andrea, helped to build cohesion across the macrogenre (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005, p.20). Next, the action moved to reading: Andrea returned the students' guided summaries of *The uses of computers*, a 'reading for main ideas' practice task which had been set for homework. She was not happy with their summaries and spent time explaining where they had gone wrong. Then the focus moved to note-taking, based

on a text called *The relative merits of highlighting and note-taking*. At the closure of this action, the students were assigned more homework: to take notes about the next practice text, *The marketing concept*. At the conclusion of the lesson, one of the students was invited to present her press report, for which she had chosen a newspaper article on immigration.

Table 13: Interweaving of curriculum macrogenres and genres in an early lesson [NGC03_09]

	Curriculum macrogenre	Curriculum Genre	Action
1	Writing macrogenre: formal academic style	Task initiation	Punctuation exercise for homework (linking back to work on dependent and independent clauses)
2	Reading macrogenre: Reading for main ideas (Reading text 3)	Task negotiation	Return summaries of <i>Uses of computers</i>
3	Reading macrogenre: note-taking (Reading text 4)	Task initiation	Begin reading <i>Highlighting and note-taking</i>
		Task negotiation	Note-taking strategies (for compare-and-contrast texts)
		Task collaboration	Brainstorm note-taking formats
		Task negotiation	Whole class brainstorm of note-taking formats
		Task collaboration	Read <i>Highlighting and note-taking</i> individually and make notes Share notes with partner
		Task negotiation	Share notes with whole class
		Task closure	-
	(Reading text 5)	Task initiation (for a following lesson)	Setting homework: take notes of <i>Marketing Concept</i>
4	Press report: Presentation of spoken text	Task performance	Charity presents her press report on Immigration
	Elaboration and critique	Task collaboration	Class discussion
	Presentation of written text	Task performance	(Charity will present her written report in a few days)

As described by Christie (2002), and also in the analysis of the Sandstone College class (see Figure 11), the macrogenres were realised mainly through alternating instantiations of task collaboration and task negotiation genres. Each stage of the lesson was characterised by a brief initiation and closure, and frequent shifting between task collaboration and task negotiation genres. The task negotiation genre was characterised by teacher-led discussion using the IRE pattern; during the task collaboration genre, students were assigned to work individually, in pairs or small groups. In addition, in the Newgate College activity system, a task performance genre occurred, in which students enacted the task ‘product’: for example, Charity’s press report at the end of NGC_03_09 shown in Table 13.

At Newgate College, there was also one incidence of the ‘learning moment genre’ remarked upon at Sandstone College. This occurred in NGC_03_16 when the students were working collaboratively on making notes from *The Marketing Concept*. Andrea suddenly realised that the students were not making notes in the way that she had intended. As will be further described in the section on teacher talk below, the learning moment genre was signalled by a sudden ‘change of gear’ as Andrea interrupted the lesson to offer contingent scaffolding.

In contrast to the early lesson represented in Table 13 [NGC_03_09], Table 14 shows the macrogenre stages and genres of a two-hour lesson from the end of the course, NGC_05_04, in which an entire iteration of the reading-writing macrogenre is compressed into a single lesson. By this stage in the course, the three major assessment items had been completed, and only the exam remained. In this lesson, the teacher was aiming to prepare students for the exam, in which they would be required to read three short texts and write an argumentative essay on a given topic referring to these texts. She also wanted to ensure that they would be able to apply ‘critical thinking’ in their exam essays. As preparation for the exam, Andrea devised a lesson encapsulating the entire reading-writing process: students would read a short text, identify the key arguments in it, discuss some counterarguments, present a debate on the topic, and finally write up a short essay.

Table 14: Macrogenres and genres in the Polygamy Class [NGC05-04]

Phase	Stage of curriculum macrogenre	Curriculum Genre	Action
1	Orientation	Task orientation	Introducing the concept of critical thinking; introductory exercises
2		Task initiation	Introducing the topic: polygamy
3	Reading for main ideas Taking notes	Task collaboration - individual - shared	Reading the text for arguments FOR polygamy
4	Summarising	Task negotiation	Reporting back
5	Elaboration and critique	Task collaboration	Discussing and developing counterarguments AGAINST polygamy
6	Drafting	Task collaboration	Preparing arguments for and against
7	Presentation of spoken text	Task performance - debate	Presenting the debate
8	Elaboration and critique	Task collaboration	Homework: writing up notes and comments
9	Presentation of written text	Task performance - essay	Writing the essay
10	Closure	Task negotiation	Feedback on homework

4.2.2. Newgate College: Activity Theory analysis

Analysis of the activity system of the Newgate College classroom shown in Figure 15 reveals somewhat more contradictions than the Sandstone College activity system, though once again, the main tension within the activity system arose from the challenging nature of the major product goals of the course – in this case, the four major assessment items.

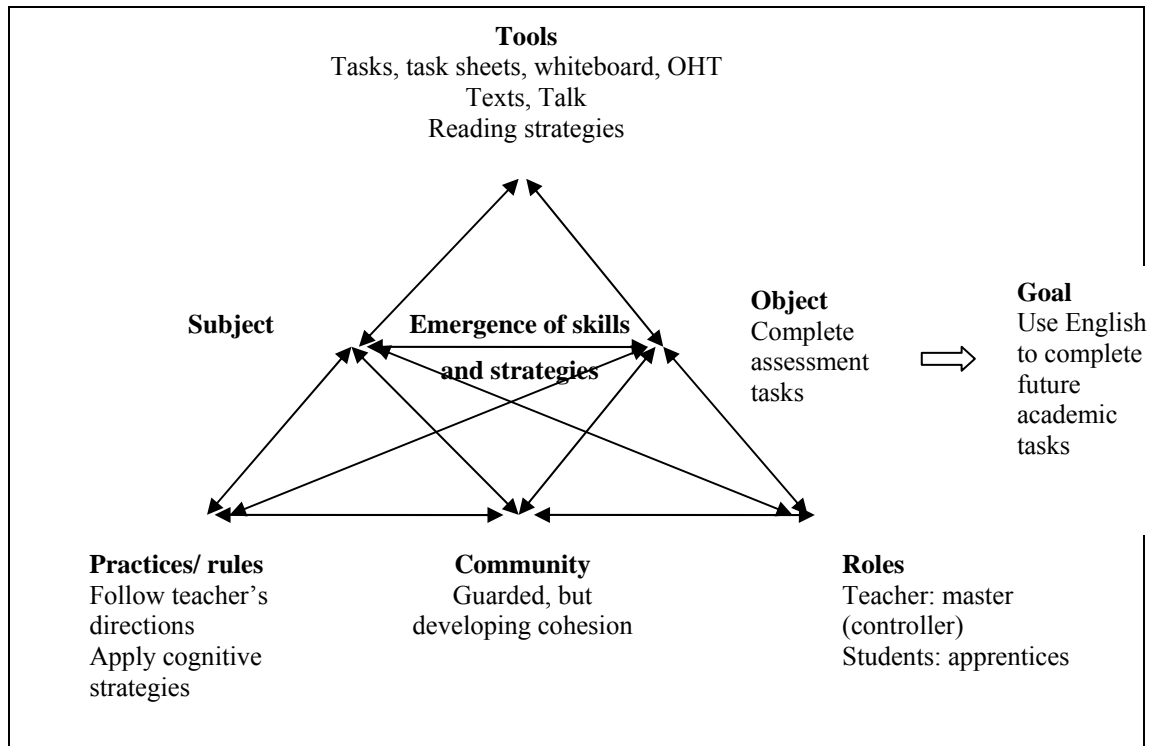
4.2.2a Goals and objects

The goal from the teacher's perspective was pragmatic: for the students to acquire sufficient command of English and independent study skills to successfully cope with the assessment demands of university subjects. As Andrea put it:

Andrea: The overall objective is to make them independent students who can manage in the academic environment [NGC_Andrea_FinalInt]

Her view appeared to be that this independence would be achieved through equipping the students with particular skills and strategies to complete future academic tasks.

Figure 15: The activity system at Newgate College



Some of the students shared, or came to share, a similar goal. For example, Charity explained that, although she had started the subject thinking that it would allow her to enjoy using English for description and narrative, she soon realised that she was now dealing with different genres which would be useful to her in the future. She found that the course demanded a lot more of her time and was much more challenging than she had anticipated, but she decided that the course benefited her because:

Charity: ... it refines your ideas about English as you know it. Especially for the future.

Kate: So what was the best thing about the subject?

Charity: The referencing. I had no idea about it. The argumentative. I never knew I was writing formal. So it educates you. And you have a way of structuring your work, especially essays. So you won't have problems when you go to second year. (NGC_CharityInt2)

Interestingly, Charity's perspective on the course appears to have been broader and in some ways more aspirational, than the teacher's, although she also valued the pragmatic nature of the course which would equip her with necessary skills for successful study, such as referencing and structuring essays.

For some of the students, however, long term pragmatic goals were less significant than the immediate goal of simply passing *Academic English*. While recognising the general goal of 'improving their English,' they saw this goal mainly in instrumental terms:

Kate: What was the purpose for you of doing Academic English?

Wanda: I think, for me, just to get a high mark.

Kate: And you had to do the subject in order to go on (to the next level)?

Wanda: Yes.

[NGC_WandaInt]

Another student expressed this instrumental motivation even more bluntly:

Yoshi: Well, it's one subject I have to pass it to get credit in order to get subject credit go on into the university. That's all. And also I hope to get better English. [NGC_CharityYoshiElaineInt]

Unlike Mark at Sandstone College, Andrea did not spend time in class discussing goals: her focus was on actions and objects, rather than goals. Lessons began by focussing on actions: talking about homework, or having students recall the content of the previous lesson. She rarely 'pointed forward' (Hammond and Gibbons, 2005, p21) to the goals and actions planned for the class or the course, but tended to focus on each action as it unfurled. For example, during the task initiation phase of the Polygamy Class, Andrea introduced the topic and had students discuss it, but she did not make an overt link with the work on critical thinking that the students had been doing in the first phase of the lesson. Nor did she explain to the students the overall plan for the class, the short-term goals (participate in the debate, write the homework essay), or the long-term goals (use critical thinking to participate in academic discourse); instead she introduced each sub-task one by one: read the text; locate the main propositions; critique these propositions; hold the debate; do the homework.

On the other hand, Andrea spent considerable time and energy focusing on the product objects of the course: the assessment tasks to be handed in during the semester, particularly the essay, and the regular stream of minor homework tasks which contributed to a class participation mark. In this way, she privileged the immediate product goals of the course over long-term goals. For their part, the students tended to view the assessable products not as a means towards longer-term goals, but as ends in themselves. Thus both Andrea and the students were motivated largely at the level of ‘action’ rather than ‘activity’ (Engeström, 1999) (see Table 7).

4.2.2b Conventions (Rules)

Andrea worked hard to establish conventions of behaviour within the activity system, asserting her authority over sometimes unwilling students. She wanted to ensure that students established a habit of independent study, as presented in the academic reading-writing macrogenre, so she regularly reminded students of the tasks which had to be submitted, and named/shamed students who had not submitted on time. Unlike Mark, however, she did not manage to combine this insistence with the same mellow humour. The subject was very demanding for students: Charity, for example, had anticipated that *Academic English* would be easy for her, but found that it took up *ninety percent* of her workload – far more than her other subjects [NGC_CharityInt2].

Andrea also worked hard to establish a culture of engagement in the class. She switched actions frequently, moving rapidly between the task negotiation and the task collaboration genres. During the task negotiation genre she called on students by name, ensuring that everyone contributed; similarly during the task collaboration genre, she circulated around the class to make sure that all students were participating. She ensured that they always had a worksheet in hand so that they had a concrete tool to support their action. The students tried to resist this pressure to participate by avoiding eye-contact, slumping in their chairs, folding their arms across their chests, sitting at a distance from the teacher’s desk and each other, remaining silent during groupwork, and giving minimal answers to teacher generated questions. They rarely asked questions, and sometimes held off-task conversations or fiddled with their mobile phones. However, little by little as the semester progressed they were drawn into participation in the conventions of behaviour that Andrea was trying to establish, including her demand for submission of frequent homework assignments.

In the task collaboration genre, Andrea made the students get up and move into new groups for nearly every task, so that they had to physically move, and also interact with different class members. At first they did so grudgingly, but gradually the group became more cooperative, as Andrea's classroom rules became more entrenched.

In terms of reading practices, Andrea also attempted to impose rules of behaviour quite vigorously. As Charity commented:

Charity: I actually wanted to be there cos I really like English. I like expressing, writing, more of descriptive writing, stories and stuff, related to novels. But this one is more argumentative and reports, and it's more official and there's rules and regulations and I take English to be such a free subject that now I feel differently. At the beginning I really wanted to be there but now I feel that it really does require a lot of work. [NGC_CharityInt2]

In this extract, Charity is referring particularly to the *rules and regulations* of conforming to academic genres such as essays and reports. However, in terms of reading also, Andrea tended to present reading strategies as rules rather than as suggested practices. For example, in stage 3 of NGC03_09 (see Table 13), Andrea was teaching the strategy of note-taking, using a text which itself compared the advantages and disadvantages of highlighting and note-taking. Andrea had the students work in groups to brainstorm what would be the most effective way to take notes from this compare-and-contrast text. With some encouragement she eventually maneuvered one student into coming up with the format she was trying to elicit, and writing it up on the whiteboard:

Highlighting		Notetaking	
Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages

However, one student, Hussein, continued to resist:

Andrea: Now Hussein, you had a different system. How would you do it?

Hussein: Just highlight the main ideas. Just sometimes you have so many idea. Just the main ones.

Andrea: Now hang on a minute. You're telling me how to highlight and note-take, but I don't want to know that. I just want to know: in this particular reading we want to find the main ideas. And we know from the title that highlighting and note-taking are being contrasted. It's like saying let's compare dogs and cats. Alright? It doesn't matter what the topic is. But if I said to you, let's compare dogs and cats, how would you organise your notes? Would it be like this? (pointing to the table on the board) Or would it be a list?

Hussein: No a list.

Andrea: Why a list? How would you do it? ... Come and show me.

Hussein: (resisting) I'd just write them down and ..

Andrea: Well come and show me. (Hussein reluctantly moves out of his chair and moves toward board, blushing) Get you doing some exercise. I don't want you falling asleep in my class. (Hussein begins to write on board) And where's the dogs and cats? Can you write those two things, because you're comparing the two.

Hussein: Well, just write, let's say here (inaudible mumbling)

Andrea: Ahah! So you've got a different structure there. You told me you'd just list them.

Hussein: This is a list.

Andrea: Yes, but you're putting the differences on the right side.

Hussein: Yeah, of course. I'm not going to mix them.

Andrea: Why?

Hussein: You'd get a bit confused which is which. (Students laugh)

Andrea: So all of you, even Hussein, has come to the conclusion that columns are better than just notes on the page. [NGC_03_09-3]

Reading strategies, then, tended to be reified and presented as rules in the approach taken by Andrea. This reification became very clear when the students were assigned to take notes from a short passage on *The Marketing Concept* [NGC_03_16_3]. The

students were not allowed to copy from the passage; more than that, however, it was made clear to them that they had to take notes following a prescribed format, and include particular propositions.

Although there is considerable research showing that reading strategies can be taught (Amer, 1994; Caverly, Nicholson, & Radcliffe, 2004; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Pani, 2004, to name just a few), the students in this group were resistant to transferring the reading strategies taught in class to their independent work. In the interviews, they claimed that the work on reading strategies was somewhat boring, easy and not relevant in preparing their essays. For example:

Kate: Andrea's really been working a lot on strategies. Things like picking out the main ideas, identifying topic sentences, identifying text structure, - compare and contrast, problem and solution – She's done a lot of work on note-taking, T-charts, text mapping that sort of thing. Spidergrams. Writing summaries. Those are the sorts of things she's covered. Are they useful, or not very useful?... (Students hesitating) Interesting? Boring? What do you think? (Students hesitating) Yoshi?

Yoshi: Well, pretty boring for me actually. Cos I've done so many times before in ELICOS. And I've just covered again and again. So I found it quite easy for me...

[NGC_CharityYoshiLinInt]

Kate: So why didn't you use Andrea's system (in writing your essay)?

Carol: In my opinion, it's kind of waste time.

Kate: Right.

Carol: You have to write a lot and some of them are not really needed for the essay. (...)But I think even some students take some notes but they don't really understand what did they write about cos they just want to complete their homework. Maybe they won't look at it when they write their essay. [NGC_CarollInt]

There was considerable evidence in the interviews that students generally continued to use reading strategies from earlier experiences of reading. For example, Charity had learned to take notes in her previous schooling; Wanda talked about her use of the Chinese strategy of learning texts by heart, and the difficulty of knowing how to reference sentences which she had memorised in their entirety. In particular, students were resistant to guessing meaning from context, and the complex note-taking formats that Andrea presented. Skimming and scanning were useful, but many students still talked about needing to understand every word. Shuji, for instance, in his final interview complained passionately:

Shuji: Reading is my biggest problem. It's just painful. I don't really have any vocabularies. ... I just keep my dictionary beside me, and when I find words I don't know I just check, check, and it takes a long, long time. [NGC_ShujiInt]

Nevertheless, there was also evidence that students had gained considerable fluency in reading during the course, and that they may have been, unconsciously perhaps, using the strategies that Andrea had taught:

Wanda: I'm not sure but I think over this semester my English has improved a lot – especially reading I think.

Kate: Why do you think that's occurred? How do you know?

Wanda: For example, just a short passage, three months ago I would spend a long time to read it and cannot get the general idea, but after this semester sometimes I just use 8 or 9 minutes to get the totally idea. So I think my reading has improved a lot. [NGC_WandaInt]

4.2.2c Roles

The distributed roles played by teacher and students at Newgate College have already been foreshadowed in the previous sections. To some extent, Andrea acted as ‘**enabler**’, setting up learning tasks for students to work on in pairs or groups during the task collaboration genre, and monitoring and guiding their participation in literacy events, including reading events. Unlike Mark, however, who took a backseat while

the students were working collaboratively, Andrea steered the task collaboration genre very closely. As will be seen more clearly in the section below on teacher talk, she frequently interrupted the students' collaborative discourse, taking a strongly proactive role in determining the outcomes of any task.

During the task negotiation genre, Andrea vigorously involved the students in participating as described above. Her dynamic use of the IRE pattern of teacher talk and nominating of respondents meant that all the students were dragooned into participation. She rarely took extended turns – her longest monologue was 282 words long. Unlike Mark who used extended turns of up to 572 words regularly during the task negotiation genre, assuming the role of 'instructor', Andrea rarely assumed this role, making relatively little distinction between her role in the task negotiation and the task collaboration genres.

Although she did not often take on the role of 'instructor', Andrea played the role of '**controller**' very often. Not only did she control the sequence of actions, the texts and the tasks that were used in class, but also the meanings that could be made legitimately as students interacted with text. She frequently insisted on particular answers, especially if she had taken a task from a book with an answer key. For example, in the following task negotiation genre from NGC_03_09, Andrea is correcting the students' homework. They had been asked to note down the main ideas and supporting details from a text on *The uses of computers* which listed ways in which computers are used in six different fields, including Medicine. Andrea was not happy with the way in which the students had performed this task. She told the students that the problem was that they had looked for main ideas at the beginning of paragraphs, whereas in this text they were found elsewhere (this was confusing for the students, who had been instilled with the concept of the topic sentence appearing at the beginning of the paragraph):

Andrea: I'm going to return your summaries on the 'Uses of Computers' – and I must say, most of them were done very poorly. (...) What most people did when you wrote your outlines is you found the main idea or you looked for the main idea in a particular spot in the paragraph – can you tell me where? At the beginning, middle, end?

Hassan: At the beginning.

Andrea: At the beginning. And that was the mistake! Because most of the main ideas were not at the beginning. They were in the middle, or at the end. So I'm going to return this to you and show you where you went wrong. [NGC_03_09_2]

This short extract illustrates Andrea's reification of concepts such as 'main idea', 'topic sentence', 'outlines'. Similarly, in the following extract, Andrea presents the 'uses of computers in Medicine' as if the six uses that were in her answer key represented a delineated reality or 'truth', like items on a Kim's game tray, rather than simply being examples of how computers can be used. This was reinforced by her use of an overhead transparency to write up the answers.

Andrea: OK. Now, 'Computers in Medicine'. There were a lot – a lot of uses of computers in Medicine. Kay, what did you get?

Kay: Umm, what did I write or what was it meant to be?

Andrea: Well, what it was meant to be.

Kay: Information

Andrea: Information, that's right. Computers are used to give doctors information. Now look in here, have a look to see what it said on page 34. Here we go! 'Medical applications of computers assist in keeping us healthy.' The second sentence: 'They provide instant information for doctors.' So that one should have been on. OK? Right. You didn't do this one? Elaine, what's the next use of computers in medicine?

Elaine: 'Expert systems'.

Andrea: 'Expert systems'. Quite a few of you wrote that. That one is probably the same as this one. It's an expert system so it provides information for doctors. Carol, keep going! What's the next one?

Carol: 'On-line monitoring of patients'

Andrea: Monitoring patients. Well, there was another one before that: it talks about 'Expert systems may be used to assist a medical practitioner in making a diagnosis' Does everyone know what that is? A diagnosis? ...

Amarasiri: Identify an illness

Andrea: Good, Amarasiri! To identify an illness – what’s wrong with the patient. And then Carol said monitoring patients, on-line monitoring, so the person is perhaps distant ... (voice tails off) I think most people got ‘performing complex tasks.’ There’s two more – anyone want to tell me what the last two uses of computers in medicine are? ...Charity, would you like to tell me?

Charity: helping the disabled? (hesitantly)

Andrea: Yes. OK, helping the disabled. So there are actually six there. Six uses of computers. Some people did the opposite. Most people wrote too much detail, other people only chose one or two of the uses.

[NGC_03_09_2]

By controlling the ‘correct’ answers to the task, Andrea acted in the role of master, placing students in the role of apprentices or novices. In this role, as Canagarajah (2002), points out, students are placed in a ‘deficit’ position on the margins of the discourse community, lacking the knowledge of insiders, while the teacher as master holds the key to a mystified ‘coffer’ of knowledge. In effect, Andrea was taking the role of ‘arbiter of meaning’ (see Lampert 1990, cited in Palincsar, 1998, p.18), by determining which answers were acceptable and which were not.

The teacher’s actions, in fact, seemed to position the students as objects rather than subjects within the activity system: the teacher’s goal appeared to be to mould the students so that they would be sure to produce the outcomes that she determined. This is reflected in her statement of goals cited above:

Andrea: The overall objective is to make them independent students who can manage in the academic environment [Andrea_FinalInt]

This was possible in the confined context of classroom exercises, although much less so in the more open environment of the essay and press report tasks. Even in this open environment, however, Andrea attempted to guide the students as closely as possible. They submitted work at every stage of the assignment writing process, and Andrea gave detailed feedback, demonstrating her commitment to the academic development of each individual student. The students, then, were positioned as ‘**apprentices**’, in a tightly prescribed role. Palincsar (1998, p346) refers to this mode of teaching as ‘direct instruction’, locating it in the behaviourist paradigm:

The hallmark of direct instruction is the active and directive role assumed by the teacher, who maintains control of the pace, sequence and content of the lesson (Baumann 1988, p.714): ‘The teacher, in a face-to-face reasonably formal manner, tells, shows, models, demonstrates, teaches the skill to be learned. The key word here is teacher, for it is the teacher who is in command of the learning situation and leads the lesson, as opposed to having instruction “directed” by a worksheet, kit, learning center, or workbook.’

In class, the students were encouraged to construct meaning, but strictly within the parameters set by Andrea. An interesting example of the detailed scaffolding of meaning by Andrea occurred in the *Polygamy* class [NGC05-04]. After the task orientation and initiation genres, the students were asked to read a short essay (+/-500 words) on polygamy and to pick out four key arguments. The layout of the worksheet indicated that four arguments had to be distilled, and the following task negotiation genre gave Andrea a chance to ensure that the students had correctly understood these arguments. In the homework task sheet, they were again asked to summarise, in writing this time, the four arguments.

In preparing the major assignments, however, Andrea’s careful guidance could not be as tight. Although they were asked to follow a note-taking format which provided a scaffolding framework, students chose their own topics, selected their own texts, prepared their own notes from these texts, derived their own meanings as far as possible, and created their own essays, largely beyond the control of their teacher. Like apprentices in a Leonardo da Vinci workshop, they were no longer simply painting between the lines, but were learning to become more independent and creative, while still under the master’s watchful eye.

The shift between the tightly structured context of the classroom and the almost boundless context of the essay was difficult for the students to manage. Many found it hard to locate manageable sources; some, like Charity, poured weeks of work into reading for the assignment; others took an easier path by using an essay that they had prepared for another subject using set texts as a starting point. For all of them, however, the arduous process of producing the essay through all the stages of the

academic reading-writing macrogenre was a tremendous challenge, though also a very satisfying one for some. By the end of semester the students seemed to be glowing with confidence. Wanda, for example, exclaimed in my interview with her in the last week:

Wanda: When I finished the task for Academic English then I will feel VERY HAPPY (sounding joyful!) I don't know why.

Kate: Because you feel proud of what you've done? Satisfied?

Wanda: Not satisfied (modestly). And not happy during the process. But when I finished it, I will feel very happy and relaxed. I haven't got this feel before. [NGC_WandaFinalInt]

Nevertheless, a number of students still felt that reading was the major skill holding them back. For example, in my final interview with Shuji, he exclaimed:

Shuji: Reading is my biggest problem. It's just painful. I don't really have any vocabularies. I can say some words, but I don't know how to speak. I can't recognize them. So many words. My vocabulary is really, really bad. During reading you have to pick up words, words, words. During class I HAVE to read something. I just keep my dictionary beside me, and when I find words I don't know I just check, check, and it takes a long, long time. [NGC_ShujiInt]

4.2.2d Community

At the beginning of the semester, the students had little sense of community. They were a very disparate group and there was little sense of mutual trust. As Charity put it:

Charity: I didn't know any of them so you just feel like you're the worst one in the class. You don't feel like you're going for the same thing. You don't feel related. You just feel like they are just people sitting there. [NGC_CharityFinalInt]

With nearly every iteration of the task collaboration genre, Andrea had the students move physically into different groupings, some of which did not work at all well. Often the students resisted working in these groups, and even up to the end of semester the students often did not participate willingly in pairwork. To some extent

this was because of the communication difficulties between students with different accents and levels of ability. Also, the students had different learning styles and interests. As Charity said:

Charity: I don't like working in groups. Cos I'm usually guessing it in my head, and I like doing it alone. Cos working in groups, if somebody doesn't understand, you don't really know how to make them understand it. So you don't know how to do, and their English is also a problem for them. So you're trying to understand what they're trying to say, but you don't get it, so you can't do anything because you do understand and they don't. [NGC_CharityFinalInt]

Nevertheless, she realised that working in groups had brought the students together so that by the end of semester it had made, as she called it, *a sort of comfort zone* [NGC_CharityFinalInt].

Andrea, on the other hand, considered that the class *never really gelled* [NGC_AndreaFinalInt]. But despite the disparity within the group, Andrea, using her role as 'controller', ensured that all the students participated equitably and respectfully, from the three very quiet young Chinese women, to the loud and disruptive Hussein. Sometimes Andrea achieved equitable participation by 'putting down' resistant students, as will have been apparent in some of the earlier extracts. Although the students often participated somewhat grudgingly, there was nevertheless a sense of mutual commitment to the goal of completing the tasks. Students were rarely off-task. This focused activity was largely driven by Andrea's snappy pacing, frequent switching of activity, and reiterated focus on the progress of the assessment tasks.

At the end of semester, once the three major assignments had been completed, there was a palpable sense of relief and drop in tension on the part of teacher and students, as the classes cruised to the final exam and closure of the course. The last few classes, particularly the Polygamy Class, were more relaxed and very enjoyable. As Wanda said:

Wanda: I think the most interesting is the last three or four weeks.

Kate: Why is that?

Wanda: I think there is more activity. Just like the critical thinking debate, argues. We have more chance to speak. I think it is the biggest reason. [NGC_Wanda_FinalInt]

4.2.2e Tools

Tasks and texts

The activity system at Newgate College was strongly task-based and product-focused. The overall curriculum macrogenre was structured around preparation for the four major assessment tasks (the essay, the press report, the research report and the final exam); within this framework, the reading-writing macrogenre was realised through a myriad of smaller classroom and homework tasks.

The early tasks in the macrogenre were intended to develop students' practice of reading strategies: skimming and scanning, reading for main ideas, surveying a chapter, guessing meaning from context, taking notes, and summarising. These short tasks were usually closely prescribed and operational. For example, students would be given clear instructions about the operations required: to underline topic sentences or to complete a given chart. Each task was based on a particular short text drawn from a variety of academic or quasi-academic sources, particularly textbooks. From my observation and the students' comments in interviews, it was clear that they did not find the texts difficult to understand. Each text introduced a different topic. Titles included: *Malaria - a new threat; Plagiarism - a clash of traditions; Terrible winds; The surface of the earth; The uses of computers; The marketing concept; Highlighting and note-taking; Cultural variations in styles of thinking*. The topics were rarely elaborated: the focus of each task was on the reading strategy and the operations required rather than the topic itself. Content, in fact, played a secondary role. As Carol explained:

Carol: Sometimes when Andrea asks us to read an article and answer the question, we just answer the questions, not really read the article. Just find the answers. [NGC_CarolInt]

Other students agreed that the quantity of short tasks led to surface learning:

Kate: And you have to do the homework for Academic English?

Yoshi: Yeh. It's regularly.

Kate: Do you agree, Elaine?

Elaine: So many homework have to finish. I agree with Yoshi 'cos we have other subjects to do the assignments as well.

Kate: I guess it's good to have lots of homework if it's really helping you learn?

Yoshi: It's really hard to say. It depends on your motivation, I think. If you are really motivated then you are happy to do the homework, but if your motivation is low, just be lazy.

Charity: You're rushing. You don't really have time to sit down and think about it. [NGC_CharityYoshiElaineInt]

The short tasks described above were designed to develop students' strategies and abilities to handle the major formative assessment task: the essay. Although this task was only worth 20% of the overall grade for the subject, it was the lynch-pin of the whole course. It represented an enormous challenge for the students, and once it had been completed, there was a sense that the course was a downhill run from then on. As mentioned earlier, the students were asked to choose their own topic and find their own sources. Some chose to write on topics from their other subjects, but for some students, this was their first semester and their first experience of dealing with the library and writing an extended argumentative essay. Many students devoted an enormous amount of time to finding sources, and their ability to make meaning from these sources varied widely, especially for those who were writing in unfamiliar fields of knowledge. Charity, for example, chose to write on Development Economics, a field in which she had no prior knowledge. As she said:

Charity: In the beginning I used to like reading a lot, but now after doing this assignment, you just don't want to read any more because it's so much work. I'd rather just sit down and listen.

Kate: So you did a lot of reading then for the assignment?

Charity: Yeah, different books, different sources because the essay really turned up a lot.

Kate: Well, you took on a really challenging topic.

Charity: I know! I don't know why I chose it, (...) picking the developing thing, I thought I could really take it from the general knowledge I

have and maybe just a little from the books. But when I did the reading, I realised you have to really KNOW, the economics and stuff. So it was really challenging. [NGC_CharityFinalInt]

The Polygamy Class [NGC05-04], shown in Table 14, however, in the second-to-last week stood in marked contrast to these early tasks. The class represented an entire manifestation of the academic reading-writing macrogenre, with a series of scaffolded tasks leading up to the final written task. Andrea's aim in this class was to develop critical thinking. In the task orientation phase, she introduced the concept of 'critical thinking' by having the students read two short passages and answer a set of associated questions on the theme of critical thinking. Andrea then wrote the word *Polygamy* on the whiteboard and began a class discussion on the topic. From this point, the students' attention was engaged. They all seemed to be able to relate to the topic. As Wanda commented: *I am interested in something close to our lives.* [NGC_WandaInt]. Once the topic had been established, Andrea asked the students to read a short essay in support of polygamy, and to work in groups to identify its four arguments. After a reporting back session, the students went back to their groups to discuss counter-arguments. Again a reporting back (task negotiation genre) phase followed, and the students were asked to raise their hands if they supported or opposed polygamy. On this basis, the students were grouped into opposing teams to prepare for the ensuing debate. After a few minutes discussion to prepare their arguments, the students were arranged in two opposing rows. They took it in turns to present one point, whereupon a member of the opposing team had a chance to refute this argument and present a counter-argument. For homework, students filled in a chart with the arguments presented in the essay, commenting on the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments, and then wrote up these notes into a short critique of the essay. The written task was not compulsory, but most students chose to complete it. The Polygamy class was absolutely engaging. For the first time in the semester, all the students were totally involved the whole time. It was also the first time that every student took extended turns (apart from giving oral presentations), although expressing their ideas coherently was clearly a major challenge.

Talk

As indicated above, Andrea did not make a clear distinction between the task initiation, task collaboration and task negotiation genres, often using the task collaboration genre as a time to continue her use of regulative and instructional talk with small groups rather than with the class as a whole. During the task collaboration genre, Andrea's voice could be heard almost constantly. The frequent switching of activity meant that there was a much higher level of regulative talk than in Mark's classes at Sandstone College. Another difference was the concentration of talk about literacy, rather than about content.

Table 15: Newgate College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre

Genre	Register	Function
Task initiation	Regulative	Calling on students to answer Giving feedback Giving instructions
	Instructional	Instructing about strategy use (metaliteracy)
Task collaboration	Regulative	Calling on students to answer Giving feedback Giving instructions
	Instructional	Instructing about strategy use (metaliteracy)
Task negotiation	Regulative	Controlling Calling on students to answer Giving feedback
	Instructional	Instructing about strategy use (metaliteracy)

The general tone is bright, brisk and action-focused. Humour is rare (except in the Polygamy class).

Also, as mentioned above, Andrea did not engage in extended turns, although she often voiced to me the concern that she was talking too much. This concern was typical of her desire to establish an active classroom community in which all students were participating actively all the time:

Andrea: I'm so much aware that there are things that I want to get through or that I need to teach them. I need to teach them THIS today. But that's what I mean by workshopping. Perhaps they will learn more from actually DOING things rather than from me standing there saying this is how you do referencing ...I also feel very aware of students sitting there being bored. [NGC_AndreaFinal]

The following extract, an example of the task initiation genre in which Andrea is preparing her students to take notes for their major essay, includes a typical example of one of the longer turns taken by Andrea. She is explaining to the students how she would like them to use the note-taking format she had adapted from Cottrell (2005). Typically, she draws the students into the warp and weft of the classroom discourse through her use of close interpersonal modality (for example, frequent use of students' names, the second person, and an inclusive 'we'), and her simple clauses (no embedding, little subordination). Her questions, too, in the IRE exchange are eminently 'answerable', as the answers are presented quite clearly on the note-taking sheet in front of them. She positions herself as 'master' and her students as 'novice apprentices', taking a prescriptive approach to building reading practices by her frequent use of imperatives, and strong modal verbs such as 'will', 'must' and 'need to'. It is also noticeable that there is a strong emphasis on metaliteracy, and only a glancing reference to the content of students' work. As in previous examples of Andrea's teacher talk, her tendency to reify literacy concepts is apparent:

Andrea: So 'I think that...' Where are you going to put that information in your essay?

Carol: Introduction.

*Andrea: **Introduction.** Whereabouts? Which part of the introduction?*

Yoshi: Thesis statement.

*Andrea: Thank you Yoshi. This will be your thesis. Will you say it like this?
Will you say 'I think that'?*

Hassan et al: No

Andrea: That's good. Did anyone say 'yes'?(no response) Good. We have to make it impersonal. But this is definitely your opinion. When you are reading, write down 'I think that ...' What you just said to me.

*And you look for support for those ideas. The ‘because’ is the information that you are looking for in your reading. Please highlight that on that sheet. If there’s anything that I want you take away from this lesson today it’s that! That what you are reading and taking notes for is the answer to that question that you had. But the question needs to be answered by you! Now some of you don’t know the answer to the question. Like Chandra, she doesn’t really know yet – correct me if I’m wrong – **whether the classical or the behavioural perspective is better.** Maybe you don’t know yet. And that’s part of the learning process. You need to read, see what other people think and then maybe come to your conclusion. Right, so some of you will know already, like Kumar, and maybe after he’s done his research he’s going to change his mind. Maybe. That’s possible. So it doesn’t matter that your opinion changes, but you must start with something. And then ‘I think that..’ and I need to find why, the reasons. Or the factors or whatever it is and they will be in your notes. OK? Is that alright? With everyone? OK. Now Can you just go to the back of this sheet like this. This sheet on the back is going to be your bible for the next few weeks. Have a look at it and tell me what it is. What is it?*

Kumar et al: (quietly) Notes. [NGC03_16_5]

Underline = regulative discourse

Bold = instructional discourse (literacy practices)

Bold + underline = instructional discourse (content)

In the task collaboration genre, too, Andrea continues to use similar linguistic devices: imperatives, strong modality, second person pronouns. The following example is taken from an incidence of the task collaboration genre in which Andrea has intervened in the students’ action of taking notes from *The Marketing Concept*. As in the previous example, the students are positioned firmly as novices, and the effect of this on Kumar is plain in his meek response ‘*So I know I did it wrong*’. As in the previous example, Andrea foregrounds metaliteracy, while the text content tends

to be reified into ‘truths’ as in her question: What IS **the marketing concept**? and the rejoinder: Yes, so **what do they need and what do they want.**

Andrea: (moving across to Kumar’s group) Good. Kumar’s started it. Have you done it all? (looking at Kumar’s work) You’ve got a lot of **information** there, Kumar; you’ve got too much **information.** (...) **What are the essential aspects of the marketing and the sales concept?** **YOU SHOULDN’T BE WRITING SENTENCES OUT, Kumar! YOU SHOULD BE WRITING THEM IN YOUR OWN WORDS.** Sorry to point you out, only you wrote it exactly as it was there!

Kumar: *So I know I did it wrong.*

Andrea: So Hassan just said ‘Well, **I can’t just write all these sentences out.**’ Yes, that’s exactly right. You’ve got to **put it in your own words.** Shorten it. OK? (...) It’s just too much. For what we’re trying to do. So you’ve got to **pick out the main ideas.**

Kumar: (inaudible)

Andrea: OK you mean it’s a definition. Yes. So if you were writing an essay, you might choose to quote this whole thing. But we’re note-taking, so for the purposes of this exercise, I don’t want you to write the whole sentence out. Alright? So what’s **the key part,** then?

Kumar/Andrea: (Andrea pointing to section of text) ‘**determine the needs and wants of the target market**’

Andrea: And then? What? What is **the marketing concept?** Tell me in your own words. OK. Read it and tell me.

Kumar: (struggling)

Andrea: Tell me what did you just read.

Kumar: (mutters)

Andrea: Don’t look at it.

Kumar: *I’ve got to look at it*

Andrea: Can anyone tell me? What IS **the marketing concept?**

Charity: (inaudible)

Andrea: Yes, so **what do they need and what do they want.** And then?

Charity: (more)

Kumar: *But it's not academic if I write it myself.*

Andrea: *It doesn't matter. What will happen is you will write it in your own words in your notes and then when you come to write it in your essay you can change it again, but it will be your style. ..(...) not in full sentences. Notes. Just phrases.*

Charity: (quietly to Kumar) *You've got to understand the idea and then write it down.* [NGC03_16_3]

Underline = regulative discourse

Bold = instructional discourse (literacy practices)

Bold + underline = instructional discourse (content)

The extract above is an example of the 'learning moment genre' identified at Sandstone College. It was suddenly clear to Andrea that Kumar, and probably some other students, had not understood the concept of paraphrasing in note-taking. She used the opportunity to intervene in the action and correct the students' misconception of the desired literacy practice. Although Andrea's use of the learning moment genre was very different from Mark's, the classroom climate was similar: the whole class gave rapt attention for a short space of time while Andrea focused on the learning point. There was also a shift in the tone: in this case, Andrea spoke more loudly and firmly, using the imperative mood to stress her point.

Another feature of teacher talk in Andrea's classes was the frequent switching between task negotiation and task collaboration genres. Sometimes she did this spontaneously, without prior planning. For example, later in NGC03_16, Andrea wanted to draw the students' attention to strategic ways to handle the sources they had located for their major essays. She wanted them to discuss this first and then read a short text explaining the use of skimming, scanning and reading in detail. However, having given out the text, she decided to reverse her plan and have students read and discuss in groups. She gave instructions quickly and efficiently, but the students were unable to follow these instructions:

Andrea: (to whole class) What reading strategies can you use to help you read more efficiently? There are four. Now you are going to look at the sheet. I shouldn't have handed it out.

Students: (inaudible)

Andrea: OK (reluctantly). Here's what we'll do. Can you (dividing the class into groups) please discuss how can we use reading for an overview? Can you (next group) tell me how you can use skimming? You two, (next group) how you can use scanning? And you two (next group), how you can use reading for detail. And notice that they are written in a particular order. ... So I want a little summary in your own words. (Andrea works with individual groups. Other groups not discussing at all) [NGC03_16_5]

Underline = regulative discourse

Bold = instructional discourse (literacy practices)

Bold + underline = instructional discourse (content)

From the examples already given, it can be seen that in the IRE sequence, Andrea's questions were generally referential, that is, demands for pre-determined answers. She did not often use questions to increase prospectiveness. However, in the Polygamy Class [NGC05_04], Andrea's use of teacher talk was somewhat different. Although she introduced frequent changes between the task collaboration and task negotiation genres, there was much more 'content' in this class. To begin with, in the task orientation genre, she used questions which provoked students' intellectual engagement (increasing prospectiveness). She also used humour, which changed the classroom climate conspicuously:

Andrea: **The topic is polygamy. Marrying more than one woman.** Who thinks that's a good idea?

(...)

Andrea: **You like that idea, Shuji?** (Kay snorts)

Shuji: Yeah, very much!

Andrea: I thought you would!

Hussein: It's too much trouble – even one's too much!

Andrea: Hassan? (various laughter – especially Kay)

Hassan: *One's enough.*

Andrea: *OK what about the women? What do you think, Carol?*

Carol: *I don't like it much*

Andrea: *You don't like the idea of sharing a man?* (More laughter)

[NGC05_04_2]

In the task collaboration genre, the students engaged in the task enthusiastically, picking out the main ideas from the text, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments and bringing in their own counter-arguments. When Andrea visited the groups, they asked questions of Andrea, and engaged in discussion, sharing power in the dialogue rather than being positioned as marginal novices:

Kay: *This is talking about years ago, right?*

Andrea: *Well, this is actually written recently. It was not written a long time ago.*

Shuji: *The first point is going to be a problem for us (that polygamy is necessary when husbands are killed in war).*

Andrea: *Why?*

Hassan: *Because it doesn't happen nowadays. Now it doesn't happen*

Hussein: *Like we said (inaudible)*

Andrea: *Aren't there some countries where this is still true today? Are there no countries where this is still true?*

Hassan: *Where husbands and fiancés are dying?*

Andrea: *Well, think about it, Afghanistan maybe, many men have been in the war, women have lost their husbands.*

Hassan: *(sounding knowledgeable) but now the cultural system is changed in Afghanistan. America has==*

Kay: *== Gross fat men with 14 year old wives. It's disgusting.*

Andrea: *Well, we could say that this is still true in some countries today.*

Hassan: *Maybe in African countries, yes.*

Hussein: *In some countries.* [NGC05_04_5]

During the debate, the students presented their arguments at length, while Andrea reverted to her role as controller, using imperatives and strong modals.

Hussein: (standing) The first one's about death of husbands in the war. A lady if her husband died, OK, she wants someone to help with the baby and her place because she doesn't have any job because if no-one help she's gonna die. And girls they don't accept any like money or help if it's not like a relative or very close to them. So in this case, she's gonna have to get married to another one. And men are allowed to marry more than one girl, to help them, with good intentions and all that. That's it.

Andrea: Thank you, Hussein. (good humoured laugh) You may sit! (Gestures to Charity)

Charity: (standing) OK. For our point against, I've seen all your thingies but women work. We're not living in the old days we're living NOW.

Hussein and Shuji: We're not talking about here.

Andrea: You have to listen – you'll get your chance.

Charity: So women work, (inaudible) the women and children. There's actually the government which pays women whose husbands have died in war. So they can look after them. And there's also community help. Because communities usually have fund-raising and they provide money for them. And there are friends and relatives who can always assist them if the husband dies. And if you think about it, it's like one husband dies more women and he goes to war and then dies. The woman has to cater for her whole life, a number of people then he has to get more than one wife. (delivered with a calm air of certainty). [NGC05_04_6]

In their homework essays critiquing the stimulus essay, students wrote willingly and fluently.

4.2.2f Newgate College: Summary of the activity system

The complex activity system of the Newgate College class was characterised by more contradictions than the Sandstone College class. The complexity arose partly from the myriad of scaffolding tools and sub-tasks to be performed. In this action-packed setting, the long-term goal of independent academic literacy sometimes became lost,

as students struggled to produce the numerous major and short-term product objects that were required.

a. Contradiction between Andrea’s goal and the role she adopted

Andrea’s intention was for the students to develop independent academic literacy practices; however, her strongly didactic teaching approach of frequently taking the role of ‘controller’ and ‘arbiter of meaning’ seemed to contradict her goal of encouraging the students to be independent. It was not until the end of course, for example in the Polygamy Class, that students had a chance to share power in the classroom. Furthermore, Andrea focused predominantly on ‘what’ she wanted the students to produce, rather than ‘why’ she set these tasks.

b. Contradiction between the students’ original reading practices and Andrea’s suggested reading practices

Andrea offered extensive scaffolding in order to support the students’ development of new reading practices – especially cognitive reading strategies such as guessing meaning from context, picking out main ideas and note-taking. At the beginning of the course, the students resisted these strategies, although some eventually adapted and developed their reading practices at least to some extent:

Kate: Do you think you’ve made any progress?

*Charity: I think I’ve changed my way of reading. At the beginning I used to read everything word for word. Just taking in everything and when you finish reading, it doesn’t really stick in, but now when you go to the direct stuff - the things you need - you remember them because you’ve gone for the specifics, and it kind of puts you into focus on the things you really need to know and what you need to remember.
[NGC_CharityFinalInt]*

Shuji: Even I concentrate VERY much, I cannot read like textbooks - PublicRelations textbooks. It is a lot of special words, technical words, I can’t read that. I have to use a dictionary all the time and I get tired. Like sometimes, like yesterday just easy words, I knew that, so I could read really, really quickly.

Kate: Have you tried the strategies that Andrea taught you like writing in the margin and underlining words? Do you do those sorts of things? Looking for what you know rather than what you don't know?

Shuji: Yes, I did it, but I can't get the perfect picture in my head.

[NGC_ShujiFinalInt]

c. Contradiction between the simple scaffolding tasks and the highly demanding major assessment tasks

There was a sharp contrast between the short, easy texts which Andrea used in class and the unbounded nature of the students' reading for their major essay. This meant that students lacked engagement in class, but also that the challenges outside class were enormous. Nevertheless, all the students were able to complete the major tasks to a standard which was acceptable to Andrea, managing to resolve the contradiction posed by the challenge of the task requirements.

d. Metacognition vs meaning-making

A final, interesting contradiction lay in the tension between metacognition (focus on learning) and meaning-making (focus on content). While the goal of reading is fundamentally to make meaning from text, metacognition rather than meaning-making was generally foregrounded in Andrea's lessons. That is, her attention focused more on HOW to make meaning than on WHAT meanings were constructed by the students. Only in the last two lessons on Polygamy and Plagiarism did content become prominent. Furthermore, until these last two lessons, Andrea nearly always acted as 'arbiter of meaning', determining what meanings could or could not be made, and moving on to the next text quickly before there could be any discussion or reflection on these meanings.

4.2.3 Understandings of critical reading at Newgate College

At Newgate College, Andrea saw critical reading as an analytical skill (see Chapter 2.2.1) which could be learned once a set of basic reading strategies had been acquired. Her predominant emphasis was on reading comprehension, with no reference to text as authored and little suggestion of reading as dialogue.

Early in the course, Andrea defined critical reading as critiquing (in the sense of finding the negatives), although later she equated it with evaluation. She also included questioning and finding a position in her definition:

Andrea: What else do you remember from Tuesday's lesson?

Wanda: The purpose, different ways to read, skimming, scanning and something more and the critical reading

Andrea: Ah! Critical reading.... And what's critical reading?

Hussein: Read critically.

Andrea: What does it mean?

Shuji: Read perfectly and understand everything, something like that

Andrea: Well, read perfectly. I don't know if you can read perfectly. But reading critically? If I criticise you, what am I doing? Not you. I'll say if I criticise this room. 'I think this room is too stuffy. Stuffy? Too hot' I'm being critical.

Student: Finding what's wrong.

Andrea: Yes, so I'm telling you what I think about this room. So critical reading therefore is ==

Student: Criticising?==

Andrea: == yes, reading something and QUESTIONING. 'Do I agree with this?' 'What do I think about it?' [NGC03_02_1]

However, although Andrea defined critical reading as critiquing, evaluating and questioning, none of these practices re-emerged in the on-going action of Andrea's classes, except in the press report macrogenre.

The press reports required students to summarise their chosen article; critique it, looking for bias; present their own opinion; and encourage discussion of the issue with the class. The exercise was not closely integrated into the main menu of the course, but rather tacked on as a 'side dish'. Students performed their presentations, followed by a few minutes of discussion, but generally these discussions seemed perfunctory, with little sense of personal connection. Often the presentations were hurriedly made at the end of the class, when the other students were beginning to pack up their bags. As the students each chose their own topic, there was no continuity between the brief presentations, and so there was little chance for the

students to develop a critical connection with the article or its content. A notable example was Shuji's presentation of an article about couples living together out of wedlock: this topic and Shuji's dynamic presentation suddenly focused the students on content, and inspired engagement.

In the major essay, Andrea encouraged the students to apply 'critical thinking' to their major assignments, in the sense of developing a position.

Andrea: what you are reading and taking notes for is the answer to that question that you had (the central question for the assignment). But the question needs to be answered by you! Now some of you don't know the answer to the question. Like Chandra, she doesn't really know yet – correct me if I'm wrong – whether the classical or the behavioral perspective (on management) is better. (...) And that's part of the learning process. You need to read, see what other people think, and then maybe come to your conclusion. [NGC03_16_5]

However, there was no chance for the students to practise this skill in class until the final days of the course.

At the end of the course, in the last two or three lessons, Andrea introduced the students to 'critical thinking', like icing on the cake of academic reading. At this point her understanding of critical reading seemed to be strongly influenced by Cottrell's workbook, *Critical thinking skills: developing effective analysis and argument* (2005). In particular Cottrell encourages students to understand critical reading as appreciating differing perspectives. Andrea introduced the students to Cottrell's allegory of the elephant in the kingdom of the blind, in which every blind courtier describes the elephant from a different perspective. Students were then asked to read the Polygamy essay described above; to evaluate the arguments presented; and to develop and present their own position. Having done this, the students participated in the debate, each team presenting a different perspective, either for or against polygamy. Andrea was pleased with the outcomes of this debate:

Andrea: Critical thinking and reading are very difficult to teach. But I think debating is a really good way to encourage students to verbalise the arguments for and against. But then it's another thing to write them down. [NGC_Andrea_FinalInt]

Despite encouraging the students to consider arguments ‘for’ and ‘against’, however, Andrea did not draw the attention to the author of the Polygamy text or the purpose and audience for which she was writing, neither did she engage in any discussion with the students about why different authors might hold different perspectives on this topic, or what alternative ways there might be of writing about it (C. Wallace, 2003, p. 115). In other words, she did not see reading as a social or negotiated practice, but rather as an analytical, deductive process of distilling propositions from text.

Thus, the predominant view of reading presented throughout the course was predicated on a technicist understanding of texts as embodying unitary and unassailable meanings. This reductive view of text was evident, for example, in Andrea’s insistence on the correct answers in the early note-taking tasks, her use of highly prescriptive worksheets, and her itemisation of what she considered to be the main points in the texts she shared with the students.

To sum up, Andrea’s understanding of critical reading seemed to develop over the duration of the course; however, it remained a pragmatic, technicist, skills-based approach to be added as ‘an extra’ to students’ more fundamental reading skills.

4.3 City College

As explained in Chapter 3, City College, like Sandstone College, is an ELICOS College attached to a large university. In the particular academic English class that was observed for the purpose of this study, there were 18 students, of whom 12 were Mandarin speakers, 12 were male students and about half were intending to do postgraduate study. The teacher, Lucy, had a recent Masters degree in Applied Linguistics, and previous teaching experience in South America as well as Australia.

The course comprised a five week module of intensive classes, 20 hours/week. The teaching was divided between two teachers, of whom I observed one, Lucy, who taught from Monday-Wednesday, while her co-teacher took the Thursday-Friday classes. The curriculum, which was closely determined by the institution, was relayed between the two teachers, one taking over where the other had left off.

This five week module fitted into the overall EAP curriculum of the institution, with previous levels focusing more on sentence and paragraph level grammar. Each of the EAP levels focused on a particular academic genre: in the case of this level, the essay. The previous level had focused on literature reviews, and the subsequent level focused on report-writing. Entry into any level depended on success at the previous level. New students were placed into the level appropriate to their skills, as determined by a diagnostic test.

As several parallel groups were running at any level, the institution had to ensure equity between these groups. Thus, the curriculum was closely specified with a suggested plan for every day of the module, set dates for submission of work, a workbook and set readings, and a common macrotask and exam. Marking was moderated across the groups.

Like Newgate College, the City College curriculum reflected a lamination of EAP approaches, integrating the four macroskills and giving attention to the academic writing process as well as attending to issues of genre (Lea and Street's 'socialisation' approach shown in Table 1). However, Lucy's own approach to the curriculum was strongly influenced by her passion for post-structuralist understandings of text, sociocultural understandings of learning, and systemic-functional linguistics.

4.3.1 City College: Curriculum macrogenres and genres

The curriculum macrogenre at City College (see Figure 16) was similar to that of Newgate College in that it followed the essay preparation process—what I have called the academic reading-writing macrogenre. However, it was much simpler in structure, as the students worked on only one macrotask for the entire five week module: an essay on the topic of work in the information economy. Like the Newgate College classes, the reading and writing macrogenres were closely integrated at City College. Although the stages of the macrogenre are similar to those at Newgate College, the stages of the City College macrogenre had a rather different intent: to construct meaning rather than to decode or derive meaning (see section 4.3.2a below), aiming in Canagarajah's words (2002a, p.20), at 'interrogating received knowledge and reconstructing it through the writing process'.

The students read three substantial texts on the topic of work in the information society (see Table 16). With each text, the elements of the reading macrogenre (orientation; reading for overall meaning; constructing detailed meanings; note-taking and summarising) became progressively more compressed. At the end of the third week, the specific essay question was announced. At this point the class activity returned again to the texts, taking notes in relation to the question. Finally, a synthesising exercise helped the students to draw the concepts from the three texts together before they completed their first draft of the essay. After feedback, the students were able to re-write their essays and submit their final version.

Figure 16: City College Curriculum Macrogenre

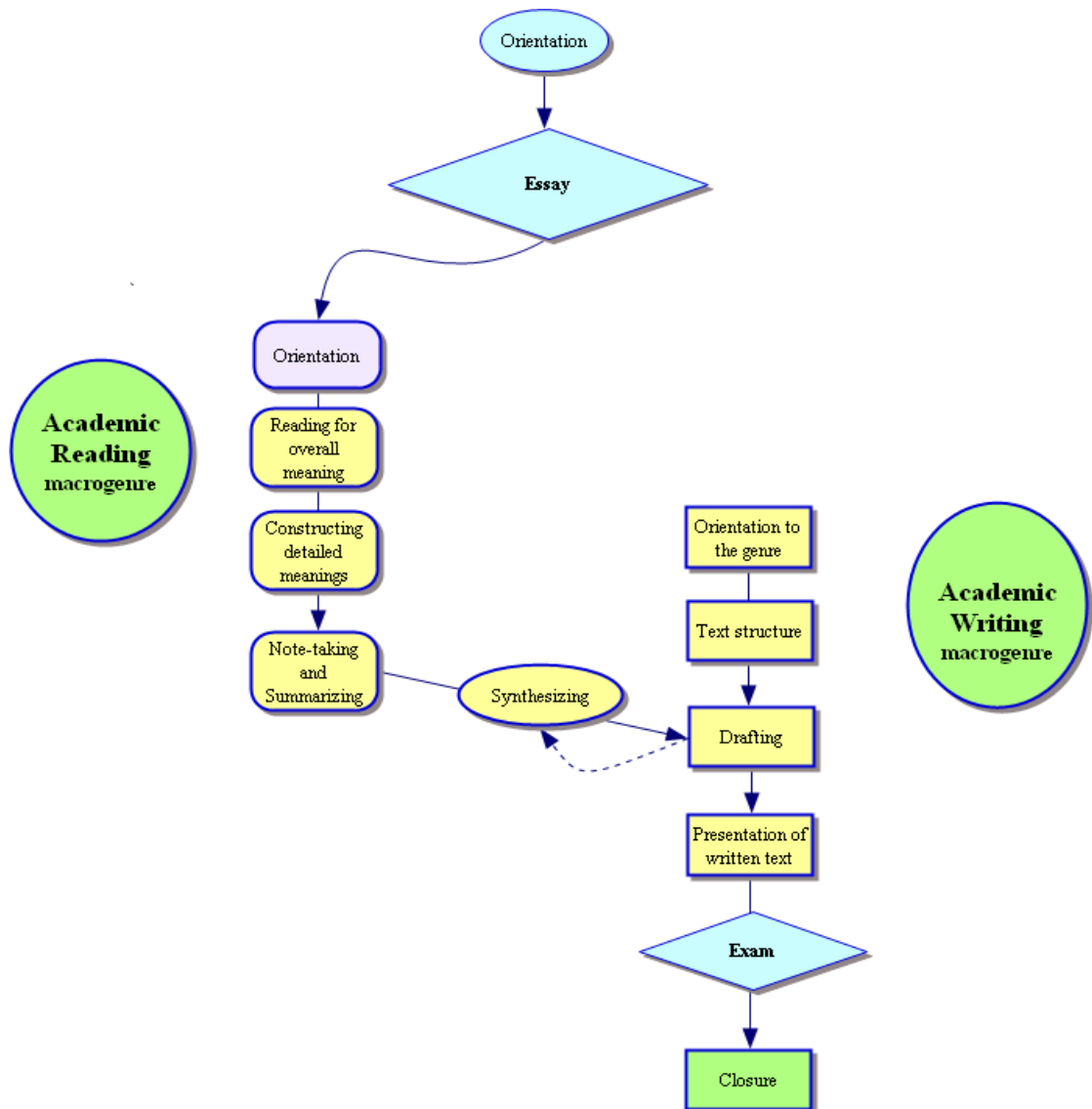


Table 16: The reading texts and essay question at City College

Texts	Extract from an ILO Report (2001) ‘Life at work in the information economy’ Belt, V. (2002). ‘A female ghetto? Women’s careers in call centres’ <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i> 12 (4), p51 Mitter, S. (2004) ‘Offshore outsourcing of information technology services: what are the implications for women?’ http://www.globalenvision.org/library/7/656/
Question	Compare the effects of increasing use of ICT on women’s employment and career prospects in developing and developed countries
Exam question	Telework is a growing practice in the modern workplace. Compare the impacts of teleworking on men and women.

At the end of the 5-week module the students sat an exam in which they were required to read two short texts, one of which was adapted from the in-class texts, on the same topic of work in the information economy and write a text-responsible essay on a new but related question synthesising material from these sources.

Table 17: Curriculum macrogenres and genres in a reading lesson at City College: ‘The spatial distribution of employment’ [CC_04_26a and b]

Stage	Curriculum macrogenre	Curriculum Genre	Action
1 (CC_04_26a)	Curriculum orientation	(2 mins)	Settling in Teacher talks about her personal activity on the previous day (a public holiday)
2	Orientation	Task initiation (30 secs)	Setting the task and outline for session
3		Task orientation a (14 mins)	Recalling previous sections of the text
4	Reading for overall meaning	Task orientation b (17 mins)	Skimming: Deconstructing title/ (7 mins) looking for key words that reflect the title (10 mins)
5	Constructing detailed meanings	Task initiation (7 mins).	Setting up note taking task; explaining task rubric (summary chart)
6		Task collaboration (19 mins)	Reading and filling in summary chart in groups
BREAK			
7 (CC_04_26b)	Constructing detailed meanings	Task negotiation (47 mins)	Teacher-led detailed deconstruction of text
8		Task closure	

As at Sandstone College and Newgate College, the curriculum macrogenre was realised in the classroom through the task orientation – task collaboration/ negotiation – task closure cycle. Unlike Andrea and Mark, however, Lucy relied heavily on task negotiation as the predominant curriculum genre. Table 17 shows the progress of a representative reading lesson, which dealt with the second section of the first reading text [CC_04_26a/b]. This lesson was preceded and followed by work on paragraph writing from the academic writing macrogenre. In a previous lesson, CC_04_24b and c, students had jointly constructed a paraphrase and summary of the first paragraph of the text, *Life at work in the information economy*.

An incidence of the ‘learning moment genre’ described at Sandstone College and Newgate College also occurred at City College. In CC04-24a Lucy initiated a collaborative task, asking the students to deconstruct the phrase *information economy* from the sub-heading *Life at work in the information economy*. However, the students complained that they did not have enough background knowledge to participate in the task. So Lucy was obliged to interrupt the task collaboration genre and revert to task negotiation, using contingent scaffolding (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) to assist the students to make meaning from the phrase. As at Sandstone College and Newgate College, the ‘learning moment genre’ had the following stages:

- teacher recognises students are unable to perform task during task collaboration genre
- teacher abandons lesson plan
- teacher reverts to task negotiation, giving overt and detailed explanation/ instruction.

However, unlike Mark and Andrea, Lucy did not return to the task collaboration genre to conclude the ‘learning moment genre’ (see Figure 12). The identification of the learning moment genre extends the work done by Bailey (1996) who identified six reasons why teachers deviated from their lesson plans: *serve the common good*; *teach to the moment*; *further the lesson*; *accommodate students’ learning styles*; *promote students’ involvement*; and *distribute the wealth*. In this study, deviation from the lesson plan in the learning moment genre could be attributed to the teachers capitalising on a ‘just-in-time’ learning opportunity (Michell & Sharpe, 2005, p.35).

4.3.2 City College: Activity Theory analysis

The City College learning environment was characterised by stronger and more complex contradictions than either Newgate College or Sandstone College in every aspect of the activity system: goals, roles, conventions, tools, community (see Figure 17). These contradictions had the potential to lead to substantial transformative learning, given sufficient and appropriate scaffolding.

4.3.2a Goals and objects

The teacher, Lucy, was passionate about the goal of the course as she saw it. She wanted students to understand that meaning is constructed by the reader through negotiation with text, and to take up the challenge of struggling to make meaning through dialogue with texts:

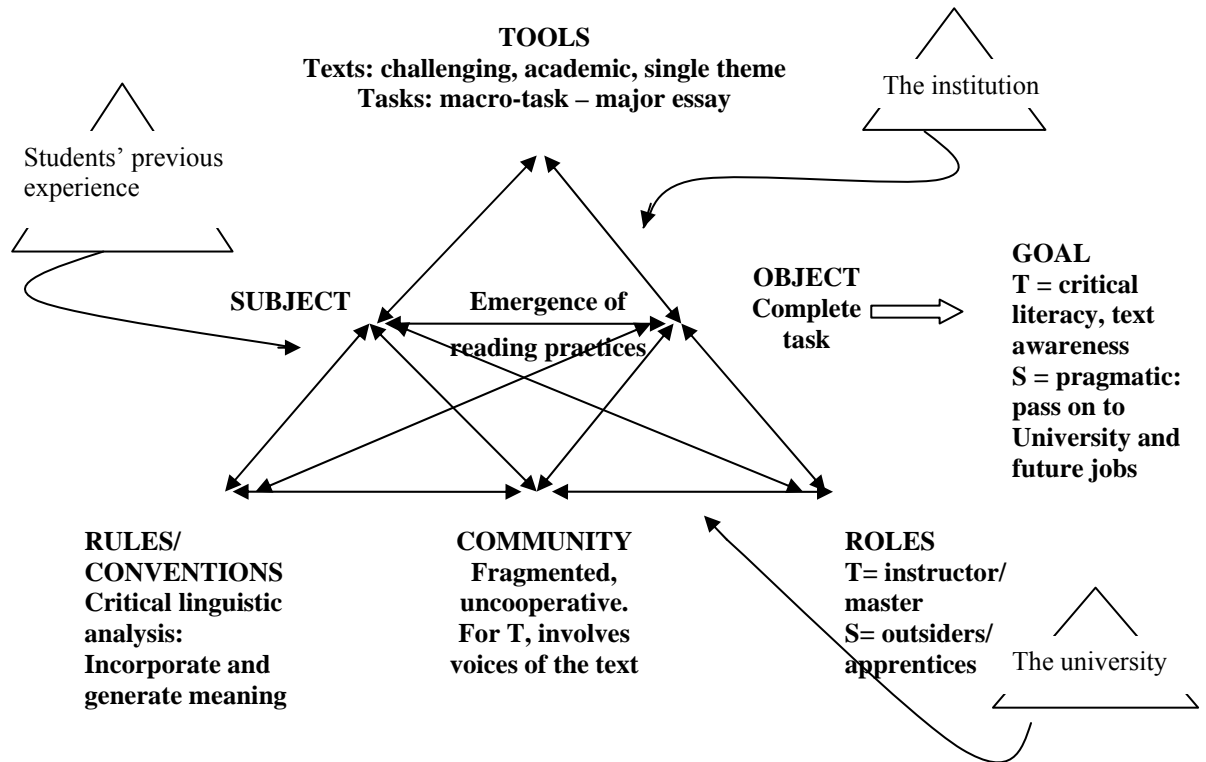
Lucy: ... meaning is open: it is contestable and having students understand that is a really important aspect of, well, not just language learning but learning, and of reflexivity as well. [...] I talk about the fact that new ways of understanding language are that meaning isn't in the words; the meaning is in the relationship between the reader, and the meanings and the ideas and the perceptions that they are bringing in, and the text. So we might read the same thing in totally different ways, taking different meanings from the text. [CC_LucyInt1]

Although she recognised that this was a very challenging goal, Lucy was determined that her students should become readers who engage deeply with text. She was keen for them to develop new identities as critical, academic readers (Luke, 2002b; Norton, 2006), strongly influenced by her reading of Lacan (for example: Lacan, 1977) who argued that identity is formed through exposure to semiotic systems.

Lucy: And I suppose that's what I think is key: how do we help students to become the kind of readers that they need to be? And it is a process and it is a very particular kind of reader identity that we're trying to develop here in order to engage not just at a superficial level. I think we can teach engagement at a superficial level using those other kinds

of strategies - but to engage at deeper levels, at more meaningful levels. [CC_LucyInt1]

Figure 17: The activity system at City College



She wanted students to be able to *incorporate* meaning, reaching out with both arms as she said this, and pulling in towards her body the metaphorical meanings of the texts. She was adamant that students should read, *THINK*, and write, rather than simply writing directly from texts. She also wanted to raise students' awareness of the multivoiced, social nature of texts, and the mutual participation of authors and readers in an on-going dialogue within the discourse community:

Lucy: The way that I understand knowledge or text, is that really that text might have been written by that particular author, but that text wouldn't have been written without the on-going collaboration of the many people that participate in that academic community, their ideas over time and working together. And that's so much in conflict with that monolithic view of the text as something that's produced by one person and one person alone. [CC_LucyInt1]

Yet for the students it was hard to participate in texts in this way. Their goals were focused on getting into the university courses that they had applied for as quickly as possible, in order to get the qualifications that would be the passport to a good job at home, or immigration to Australia. They understood that the goal of the course was to improve their English for academic purposes—as Val said, *It's useful to me, to my Masters* [CC_ValInt]—but none of them expressed any aspiration towards the sort of reader identity that Lucy described. The stakes were also high. Not passing the module, for some students, would mean postponing their entry to university for another semester: that is, another six months of living costs and tuition fees. This extra expense would be a substantial financial burden.

A second important goal of teaching literacy for Lucy was to empower the students with access to privileged knowledge, in line with her reading of Foucault and, Bourdieu:

Lucy: My understanding of empowerment is that you recognise that power does exist and does position you, and you're not this free-floating agency who's got agency and who can do whatever they want. Because the rules are there before you – you're not making the rules of the game. Empowerment is all about understanding how the rules work, and then being able to navigate and use the rules for your purposes, and in some cases, if it's your purpose, to challenge the terms of those rules. [CC_LucyInt]

She attempted to share her understanding of this emancipatory goal with the class, explaining the issue of linguistic imperialism (Canagarajah, 1999, 2001; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992) and the students' need, as she saw it, to be aware of how they were positioned by the hegemony of western education. It was hard to gauge the students' understanding of Lucy's attempt to communicate this goal, as they did not respond either verbally or with discernable body language to Lucy's explanations.

The goals of external activity systems were also at play in the activity system of the City College class. The institution's goals were particularly significant: as a commercial college, the institution needed to maximise profits as well as to maintain standards for the university to which it was affiliated. The institution's decision to use its own system of accreditation rather than relying on IELTS was a response to both

these imperatives. To satisfy the university, the course was designed both to prepare students adequately for tertiary study, as well as to provide a reliable assessment system. To maximise profits, the course was designed to attract enrolments by avoiding the spectre of the IELTS and keeping fees to a minimum. In addition, to make the course as cost effective as possible, recyclable materials and assessment tasks had been prepared so that casual teachers could implement the curriculum with little need for preparation. The course was designed as Lucy said *as a sausage machine* to ‘skill up’ the students as efficiently as possible for entry into university.

Thus, the pragmatic goals of the students and the institution (Dunworth, 2006; Pennycook, 1997) were in contradiction to Lucy’s goals of critical literacy and critical pedagogy (Gilyard, 2000; Luke, 2002b; Norton, 2000 etc).

4.3.2b Conventions (Rules)

The classroom practices in the learning environment at City College reflected Lucy’s passionate commitment to the goals she had set. She recognised, however, that the students found it very hard to meet her expectations. As she put it, they emanated a *physical unwillingness* to change [CC_LucyInt1]. It appeared, as a result, that she had to work twice as hard in order to achieve the transformative learning she envisaged:

Lucy: I think the main motivator for any person is being able to engage in something that’s meaningful, so I suppose the way that I’m trying to exploit that is to get them to understand that things that they might have thought were not meaningful ARE actually meaningful. And my way of understanding of this is that it’s really PUSHING students in a direction that they might not want to go. And I understand and respect that students may not want to go there, but the idea behind that is that my understanding and my experience of teaching MANY groups is that the first three to four weeks are excruciating for them. Very hard and very difficult. [...] It’s not instant gratification at all. They have to struggle. And that’s a choice that human beings make all the time: either you’re prepared to engage in the struggle or you’re not.

[CC_LucyInt1]

Pushing the class to establish reading practices which matched her goals was very demanding: Lucy was often exhausted by the end of the four hour morning. As she explained:

Lucy: It's a huge learning curve. It's very intense. I find it very intense for me. [CC_LucyInt1]

In her enthusiasm for engaging with meaning in texts, Lucy gave a great deal of attention to drilling down into the language of the texts, considering the meaning of every clause, every phrase, every word, sometimes down to the morphemic level. As she said:

Lucy: Where do you stop? And there's always much more down here.
[CC_LucyInt1]

Sometimes this meant lengthy probing of the meaning of a single word. For example, in the 'learning moment genre' in CC04_24b, Lucy spent 20 minutes unpacking the meaning of 'economy' from the sub-heading *Life at work in the information economy* rather than simply having the students look up the word in their electronic dictionaries. This approach fitted with her understanding of language as shot through with *excesses of meaning* [CC_LucyInt1]; that *language evokes ideas; it does not represent them* (Slobin 1982, cited in Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.9).

Lucy expected the students to participate in her struggle to make meaning, but there was not much evidence of student participation. As Lucy relied most heavily on the task negotiation genre, the majority of class time was spent in IRE exchanges in which teacher talk predominated. Only two or three students participated regularly in the 'responding' segment of these exchanges. It is possible that the students were indeed following the development of meaning in the task negotiation genre intently and were struggling silently to construct their own meanings. Lucy claimed that she could know whether students were participating by monitoring the students' classroom response:

Lucy: So I suppose that the way that I gauge it is with students – it's sort of the look in their eyes, and whether I can see them going 'Oh, yeah' Click! That little spark. I know that students get tired and especially when they're looking at texts very intensely and we have looked at texts very intensely – quite a lot of text in a short time and that's very

demanding. And I have been very demanding, too demanding in some respects, but I think that I can see that sort of “Oh I get this! I’m getting this meaning that I didn’t have before’ and so for me, I see that as successful because it’s sort of letting students in; it’s giving them access to meanings that they’re not going to have through looking at a dictionary. They’re not going to get through even predicting, looking at a word in context. It is supplementing the text. It’s that notion – I think it comes from the French philosophers as well – that texts work on excess and supplements of meaning. That excess, that supplement, they’re not really marginal, they’re really important. [CC_LucyInt1]

The norms of classroom behaviour in the task negotiation genre, then, depended on the majority of students participating silently in making meaning from text, while the teacher dominated the classroom discourse.

In the task collaboration genre, students often resisted participation. For example, in CC04_26a (see Table 17), Lucy spent the beginning of the lesson unpacking the heading and then skimming a page-long section of text which the students would have to summarise for an assessable sub-task. She then asked the students to read in more detail, filling in a note-taking chart from the workbook which she explained carefully:

Lucy: This section is telling us about the effects of this on women, and here we’ve got evaluation of call centres, so whose evaluation are we looking for? The writer’s! It could be the women’s evaluation. You’re right. But if it’s the women’s evaluation you should be able to tell the difference between the women’s evaluation themselves and the writer’s evaluation. But here it’s the writer’s evaluation. OK? And then we’ve got ‘overall effects on economy’, So again you’re looking for effects. Effects of what? Effects of relocation on the economy. Alright? So I’m going to let you read through this section. It might be a good idea for you to maybe work with a partner and share your ideas. Or maybe when you’ve finished doing it yourself then I’ll get you to work with a partner.

The students began this task individually, but soon became distracted, talking to each other in their first language. It appeared that none of them shared their ideas with a partner, and few of them filled in the chart effectively. After the break, Lucy returned to the exercise, using the task negotiation genre, but the student sitting next to me, Kim, never completed the chart. This pattern of off-task behaviour in the task collaboration genre became increasingly entrenched over the five weeks.

Lucy considered that the students' previous learning experience was a factor in their reluctance to engage with her approach to deconstructing meaning:

Lucy: I think in relation to this particular group, I think with a number of groups, it doesn't work particularly well because I think they see those tasks as quite arduous and perhaps they don't want to do them. Or perhaps maybe it's from previous experience, or maybe it's because they don't know HOW to undertake the tasks as well, and I understand that because they're being asked questions that are, well, they're not comprehension questions in the usual sense. They're much more focusing on what's going on in this text, what's the purpose of this, what's the relationship; they're more analytical questions about text. The answer isn't obviously there: you've got to think about it.
[CC_LucyInt1]

In other words, the students were used to more traditional comprehension questions, such as those found in the IELTS, for which most of them had prepared before coming to Australia, and were not ready for the searching, less structured questions posed by Lucy. The lack of structure was challenging for students. As Rama explained:

Rama: In Level 7 we didn't do this kind of essay. We did only review. It's totally formatted everything - Topic sentence on the top. So we can neglect all the examples, and we can select topic sentence on the top. We can paraphrase like that. [...] They taught how to find topic sentence and everything. That's a different feel, different approach.
[CC_RamaInt].

Nor were the students used to Lucy's richly intensive gaze at language, her attention to the meaning, derivation and grammatical function of a particular phrase, word and even morpheme:

Kate: Now Lucy when she's teaching often draws your attention right down to the sentence and word level. Is that a bit different from ...? Has anyone taught you to read like that before? Lucy often looks right in detail. Were you surprised at that?

Hari: Well, I'm not used to that, but I am not surprised because I know that we have to study English so if you are going in detail it will also - according to me - it also improves your vocabulary because you find synonyms of a single word, different kinds of meanings. And it will also help you to make sentence, how you can put the verb, how can you put.. [CC_HariInt]

4.3.3c Roles

Lucy played the dominant role in the City College classes. She saw the students as *apprentices* for whom she modelled a certain way of looking at texts:

Lucy: As students get accustomed to looking at texts this way, and as they get used to me showing them, they get more able to do it for themselves. So it really is an apprenticeship. I see it as an apprenticeship. [CC_LucyInt1]

By modelling her intensive approach to deconstructing text and reconstructing meaning, she saw her role as enabling students to see into rich layers of meaning within the text, beyond the restricted meanings that could be derived from a dictionary:

Lucy: It's sort of letting students in; it's giving them access to meanings that they're not going to have through looking at a dictionary. They're not going to get through even predicting, looking at a word in context. It is supplementing the text. ...

Kate: So you would see it in terms of modelling?

Lucy: Yes, I'm modelling for them what I do as a reader. I'm trying to give them a window into that so that they can not only utilise those strategies, it's more than that, that they're starting to get an awareness that enables them to utilise that. You can't utilise strategies (well, I suppose you can) without an awareness of what am I looking FOR. What are the ways into meaning here? [CC_LucyInt1]

Although Lucy was deeply committed to student learning, unlike Andrea and Mark she did not express a parental concern for her students as individuals. She clearly did not consider that it was her job to ensure that students passed. In fact, she suggested that some students, if necessary, might discover that an academic pathway was not the right one for them:

Lucy: I suppose too that I think that part of learning is following your own path by smacking into a brick wall and going 'OK. Well that was cool! Maybe I'll try that again, or maybe I'll try something else'. [CC_LucyInt1]

The students' role, as prescribed by Lucy from her position of power, was to participate actively in the predominant task negotiation genre, by listening to her explanations, responding to her questions and gradually constructing richer and deeper understandings of the texts. Indeed, some students participated in this way, particularly the two Subcontinental students, but many students in the class were unable or unwilling to do so. Kim, for example, explained that in his previous group, he had felt confident to ask the teacher questions, but in this group he preferred to keep silent.

Yangli explained that he did not volunteer answers because other students would answer first, or even interrupt:

Yangli: I can understand but I don't want to answer. Just silence. Because other people will answer faster than you. They will interrupt. [CC_MichaelYangliInt]

He also complained because it was hard to understand Hari and Rama's accents:

Yangli: I think the teachers has to (ought to) repeat if they answer because we don't understand. [CC_MichaelYangliInt]

Not understanding the contribution of other students made it hard to follow the lesson coherently. Another reason why some students did not participate was because they lost concentration during extended teacher turns. As Michael explained, he often did not participate because he was *thinking about something else* [CC_MichaelYangliInt]. Mon, Panon and Ken similarly gave the following explanations for not responding to questions: *sleepy – boring class – can't follow – It is overload for me and wait for others to answer.* [CC_MonPanonKenInt]. Another problem was losing face, as Kim explained:

Kate: And then you think about it later? So why don't you ask questions in class?

Kim: Me? Because I don't understand something, and I don't know what is question. And Rama and Hari, they speak very well. I think they speak better than me. So when I get down (depressed), I don't want to talk with them. [CC_KimInt]

Although the same data collection process was followed in all three settings, the task collaboration genre at City College yielded only a few, very limited collaborative exchanges as the students tended to either resist collaboration by working individually, or very quickly moved off-task. Mon, Panon and Ken expressed their preference for group discussion as it gave them an opportunity to use English to exchange ideas and this helped them to learn [CC_MonPanonKenInt]. However, it seemed that they were referring to their experience in previous modules or with the alternate teacher. Yangli explained the lack of successful groupwork as follows:

Yangli: We don't know how to work together. We need a leader – no leader. You must have a leader. [CC_YangliMichaelInt]

Students rarely asked questions in class, except at the end of the course when the assignments were due. The day that the draft assignments were handed back, the students rushed to see the teacher after class, clustering around her table and holding her back for nearly an hour until the next class entered the room. The atmosphere of stress was palpable.

Out of class, the amount of work undertaken by the students varied considerably. When the essay was due, all the students worked extremely hard, some staying up nearly all night to rewrite their drafts, as they only had 24 hours between the

receiving feedback on their drafts and the final submission date. At other times, there were few homework tasks. Out of class, most students chose to watch television as a good way to improve their English. Others read magazines or used the internet to read their email and news from their home country. Interestingly, all the students that I interviewed claimed to enjoy reading, not only in their first language but also in English, in areas of their particular interest—sport and technology being the most commonly cited.

To sum up, while the teacher, Lucy, played a very vigorous role in this activity system, *pushing* the activity forwards, the students on the whole did not participate as actively as she would have liked, to some extent even resisting participation. This contradiction between the teacher and students' expectations remained unresolved throughout the five week course.

The lack of willingness to participate at City College was in contrast to the cooperative classroom climate at Sandstone College, and even to Newgate College where the students, although reluctant to begin with, gradually came to participate more actively in classroom action.

4.3.3d Community

A notable characteristic of the community of the City College class, was the students' general respect for the teacher. The students seemed to assume that the class was difficult because academic literacy is difficult. As Rama put it: *In this situation she has to teach like this* [CC_FrankieRamaInt].

The classroom community, however, did not work productively. One of the main reasons for this was that the Chinese and Thai students often communicated in class in their first language. This excluded the students who were from minority groups, like Kim:

Kate: How do you feel about the students in the group? You told me at the beginning that you were the only Korean and they always spoke Chinese.

Kim: At first I liked that. Because I didn't speak Korean – only English, but always they speak Chinese and sometimes I want to talk with them but they speak Chinese. So my feeling is don't need and boring. I don't want to discuss with them.

Kate: [...] Were there any good points when you thought "Oh this is good. I really like this class"?

Kim: Never. This term. Never. [CC_KimInt]

There was also growing antagonism towards the Subcontinental students who answered nearly all the questions (see Figure 18). In interviews, several students mentioned that they did not participate in the task negotiation genre because Hari and Rama answered more quickly. Although I suggested to Yangli and Michael that there could be cultural reasons for this, as East Asian speakers tend to be more reticent (J. Jones, 1999), Yangli asserted that:

Yangli: It's not only the culture. They want to show (show off). But we can't understand what they are saying so we can't communicate with them.
[CC_YangliMichaelInt]

The pattern of classroom discourse allowed very few opportunities for the students to get to know each other, and although the teacher occasionally talked about her own private life, she never asked the students about theirs. She knew almost nothing about them, in fact. For example, she assumed that they were undergraduates although more than half were about to enter postgraduate courses. After class, the students dispersed across the city.

Another feature of the classroom community was the rarity of humour. The most common source of laughter was Lucy's mispronunciation of Chinese names, which again marginalised the non-Chinese students who could not participate in this fun. When the students attempted to make fun, Lucy quickly deflected their laughter as if it were disruptive.

Another possible source of frustration for the students was Lucy's management of time. Her classes often went over time – one day, for example, another teacher popped her head in the door and jokingly called to Lucy: *Why don't you give these*

poor guys a break? [CC04_26b]. By the same token, however, Lucy's breaks often lasted longer than the scheduled time. This contrasted greatly with Mark's classes at Sandstone College, which unerringly started and ended promptly on time.

In most EAP groups, the end of the module represents a high point in the classroom community (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). However, for this group the last week of the module was very disappointing: none of the students received a grade above 'C' for their essays, and 10 of the 18 students failed the module.

The institution's values also impinged on the classroom community. In week three of the module, the institution announced a reclassification of some of Lucy's casual teaching which would lead to a drop in salary. Understandably, Lucy found this very demotivating, and her commitment to the class declined immediately.

As Mark at Sandstone College commented, every group of students is different: the Sandstone College students in the class I observed, he felt were an exceptional group. However, as Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) point out, classroom climate is very much influenced by the teacher and the institution he/she is working within.

4.3.3e Tools

Texts

The three main texts (see Table 16) could be described as authentically academic: one was taken from an academic journal, another was from a report by the ILO, and the third from a reputable organisational website. The texts used authentic academic language, although all three had been abridged for the purposes of the course and appeared to have lost some coherence as a result. All three texts assumed considerable cultural knowledge. The concepts of *call centres* and *telework*, for example, which were central to these texts were not necessarily familiar to these students. Furthermore, the texts and the essay question were all based on the assumption that women should, and would want to, participate in the workforce.

All three texts were located broadly in the disciplines of Labour Economics and Human Resource Management and assumed knowledge of economic concepts such

as ‘the labour market’; ‘developed and developing countries’; ‘outsourcing’ and so on. While Lucy went to considerable lengths to explain such terms, the students came to these texts ‘cold’, that is, with no prior knowledge, whereas if they had been studying in the field, they would have been exposed to such concepts through lectures and tutorials, as well as meeting them in the literature. Furthermore, most of the students had little intrinsic interest in the topic. One student, Hari, had worked in an Indian call centre and so had a greater appreciation of the topic; another, Val, had worked in Human Resource Management and was intending to study a Masters course in this field. These two students were more able to relate to the texts.

However, other students commented, for example:

Kate: So did you find these texts interesting?

Kim: Not interesting. But sometimes texts are very interesting.

Kate: What sort of texts?

Kim: Maybe texts about IT or technology. I think that is interesting for me.

But this topic is not interesting [CC_KimInt]

Lucy was keenly aware of this problem:

Lucy: Sometimes you have classes and groups where everybody’s tuned in, and sometimes you have classes where a number are tuned out. And there are a lot of factors in that. Like I was saying to you before, one of the factors for this group is the sort of DISTANCE of what they’re doing — the DISTANCE of these academic texts from their real lives, and even though we’re trying to relate it to real life and bring that in, it’s not who they ARE. [CC_LucyInt1]

However, she made little attempt to link the concepts of the texts to the realities of the students’ lives. A video documentary, supplied by the institution, about call centres in India, where call centre work is regarded as highly prestigious, went some way towards addressing this knowledge gap, but left the students confused about the interpretation of call centres as *sweatshops* in the set texts.

Talk

As the task negotiation genre predominated at City College, classroom talk was dominated by Lucy. In CC04_26a (shown in Table 17), for example, which lasted 60

minutes, Lucy spoke 92% of the words, and took 52% of the turns (see Figure 18 and Figure 19).

The following session, CC04_26b, lasting 47 minutes was similar, as were most of the sessions in the course. It would have been impossible to collect statistics like this in Mark or Andrea's classes, because of the regular iterations of the task collaboration genre in which students participated in groups.

As has already been mentioned, only two or three students regularly responded in the IRE sequence. In CC04_26a, (as shown in Figure 18 and 19), three students participated regularly: Hari took 20% of the total turns (5% of the words); Jo took 10.62% of the total turns (1% of the words); and Rama took 3.8% of the turns (1% of the words). This class took place in the second week of the module, when Hari, who had arrived late for the course, had only been in the class for three days. At this stage, Jo and others were still making a bid for turns in the task negotiation genre. However, as the course went on, Hari dominated more and more. This may have been because he received more positive reinforcement from Lucy than other students: 95% of his turns received a positive response in the IRE sequence, whereas only 65% of Jo's turns received a positive response. Jo's responses were often ignored, or even met with embarrassed laughter from Lucy, implying that he must be joking (See Table 18).

Figure 18: Proportion of words spoken in CC04_26a: *The spatial distribution of employment*

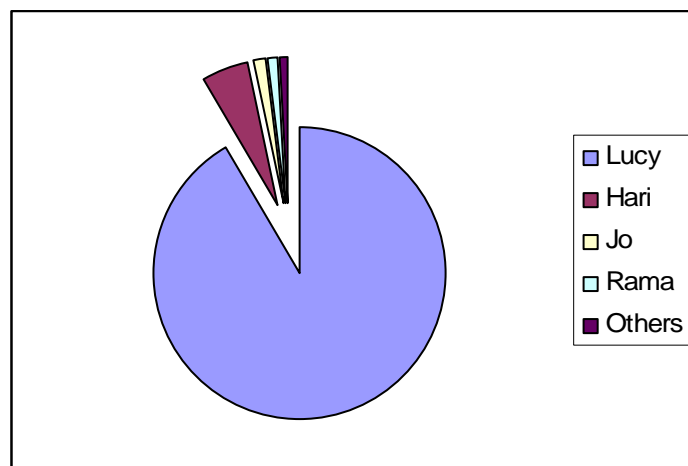


Figure 19: Percentage of turns in CC04_26a

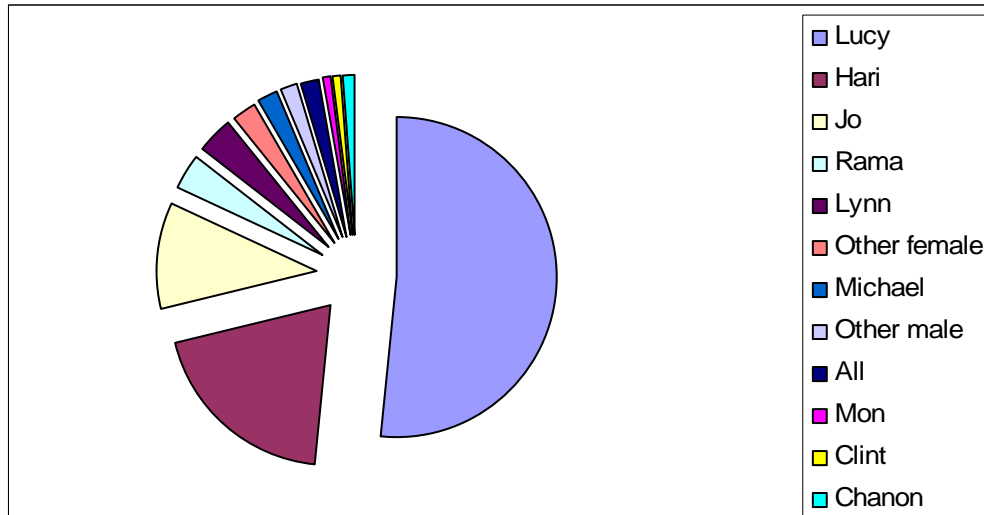


Table 18: Teacher responses to student turns in CC04_26a

Lucy response type	Student number of turns						
	Hari	Jo	Rama	Lynn	Other female	Michael	Other male
Strongly positive	25	0	1	3	6	0	1
Positive	12	10	6	2	4	2	1
Elaborated	15	10	3	0	0	1	1
Supported	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ignored	2	10	1	2	1	1	2
Negated	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total	57	31	11	7	11	5	5
Percentage of individual turns receiving a positive response							
Positive response	95%	65%	91%	71%	91%	60%	60%
Negative response	5%	35%	9%	29%	9%	40%	40%

Key

- Strongly positive eg. *Lucy: You're absolutely right.*
- Positive eg. *Lucy: OK. Good.*
- Elaborated eg. *Hari: Lots of women doing these kinds of jobs.*
Lucy: Lots of women doing this kind of work, More employment.
- Supported eg. *Lucy: And because they are working from home they are?*
Hari and Lucy: Isolated.

Lucy rarely used regulative talk directly. When she did so, unlike Andrea and Mark, she did not use imperatives. Instead, she used low obligation modality (for example, the mood adjunct *I guess*, and the modal *should*) and the inclusive ‘we’. Although this appeared to be an abrogation of power, the discursal intent of this modality was nevertheless absolutely firm:

Lucy: OK So. I guess what we should do today, because we don't have a lot of time, because we have less time in this term, is we need to start looking at the section in the ILO World Employment Report that you're going to be summarising. [CC04_26a-2]

Similarly:

Lucy: OK, so what I want you to do is, what I'd LIKE you to do is: in your workbooks, there is section for you that relates to this reading..., to help you to PICK OUT the key information in noteform of this section. [CC04_26a-4]

It is interesting in this excerpt that Lucy resiles from the strong *what I want you to do*, to the less assertive *what I'd LIKE you to do*. Another example of this apparently unassertive language occurred in the orientation to an instantiation of the task collaboration genre:

Lucy: So I'm going to let you read through this section. It might be a good idea for you to maybe work with a partner and share your ideas. Or maybe when you've finished doing it yourself then I'll get you to work with a partner. [CC04_26a-5]

Lucy's intent in this use of low obligation modality was to position the students as responsible self-motivated learners, implying that as individuals they had the right to make decisions about their learning, and calling on them to participate in the co-construction of meaning. However, this abrogation of power was at odds with her otherwise authoritarian and authoritative approach, and was potentially confusing for students from the teacher-dominated learning cultures from which they all originated. This confusion is perhaps one explanation for the collapse of the task collaboration genre.

Table 19: City College: Teacher talk in the curriculum macrogenre

Genre	Register	Function
Task initiation	Regulative	Suggesting instructions Planning
Task orientation	Regulative	Feedback Giving instructions WH display questions.
	Instructional	Recalling previous sessions (building field): WH display questions.
Task negotiation	Regulative	Feedback WH display questions.
	Instructional	WH display questions. Building field Developing language awareness Modelling reflection/ making thinking visible

NB Teacher talk is slow, deliberate, intense, and characterised by message abundancy. Humour is not used.

In the task orientation and task negotiation genres, Lucy used the regulative register, for example, to give feedback (eg *Yes, you are absolutely right.* [CC04_26a-4]), or to direct the students' attention to part of the text:

Lucy: If we have a look at this heading, what are we talking about?

[CC04_26a-4]

However, a feature which was very characteristic of Lucy's talk, and provided a contrast with Mark and Andrea, was her frequent use of 'demand' WH-interrogative clauses in the classical IRE sequence. These questions fused instructional and regulative talk (Christie, 2002) in that they both signalled the field of discourse (instructional) and controlled the pace and direction of the class (regulative). This aspect of Lucy's talk may also have been rather confusing for the students who, apart from the Subcontinental students, seemed to expect to be nominated if a WH-question was posed. In other words, Lucy's cultural expectations of learning and the students' expectations seemed to be in contradiction. Lucy's use of demand questions,

combined with her authoritative answering of the questions she herself had posed, positioned her as the absolute authority in the classroom. Interpersonally, the WH-element presented a direct demand for information from the students, potentially ‘putting them on the spot’ and causing them to lose face. For example:

Lucy: What kind of things does that tell us? (pause) [CC04_26a-4]

Lucy: What words can you see that relate to different regions? [CC04_26a-4]

Lucy: If we have a look at this heading, what are we talking about? What is spread here? What part of the heading tells us ‘what’ is distributed? ... [CC04_26a-4]

Lucy: Where do you think jobs might be being moved from, and where they might be being moved to? [CC04_26a-4]

These WH- questions shaped the logogenesis (‘the unfolding of text’, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 43) of classroom talk, as each WH- element thematically introduced the question itself, and was followed by a coherently related sequence of clauses.

Alternatively, the ‘initiate’ phase of the IRE sequence was filled by Lucy’s frequent use of unfinished statements with a rising intonation followed by a pause, indicating that someone (not nominated) should complete the clause. These disguised questions were generally answered either by Hari or by Lucy herself. For example:

Lucy: A centre is?— right— it’s in the middle of something. Yes.

We can talk about business centres. Or we can talk about work centres,

Clint: (under breath) sites

Lucy: So we are talking about a place where? ... Everybody? ... Yes? ... A place where everybody? ... Comes together. A place where everybody is working together. [CC04_26a-4]

These questions functioned as ‘cued elicitation’ (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005), and Lucy frequently gave substantial hints through gesture and body language to

encourage students to come up with answers to her questions. In the extract above, for example, she drew her hands together as if holding a spherical object before supplying the verbal answer.

In the third phase of the IRE sequence, evaluation, Lucy often appropriated and recast the students' responses, in this way building up shared co-constructed meanings and 'increasing prospectiveness', that is, to 'lead to longer more productive sequences of meaning' and 'give students a greater voice in the construction of classroom knowledge' (Hammond & Gibbons 2005, p. 24-25).

With Hari, in particular, the IRE sequence became a cognitive pas-de-deux, as one turn elided with the next:

Lucy: Career choices. So if you say career choices. Do they have more or less career choices?

Hari: Less

Lucy: Less career choices

Clint: Exclusion (appropriated from the text)

Lucy: Ah exactly. Exclusion from career choices. Everyone knows what exclusion means?

Hari: There are two words: include and exclude. Include means you are getting in; exclude means you are getting out.

Lucy: (Laughs) Good! You're right! Include means you are inside of something, and exclude, exactly what you said. You're out. OK==

Hari: ==I'm not talking in job sense.

Lucy: No! You're right! You're making perfect sense. Everyone understand career choices? What's a career choice?

Michael: (begins but drowned out by Hari)

Hari: Choices means options. You didn't have many options.

Lucy: OK. Excellent.

Hari: In the future.

Lucy: Yes it's talking about the future, isn't it.

Hari: Suppose we are excluded from our jobs, then we don't have enough options.

Lucy: That's right. And this exclusion from the choices, not being able to get==

Hari: ==is job exclusion

Lucy: Is related to another effect on women. We've got exclusion from career choices and?

Hari and others: Isolation (appropriated from the text)

Lucy: Isolation. Good. [CC04_26_lines 463ff]

However, this intersubjective pas-de-deux with Hari also served to exclude other students. By not nominating respondents, Lucy was allowing students to choose whether or not to participate in the dialogue, respecting their autonomy; but by not making space for others to participate verbally, Lucy increasingly marginalised most of the class. Hari, in his enthusiasm, sometimes interrupted and drowned out other students, further alienating them (see Michael's turn in the extract above.) Unlike most of the students, Hari was completely engaged throughout the lesson. From time to time, when he was particularly impressed, he used the characteristic Indian head wobble². Others, however, looked increasingly glum.

Furthermore, Lucy's attempts to increase prospectiveness, sometimes seemed bizarre or unanswerable to the students. For example, one of her questions, reported in a previous extract, which caused a ripple of resistance and laughter among the students was:

Lucy: Good OK. ... Centre. So what's a centre?

Various mumbles – one S laughs

Lucy: A centre is right it's in the middle of something. Yes We can talk about business centres. Or we can talk about work centres,

Clint: (under breath) sites

² According to Kolonad (1994), this discourse strategy is commonly used by Hindi, Urdu and Bengali speakers. If this is the case, it is not surprising that Chinese and Thai students, who are accustomed to relying on tone as an indicator of experiential meaning rather than interpersonal meaning, did not respond to this question style, while the Subcontinental students interacted willingly. This suggests an interesting avenue for research in intercultural communication.

Lucy: So we are talking about a place where? Everybody? Yes? A place where everybody?... Comes together. A place where everybody is working together. [CC04_26a-4]

Building field was an important function of Lucy's discourse in the instructional register: in other words, she was attempting to develop the students' vocabulary in this thematic area, as well as their general academic vocabulary. The examples given above already illustrate this function well.

Besides unpacking the meaning of words and phrases such as *career choice*, Lucy paid a great deal of attention to developing students' linguistic awareness of the grammatical relations between words and within phrases. For example:

Lucy: So notice when we use the verb here from 'isolation'. We say I am 'isolated from'. I am isolated from my colleagues if I'm working from home. Because it's not like something I want to do, or do to myself. It's like something that happened to me. So it's a passive form. 'I am isolated from my colleagues'. Isolation is the noun. The verb is? Some Ss very quietly: isolate

Lucy: 'to be.' We usually use it in the passive form, to be isolated from ... (writing on board) something.... [CC04_26a-4]

These two functions of building field and analysing grammatical function could be called 'making language visible' (Lillis, 2001).

A third, and very important function of Lucy's talk was what I have called, in parallel with Lillis (2001), 'making **thinking** visible'. In other words, Lucy used a technique of mental modeling: verbalising her thought process to model a process of critical reflection for the students. Generally these reflections, based on Lucy's own passion for language, were about the way language was being used in the texts to embody meaning, rather than about the meanings per se. For example, Lucy spent some time deconstructing the use of authorial voice in the section of the text that read:

Wages and conditions in call centres appear to vary widely. In the best, a new more informal and more appealing work culture may be apparent; but in the worst instances, call centres have been called the 'sweatshops of the digital era'.

In reflecting on this section of text, Lucy said:

Lucy: Then you've got 'BUT in the worst instances, call centres have been called', so here, remember at the beginning I said it was the writer's evaluation. Is this the writer's evaluation? If I say that something has been called? No. It doesn't SEEM to be, does it? It doesn't seem to be the writer's evaluation. The writer is presenting it as this is what OTHER (slowly) people have been said. 'They have been called' (Sermon genre) But do you think the writer also agrees?

Rama: Yes.

Lucy: Yes? Yes? (slowly, reflectively) Very interesting the way this writer has presented this. They have presented their evaluation in a very delicate way. They are evaluating, but they are doing it in a very delicate way. It's strong in one way, but it's not very strong in another way, because they've said 'this is what they have been called', so I would say it's a way of keeping a bit of distance. Keeping some distance, but at the same time agreeing with this evaluation. The language that we use, or the language that writers use when they evaluate is very complex. Especially in academic writing 'cos in academic writing when you want to evaluate something, you want to be very careful when we make judgements. So we've got 'call centres have been called'. But then we've got something that is really quite strong. THE SWEATSHOPS of the digital era. So if something is a sweatshop, what does that mean? What's a sweatshop?[CC04_26]

In this extract, Lucy slipped into a register typically heard in the genre of the Protestant sermon. Like a pastor encouraging the congregation to reflect deeply on a phrase from the Bible, she used a slow, quiet, pensive tone, emphasising each separate word: *They have been called*. Lucy wanted the students to ponder on this phrase, drawing their attention to the writer's subtle use of language to foreground the voice of others while reserving his own judgement.

One more feature of Lucy's discourse must be mentioned: her extensive use of 'message abundancy' (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005 p.16). Not only did Lucy speak very slowly, deliberately and clearly, but she also made extensive use of the

whiteboard to construct complex mindmaps as she constructed meaning from the text. These mindmaps incorporated words, phrases, arrows and even drawings (for example, to illustrate *the bottom rung of the career ladder*). This technique slowed the pace of the lessons dramatically, giving students a chance to reflect on meanings. Furthermore, as she spoke Lucy used extravagant gestures and facial expression to support her message. Students had no trouble remembering the word *toehold*, for example, not only because it was a colourful metaphor in itself but also because of Lucy's vivid dramatisation of the word.

Tasks

In contrast to Andrea and Mark who used tasks as the controlling mechanism for their classes, Lucy relied more on teacher talk to regulate classroom action. However, the curriculum was accompanied by a workbook which included tasks associated with each reading: for example, a table for the students to complete with notes from the text. These tasks tended to be open-ended, active tasks (F. Davies, 1995, p.143) unlike the tightly controlled multiple choice tasks at Sandstone College. Lucy assigned the students to complete these tasks either at home or during the task collaboration phase in class. In the predominant task negotiation genre, however, although Lucy generally followed the tasks, they became very much secondary to her own intensive interaction with the text. Thus, while Andrea and Mark used tasks to mediate the students' interactions with the texts, Lucy's main strategy was to mediate the texts with her own WH- questions and explanations: as she put it, *letting the students in; it's giving them access to meanings* [CC_LucyInt1].

4.3.3f City College: Summary of the activity system

Whereas the Sandstone College class was characterised predominantly by harmony, the activity system of the City College class bristled with contradictions. These contradictions offered abundant opportunity for transformative learning, as suggested by Engeström (1999), but for the most part, remained unresolved. This summary provides a brief overview of the contradictions in the Sandstone College activity system. They will be discussed further in Chapter 6 under the heading of *Affordances*.

1. Primary contradictions, defined by the Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work as *inner contradictions (double nature) within each constituent component of the central activity* (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a).

Goals: Unlike Mark, who negotiated shared goals with his students, Lucy did not manage to suffuse her students with an understanding of her goals. While she was reaching for the goals of critical pedagogy and critical literacy, like Pohl (2005) she found that the students remained wedded to their pragmatic perspective. For Lucy, this was a constant struggle, and one which she resolved by holding on to her high aspirational goal even when it became apparent that the students were unable to cope. She consistently refused to offer what she disparagingly called *structuralist* hand-holds, for example, downplaying the text-mapping exercises in the workbook..

Roles: On the one hand, Lucy expected the students to behave as autonomous and responsible learners, engaging vigorously with the meaning of the texts, and interacting spontaneously with her in a co-constructed dialogue. For their part, however, the students expected Lucy to guide and support their learning, and sometimes found her approach confusing and even alienating.

Tools: Lucy expected that the tools of critical language analysis would help the students to draw richer meanings from the text and thus engage more deeply with the concepts. Ironically, however, it seemed that this detailed level of analysis at the level of the clause obscured rather than opened up meaning at the level of the text.

Rules: the rules of exchange within the activity system were also contradictory. The IRE pattern of turn-taking which Lucy established was meant to encourage students to participate freely and contribute dynamically to the co-construction of classroom discourse, but the lack of nominated turns made it difficult for the majority of students to participate. Furthermore, Lucy (unintentionally) used the pattern to enforce her own perspective on the texts rather than eliciting genuine discussion amongst the students and allowing them to gain a sense of ownership of the texts. A major problem for the students was the amount of intensive listening involved: Lucy spoke slowly and clearly, making abundant use of supplementary semiotic tools (her

body language and the whiteboard), but nevertheless they were expected to concentrate in a foreign language for extended periods – an exhausting activity.

2. Secondary contradictions, defined as *contradictions between the constituents of the central activity* (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a).

There were many contradictions between the constituent elements of the system. Perhaps the most significant of these was between the students' current language resources and the task/ text demands. Once again, this contradiction offered huge potential for transformative learning, given adequate and appropriate scaffolding and time.

3. Tertiary contradictions *between the object/ motive of the dominant form of the central activity and the object/motive of a culturally more advanced form of the central activity* (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a).

The contradictions at this level were also substantial: the students' instrumental product motive (WHAT do I have to produce to reach my goal of getting into university and getting a degree?) conflicting with Lucy's process motive (HOW do I construct meaning in dialogue with academic texts?) The Center for Activity Theory and Development suggests that *new qualitative forms of activity emerge as solutions to the contradictions of the previous form. This in turn takes place in the form of 'invisible breakthroughs', innovations from below.* Again, this contradiction offered considerable potential for transformative learning.

4. Quaternary contradictions *between the central activity and neighbour activities* (Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, 2004a).

The quaternary contradictions between this and other systems were also substantial. Particularly the divergent cultural backgrounds of students and teacher had a powerful influence on the way goals, rules and roles were constructed. The students were resistant to Lucy's attempts to make them more aware of the complexities of academic literacy, but Lucy was also unwilling to accommodate her teaching to meet their expectations. Her attitude to the transcultural contact zone which the students were negotiating was uncompromising:

Lucy: My understanding of empowerment is that you recognise that power does exist and does position you, and you're not this free-floating agency who's got agency and who can do whatever they want. Because the rules are there before you – you're not making the rules of the game. [CC_LucyInt]

Singh and Doherty (2004) identified this kind of response among teachers of EAP as fundamentally assimilationist. For Lucy, those students who could not learn the rules should consider seeking a different path:

Lucy: I think that part of learning is following your own path by smacking into a brick wall and going OK. Well that was cool! Maybe I'll try that again, or maybe I'll try something else. [CC_LucyInt]

Furthermore, the pressures of the institution significantly affected the activity system, partly because of its positioning of teachers as *robots* (Graves, 2000), but also because of the rigid curriculum which, as Lucy explained, did not allow her the flexibility to teach according to the students' level of language resources.

Finally, in moving away from the IELTS to its own accredited pathway program, the institution had attempted to align the goals of the EAP course better with the future language needs of the students as demanded by the university. However, the diversity of disciplines that the students were entering made it very hard to know just what academic literacies to include in the curriculum. It was likely that some of these students, such as those going into IT, would never have to write an essay again. Moreover, the university is more than likely to continue to blame the EAP course for failing to prepare students well, as preparation can never be full enough or detailed enough.

4.3.3 Understandings of critical reading at City College

As discussed in section 4.3.2a, Lucy was passionate about the goal of critical reading. Strongly influenced by sociocultural perspectives on learning (for example, James Gee's work on Discourses), as well as by post-structural philosophies of language (such as proposed by Bahktin, Foucault, Bourdieu and Kristeva), Lucy understood texts as existing in a social context. For her, texts were far from static repositories of

information, as Andrea tended to view them. Rather, she was acutely aware of the multivoiced nature of texts: while written by a particular author, she saw texts as layered with the voices and meanings of other participants in the discourse community. Meaning, for Lucy, was *open and contestable*; meanings could not be reduced to simple propositions, but were rich, complex and deep. Reductionism, which she associated with structuralism, was a total anathema to Lucy, and she consistently tried to draw her students' attention to *excesses and supplements of meaning* [CC_LucyInt1] as essential to engagement with text.

Importantly, Lucy saw critical reading as process – not as the staged process implied by the cognitivist school (as, for example, in the work of Leki, 1991 and Spack 1993, cited in Hirvela, 2004, p.174) – but as an ever-deepening engagement with text and ideas. She encouraged the students to return to the texts again and again as they sought to gain richer understandings of the field. She frequently bemoaned the students' focus on product, wishing that they would engage more in the process of learning despite the *struggle* that the critical reading process entailed:

Lucy: It's not instant gratification at all. They have to struggle. And that's a choice that human beings make all the time: either you're prepared to engage in the struggle or you're not. [CC_LucyInt1]

However, students did not need to struggle in isolation, as Lucy's social view of critical reading meant that collaboration could support the meaning-making process:

Lucy: I hope that they will be picking up that it's worth reading difficult texts; that it's worth struggling with meaning. That part of getting meaning is engaging with that struggle, and going through that process and also the idea that I struggle over meaning at times, and even that my explanations at times are 'well I didn't like that explanation, I could have explained that better. I wasn't happy with that'. That sometimes we all get stuck for words in our understanding and that maybe someone else could supply them over here or bring this in over here. So this person's adding this bit of meaning here, and this person's coming from over here. So that collaborative way.
[CC_LucyInt1]

Lucy also understood critical reading as an engagement with language. She was fascinated by the way in which language embodied laminated meanings, and took pains to engage students in focusing on the rich semantic connotations of vocabulary as well as the morphology and derivation of words. She used her understanding of Systemic Functional Linguistics to raise students' awareness of Halliday's (2004) three metafunctions: experiential, interpersonal and textual, while eschewing the use of complex grammatical terminology. She drew students' attention to cohesive devices; strove to build the language of the field (Macken-Horarik, 1996); and attempted to show them how the relationship between author and reader was constructed in texts (C. Wallace, 2003).

Finally, Lucy saw critical reading as empowerment. Like Norton, Luke, Janks and others (Janks, 2002; Luke, 2002b; Luke & Elkins, 2006; Norton, 2000), Lucy believed that developing critical reading practices would involve the students in developing new identities—identities which could resist the hegemonic power of texts, especially in the context of participation in western education systems. Such empowerment meant engaging with eyes wide open in the cultural context of academia:

Lucy: My understanding of empowerment is that you recognise that power does exist and does position you, and you're not this free-floating agency who's got agency and who can do whatever they want. Because the rules are there before you - you're not making the rules of the game. Empowerment is all about understanding how the rules work, and then being able to navigate and use the rules for your purposes, and in some cases, if it's your purpose, to challenge the terms of those rules. But equipping people with the knowledge in order to be able to succeed in terms of that. [CC_LucyInt1]

Despite Lucy's striving towards a poststructuralist goal of critical literacy, the students remained apparently untouched by her enthusiasm – their pragmatic goals, if anything, becoming more entrenched. For them EAP classes were not a way of reaching critical emancipatory goals, but simply a pragmatic matter of passing through to the next stage of their study: as Doherty and Singh (2005, p.1) put it, 'not so much as life-changing locations but rather necessary transit lounges'.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a detailed description of the teaching and learning of reading in three EAP learning environments. Two complementary tools were used as the lens through which to view these learning environments: Christie's classroom discourse analysis and Engeström's Activity Theory. Each section concluded by presenting the view of critical reading represented in that environment, focusing particularly on the teachers' understandings of critical reading.

Classroom discourse analysis revealed that the curriculum macrogenres in each setting had similar generic stages, which can be summarised as:

- Orientation to the text
- Skimming / reading for gist/ reading for overall meanings
- Reading for detailed understandings
- Language development
- Summarising /Critiquing/ Synthesising

However, these stages were realised somewhat differently in the three environments, one major difference being that at City College the entire module consisted of one extended instantiation of the macrogenre, whereas the Sandstone College and Newgate College settings used a number of iterations of the macrogenre.

The orientation genre at City College focused on text – its author, genre, purpose, source, and organisational structure, whereas the orientation genre at Sandstone College and Newgate College focused on content – building background knowledge, as suggested by Carrell (1987), in order to establish schema which would allow students to assimilate learning from the texts, but also arousing students' interest in the topic so that they could begin to engage affectively with the texts.

The 'skimming' and 'reading for detailed understanding' stages at Sandstone College and Newgate College used exercises or mini-tasks to scaffold students' comprehension of the texts with a focus on decoding meaning, while the Newgate College teacher, Lucy, worked hard to enlist the students in co-constructing meaning from text, fusing the stages of 'language development' and 'reading for detailed understanding'. In contrast, the focus on content over language at Sandstone College

and Newgate College meant that the ‘language development’ phase was brief and even superficial.

The summarising/ critiquing/ synthesising stage was also realised quite differently in the three settings. While summarising was a focus of attention in all three settings, it was understood from a structural perspective as ‘picking out the main ideas’ at Sandstone College and Newgate College, while at City College Lucy wanted students to have *incorporated* [CC_LucyInt1] meanings from the reading passages, and to synthesise these into their own texts while acknowledging the competing voices of the sources.

The macrogenres in each setting were realised through a cycle of task initiation – task negotiation/collaboration genres – task closure genres (see Figure 11; Table 13; Table 14 and Table 17). At Sandstone College, the classes proceeded steadily and predictably through the task collaboration/ negotiation cycle with the support of a task sheet based on IELTS style multiple choice and short answer questions. At Newgate College, the classes jumped from one genre to the other very rapidly, supported by multiple handouts, and the class workbook. At City College, the predominant genre was the task negotiation genre. In each setting there was at least one instance of the ‘learning moment genre’ (see Figure 12), though again these were realised rather differently in the different settings.

Turning to Activity Theory, there were substantial differences between the three environments, as summarised in Table 20. Most significantly, the reading practices presented by the teachers in the three settings were quite different, reflecting three contrasting approaches to teaching reading and three different understandings of critical reading, broadly speaking: the traditional, the cognitive and the social constructionist.

Mark, at Sandstone College, the most ‘traditional’ of the three teachers, felt he was tied pragmatically to the *tyranny of the IELTS*. However, he also felt passionate about critical reading as a cultural as well as an analytical activity, and tried to introduce the students to cultural texts and to the beginnings of critical-analytical thinking about texts, giving them two summarising tasks to complete. Like Krashen (2004), Mark also believed that students would improve their reading by practising reading for

pleasure. Mark's approach could thus be categorised as 'critical-pragmatic' (Harwood & Hadley, 2004). Mark positioned himself in the role of 'master' as the ultimate authority and controller in the classroom, but set up classroom action to be strongly collaborative, with students taking an active role in processing text through participation in multiple short tasks, while Mark took the role of 'enabler'. These short tasks formed a scaffold through which students came to make meaning from highly challenging texts. The Xenotransplantation macrogenre culminated with critical analysis, when the students were asked to summarise, synthesise, and develop their own opinion.

Table 20: Comparison of the activity systems of the three learning environments

	Sandstone College	Newgate College	City College
Goals Teacher	Pragmatic/ cultural/ critical (analytical)	Pragmatic/ Critical (analytical)	Critical (emancipatory)
Students	Pragmatic, and increasingly cultural and academic	Pragmatic	Pragmatic
Critical reading goals	Engender love of reading Analysis Dialogue with texts	Evaluate/ analyse arguments Meanings reified	Develop critical language awareness of text as meaning potential
Roles Teacher	Master/ instructor Enabler	Master/ controller/ arbiter of meaning	Master/ model Co-constructor
Students	Active apprentices	Apprentices/ producers	Passive apprentices
Practices - Teacher	Rehearsing students for IELTS Raising cultural awareness	Raising metacognitive awareness of reading strategies	Constructing meaning through critical language awareness
Students	Practising reading	'Doing' academic work	Struggling to make meaning
Tools – Texts	Quasi-academic: challenging	Quasi-academic: not challenging	Adapted academic: challenging
Tasks	Based on IELTS multiple choice	Authentic academic tasks + Multiple short tasks	Essay
Teacher talk	Regulative + instructional	Highly regulative	Instructional and regulative fused
Community	Harmonious and collaborative	Increasingly collaborative	Fragmented, tense
External systems Parent institution	Supportive and non- intrusive	Supportive and non- intrusive	Not supportive/ managerial
Students' previous learning	Teacher-centred, pragmatic	Teacher-centred, pragmatic	Teacher-centred, pragmatic

Andrea, at Newgate College, felt the urgency of equipping her students with all the strategies that they would need to tackle the different genres they might meet in their

university study. She thus took a pragmatic, structural approach based on cognitive strategies, and influenced by the work of Chamot and O'Malley (1994), Oxford (1990) and others. She positioned herself as 'master' and 'controller', arbitrating on and reifying meaning, and pushing the students into participation through highly regulative teacher talk. In contrast to the high challenge texts at Sandstone College, students were generally not presented with in-class challenge (although the essay macro-task threw them into uncharted and highly challenging waters). 'Critical' reading (constructed as arguing for and against a proposition) was added into the final sessions, but with little dialogic interaction with the voice(s) of the text. Overall, the activity at Newgate College tended to reify and reduce texts, skills, strategies – and even students themselves.

In contrast, Lucy, at City College, was more interested in developing students' critical orientation to text as dialogue. Her understanding of critical reading reflected an emancipatory, critical pedagogy perspective (Freire, 1972; Luke, 2002b; C. Wallace, 2003). Although she dominated the classroom, taking a strongly authoritative role, she was keen to position herself and the students as 'language explorers' (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000) and co-constructors of knowledge, zooming in on analysis of text at increasingly detailed levels. However, the students did not all respond to this approach, positioning themselves largely as passive learners and remaining as outsiders to academic discourse. The classroom community became increasingly fragmented and brittle, and task collaboration was increasingly overtaken by the task negotiation genre. Although the major essay-writing task and final exam were apparently quite similar to the essay and exam at Newgate College, the activity constructed by Lucy was completely different. For Lucy, the goal of the activity was for the students to acquire an identity as critical readers through struggle with text: that is, she was concerned with the process of 'becoming', in contrast to Andrea whose goals were associated more with 'skilling up'.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, will investigate the evidence of student development of critical reading practices within the three activity systems, using as a lens the dialogic model of critical reading presented in Chapter 2. This will lead on to a discussion, in Chapter 6, of how the affordances in the three settings contributed to the learning

outcomes. Finally, Chapter 7 will discuss the implications of these findings for the development and implementation of EAP curricula.

Chapter Five: Critical reading outcomes

Chapter 4 has described the macrogenres and activity systems of three learning environments in an attempt to answer the first limb of the research question: **What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**

Each environment represented rather different goal-orientations in EAP reading:

- At Sandstone College, Mark focused primarily on the pragmatic goal of IELTS preparation, but also aimed to develop students' appreciation of literature, love of reading and critical engagement with texts.
- At Newgate College, Andrea took a strongly pragmatic approach, focusing on developing students' use of cognitive strategies as an instrumental tool for academic assignment completion. This was replaced in the last few sessions with a more critical-analytical orientation to academic literacy.
- At City College, Lucy focused on developing students' critical language awareness and their ability to participate in constructing meaning from text.

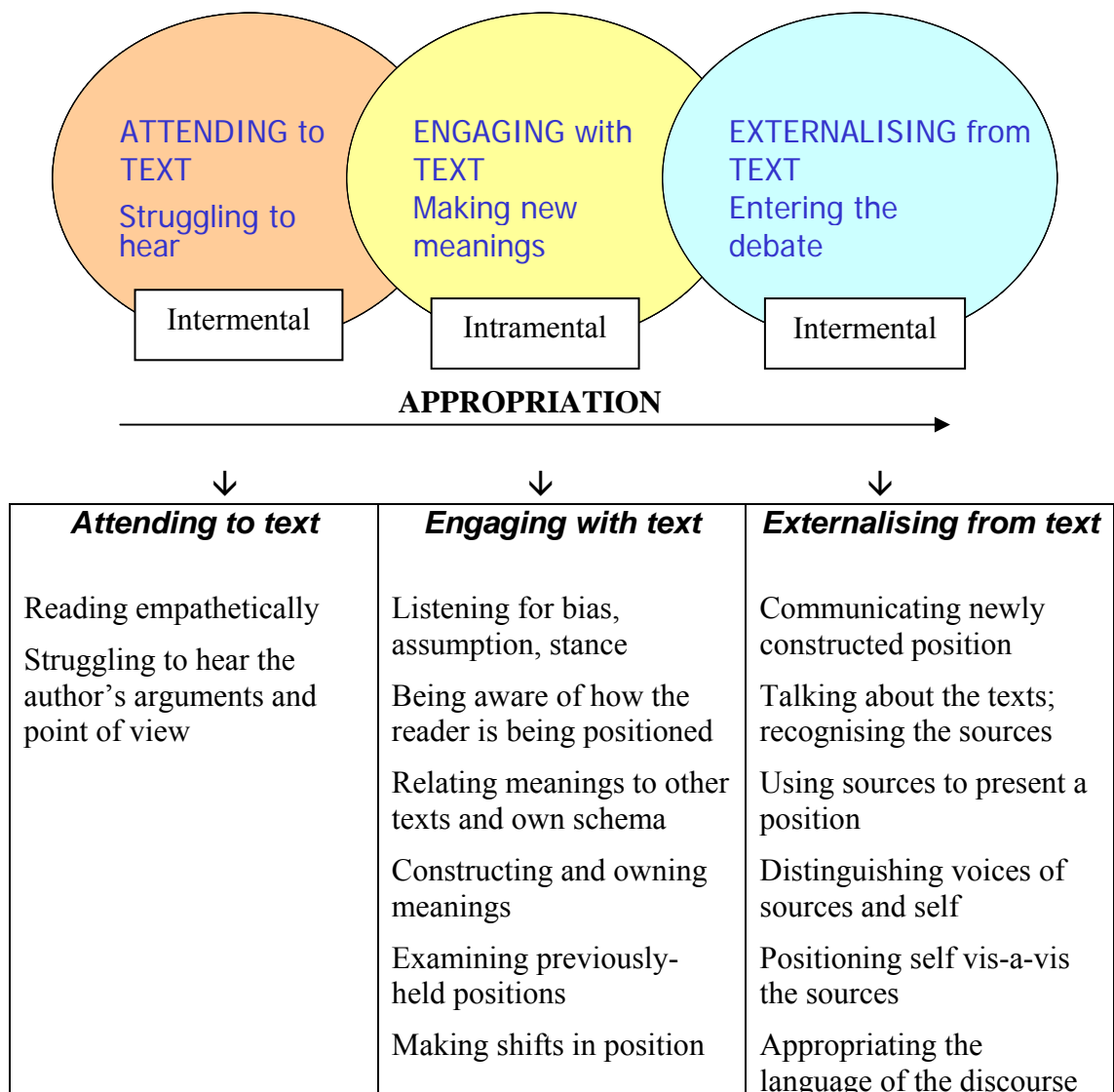
Meanwhile, the students themselves, especially at Newgate College and City College, had strongly pragmatic goals: to access and complete tertiary study in the Australian context.

Chapter 5 will respond to the second research question: **What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in the three environments?**

This question will be answered by analysing the evidence in each setting of students' microgenetic (moment-to-moment) and ontogenetic development (development over time) (Vyogtsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.45-55) of critical reading

practices. The analysis will be framed in terms of the model of critical reading presented in Chapter 2, in which critical reading is defined as a complex dialogic process by which readers: **attend** to the voices of the text; **engage** with text by constructing and reconstructing meanings through internal dialogue; and **externalise** the meanings they have constructed through written or spoken dialogue with others. This dialogic activity supports the reader in appropriating meanings and the language to express those meanings, not as a transmitted, static body of knowledge, but as a dynamic network of meanings reconstructed and ‘owned’ by the reader herself through active participation in reading. The critical reading model is shown again here for ease of reference (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: A proposed dialogic model of critical reading in EAP



		community
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Evidence of microgenetic development is derived from the transcripts of classroom discourse, as well as from the associated observation notes, and where possible from the students' written texts. As Platt and Brooks (2002, p.375) have explained 'If in dialogic activity the mind undergoes transformation, then the evidence can be found *in the discourse itself*' (see also, for example: Donato, 1994; Swain, 1995, Christie 2002). 'Discourse', as Gee (1990) suggests, would include not only the verbal evidence, but also paralinguistic features such as posture and voice quality (Platt & Brooks, 2002, p. 373).

Table 21: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse

BAND	Zone of critical reading		
	Attending	Engaging	Externalising
Excellent 4	Shows detailed understanding of source texts: summarises/paraphrases clearly and empathetically	Synthesises effectively Demonstrates a critical stance (eg listening for bias, questioning assumptions, questioning evidence or argument)	Presents an 'owned' position in relation to the sources. Refers to the sources appropriately, distinguishing own voice and the multiple voices of the sources. Appropriates language of the 'field'.
Good 3	Shows some understanding of source texts; summarises/paraphrases but with some inaccuracies. Does not appreciate the author's position	Juxtaposes but does not synthesise effectively Little critical awareness.	Presents a position but without strong justification Tends to plagiphastic writing; frequently uses lexical bundles from the source texts. Voices of texts dominate and may not be clearly distinguished
Reasonable 2	Little understanding of source texts demonstrated. Simply repeats the sources. Some misunderstandings evident.	Does not relate the sources to each other No critical awareness shown	Plagiphrased: Copies whole clauses or sentences. Own voice not evident Refers to sources but does not develop a coherent position OR Own voice evident with little use made of sources
Poor 1	Many misunderstandings and/or no evidence of understanding	No evidence of engagement	Plagiarised: Repeats strings of sentences OR the reader is unable to make sense of the answer.

Evidence of ontogenetic development derives from two sources: first, the students' own perceptions of their development; and second, through analysis of the students' final written work. As an ethnographic study, the design of the study did not involve

pre-and post-testing. However, at City College and Newgate College, the students' essays and exams provided ontogenetic evidence of emerging literacy practices. In the case of Sandstone College, little written work was set; nevertheless, the students' summaries of the xenotransplantation and cannibalism texts provided some insight into their development as critical readers.

The students' written work was analysed according to a set of band descriptors, as presented and explained in Chapter 3, and shown here again in Table 21. The band descriptors make it possible to relate, at least to some extent, the student learning outcomes with the learning environments in which they participated, although as Platt and Brooks (2002) point out, such evidence is necessarily indirect.

5.1 Sandstone College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices

At Sandstone College, as described in Chapter 4, the reading and writing curricula were not integrated, so there was little opportunity for the students to externalise their understandings in writing. For this reason, evidence of ontogenetic development was limited to their performance on the IELTS-style classroom reading tasks and to the students' perception of their own progress, which was elicited through a questionnaire and focus group interviews at the end of the module. The audio recordings of classroom discourse, however, provided good examples of the students' developing critical reading practices at the microgenetic level.

5.1.1 Microgenetic development at Sandstone College

As the macrogenre cycles at Sandstone College unfolded, it was possible to observe microgenetic development taking place in all three of the zones of critical reading shown in the model at Figure 20: **attending**, **engaging** and **externalising**. The Sandstone College data included two major macrogenre cycles of academic reading (see Figures 9 and 11): the Xenotransplantation and Cannibalism macrogenres. The first of these, the Xenotransplantation macrogenre, is used here to demonstrate the students' developing critical reading practice. In particular, the final stages of this

macrogenre demonstrated students' developing practice of attending, engaging and externalising.

Attending

As described in Chapter 4, the Xenotransplantation macrogenre began with an initiation stage and then progressed through cycles of task collaboration and task negotiation, covering reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail and vocabulary development, following the typical IELTS multiple choice and short answer question types. The final task set by Mark in the Xenotransplantation macrogenre was a summarising task.

The students' first attempts at the summarising task were unsuccessful. Mark, realising he had set too great a challenge, moved into the 'learning moment genre' (see Figure 12), reversing the task collaboration-task negotiation cycle, and taking a more didactic role. He used contingent scaffolding (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) to assist the students in their performance of the task, co-constructing with the whole class a negotiated summary of the first text by teasing out the reasons why the author, Cowan, supported xenotransplantation. He jotted these reasons down in point form, using the whiteboard as a supporting semiotic layer for the students. Mark then asked the class to work in pairs to identify the reasons why the author of the second text, Oogyes, was opposed to xenotransplantation, suggesting that the students use the paraphrased main ideas from earlier tasks for support.

The class, as usual, moved smoothly into the pairwork task, with every pair in the room applying their attention immediately and consistently to the task. As the students became increasingly involved in pairwork, the concentrated murmur of voices in the room grew louder, but the audio-recording captured two students, Miho and Hong, working out Oogyes' reasons for opposing xenotransplantation. Miho and Hong were deeply involved together in 'puzzling through' the task, as Donato (2000) puts it. The frequent pauses in their conversation as they scanned back through the reading, as well as Hong's reflective drawing of breath between his teeth, indicated that the task was far from easy, although they had already spent time on the exercise at home:

Hong: I think the major words are 'animals are not just things' ==

- Miho:* == (inaudible) Yeah this is right.
- Hong:* Yep. (more inaudible interchange – drawing breath between teeth)
So...
- Miho:* Animal rights?
- Hong:* It want transfer this sentence in a noun.
- Miho:* But not like that.
- Hong:* Or just write like this.
- Miho:* Like that? (Hong writes...) ‘Animals are not –right –not just things’==
- Hong:* ==Not just things...Maybe too long.
- Miho:* Just say,.. just say: ‘alternative means’.. I think.
- Hong:* Ah. Yes (...)
- Miho:* Should we say: ‘the suffering of pigs’?
- Hong:* The suffering of animals. Yep.
- Miho:* Animals...
- Hong:* Better... ‘Other ways to address the same problem’. Yes.
- Miho:* And.. the difference between human and animal organ donors ..
- Hong:* Yeah... And.. (crossing out and re-writing)
- Miho:* Suffering the animals, and then alternatives ..
- Miho:* What else do we have?
- Hong:* Maybe ethical issues ==
- Miho:* ==and ethical issues (Miho writes)... [SC02_28_2]

Shortly later, Mark called the attention of the class, and point by point elicited the students’ summaries of Oogyes’ argument. Miho and Hong realised they had missed one part of this argument: that xenotransplantation risks introducing animal pathogens into humans. Muttering their disappointment, they copied this answer from the board, but Miho then proudly took the opportunity to offer a point that others seemed to have overlooked:

- Mark:* (...) What else? (...) There’s one more – at least.
- Miho:* (confidently) Alternative means.
- Mark:* OK, yes. (Mark writes on board ‘There are alternative means’)
- Miho:* (whispers triumphantly to Hong) You see! [SC02_28_2]

In this way, with scaffolding from their peers and from Mark, the students in the Sandstone College class all managed to reach a good understanding of the main points of the Xenotransplantation texts. In terms of the band descriptors in Table 21, they could be said to have reached band 4 on ‘**Attending**’.

Having elicited the main elements of Oogyes’ argument, Mark summarised the arguments for and against xenotransplantation and then asked the students to continue their discussion in pairs:

Mark: In this one (pointing to the Cowan summary) he was trying to say that xenotransplantation is a good and exciting idea, while in this one, she’s saying ‘Hang on a minute. Let’s not rush into this because of all of these things’. So let’s finish it off. Same pairs. Have a discussion between yourselves about which one you agree with, whether you are a Cowan person or an Oogyes person, or maybe you might have a different idea altogether. You might have some objection on other grounds, or you might have other grounds to support. Or somewhere else. OK. It’s a discussion. For a few minutes. [SC02_28_3]

By asking the students to identify as either *a Cowan person or an Oogyes person*, Mark is taking the students beyond the zone of simply **attending** to text and into the realm of **engaging** and **externalising**.

Miho and Hong, like all the other students, set about their discussion with gusto. Although this complex topic was very challenging for the students, the noise level rose consistently, with the whole class very much on task and, what’s more, discussing in English. Their **engagement** was palpable. Hong had already attempted to do this task at home, and was quite smug about his attempt, but the response he had prepared, redolent of the IELTS essay writing genre, was somewhat vacuous:

Hong: I wrote ‘I strongly support the recent developments in xenotransplantation because I believe the benefits of xenotransplantation can outweigh the drawbacks.’ Very useful sentence this!

Miho: (reads his statement under her breath)

Hong: (with satisfaction) This is very useful sentence! [SC02_28_2]

His smugness was challenged by Miho, however:

Miho: In my opinion, the benefits for us .. bring suffering for pigs. So it can outweigh.

Hong: I know. We can't ignore the sufferings of animals but I think it's better – the better way to solve this problem. Yeah. We can reduce the suffering of humans. Yeh.

Miho: But what about those pigs? [SC02_28_2]

As they continued their discussion, Miho and Hong gained increasing fluency in controlling the field of the discussion (the term 'xenotransplantation', for example, came more and more easily to Miho each time she used it), and in voicing their opinions on the subject. For example, in Hong's first attempt at expressing his opinion shown in the following extract, there was a breakdown in anaphora when he claimed 'they're just animals' with no prior referent. Miho pushed him to express his opinion more coherently. His second attempt, as he added another point to his argument, was more confident (*I STRONGLY support the idea of Mark Cowan*). However, Miho considered that his argument was not quite correct according to the texts, as the problems with rejection are not in human to human transplantation, but in animal to human transplantation. She corrected this by pointing out that the problem with human to human transplantation is the lack of donors (*the number is not enough*). Gradually, the students were claiming more and more 'ownership' of both the concepts and language of the texts. This appropriation was all the more impressive given their original unfamiliarity of the field:

Hong: Yes, I agree with Glenys Oogyes.

Miho: Oh so you oppose? But you said you support.

Hong: No I support, oh no, no, no. I support Mark Cowan's opinion because, because, I think it's better. For the whole society, for all humans because... they're just animals, and they can be reproduced. What do you think? What is your opinion?

Miho: You can tell your opinion first. Then I can discuss and I can disagree with you.

Hong: Yea, I strongly support the idea of Mark Cowan, because I think from now on I don't think we have many choice to say to the people

who are suffering the disease, so I think right now the best way is xenotransplantation. Yeah. I think now it's the best way although there are still another way to address, but I think the best way is still xenotransplantation. That's my opinion.

Miho: So when and if another way is developed, you will choose that? Instead of xeno-, xeno-something, xenotransplantation?

Hong: Yep. I think the best way is xenotransplantation because I think still the transplantation from human to human is still undeveloped – the technology.

Miho: I think it's already developed but..

Hong: It still have some problems with rejection.

Miho: But I think it's about the numbers, the number is not enough.

Hong: Yeah right! The number is not enough so that's why xenotransplantation is needed.

Miho: I think if the number was enough, we don't need xeno .. transplantation (class is getting very noisy)

Hong: But how about, you can't get enough. Many people don't want to [buy??] their organs.

Miho: So what I am talking is, if we can have another way, an alternative ==

Hong: ==another way

Miho: such as mechanical substitutes.

Hong: But==

Mark: (to whole class) OK. I think it is time we moved on. [SC02_28_3]

In the final phase of this task collaboration - task negotiation cycle, Mark engaged the class as a whole in discussion on the topic, commencing by asking them to raise their hands either in support of Cowan or Oogyes. This led to a sustained class discussion of the issues. An interesting feature of this class was that the IRE pattern of classroom discourse dissipated as students began to take turns from one another, rather than waiting for the teacher to control the discussion. Moreover, they started to bring in ideas that had not been expressed in the source texts, clearly demonstrating their

engagement with the topic, their appropriation of ideas and their ability to **externalise** their own newly constructed positions:

Mark: The majority who are in favour, in support. Is that easy for you to hold that position or do you find that there is some considerable persuasion in these arguments (pointing to the list on the whiteboard) as well? Is it easy? Or is there a fine balance? (Hong sighs reflectively)

Pom: Easy. I think this side is too idealist.

Mark: Too ideal? Yeah?

Pom: If you have to choose between a human and an animal, the human is more important. I think it is worth to kill an animal for a human.

Mark: Why?

Pom: Because a human can bring lots of things to the world.

Lili: And humans have a (inaudible.) Just think about it - animals suffer from the breed process because of human have a ==

Jun: ==I thought. -This is an opinion.- Pigs don't have a freedom. Seriously, how can I say, pigs are harvested in organic farms, harvested kind of to give their organs. But I don't see why the difference between breed for organs and breed to have the meat. Why is it different? I confused. I think it's same I think. [SC02_28_4]

Thus, across the Xenotransplantation macrogenre, microgenesis had clearly occurred. Before tackling the two texts, the students had not even heard of xenotransplantation. By the end of the macrogenre, the students (not without struggle) had confidently and critically appropriated the concepts and language of this challenging field, having **attended** to the two texts, **engaged** in critiquing the content, comparing the two texts and constructing new meanings, and **externalised** these meanings in sustained discussion of the benefits and ethical dilemmas of xenotransplantation. Although Miho and Hong's dialogue was the only one to be recorded³, it appeared from my observations and also from the general class discussion at the end of the macrogenre

³ As described in Chapter 3, the classroom sessions were audio recorded using a single digital recorder which was placed in front of a randomly chosen group during pairwork or groupwork.

that every student in the class, even the weaker students like Lili and Jun, was able to participate in similar development, so that most (perhaps all) could be said to have achieved band 4 in every zone of critical reading (see Table 21).

5.1.2 Ontogenetic development at Sandstone College

The span of the Sandstone College setting was much briefer than in the other two settings: the observed reading classes comprised only 3 hours of the total 20 hours/week for the five-week module, and academic reading comprised only 2 of these hours. The opportunity for ontogenetic (longitudinal) development was therefore somewhat limited. Nevertheless, the students' development of enhanced critical reading practices across this time was clearly evident in:

- their increased ability to answer the IELTS style questions: improvements in **attending**
- the students' changing attitudes to text: improvements in **engagement**
- the students' self-assessment: evidence of **attending, engagement** and **externalising**
- and the students' ability to **externalise** their understandings from text, in particular their ability to summarise.

5.1.2a Increased ability to answer the IELTS style questions: improvements in attending

The first source of evidence in terms of the ontogenetic development of the students at Sandstone College was their increased ability to answer the IELTS style questions. These questions tested the students' ability in the zone of **attending** to text. In the first iteration of the macrogenre cycle, which focused on the Xenotransplantation text, many students struggled with the texts and tasks. Their initial pair work was interspersed with frequent sighs and drawing in breath between the teeth. Even the best students, such as Miho and Lin, commented to each other:

Miho: (whispering to her neighbour) I think this is very difficult for anybody.

Lin: (whispering back) I think it's very difficult. I think so too.

[SC02_21_3]

Most students merely guessed at answers, and Lili, for example, answered nearly all the questions incorrectly. The following exchange was typical:

Mark: OK. What about number 9? Sumi?

Sumi: 'No'

Mark: 'No' says Sumi. Who agrees with Sumi? Who thinks it's something else?

Jun: Just confused.

Mark: Just confused? Well, you're doing well because the answer is 'no'. So good work. See, it wasn't so difficult .. Yet!

Lili: There are too many big words. (laughs) Maybe all wrong!

Mark: OK. So 'human antibodies will automatically accept organs transplanted from knockout pigs.' The answer is 'no' Where's the evidence, Sumi?

(Long pause. Sumi can't answer. Mark chuckles and throws the question open) [SC02_28_1]

Table 22: Comparative readability of Xenotransplantation and Cannibalism texts

	Xenotransplantation	Cannibalism
Average words/ paragraph	94.2	230
Average words/ sentence	23.55	57.5
Average words/ clause	9.81	10.2
Average clauses/ sentence	2.4	2.66

However, by the second cycle, dealing with the Cannibalism text, the students were able to answer the questions more confidently and accurately, suggesting that they had been able to decode the text more effectively. This would suggest some ontogenetic progress, although there could have been other reasons why students were able to respond more confidently to the questions: for example, a more strongly scaffolded orientation to the text, an easier text, or easier questions. As far as I could tell, this was not the case. The students themselves claimed that the Cannibalism text was easier, but this perception itself may have been an indication of increased proficiency, as the crude readability measures (Alderson, 2000, p.71) shown in Table 22 would suggest the contrary. The two texts were similar in their levels of

abstraction and were derived from the same source: the ABC's *Science Report*. In other words, it appeared that the students had indeed made progress in **attending** to text.

5.1.2b the students' changing attitudes to text: improvements in engagement

A second measure of ontogenetic development was the students' changing attitude to text by the end of the five week module. The weaker students, Annie, for example, retained a unitary attitude to text, wanting to understand the text *exactly* and still lacking confidence:

Annie: If we need to do the homework we need to understand exactly. I can't summarise. I can't because can't understand, and rewrite, I can't rewrite. (SC_Jane_Lili_Annie_Final_Int)

On the other hand, Lili, another weak student, had begun to experiment and question her relationship with text:

Lili: Find a suitable, the reading skill suit for me. Is very hard. Sometimes, I try different way to read a book or read an article, but still cannot find which way is suit for me. I should check each word I don't understand, or just choose some vocabulary. I don't know which way is suit for me. So just try. (SC_Jane_Lili_Annie_Final_Int)

The stronger students, however, had gained an awareness of a critical approach to reading as analytical skill, but also as an interpersonal dialogue with text, even if they were self-deprecating about their ability in this regard:

Tommy: For critical reading, we have to understand all the text, and we have to think about it again and if I agree with something and if we disagree with something and we have to paraphrase that text and say oh I think this is not true and this will be like this and we have to give some evidences for those thinking. ...

Hong: Sometime I think it is useful for if you want to read more deep. I think critical reading is very useful especially for literature because

even in your own language sometimes we can't understand, follow all that the text want to say to us. It is not only a language problem. I think also your background knowledge is also important so you learn not only the language but also some knowledge or something like that....

Miho: From a neutral point of view, analyse your own and come up with your own idea. That kind of thing I think. But I'm very bad at critical reading – I'm always impressed by the author. When I read the newspaper, if the text is about bashing the Bush administration, I always==

Hong: ==Agree with the author!

Miho: Yes! [SC_Tommy_Miho_Hong_Lin_Final_Int]

This heightened awareness of critical reading suggested that these students had increased their ability to **engage** with text, or at the very least, an awareness of what it meant to engage with text.

5.1.2c the students' self-assessment: increases in attending, engaging and externalising

A third measure of ontogenetic development was **the students' self-assessment**. In the final focus groups, most students were hesitant to claim that they had made progress, although Jane expressed greater confidence:

Jane: The paraphrasing and summarising also very useful to me, and also novel is very useful to me... This is a short time to improve the English practice. But I have confidence of reading more...

[SC_Jane_Lili_Annie_Final_Int]

Lin, also, had gained confidence and a greater tolerance of ambiguity:

Lin: I'm especially satisfied because I could read without a dictionary, because I usually feel very stifling (?) when I encounter words which I don't know, and I can't control my mind to look up the dictionary. But in that class I didn't do that. It helps me a lot.

[SC_Tommy_Miho_Hong_Lin_Final_Int]

In the final questionnaire, which was administered at the end of the 5-week module to elicit students' responses to the various texts to which they had been exposed, most students strongly agreed or agreed overall that they had:

- improved their reading skills (93%)
- learned useful vocabulary (87%)
- improved their reading strategies (70%)

They were less sure that their confidence had improved (only 63% strongly agreed or agreed) and that they had improved their ability to think critically (56%), perhaps because this term had not been defined or discussed.

Table 23 shows the students' feedback on the specific iterations of the macrogenre. Although the students were less certain about the cultural macrogenres (*Bleak House* and *Apocalypse Now*) and the Reading Diary, most students agreed or strongly agreed that the two academic texts had improved their vocabulary, their reading skills and strategies and, to a lesser extent, their critical thinking. The students appreciated the challenging and interesting topics, especially cannibalism, which was rated 4.58 on a scale of 1-5 for interest (see Table 23).

Table 23: Student feedback on the texts and associated tasks at Sandstone College

	Average rating for each text				
	Xeno-transplantation	Cannibalism	Apocalypse Now	Bleak House	Reading Diary
Challenging	4.27	4.08	4	4.08	3.67
Interesting	4.36	4.58		3.17	
Enjoyable	3.8	4.3	3.41	3.17	3.91
Improved vocabulary	4.09	4.5	3.58	3.33	3.58
Improved critical thinking	3.8	3.58	3.5	3.25	3.25
Improved reading skills	3.8	4	3.5	3.42	4
Improved reading strategies	3.9	4		3.5	3.3
Improved confidence	3.18	3.75	3.08	3.25	3.6

Key: 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly disagree

Many of the students commented spontaneously on their increased ability to summarise and paraphrase:

- *I learned that it is the best way to choose topic sentences or to write paraphrase for really understanding the text.*
- *I learned it's good to learn how to summarise and how it works.*
- *By summarising and paraphrasing it helped me to improve my reading skills.*
- *Finding a thesis statement and topic sentences for each paragraph was good. It helped me to think deeply. And also paraphrasing was really good to improve my reading and understanding skills in English. [SC_Final questionnaire]*

Others commented spontaneously on the content of the texts, showing that they had engaged with the texts, rather than simply treating them as a reading exercise:

- *Although this is an academic text and includes some big words, I still enjoyed this reading text because I am very interested at this topic. I have not ever heard such an interesting explanation about this term 'cannibalism' until I read this reading text.*
- *I find it interesting that cannibalism is not for decreasing the number of species but for increasing it. [SC_Final questionnaire]*

The Cannibalism text was rated as less challenging (despite its higher score on readability measures, as shown above) but contributing more effectively to reading development. Of all the texts, this one rated most highly in terms of contributing to increased confidence and particularly, in terms of interest and enjoyment. Some of this increased confidence, of course, may have been due to the students' increased familiarity with the type of tasks, but largely it can be attributed to the students' high level of engagement with this text. This may suggest that scaffolding, defined by Mariani (1997) and Hammond and Gibbons (2005) as 'high challenge, high support' should also include a parameter for 'high engagement'.

Another interesting aspect of the students' self-assessment was that several of them commented that the reading classes had improved their ability to write, which suggests evidence of developing critical reading practice in the zone of **externalising**. Tommy, for example, made an interesting, unsolicited observation that showed his growing awareness of language as situated and laminated:

I became more confident in practising new phrases that I have learnt and also understood that this phrase is also a different context of that phrase but same meaning and so on. [SC_Tommy_email11/4/06]

Thus, the students' self-assessment provides evidence of developing practice in all three zones of the critical reading model: **attending**, **engaging** and **externalising**.

5.1.2d the students' ability to externalise their understandings from text, in particular their ability to summarise.

Finally, the students' ability to externalise their understandings from text in writing, in particular their ability to summarise, showed improvement. Their first attempt at summarising was not successful, as has been described above. Lin was one of the few students who could even begin to attempt the task. Although her summary of the two xenotransplantation texts reflects some understanding, it failed to distinguish between the two competing voices. Moreover, her use of the connector 'therefore' suggests that she had incorrectly associated the prevention of hyperacute rejection of pig organs by humans with the cleanliness of the pig farms rather than the genetic modification of donor pigs. Further, her direct appropriation of segments of text, augmented with dictionary-derived synonyms, without demonstrating understanding, suggests that she has not been able to incorporate, or take ownership, of new meanings effectively. This type of summary, in terms of my dialogic model of critical reading, suggests a circumvention of the intramental, engagement zone of critical reading, as well as limited ability to attend to the text and, necessarily, to externalise understandings clearly:

Lin: [Peter Cowan supports recent developments in xenotransplantation on the grounds of] non-rejection of transplantations from animals to humans. The animals, mainly pigs at present, are being kept in isolated and completely unspoiled by use and completely clean units. Therefore these genetically engineered animals are finally able to prevent hyperacute rejection of organs by humans.[SC_Lin_Summary1]

[Question prompt]

Directly drawn from the Oogyes text
Dictionary definition of 'pristine'

However, at the end of the Cannibalism cycle of the macrogenre, Lin was able to produce the following summary. While she was still relying heavily on wordings from the source text, she was able to weave them into a coherent whole which demonstrates a good understanding of the original, effectively appropriating the ideas and language of the source text. The instructions for this task were simply to summarise the text: hence, Lin's own voice is not apparent. She does not take an evaluative stance (Holme & Chalauisaeng, 2006; Hood, 2006; Hunston & Thompson, 2000), nor does she attempt to highlight the author's voice, but she has clearly understood the thesis of the text (that cannibalism is a way of ensuring the survival of the next generation), has incorporated it into her own reconstructed understanding of cannibalism, and is effectively able to externalise it, participating at least to some extent in all three of the zones of critical reading: **attending, engaging** and **externalising**.

Early on a Spring morning, you can see a line of marching soldiers in the European forest. They're European Wood Ants. They wars against another nearby nest, but it's not just war for the sake of it. It's for their next generation; cannibalism. Cannibalism is productive and natural behaviour. Contrary to the belief of many, it's widespread and common in nature, not practiced only under extreme stress such as overcrowding and starvation. They do it because they need to get enough protein in the natural world by eating the same species: mate eats mates, parents eat their young, the young eat their parents, siblings eat siblings. Usually we can find two kinds of cannibalistic strategies – the lifeboat strategy and the grazer strategy. The lifeboat strategy can be seen when the food is not enough, the strongest eat the weaker so that the available food is concentrated to a few that can get enough. The grazer strategy can be seen where the young have the ability to get food that is not available to their parents, and then are eaten by the adults. We also should think about cannibalism among humans. Most people think that it's practice only in times of extreme stress or poverty. However, it was a common practice for hunter-gatherers, although it looks like various religious or cultural ceremony. [SC_Lin_Summary2]

Underlined = appropriated from the source text

Even the weakest students in the group managed to write summaries in which they effectively appropriated the language (especially key lexical items) and concepts of the source text, showing at least nascent development of practices in all three zones of critical reading according to my model. For example, in her summary, Annie was able to summarise the key propositions of the source simply but effectively. She wrote:

Cannibalism happens in the European wood. European Wood Ants fight with Wood ants who come from another nest. Ants can get protein from fight, it is in order to bring up their children. Cannibalism in every kind of animal life are very usual. Animal eat their family, because it can solve the problem that lack of protein. There are two kind of strategies of cannibalistic: the lifeboat strategy is happened when they don't have enough protein to maintain their life. However, the grazer strategy is happened when they don't have much food for next generation, which is not usually for elder. For example, the wood ant story. Cannibalism not only happened in animal, but also happened between humans, for example, people living as hunter-gatherers and people live in Papua-New Guineans. [SC_Annie_Summary2]

Underlined = appropriated from the source text

The Cannibalism summarising task was framed transmissively, asking the students to do no more than simply summarise the author's ideas. Nevertheless, the degree of separation between the students' texts and the original suggests that they had been able to internalise the concepts, reconstructing and then externalising them, suggesting that the students had been able, at least to some extent, to participate in all three zones of the critical reading model.

5.1.3 Summary of development at Sandstone College

As the students commented, five weeks was a short time over which to observe emerging reading practices. However, in one respect in particular the students' practices improved: in summarising from sources. Even the weakest students' summaries of the Cannibalism text towards the end of the course showed a grasp of the key propositions of the source text, suggesting that the students had been able to decode and derive meanings from the texts (that is, to **attend** to the texts), and **externalise** these meanings. Although the tasks did not require them to do more,

many students showed in their spontaneous comments on the evaluation forms that they had also **engaged** with the meanings of the text.

Thus it can be claimed that students in the Sandstone College learning environment had developed, at least to some extent, critical reading practices of **attending** to text, **engaging** with text, and **externalising** meanings in relation to text.

5.2 Newgate College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices

As described in Chapter 4, the teacher at Newgate College, Andrea, took a ‘skills’ approach (Hyland, 2006; Lea & Street, 1998) to literacy, focusing on developing reading strategies such as skimming and scanning, note-taking and summarising at the beginning of the course, and introducing the students to an analytical approach to ‘critical thinking’ right at the end of the course. Her approach was highly structured and extensively ‘supported’ (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005), so that students could successfully achieve ‘the right answer’.

The data yielded evidence of microgenetic development occurring—and not occurring—from the classroom transcripts, and summative evidence of ontogenetic development from the students essays and final exams.

5.2.1 Microgenetic development at Newgate College

The Newgate College data provided some interesting insights into activities in which microgenesis did, or conversely, did not occur. In this section, I will look at two contrasting sequences: first, the summarising sequence based on the *Marketing Concept* short text (NGC03_16): and secondly, the *Polygamy* class (NGC05_04), both of which have been described in some detail in Chapter 4.

As explained in Chapter 4, the *Marketing Concept* task occurred in an early lesson. At this point, the teacher, Andrea, was focussing primarily on developing students’

reading strategies, in this case their ability to summarise, in preparation for the upcoming essay, the major task of the course. In contrast, the *Polygamy* class occurred at the end of the course, once the students had completed their major assignments and were coasting towards the final exam. Andrea told me that her aim in this class was to develop the students' ability to think critically, and indeed, the *Polygamy* task was preceded by some short critical thinking exercises drawn from a workbook by Sara Cottrell (2005): *Critical thinking skills: developing effective analysis and argument*.

5.2.1a The *Marketing Concept* task

Prior to the *Marketing Concept* sequence, the students had been practising making notes in various styles — lists, mindmaps and T-charts — having identified the text structure and main points of a text, and then writing a summary based on the notes. In the previous exercise, on *The uses of computers*, Andrea had been disappointed with the students' performance. Taking a unitary view of text, she had insisted that their notes and summaries reflect exactly the pattern shown in the answer key. For homework, she had instructed the students to read and take notes from the next text: a 400-word extract headed *The marketing concept* taken from a Marketing textbook; they were to complete a T-chart with two parallel, contrasting columns. As many of the students had not completed this task at home, Andrea organised them into groups of three to complete it in class. While they worked, she circulated around the classroom, frequently intervening to insist that students write *in their own words* [NGC03_16_2]. Kumar, for example, had done the homework, but had written out whole sentences from the source text. (See the extract in Chapter 4.2.2e). Although he was a competent decoder, having studied at an international school in Pakistan, he was not accustomed to the social practice of paraphrasing. Amarasiri, similarly, had not been able to break free from the original words of the text, but through task collaboration with his classmates, as well as close scaffolding from Andrea, he was able to gain an increasing control over the concepts:

Andrea: So what have you got, Amarasiri? So what's the marketing concept?

Amarasiri: (reads from his notes) 'Marketing concept is an external orientation focusing on the needs of consumers.' (almost an exact quote)

Andrea: And? There's a little bit more that's important. So it focuses on the needs and wants of the consumers. And then?

Yoshi: Just brings it back to the company, make a product that follows the customers' suggestions. (his own words)

Amarasiri: Research.

Andrea: So go out, do some research. So the marketing concept says that market research is done to find out what the customers want and need and then the product is made. That is the first point. So saying it like that is much easier to understand, isn't it? Alright. So who's writing here? Who's the secretary? You have to decide.

Amarasiri: She is.

Andrea: Alright, Wanda, there you are. Can you write that?

(long silence while Wanda writes)

Amarasiri: (inaudible)...while doing research...

Wanda: (writing) while doing research...

Amarasiri: Spend less money on advertising.

Wanda: Extern==

Andrea: ==Are you doing internal orientation? Internal – external. You can write those words down.

Amarasiri: Firm B spends more money on advertising.

Andrea: That's a bit further down. Before you get there, Amarasiri, what do you have under 'sales concept'?

Wanda: Internal orientation stressing the capability of the firm. (direct quote).

Andrea: Right, and the marketing concept is the external orientation?

Wanda: Yes.

Andrea: But before that you should have a definition of what is the marketing concept and what is the sales concept. Just before that. So you've got the marketing concept. What do you have for marketing? What's your definition?

Wanda: It's a management orientation. (direct quote).

Andrea: And what else? That's not enough.

Wanda: Holds key to organisation. (direct quote). Determines the needs and wants of the target market (direct quote).

Andrea: Alright. So put that in your own words now. [NGC03_16_3]

As in the pairwork examples cited from Sandstone College, this extract gives a clear demonstration of the students collaborating together and with their teacher to ‘puzzle through’ the task. However, the task remained at a transmissive level, with students aiming simply to repeat the propositions of the source text with no apparent sense of engagement with meaning—very different from the enthusiastic exchange between Hong and Miho at Sandstone College (see section 5.1.1 above). The students’ externalisation of concepts from the text was performed more as a technicist transferral of meanings from proposition to paraphrase: a kind of short circuit between **attending** to text and **externalising**, with minimal, if any, **engagement**.

Next, using the task negotiation genre, Andrea asked the class to report back on their note-taking, sharing with them her own set of notes on an overhead transparency (see Table 24). The students asked if she would make these notes available on WebCT (the institution’s online learning management system) so that they would be able to complete the next task, which was to write up a summary of the *Marketing Concept* text, using the notes as a basis while keeping their books closed. Interestingly, Andrea herself treated this task almost as a meaning-free exercise: she did not make any attempt to discuss the content with the students, except as a set of isolated propositions, free from any link with the students’ lived reality or any other content topic in the 13 week course. In other words, the text was treated as ‘dis-located’, as if it were autonomous of social context (Bloome, et al. 2005, p.53).

Table 24: NGC: Teacher's notes from the *Marketing Concept*

Marketing concept	Sales Concept
Finds out needs and wants of consumers and tries to satisfy them	Tries to stimulate interest in the company’s product
External orientation: stresses needs of consumers. Does market research	Internal orientation: stresses what the firm can produce
Advertising informs the consumers about the product	Doesn’t worry about what the consumers want: produces what the company can most

Little persuasion necessary, cos they already WANT that product (that's why the company is producing it)	efficiently produce
So advertising has to INFORM	Advertising has to PERSUADE – lots of expensive ads necessary
Successful: the product meets a need	Not successful if nobody wants the product

In their summaries, the students avoided copying directly from the original text. However, they appeared to have switched their original dependence on the source text on to their teacher's notes. Wanda, the scribe in the group above, for example, wrote the following summary, simply 'joining the dots' in the teacher's notes:

Marketing concept means finds out consumers' needs and wants try the best to satisfy the consumers. while sales concept just tries to stimulate interest in the company's product. The marketing concept is an external orientation doing some market research and stressing needs of consumers. Sales concept is a internal orientation stressing what the firm or the company can produce and do not need some research and do not worry about what is consumers' wants, just produces some products which can most efficiently produce. To the consumers the advertising for marketing concept just have little persuasion. Because they have already know what is they want to buy. But sales concept should use advertising to persuade consumer to buy their products. It is seems that marketing concept is more successful, but sales concept should have expensive advertising to attract consumers buy their products. It is less successful. [NGC_Wanda_MktingSummary]

Underlined: Wordings taken directly from the teacher's notes

Despite their strong reliance on the teacher's scaffolding, this was a first step for the students in this group in showing that they had **attended** to text. However, despite Andrea's occasional references to the text author, there is no indication in the summaries that the students have understood these concepts to be constructions. They did not present the ideas as authored, or present their own position vis-à-vis the concepts. Rather, they generally presented the concepts as tangible 'facts'. It was only at the end of her summary that Wanda ventured to use a very tentative modal adjunct, suggesting a personal voice as she **externalises** from the text: *It is seems that*

marketing concept is more successful, but sales concept should have expensive advertising to attract consumers buy their products.

Microgenesis, then, was evident in the *Marketing Concept* class to some extent, particularly in the critical reading zones of **attending** and **externalising**. At the beginning of this activity, the students were using straight copying from the source text, while at the end they were attempting (with strong scaffolding from the teacher's notes) to summarise the text 'in their own words'. However, they did not appear to have **engaged** with the texts in any way: they had not recognised the text as authored or situated; nor had they critiqued or analysed the text. It appeared that they had simply accepted the propositions of the source text as given, self-evident truths, devoid of any meaningful location in a wider social context.

This apparent lack of engagement could be framed as a lack of understanding of the social practices of academic writing, that is, as a problem of understanding how and when to allow their own voices to resonate. Chatterjee (2007), Hunston and Thompson (2000) and Hood (2006) for example, might claim that the problem reflects a lack of understanding of how evaluative language and intertextual conventions are used in academic writing rather than a lack of engagement with text. Moreover, in this simple exercise, Andrea had not asked the students to develop or express a personally-owned position, nor had she made explicit the role of evaluative language and the conventions of intertextuality in academic writing. Equally, however, the students' writing gives an insight into their identity as readers, standing outside the text and the discourse community, and remaining untouched by academic text; and of their attitude to text as unitary, unassailable, dis-located and un-authored.

5.2.1b The *Polygamy* task

The *Polygamy* task, outlined in Chapter 4.2.1, comprised an entire cycle of the reading-writing macrogenre: orientation; reading for main ideas; note-taking; summarising; elaborating and critiquing; drafting; presentation of spoken text (a debate) and presentation of written text (a critique of the stimulus text) (see Table 14). In complete contrast to the *Marketing Concept* task, this concise iteration of the

macrogenre encapsulated microgenetic development of critical reading practices more clearly than any other sequence in the course, and indeed in the entire study.

The reading text around which this macrogenre revolved was a short essay in support of polygamy written by a female Moslem student, and taken from Fjeldstad's (2002) textbook *The thoughtful reader*. Polygamy was a highly emotive topic that engaged this intercultural group of young adults from the beginning, and retained their involvement throughout the lesson. After reading through the text individually, the students worked in pairs to identify the four central arguments. In the class feedback session that followed, each of these arguments was briefly summarised on the whiteboard. Next, the students formed into small groups to evaluate the arguments. Once they had done this, they reconvened into two roughly equal groups, 'for' and 'against', according to their point of view. Each student was asked to prepare one point to present in the debate. Now an element of competition added to the already 'buzzing' classroom dynamics. Within their groups, students helped each other to elaborate and rehearse their arguments.

For the debate, the groups were asked to arrange their chairs in two opposing rows, and the students were called one by one to make their points. After each speaker, the opposite student was offered a chance to refute their point before making his/her own point, and so on. The debate became quite passionate, and the teacher had to play a crucial role as chair, ensuring that all students were given space to speak in a respectful and cooperative climate.

Figure 21: Polygamy task: Note-taking tool

Writer's position		
Polygamy has a valuable social function under certain circumstances		
Supporting reasons	Strengths of line of reasoning	Flaws and gaps or other weaknesses in the argument

For homework, the students wrote a critique of the source reading, providing a summary and evaluation of each point. The table in Figure 21 was provided as a planning tool.

Each student's participation across the macrogenre was examined in detail (see example in Appendix 5). Microgenesis was evident in all the students. As a typical example, I will refer here to one particular student, Carol, a reticent young woman, who was a good student, but not the most proficient in the class. In the orientation stage, it appeared that Carol had not previously thought much about this topic. Her replies were limited to one or two clauses/ turn; she used only simple clauses; the ellipsis in *Not marry!* suggests an instant reaction rather than a carefully thought out position:

- Andrea:* *What do you think Carol?*
- Carol:* *I don't like it much.*
- Andrea:* *You don't like the idea of sharing a man? (Class laughter)*
- Carol:* *Actually it doesn't matter.*
- Hussein:* *(inaudible)*
- Carol:* *For me it doesn't matter. I don't know about other people.*
- Hussein:* *It's OK for him to marry another girl?!*
- Carol:* *Not marry! (more laughter)*
- Andrea:* *We're talking about marriage.*
- Carol:* *Ah no! [NGC05_04_1]*

After the orientation, the students worked in groups to pick out four key points made in the stimulus essay and then reported back to the whole class. By skimming through the text, and then gradually going back and reading in more detail, the students were able to scaffold each others' identification of these points, some making notes, some helping each other to identify and understand the ideas. This stage actualised the **attending to text** zone of the critical reading model. No data were recorded for Carol at this stage. However, Charity was able to sum up one of the points in the class discussion as follows:

- Andrea:* *Alright. Let's have a look at the first one then, do you want to tell us about the war – how can the war be a reason for men to take more than one wife?*

Charity: Because more men go to war and then they die, and they leave behind women. And Moslem women don't work so they depend on their men and they don't have financial stability, but once they get married, the chance of the men dying is more and plus there are no men for the women to marry. And even if he dies, you have to (inaudible) (Andrea intersperses with positive backchannels)
[NGC05_04_3]

It is interesting that, although Andrea had asked from a concrete, unitary perspective on text for 'the four main points', these four reasons were expressed in many different ways by the students, suggesting that they were already beginning to take ownership or appropriate the concepts, participating in the **engaging** and **externalising** zones of the critical reading model.

Next, the students were asked to evaluate these points, discussing their ideas in small groups before reporting back to the class. At this stage, Carol was able to voice more complex ideas, using longer turns (now 2 clauses/turn on average) and more complex forms of reasoning, both extending and elaborating on her points, as she struggled to express her counterarguments to the text:

Carol: They don't need to have a baby these days. It's just an excuse I think.

(...)

Carol: If you want to avoid the cheating, you can never marry anyone.

At this point, Carol was beginning to participate in all three zones of the critical reading model: she had 'listened' to the text (although she had not appreciated the authored nature of the text); she had begun to formulate her own position in relation to the text; and she was able to externalise her understandings in a rudimentary way.

By the time it came for Carol to speak in the debate, she was confident to voice her point of view. For example, the following extract from the debate is a rebuttal of the previous students' point. It is an extended turn of 12 clauses – perhaps the longest turn Carol took in class in the entire 13 weeks:

Carol: I disagree with Kay's point. Because if you really want to have a baby, there are many ways to have a baby, like technical biology. Technical things that can help you to have a baby. And another way

you can have a baby is to adopt it from the charity. It's not a really problem, and the husband has to accept the truth cos you are family. You are marriage and you have promised. You have to accept everything. [NGC05_04_6]

Further logogenesis was evident in Carol's use of the note-taking proforma in which she demonstrated a good understanding of the text, as well as a critique of the text which shows a development in her own position. In part of this proforma she wrote:

<i>Reason given</i>	<i>Flaws</i>
<i>First wife is chronically sick or disabled</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. This is hard to explant to their children, friends and relatives and this could make a bad influence for their children in their childhood.</i> <i>2. A man should take the responsibility for their family, take care his wife and children.</i> <i>3. This is not a good example for the image of the modern society</i>

Finally, Carol wrote in her critique:

The second reason is the first wife is chronically sick or disabled. For this argument, the writer only mentioned that if the husband is not allowed to have a second wife, there will be some potential hazard, but the writer did not say what kind of hazard it would be. So the audience will not get the clear image about what the meaning of hazard by the writer. There are also some weaknesses in this argument, first, if just because his wife's sickness and he marry another woman, that's unmoral and hard to explain to their children, friends and relatives; in addition, this will make a bad influence on their children in their childhood. Second, this is not a good example for the image of modern society. [NGCCarol_PolygamyCritique]

Although Carol's critique is not sophisticated, she was able to write an extended text which demonstrated her position in relation to the *Polygamy* essay. She foregrounded the source text, creating a clear differentiation between her own voice and the original

author's, while also appropriating some of the key lexis from the source: *potential hazard, chronically sick or disabled*. She used evaluative language to position herself in relation to this text: for example *only mentioned; some weaknesses; that's unmoral*. She was also able to use complex noun groups and nominalisation which lend an academic voice to her argument; and she competently used thematisation and textual markers, suggesting that she was controlling the cohesive development of her text in her own voice.

On the other hand, while Carol's use of language demonstrated an increasing control in the **engaging** and **externalising** zones, it remained somewhat naïve in terms of **attending** to text. While she made sense of the arguments from her own perspective, Carol did not show any awareness of the situated, authored nature of the text. She made no attempt to understand from the author's perspective, as a 'connected knower' (Belenky & Stanton, 2000). In fact, the context of the debate reinforced a dualistic way of knowing which militated against a more nuanced understanding of text as situated.

To sum up, Carol's microgenetic development is made visible through her participation in this sequence of tasks. As the sequence progressed, she participated more fully in the three zones of critical reading: **attending** to the text; **engaging** with the text; and **externalising** meanings from the text. Hers was not a superficial or transmissive reading. She listened to the ideas presented, evaluated them, and made shifts in her own thinking as a result of her reading (albeit to expand her original stance against polygamy, and failing to understand the text as situated in a social context far from her own). Finally, she was able to express a coherent argument in relation to the text.

Carol's argument remained at what Belenky and Stanton (2000) would call the level of the 'separate knower': she had developed her own position on the basis of discussion and reasoning, playing Elbow's 'doubting game' (Elbow, 1973). She reasoned from her own cultural viewpoint as a 'received knower' (Belenky & Stanton, 2000), without acknowledging the different perspective of the Moslem author of the source text as might a 'connected' or 'constructivist knower' (Belenky & Stanton, 2000). Nevertheless, the logogenesis of Carol's discourse across the span

of the Polygamy macrogenre clearly demonstrated the emergence of critical reading practices. Moreover, detailed analysis of the other students' participation over the span of the Polygamy class also revealed similar emergence.

5.2.2 Ontogenetic development at Newgate College

The span of the Newgate College class was much longer than either of the other settings (13 weeks as opposed to 5 weeks); however, it was not an intensive program, with only 6 hours of class time/ week. Nevertheless, the substantial amount of homework, and the pressure to complete this homework meant that the students had much more independent practice-time than in the other settings. It would have been surprising, therefore, if ontogenetic development had not occurred. Two main sources of evidence of ontogenetic development are discussed here: the students' self-assessment, and their text-responsible writing, especially their performance in the final exam.

5.2.2a Newgate College students' self assessment

By the end of the semester, the Newgate College students were quite euphoric. Completing *Academic English* seemed to most of them like a tremendous hurdle overcome and many students expressed great satisfaction at having achieved so much. Wanda, for example, glowing with a new-found confidence, told me:

Wanda: I'm not sure, but I think over this semester my English has improved a lot – especially reading I think.

Kate: Why do you think that's occurred? How do you know?

Wanda: For example, just a short passage, three months ago I would spend a long time to read it and cannot get the general idea, but after this semester sometimes I just use 8 or 9 minutes to get the totally idea. So I think my reading has improved a lot. (...) When I finish the task for Academic English then I will feel VERY HAPPY (sounding joyful) I don't know why.

Kate: Because you feel proud of what you've done? Satisfied?

Wanda: Not satisfied. And not happy during the process. But when I finished it, I will feel very happy and relaxed. I haven't got this feel before. [NGCWanda_FinalInt]

Charity also had acquired a new confidence. She explained:

Charity: I think I've changed from the beginning till now. (...) I think I've changed my way of reading. At the beginning I used to read everything – word for word. Just taking in everything and when you finish reading, it doesn't really stick in, but now when you go to the direct stuff – the things you need – you remember them because you've gone for the specifics, and it kind of puts you into focus on the things you really need to know and what you need to remember. [NGCCharity_FinalInt]

Through her struggle to write her major essay on the topic she had chosen in the field of development economics, Charity had learned a huge amount, and was very pleased with her achievement. She had obviously worked hard to understand new concepts through her reading and, as she did so, to apply new knowledge to her previous life experience. She had taken a strongly independent approach to the assignment, ignoring the strategies that Andrea had taught in favour of her own pragmatic response to the task, and existing study strategies:

Kate: Did you take notes anywhere?

Charity: Yes, I took lots of notes. First I would take them like as they are, then when I had them I would try to write them in my own words or try to understand them and analyse them and then write them down again. It's like writing and re-writing until you have the essay.

Kate: So when you came to writing the essay you were really writing from your notes. Would you have done that if it hadn't been for Andrea?

Charity: Yes, I think I would.

Kate: Because you'd had that training at school?

Charity: Yes. I didn't really follow up with the stuff that she was telling us to do.

Kate: Like the note-taking format?

Charity: Yes, I never did that. I just did it the way I thought I would do it. I think that was more cumbersome. But it still worked. I finished it.

[NGCCharity_FinalInt]

Although Charity had taken a very responsible and a thoughtful approach to her work she went on to say:

Charity: Plus, in the beginning I used to like reading a lot, but now after doing this assignment, you just don't want to read any more because it's so much work. I'd rather just sit down and listen.

[NGCCharity_FinalInt]

Carol, like Wanda and Charity, was also shining with a new confidence when I interviewed her after the final exam. She, too, had taken a pragmatic approach to reading, remaining aloof from the content of her major assignment:

Kate: Do you think your reading has improved?

Carol: Maybe. I still just like before I didn't read a lot, English newspaper or English article. I think I know how to read more effectively.

Kate: For your assignment you had to do a lot of reading. Did you find it interesting?

Carol: No not at all. I think for most of the students, the topic is the boring topic. I had to read economic, political... [NGCCCarol_FinalInt]

Like other students, Carol had ignored Andrea's recommended note-taking strategies. She told me that her strategy in writing (or perhaps I should say 'creating') the major essay had been to look at the table of contents, go to the relevant page and copy some sections on to her computer file. She would then change the wording by using the Word thesaurus to create a paraphrase:

Kate: So how did you manage to do the paraphrasing?

Carol: Sometimes I changed the verb into a noun and if it's a noun I changed to the verb or changed to another vocabulary. Just very simple.

Kate: How did you change the vocabulary?

Carol: Use the computer! Just hold shift F7!

Kate: And then you chose one of the words?

Carol: Yes. It's quite easy to change.

Kate: So you didn't use Anna's sheet for taking notes? (...)

Carol: In my opinion it's kind of waste time.

Kate: Right.

Carol: You have to write a lot and some of them are not really needed for the essay.

Kate: Very pragmatic.

Carol: But I think even some students take some notes but they don't really understand what did they write about cos they just want to complete their (note-taking) homework. Maybe they won't look at it when they write their essay.

Kate: So when you copied the bits from the source and you put them into your computer document. Did you understand what you were copying?

Carol: I will read through the sentence before I copy them into my computer. And I think I understand. [NGCCarol_FinalInt]

In sum, the students' self-reports showed their satisfaction with having completed the various tasks, in keeping with a pragmatic, product orientation to the course. They had also gained strategies for dealing with large quantities of academic text. However, unlike the Sandstone College students, there was little indication that the students had gained an identity as interested, critical or reflective academic readers. The outcomes could be summed up well by Carol:

Kate: And are you pleased that you took it (Academic English)?

Carol: Yes, cos I learned a lot of things from this class, and some things are really useful in the uni.

5.2.2b Newgate College students' text-responsible writing

A second source of evidence of ontogenetic development was the students' text-responsible written work: in particular, their major essays and final exams. In order to gain clearer insight into the students' critical reading practices as evidenced in their writing, the essays and exam essays were analysed using the set of band descriptors presented in Table 8 (shown here again for ease of reference in Table 25), assessing practice in each of the three zones of the critical reading model.

Table 25: Band descriptors to assess critical reading through student discourse

	Zone of critical reading		
BAND	Attending	Engaging	Externalising
Excellent 4	Shows detailed understanding of source texts: summarises/paraphrases clearly and empathetically	Synthesises effectively Demonstrates a critical stance (eg listening for bias, questioning assumptions, questioning evidence or argument)	Presents an ‘owned’ position in relation to the sources. Refers to the sources appropriately, distinguishing own voice and the multiple voices of the sources. Appropriates language of the ‘field’.
Good 3	Shows some understanding of source texts; summarises/paraphrases but with some inaccuracies. Does not appreciate the author’s position	Juxtaposes but does not synthesise effectively Little critical awareness.	Presents a position but without strong justification Tends to plagiphastic writing; frequently uses lexical bundles from the source texts. Voices of texts dominate and may not be clearly distinguished
Reasonable 2	Little understanding of source texts demonstrated. Simply repeats the sources. Some misunderstandings evident.	Does not relate the sources to each other No critical awareness shown	Plagiphased: Copies whole clauses or sentences. Own voice not evident Refers to sources but does not develop a coherent position OR Own voice evident with little use made of sources
Poor 1	Many misunderstandings and/or no evidence of understanding	No evidence of engagement	Plagiarised: Repeats strings of sentences OR the reader is unable to make sense of the answer.

The main benefit of using the band descriptors was to throw an intensive light on to the students’ written work to facilitate in-depth analysis of their underlying reading practices, rather than to ‘pigeon-hole’ their essays. The analysis attempts to gain insight into the students’ ontogenetic development, as it gives a summative view of the students’ literacy practices, as opposed to the dynamic data of learning-in-progress which was gleaned from the microgenetic evidence available from classroom discourse analysis (Bloome et al., 2005).

Although both the essays and exam essays were analysed in detail (see Appendices 6 and 7), the exam essays offer more reliable insights, as I did not have access to the

students' sources for their major essays. The students had each chosen their own topic for their essay, and all had succeeded in finding relevant and appropriate sources. It appeared that the students had taken pains to avoid plagiarism. Most had developed a position in relation to their topic and could, to some extent, develop an argument to support this position. On the other hand, four of the ten students had included irrelevant information, had failed to take a clear perspective on their topic, had been unable to synthesise their sources effectively, and appeared not have understood the sources in depth.

Analysis of the exam essays gives a more reliable summative picture of the students' development, as this was a prescribed task based on three short, quasi-academic texts given under exam conditions. The students had discussed the exam topic, *Can plagiarism ever be justified?* in class the previous week and held a short debate, similar to the *Polygamy* debate, in the last week of class. In the exam, they were given three hours to read the texts and write a 1000 word essay referring to the three sources. Although they knew the topic (but not the actual question) beforehand, the students had not previously been introduced to the source texts.

To present a more detailed picture of the students' practices, I will discuss in detail the exam essays of two students in the mid-range of the class. The first, Wanda, had not done particularly well in her major essay, but was able to write a reasonably good exam answer. Wanda had obviously prepared carefully for the exam on the basis of the class work. Her ability to synthesise from the previously unseen sources given in the exam suggests that she was able to understand the source material and even to shift her position slightly as a result. Her argument against condoning plagiarism was clearly structured around three key points taken from the first source text, and properly acknowledged with a non-integral reference. Under each main point, Wanda paraphrased or quoted one or two references to the source texts, as well as including her own comments, so that the voices of the texts were interwoven with Wanda's own voice. For example:

There are various types of plagiarism, such as submit others' written work as your own; copy the information from the Internet; paraphrase or summarise without acknowledgment and reference; gather different articles and combined, change it become your own (Chen, L. 2006). These types of

plagiarism are most common and all of these are not accepted in the universities if students plagiarise, they should resubmit their assignment even fail this course. [NGCWanda_exam]

At times, Wanda's own voice became rather too strident in reaction to the sources.

Take for example the following paragraph:

*Lack of knowledge of subject area. * Some topic of assignment in universities are complex and hard to understand. The teacher prefer to check students' acknowledge and how they change the knowledge in the textbook into their own and deeply improve it when the teacher asked students to complete a complex topic assignment. Obviously, it is not easy for most students to complete such a hard assignment and it is beyond their ability to complete (JISC Electronic Plagiarism Detection, May 15 2006). In this case, some students will plagiarise then handout the assignment just in order to finish the assignment, some of them expected to get a high mark. Sometimes I couldn't understand this kind of plagiarism. I want to ask a question for them. Why you study here? Studying in universities is not only pass the exam or finish the assignment, but also get information, acknowledge which can bring you high challenge to the society. I don't care what you want to do in the future even become boss or president. I just want to mention that if you just plagiarise to graduate you learn nothing in the university and have no ability to compete with others. [NGCWanda_exam]*

**taken from Source Text 1 and previously acknowledged.*

Plain font = ideas drawn from the previous week's class

underlined = language directly appropriated from the sources

It appears that Wanda's ability to mount this argument was not based solely on her understanding of the source texts; she knew the topic well, and had possibly even prepared this essay beforehand. Nevertheless, her writing shows a good understanding of what it means to synthesise from sources, and how to appropriate the language and ideas of sources into her own text. It appears that Wanda was using practices in all three zones of the critical reading model: attending to text, engaging with text, and externalising from text. Perhaps the weakest zone of practice in Wanda's case is in **attending** to text. Her own voice appears to dominate, showing a

relative lack of ‘respect’ for the source texts. As discussed above, it is hard to know whether to ascribe this lack of deference to her reading practices, or to a lack of understanding of writing conventions. The two are intimately intertwined.

A second mid-range student, Shuji, bravely argued that plagiarism can be justified, but found it difficult to mount a case:

First of all, let show what is the plagiarism. From Chen (2006) plagiarism is that:

‘Someone else’s written work as your own:

Copying information word for word from the internet:

Copying work from various authors and then linking them together in an assignment (cut and paste)’

After internet invented and getting popular, it is getting difficult to find plagiarism for teachers. However, research skill is one of the most important aspect in Academic English not only from library but also internet. Internet to widen their thinking, to learn to embrace diversity and to foster global principles and values (Riegle, n.d.). Students do the research by internet, then get idea from that, but they do not write directly. They used internet to get knowledge but is it still called plagiarism? Research from internet is necessary skills for students. [NGCShuji_exam]

underlined = language directly appropriated from the sources

Like Wanda, Shuji was able to introduce references to one or two sources in each paragraph of his essay, although his reference to Riegle in this paragraph is not closely integrated into his writing. Perhaps he had not fully understood Riegle’s point that the Internet is making personal ownership of ideas less significant as information becomes more freely available. However, he had made a valiant attempt to mount a difficult and contentious argument on the basis of the readings in the exam.

Shuji’s writing shows a conscientious attempt to **attend** to the voices of the sources, despite the fact that he seems to have misunderstood Riegle, and possibly misunderstood the concept of plagiarism itself. He has very much taken control of the concepts by **engaging** with the texts: incorporating ideas from the texts into his own text. He also shows an awareness of how to **externalise** from the source texts, using

academic conventions of referencing. It is interesting that, like Wanda, his strengths seem to be in **engaging** and **externalising** rather than in **attending**.

5.2.3 Summary of development at Newgate College

The curriculum at Newgate College was oriented towards the acquisition of pragmatic academic skills which would equip the students for university study. Andrea took a cognitivist approach, intending that the students would learn skills in identifying main ideas, taking notes, summarising, and integrating sources into their academic writing. As a secondary goal, she also wanted the students to be able to take a critical stance, looking at an issue from different perspectives and mounting an argument. The data suggests that the students had begun to participate in practices which enabled them to fulfil these goals at least to a certain extent. They had all been able to complete text-responsible assignments, and all except one of those interviewed expressed a sense of pride in their achievements, a growing confidence and a burgeoning identity as participants in academic discourse.

In terms of the critical reading model, the students were still struggling to **attend** to sources, as their language resources were still limited, and they retained a position as ‘separate’ rather than ‘connected’ knowers (Belenky & Stanton, 2000). They seemed to have little understanding of text as situated or authored. When faced with challenging texts, as Carol intimated, they were inclined to use ‘compensation strategies’ (Adamson, 1993) in order to fulfil tasks, rather than struggling to attend to content. Charity, on the other hand, in her essay preparation process, had worked hard to attend to text, but used strategies which she had developed herself rather than those which had been taught in class.

As for **engaging** with text, there was little evidence that the students, apart from Charity, had engaged deeply with the content of the sources used for their essays, despite being able to choose their own essay topics. In the early classes, for example in the Marketing Concept macrogenre, content had generally not been foregrounded, and so there were few opportunities for students to engage with meanings in the texts. However, in the later classes, such as the Polygamy macrogenre and the exam preparation class on plagiarism, emerging engagement with text was evident.

Conspicuously absent from the Newgate College classes, as from the Sandstone College classes, was text analysis (Luke & Freebody, 1999; C. Wallace, 2003). Although students were expected to skim and scan, using transition markers, headings and looking for prototypical text structures, such as ‘compare and contrast’, there was little or no attention to finer aspects of text analysis at the paragraph, sentence or clause level. This meant that students had no linguistic tools with which to critique texts and examine the ways in which meaning was conveyed.

In terms of **externalising** meanings from text, students had learned ‘text user’ (Luke & Freebody, 1999) resources, gaining skills in the conventions of referring to sources and avoiding plagiarism. In their exam essays, they were able to make the source texts serve their purposes rather than being controlled by the texts. Similarly, the Polygamy sequence provided an excellent opportunity for the students to externalise meanings in relation to text. Overall, however, the lack of engagement with text, and the students’ limited resources in attending to text meant that their externalisation of meanings from text was limited, and consequently they tended, especially in their essays, to be ‘ventriloquating’ (Bakhtin, 1994; Gee, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991; van Lier, 2004; and others) rather than writing in their own voice. Alternatively, in the exam essays, their own voices tended to over-ride the sources.

Although the students’ participation in the three zones of critical reading was somewhat limited, it was heart-warming to observe the increased confidence and sense of identity of these students at the end of the course. All the students interviewed expressed a great sense of satisfaction with their progress, and anticipation of their future ability to succeed in university. At least one student summed up very well the essence of critical reading:

Yoshi: And once you understand, you won’t forget. You can talk to your friends, and if you talk to an expert you can discuss or argue with them, (...) but if you understand you can put your knowledge and your opinion as well. That’s the kind of thing I really enjoy. I really like to say what I think and stuff. [NGC_YoshiWandaCharity_Int2]

5.3 City College: evidence of emerging critical reading practices

As described in Chapter 4, at City College, the teacher's orientation to critical reading corresponded closely with the model of critical reading proposed in this thesis. Furthermore, the integrated curriculum of the five week intensive course had a strong focus on reading. It could be expected, therefore, that the students at City College would be most likely to develop critical reading practices. Of all three learning environments, however, it was hardest to find evidence of emerging critical reading practices at City College. Perhaps the main reason for this was that there were fewer opportunities for students to participate overtly, either orally or in writing, than at Newgate College and Sandstone College. As a basic premise of this study is that learning is viewed as participation (Gee, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003; van Lier, 2004), this meant that the available evidence was significantly reduced. Nevertheless, several sources of evidence were available and are used in this section to analyse students' emergent critical reading practices. First, analysis of classroom discourse and the students' summaries of the *Spatial distribution of employment* text provide some limited evidence of microgenesis. Secondly, the students' self-reports and analysis of their essays and exam essays provide summative evidence of ontogenetic development.

5.3.1 Microgenetic development at City College

5.3.1a Evidence from classroom discourse

As discussed in Chapter 4, group and pairwork often failed to be productive at City College: during the task collaboration genre, students were frequently off task, speaking in their first language, or participating silently by working individually. So, although the same method of recording groupwork was used in all three settings (random selection of a different group each time), the 41 hours of recording at City College yielded no substantial evidence of microgenetic development in peer groups.

During the task negotiation genre, which predominated at City College, the majority of students remained silent (see Chapter 4.3.3e and Figures 18 and 19). Furthermore, they tended to avoid eye contact with Lucy, and many maintained the self-effacing,

motionless body language which signals ‘I hope nobody will notice me’ – a kind of classroom disappearing trick! Many EAP teachers will recognise this body language as culturally acquired, and particularly prevalent among East Asian students.

However, as described in Chapter 4.3.3e, one student, Hari, participated very actively in the IRE pattern of discourse established by Lucy. A good example of Hari’s participation occurred in the *Spatial distribution of employment* class described in Chapter 4 (see Table 17 for a summary of the macrogenre, and Figures 18 and 19 for a quantitative analysis of Hari’s turns). As Lucy worked through the text, applying her critical gaze to the language, Hari followed her at every step, developing finer understandings of the relationship between language and meaning in terms of field, tenor and mode.

In terms of field, Hari collaborated closely with Lucy to build experiential meaning from the text. For example, he attended closely as she explored at length the metaphors of the text, such as ‘toehold’, ‘labour market’ and ‘career ladder’. In unpacking the term ‘labour market’, for instance, Hari extended as well as reflected Lucy’s explanation:

Lucy: (coming to the end of an extended exposé of the labour market metaphor) What employers are looking for is who can I get for the cheapest price.

Hari: They are looking for the optimal solution.

Lucy: Huh?

Hari: They are looking for an optimal solution.

Lucy: OK. If you say they are looking for an optimal solution. Optimal here means ‘best’ doesn’t it?

Hari: Not best exactly. They are looking for a person who can work potentially, cheaper.

Lucy: Yes, you are absolutely right. [CC04_26a_2]

Hari also participated as Lucy unpacked complex noun phrases, such as ‘the spatial distribution of employment’. Lucy had asked the students to relate the noun ‘distribution’ to its root verb, and Hari followed, interacted and even pre-empted Lucy’s question with the noun ‘space’ from ‘spatial’:

Lucy: So the verb is 'distribute'. Here's our heading, the meaning is packed into this heading. We've got 'the spatial distribution of employment.' Everyone know what distribute means? If you distribute something, what are you doing?

Lin: (barely audible) give.

Lucy: So one idea of distribute is to give.

Hari: divide. (ignored)

Lucy: Also another idea of distribute is this: it's like spread (spreads arms akimbo). It's spread. If we have a look at this heading, what are we talking about? What is spread here? ... What part of the heading tells us 'what' is distributed? ... Distribution of?

Several students: (quietly) Employment==

Lucy: ==employment. Right. OK. So the way that we say this, employment doesn't distribute itself (laughs). It's like a passive way. It IS a passive way of talking about this. Employment is spread. (writing on board) So here we've got 'spatial'. 'The spatial distribution'.

Hari: Space.

Lucy: Space, thank you. We're talking about space. [CC04_26a_3]

He participated, too, as she probed into the laminated meanings of particular lexemes, such as 'career choices':

Lucy: Everyone understand career choices? What's a career choice?

Michael: (begins but drowned out by Hari)

Hari: Choices means options. You didn't have many options.

Lucy: OK. Excellent. [CC04_26a_3]

and also when she unpacked the morphology of particular lexemes to deepen the students' understanding:

Lucy: Yes, so teleworking is the idea of something happening OVER a distance. (Some students reacting in murmurs) So television: we can SEE over a distance. TELEworking, working done over a distance.

Hari: Telephone.

Lucy: Telephone! Communication done over a distance. OK. Good. [CC04_26a_3]

Lucy also scaffolded students in attending to the text by focusing their gaze on to textual meanings (mode). For example, when Lucy drew the students' attention to the use of lexical cohesion through the text, Hari again collaborated closely with her:

Lucy: So one way we could break down this heading is 'How employment is spread over different areas', or 'how employment is spread over different regions' OK? Or of course, if we're talking about different regions, or different areas, we're talking about WHERE. So another way we could break this down is to say WHERE employment is spread. Or where employment IS. How employment is spread, where the employment is... Right. And then if you quickly have a look ... at this section.... You might find some words that relate to different areas or different regions. What words can you see that relate to different regions? (long pause)

Student: (Totally inaudible – perhaps 'location')

Lucy: OK. Good! You're finding words that relate to? Different areas or regions in terms of? Location. Absolutely. Everyone knows what location means?

(...)

Lucy: So we had location. Did we find any other words related to==

Hari: ==Accommodation.

Jo: Accommodation.

Lucy: Accommodation? Yes, accommodation does relate to place.

[CC04_26a_3]

Hari was also working closely with Lucy as she identified transition markers:

Lucy: And in this paragraph, where does the questioning begin?

Hari: 'Isolation and exclusion'

Lucy: Good. OK. And what word begins this questioning?

Lynn: But.

Lucy: BUT exactly. (writes on whiteboard) And what does BUT indicate? Effect?

Hari: Negative effect==

Lucy: ==Ahhh==

Hari: (quickly explains) == They are saying they are thinking positively and somewhere, something think that, BUT..

Lucy: OK. So what we've got is we've got a common point of view, and then we've got 'but' ==

Hari: ==but

Lucy: But. So this is used to introduce a different... point of view.

[CC04_26a_3]

Hari also worked conscientiously to complete the outline in the workbook during the task collaboration genre, picking out the line of argument presented in the text.

It was in deconstructing tenor, however, that Hari seemed to be learning most. During the following interchange in which Lucy highlighted the delicate use of language by the author to position himself in relation to an argument, Hari frequently used the body language that Kolonad (1994) calls 'head oscillation', used in Indian culture to denote appreciation:

Lucy: ...When we look at that first sentence, it says that women are often THOUGHT to benefit. What does that indicate? The writer doesn't say 'women benefit from', the writer says 'Women are often THOUGHT to benefit'. Why? What does that tell you?

Jo: Women has more employment. Women has more responsibility for the family.

Lucy: That's a point that's made later in the paragraph, you're right. But the verb 'thought to' what does that tell you?

Hari: There is something doubt.

Lucy: Ah good. OK. Yes.

Hari: There is a doubt.

Lucy: Alright.

Hari: Not exactly (?)

Lucy: If the writer had said, 'Women benefit from the new independence of work location' (writing on board), then the writer is presenting this as? .. a fact. Right? Now I don't know if it is a fact, but if the writer says 'Women benefit from the new independence of work location. Then the writer is presenting it to the reader as a fact. OK.

If the writer says ‘Women are often THOUGHT to benefit etc I don’t want to write the whole thing. This here adds a different meaning. So here the writer is not presenting this as a fact. What is the writer doing? The writer is presenting it as? If I write ‘I think..’ it’s my?’

Students and Lucy: (writing on board as prompt) Point of view.

Lucy: Good. The writer is presenting it as a point of view. So you’re absolutely right, Hari, if the writer presents something as a point of view, he may or may not agree with it. Yeh?

Hari: ‘Often’...?’

Lucy: So what does ‘often’ suggest?

Hari ‘Often’ suggests not always: usually

Lucy: OK? You’re right. Often is not always – usually. But when I read this for example, ‘Women are often thought to benefit’ the way that I read this is that MOST PEOPLE THINK– it’s like a general opinion –YEH – most people think that women benefit, or maybe most employers think, but in this case most people think. (Hari doing lots of head oscillation) So in this case it’s presented as a general point of view. So it’s presented as a general PERCEPTION (writing).

[CC04_26a_3]

Thus, Hari took an active part in language analysis in Lucy’s lessons, appearing to **attend** with an increasingly refined focus on the experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings embodied in the text. Other students may well have been participating silently (as do students in a lecture setting, for example), but did not show overt evidence of microgenetic development in this zone of the critical reading model.

Similarly in the **engaging** zone, classroom discourse analysis yielded little evidence of any engagement with the text, apart from Hari’s enthusiastic head oscillation. Although Lucy frequently highlighted the authored nature of texts, and drew students’ attention to the ways in which the authors were positioning themselves and their readers through subtle using of evaluative language, it appeared that students were unable to relate to the field sufficiently to make meaning effectively as they read. As

Panon and Mon explained, their quietness in class was a symptom of lack of engagement:

*Kate: One thing that's interesting to me is that you're very quiet in class!
Why?*

Panon: Sleepy. Boring class. (...)

Mon: Sometimes we can't follow. But when we get back home and we read it again, we can follow. But in class sometimes we don't understand.

[CCMonKenPanon_Int]

5.3.1b Evidence from the students' written summaries of *The Spatial distribution of employment*

In terms of **externalising**, the predominance of the task negotiation genre at City College meant that there were relatively few opportunities for students to voice their understandings or to reflect on the text. Similarly, there were relatively few chances to externalise in writing. The students were, however, asked to submit a summary of *The spatial distribution of employment* segment of the ILO report which was the focus of CC04_26a and b (see Table 4.8) – the same class which is discussed in the previous section.

Most students were able to complete a summary which showed that they had, at least to some extent, been able to **attend** to the text, and could **externalise** the meanings that they had made. One of the summaries is selected here as representative of the mid-range of the class. Nid, one of the students who did not vocally participate in the class, was able to write as follows:

This summary will focus in the freedom of jobs from any places that is a section of teleworking. But the relocation of works from developed to developing countries was also involved in the summary. The writers show some effects of teleworking on women. Firstly, they can manage their tables and get more convenience for their work. However, the authors found a disadvantage of teleworking. People who work at home has less chance to get higher situation that because of employers can not see their ability. Call centres are a job that a lot of women in developing countries work. But the condition of this job is non-standard that means it is up to each places. In the*

worst way, this job is called the ‘sweatshops of the digital era’. However, teleworking can contribute the chance of employment to developing countries and also supports job increase. [CCNid_summary]

* Thesaurus synonym for ‘schedules’ in the original

Nid’s summary suggests that he has been able to draw meaning from the source text to some extent. By using the thesaurus in *Word*, as well as the scaffolding provided by filling in the worksheet, and Lucy’s extensive whiteboard scaffolding, Nid has produced a reasonably competent summary. He has even been able to recognise the voice of the source text: for example, *The authors found a disadvantage of teleworking*. It would be but a short step from here to using the academic conventions of citation. What is missing, as with the *Cannibalism* and *the Marketing Concept* summaries at Sandstone College and Newgate College, is any sense of the student’s own voice. There is a sense in which this summary merely ‘ventriloquates’ (Bakhtin, 1994) from the source text and the whiteboard notes.

To sum up, analysis of classroom discourse and of the students’ summaries of *The spatial distribution of employment* at City College shows only limited evidence of the students’ emerging practices of **attending** to, **engaging** with and **externalising** from text. However, this lack of overt evidence does not mean that the students were not participating silently, taking in understandings and perspectives on literacy that would serve them well in the long run.

5.3.2 Ontogenetic development at City College

Evidence of ontogenetic development at City College is drawn from two sources: the students’ self-reports and their final exams and essays.

5.3.2a City College students’ self assessment

Although the students were reasonably positive at the beginning of the course, by the end of the course, none of the students I interviewed made positive comments about their development of reading practices. Kim, in particular, sounded depressed:

Kate: Do you think you’ve changed at all over this 5 week period?

Kim: No. (strongly and dejectedly)

Kate: It sounds like 5 weeks of spending a lot of money and not getting much value!

Kim: And my feeling is not good. [CCKim_Int]

Even Hari, who was so active in class, claimed that he had not made progress in reading, as he considered reading had not been a problem for him in the first place:

Kate: So now we're at the end of level 8, how are you feeling about your ability to read academic texts?

Hari: Reading? I don't think there's too much change. Because I don't have a problem with reading actually. There are a few words which I can't understand, but if we read the whole sentence or the whole paragraph we can easily understand what the author wants to say. So reading is not a problem for me. [CCHari_Int]

His self-report calls into question the evidence of microgenesis presented in the previous section.

Val, another student whose final essay and exam essay scored well, was also doubtful about the learning she had achieved. She explained that the best outcome of the module for her had been *changing her thinking* [CCVal_Int], as a result of comparing her essay with a student from another class. Although Lucy had stressed the importance of using evidence in academic writing, Val claimed that she had learned this through her own discovery of analysing the work of a student from another class — not because of participation in Lucy's class:

Kate: Do you think this five weeks has been beneficial to you?

Val: I guess so (doubtfully) .. Just I think the most beneficial has been changing my thinking. I did this research, I get this result C. But I don't satisfy. I spent too much time on this, but I just get C. I have a little bit disappointed. But after this I think about why I get C. I read some people from the other classrooms who get A. I read very carefully. I found the thinking style is totally different.

Kate: In what way?

Val: Because I think in Chinese thinking style. I think too much and there are no some evidence, So I think from now on I should be changing.

So today I borrow some book for my writing. I will read it carefully.
[CCVal_Int]

A point that was made repeatedly in the interviews was the students' lack of engagement with the texts and the class. Kim, for example, complained:

Kate: So did you find these texts interesting?

Kim: Not interesting. But sometimes texts are very interesting.

Kate: What sort of texts?

Kim: Maybe texts about IT or technology. I think that is interesting for me. But this topic is not interesting. [CCKim_Int]

Ken, Mon and Panon expressed the same opinion:

Kate: Are you finding the readings interesting?

Ken: Not really interesting (all laugh – perhaps embarrassed)

(...)

Kate: So why is the reading not interesting? Is it too difficult, or are the topics not interesting?

Panon: The topic's not interesting. [CCMonKenPanon_Int]

Although they thought the work was useful, particularly the work on paraphrasing, they could not keep up with Lucy's intensive pace, and consequently found the class *boring* [CCMonKenPanon_Int] or overwhelming:

Kate: Do you think the class is helping you to improve your reading? Lucy is paying a lot of attention to raising your awareness of how the language is working. Are you finding that helpful to you?(...)

Panon: I think useful, but sometimes too much.

Kate: You're on overload! (all laugh - reference to a comment in class earlier that day)

Mon: Yes, I'm on overload for me (...) Very different from Level 7.

Kate: In what way is it different?

Mon: Everyday we study is not serious like this. [CCMonKenPanon_Int]

Despite their negativity, the students' self-reports did reveal some new understandings about critical reading. For example, Val explained how she had read, and re-read *thinking again and again, changing my idea* [CCVal_Int] as she composed her essay: suggesting that she was now understanding text as dynamic and

interactive rather than as a set of unitary meanings. Hari, too, explained his new understanding of paraphrasing:

Kate: I noticed with your writing too that you're not sure how to paraphrase.

Hari: Yes, sometimes.

Kate: You're inclined to – well you want to take the words directly from the text. Is that right?

Hari: No, no. What I'm trying to do is take whatever the topic is related to, what are the statements that we need to write an essay. We have to take help – just take help from the text. Then I try to paraphrase more the statements. What are they trying to say, what are the meanings, the possible synonyms and just try to make it in our own words.

Kate: It's difficult.

Hari: Yes, it's difficult – but we have to do!

Kate: So in your past education, did you ever have to do that?

Hari: No, not exactly. [CCHari_Int]

Other students, too, had learned new approaches to paraphrasing according to this excerpt from an interview after the first summarising class (CC04_26a) on *Life at work in the information economy* :

Kate: So the point of today's lesson on paraphrasing.(...) was it different from what you'd known before? You've probably done paraphrasing before. (...)

Clint: Yes, we have done the paraphrasing in level 7, but ==

George: ==but not good==

Clint: I think teacher just said how to write paraphrasing, but we don't know how to write. (...) We know the paraphrasing definition but we don't know how to do it.

George: For example, the teacher asked us to find the main point, but we don't know how to do that.

Clint: And teachers think we have to know – we already – but we don't know how.

Kate: So Lucy's given you a lot of support.

Clint: But I think Lucy, we did together. And so we can.

Kate: So do you think it's useful?

Clint: I think it's useful.

George: Kind of.

*Clint: Because if you don't understand the meaning you can't paraphrase.
So I think it's useful. [CCClintGeorge_Int]*

In summary, the students' self assessment of learning development was lukewarm at best. Nevertheless, although the students claimed that they had not made progress, there was some indication that they actually gained understandings of text as constructed, suggesting an increased ability to **attend** to text. Some felt that they had gained an increased ability to **externalise** meanings through paraphrasing. Conspicuously absent, however, was evidence of **engaging** with the texts.

5.3.2b City College students' text-responsible writing

The students' essays

In the last week of the course, the students at City College were required to submit an essay of 500-800 words addressing the question *Compare the effects of the increasing use of ICT in women's employment and career prospects in developing and developed countries*. The students were instructed to refer to at least two of the three core readings, using at least one in-text reference in every body paragraph. No other texts were to be used. Of the three core readings, two had been extensively discussed in class: Belt, V. (2002) 'A female ghetto? Women's careers in call centres' *Human Resource Management Journal*. 12(4) p51ff; and 'Life at work in the information economy', an extract from the ILO's 2001 *World Employment Report*. The students had also been expected to read the third text with much less support: Mitter, S. (2002) *Offshore outsourcing of information technology services*.

<http://www.globalenvision.org/library/7/656/>.

It is worth noting that these readings were extremely challenging. All three readings included complex arguments with a high degree of hedging, concessional language and embedding. All three articles demanded a high degree of 'world knowledge' particularly in the field of economic and political geography, and all three were

underpinned by assumptions about feminism which may have been quite foreign to these students. All three articles were written for specialist academic audiences and demanded much more sophisticated and specialised reading than would the majority of first year texts, either at undergraduate or Masters level.

The essay question, too, was very challenging with its dual focus on developed and developing countries, and on womens' employment and career prospects. It could not be answered by simply reiterating the sources. In order to answer the question, students had to disentangle the complex web of arguments and evidence in the source texts, weigh up the evidence relating to the questions critically, and reach a position. However, as described in Chapter 4, extensive scaffolding had been provided for the students in preparing for this task, including:

- Completing a flowchart diagramming the main points of the ILO Report
- Detailed reading of two of the texts
- Paraphrasing and summarising sections of the ILO report
- Preparing a grid with notes on the effects of ICT on Women's employment and career prospects in developing and developed countries:
- Deconstructing a model introduction
- Deconstructing model essay
- Discussing a video on call centres in India and the UK
- The opportunity to submit a draft and receive extensive feedback.

The students' essays did not receive high grades: the highest grade was B, but most were Cs and Ds, suggesting that the goals of the module had not been achieved. Appendix 8 shows a summarised analysis of the students' essays against the band descriptors shown in Table 21. The average bandscore for the whole group was only 2.3. In terms of **attending** to text (average bandscore 2.5), the students had generally understood the key concepts, although there were still many examples of misunderstanding. After four weeks working on the same topic, using only three main texts, it could have been expected that they would have almost perfect comprehension. In terms of **engaging with text** (average bandscore 2.3), all the students made some attempt to form an argument in response to the question based on their reading of the source texts, although in many cases these arguments were unclear. Finally in terms of **externalising** (average bandscore 2.1), there was no

evidence of any serious plagiarism: all the students had understood the importance of referencing and were able to synthesise, albeit somewhat clumsily, from the sources. However, there was also considerable ‘patching’ from the sources associated with paragraphs that lacked coherence. There was a sense in which the students were merely ventriloquating from the sources with little of their own meaning-making apparent. For further in-depth analysis, two essays are analysed in greater detail here. As with the Newgate College students’ essays, these have been chosen from the mid-range of the class.

Hari’s essay

Hari’s essay has been chosen for detailed analysis as he has featured prominently in the microgenetic analysis in the previous section. Hari produced two drafts before submitting his final essay, making substantial improvements at each attempt. His first attempt at the draft had large sections (more than 50% of the essay) lifted from *Wikipedia* and two other internet sources which I was able to locate easily using a Google search. Although Lucy had insisted throughout the module that they should write from academic sources, that they should not simply copy from these sources, and that for this essay they should use only the three sources they had been given, it was as if Hari had to experience this before understanding. However, in Hari’s second and third drafts, this plagiaristic element was completely eliminated.

The second major challenge for Hari was answering the question: the first draft was only tangentially related to the question, while the second draft failed to address the issue of *women’s* employment, although it attempted to distinguish between developing and developed countries. Between the first and second drafts, there were dramatic improvements. There were also significant improvements between the second and final drafts which can be summarised as follows:

- Unlike the drafts, the final essay presented a reasonably clearly stated position in answer to the question
- The paragraph on women’s employment in industrialised countries was more relevant to the question and included a more clearly articulated position, although the third body paragraph remained obscure
- Surface-level referencing conventions were improved.

However, other important features remained unimproved. In particular, the lack of cohesion between propositions was not addressed, and the problem of switching perspectives between advantages and disadvantages remained.

To explore these issues in more depth, two paragraphs are presented in

Table 26 and Table 27: the former from Hari's second draft, and the latter from his final essay. The analysis shows a substantial improvement between the draft and final paragraphs. However, both paragraphs show slight misunderstandings of the source texts which suggest that Hari has only been able to attend to the sources at a superficial level, taking isolated 'bytes' of information. His original exaggeration of the problem of unemployment in industrialised countries was a common feature in the students' essays, and indicated that he had taken this as an actual rather than a potential problem as was suggested in the readings. Similarly, his last sentence represents something of a misunderstanding: the shift of call centre work from developed to developing countries is presented in the source text by Mitter as a result of inequalities of employment rather than a cause of inequality.

In terms of **engaging**, however, the final essay shows a major improvement in terms of coherence, suggesting that Hari had now more clearly made meaning for himself. It is interesting to note how the process of externalising had also helped Hari to attend to, and engage with meaning. It appears that he had been able to gain personal control over the topic, as Lucy would put it, 'incorporating' concepts into his own schema. He has been able to bring together learnings from the three sources and synthesise them effectively to represent his own position in response to the essay question. Unfortunately at some points in the essay, his position still wavered, and it was hard to make out his point of view.

In terms of **externalising**, Hari's difficulty in establishing a clear position continued to be a problem, but he had learned how to bring together sources to back up rather than to dominate his own view. Between the first and the final draft he made substantial improvements in this zone.

Table 26: Paragraph taken from Hari's second draft

In the industrialised countries increasing in unemployment is a big problem¹ because of the relocation of jobs to developing countries². According to the ILO Report around 5% of the total service sector jobs in industrialised countries could be relocated to developing countries because they have cheaper labor coast as compared to the developed countries and also have sufficient skills to do their work (Mitter, 2000)⁴. Mitter states that UK unions have predicted that around 200,000 jobs in the financial sector would be relocated to India soon. This is creating inequalities of employment between the developed countries and developing countries⁵ (Belt, V. 2002)⁶.

¹ Exaggerated representation of the sources

² The paragraph does not relate to WOMEN'S employment specifically, as required by the question. It fails to present the positive effects of ICT on women's employment

³ Over-generalisation: not all developing countries have these skills

⁴ Good synthesis, but sources not clearly delineated

⁵ In fact this relocation of work could be said to be addressing inequalities rather than creating them

⁶ The term 'inequalities' is appropriated from Belt, but not with reference to developing and developed countries.

Table 27: The equivalent paragraph taken from Hari's final essay

In the industrialised countries due to teleworking women jobs are increased and these jobs provide women a flexibility to facilitate their work and family responsibilities simultaneously¹. ²Now lots of jobs like call center jobs are relocated from developed to developing countries and according to the ILO Report around 5% of the total service sector jobs in industrialised countries could be relocated to developing countries because they have cheaper labor coast as compared to the developed countries and also have sufficient skills to do their work. UK unions have predicted that around 200,000 jobs in the financial sector would be relocated to India soon

(Mitter, 2000). This is creating geographical inequalities of employment between the developed and developing countries (Belt, 2002)³.

¹ Topic sentence relating the paragraph to the question. Strenuous attempt to paraphrase from ILO Report. Acknowledges positive effects of ICT on women's employment

² Connective needed here to signal switch of perspective to negative effects

³ Same as in previous draft

In conclusion, although Hari did not receive a very high grade for his essay, his advance from IELTS 5 (his writing score before commencing the module) is very impressive. Although he claimed not to have made progress in reading (see section Chapter 5.3.2a above), he had certainly made substantial improvements in writing, and in particular in writing from sources. He had come to understand what sort of evidence is valued in academic writing, and how to **attend to, engage with** and **externalise from** the sources he had read. He had also experienced how the **externalising** process can help to deepen participation in the other two zones of critical reading.

Austin's essay

The second student chosen here to exemplify development in the mid-range of the class is Austin. In contrast to Hari, Austin was a very shy, quiet student. On the rare occasions when he ventured a comment in the task negotiation genre, the other Chinese-speaking students all laughed. There seemed to be a standing joke (which excluded the teacher) about the fact that Austin's voice was rarely heard. Austin had progressed through previous levels of the course, and appeared to have a good understanding of the academic essay genre. Even his draft essay demonstrated the expected generic stages: introduction - body paragraphs – conclusion, and he attempted to argue a position using a thesis statement based on the essay question which appeared in the introduction and was echoed in the conclusion. At first glance, his essay 'looked' acceptable.

However, closer analysis revealed that there were many problems in coherence and cohesion which were not much improved between the draft and the final essay. The final essay still includes many weaknesses which suggest inadequate depth of critical

reading practices. For example, the perspective tends to waiver between positive and negative impacts of ICT on women's employment; there is little cohesion between propositions; and Austin makes unsubstantiated sweeping generalisations such as *Women who live in developed countries mostly work at home* and *The women [in developed countries] are happy to work at home indefinitely as a primary breadwinner*. In addition, Austin ignored many important points from the sources, especially the shift in ICT work from developed to developing countries (as highlighted in Hari's essay). These problems throw doubt on Austin's effective **attending** to the sources, as well as on his internalisation of concepts in the **engaging** zone of critical reading. Austin's **externalisation** of ideas is also hindered by his inability to steer his argument using appropriate cohesive devices, especially his use of connectives.

To throw a clearer light on Austin's critical reading practices, two paragraphs are compared: one taken from his draft essay (Table 28) and one taken from his final essay (Table 29). Unlike Hari, Austin has not made great improvements between the draft and final essays. In fact, in some respects, the final essay has lost some good points from the draft: for example, in the draft but not in the final essay, Austin foregrounded Belt's research, adding weight to his claims. The paragraph in the final draft, no better than the initial draft, flips from giving negative to positive views indeterminately so that, although there is an attempt at comparison between women's prospects in ICT-based work in developed and developing countries, Austin's position remains unclear. He appropriates chunks of language from the sources (or chunks that Lucy has written on the whiteboard) but does not use them coherently in his own sentences, giving the impression of plagiphrasing. He fails to synthesise ideas from the sources effectively into his own writing, leaving the paragraph as a slab from ILO, followed by a slab from Belt and so on. All of these problems suggest that Austin has not clearly understood the sources in the **attending** zone, let alone been able to internalise or **engage** with the sources and thence **externalise from** the concepts and language that he has met.

While Austin's essay seems disappointing in terms of critical reading, it must be recognised that the essay topic was extremely challenging as it combined three parameters: industrialised/ developing; male/ female; and career prospects/

employment. Furthermore, the field of the readings (the demographics of employment in ICT-based industries) was remote to the students. The readings also were extremely challenging not just because of the remoteness of the field, but also because of the deeply embedded arguments they presented.

Table 28: A paragraph from Austin's draft essay

Nevertheless, women's careers in call centre¹ could be argued that 'not to characterise call centres as entirely career less'². That means that women working in call centres don't totally lack of opportunities for promotion. (ILO report, 2001) state that women, work in call centre, may not lead to career upgrading³. The worst⁴ is that call centre has been thought as sweatshops of the digital era⁵. However, many women can go on to achieve promotion within call centers⁶. Some evidence show that women made up the majority of term leaders. Many women in Belt's study were promoted to team leader. Women made up 50 pre cent or more of all the managers in most of the case. This situation is creating opportunities for promotion⁷ (Belt, V. 2002). In developing countries, in most case, the higher than the cost⁸ Women, working in call centre, get more work experience and their perception of their prospects⁹ (Mitter, S. 2000).

¹ Only one example of ICT careers for women

² Quotation not embedded properly. Source (Belt) not given

³ Contradicts previous clauses – no signal of change in perspective

⁴ Taken from source, not relevant to this paragraph

⁵ Should be quoted and explained

⁶ Back to positive perspective

⁷ Belt's point is that these opportunities were generally only at lower management levels

⁸ Chunk borrowed from Mitter and poorly synthesised

⁹ Chunk taken from whiteboard. Not found in Mitter

Table 29: The equivalent paragraph from Austin's final essay

The women's prospects in developed countries as ILO (2001) state that women, work in call centre, may not lead to career upgrading¹. A minority of women have been enabled work to management career. The worst is that call centre has been thought as sweatshops of the digital era². However, many women can go on to achieve promotion within call centers³. Some evidence show that women made up the majority of term leaders. Women made up 50 pre cent or more of all the managers in most of the case⁴. This situation is creating opportunities for promotion (Belt, V. 2002). In developing countries, in most case, the benefits are batter than the disadvantage. Women, working in call centre, get more work experience and their perception of their prospects⁵ (Mitter, S. 2000).

¹ Chunk copied from source and not integrated coherently

² Paraphrased from original, but not integrated into the coherence of this paragraph

³ Chunk copied from source and not integrated coherently.

⁴ Conflicts with opening sentence: not explained

⁵ Inconclusive: something missing? Chunk taken from whiteboard

The students' exam essays

In the City College exam, as at Newgate College, students were expected to write a text-responsible essay on a familiar topic. Three short texts on the topic of teleworking were provided, each about 150 words in length. One of these texts was very familiar to the students as it was an adapted version of the ILO Report they had previously summarised; a second text was adapted from a less familiar source which they had been given to read in preparation for the exam; and the third text was new to the students. On the basis of these readings, the students were asked to write an essay of about 350 words on the topic: *Telework is a growing practice in the modern workplace. Compare the impacts of teleworking on men and women.* They were instructed to include references to at least two of the readings and not to use more

than one direct quotation. They were reminded to use paraphrasing, and told that they would be assessed on their ability to use in-text referencing as well as on their essay-writing skills.

Of the eighteen students in the class, eleven scored 'D': a fail grade. The highest score was 'C+'. Two of the students were unable to complete the task: they wrote only a few disconnected lines during the two-hour time frame allotted. One other student, Clint, had memorised an essay and reproduced it in the exam, despite the fact that it was not relevant to the question.

Using the band descriptors, the overall average score was 2.3 (see Appendix 9). In terms of **attending to text**, most students were able to draw some meaning from the texts. However, many salient points from the readings were ignored, and several students misunderstood sections of the source readings or drew unjustifiable inferences from the readings and made sweeping generalisations. Although the students appeared to have understood the broad top-level propositions, they had some difficulty in understanding lower levels of clause and lexis. For example, many students' writing showed that they had failed to recognise the embedded clause in *the effect the working pattern has on the individual depends on gender*. At the lexical level, for example, the expression *men are more likely to separate the two*, for example, caused problems for some students.

In terms of **engaging with** text, all the students had attempted to develop their own constructed position in their exam essays, based on the evidence presented in the readings. On the other hand, there was little sense that the students had heard the texts as competing voices, as none of the students made any attempt to use integral references in their writing by foregrounding the author; instead, they used non-integral references, including the author's name and date in brackets at the end of the sentence, suggesting they had perceived the texts as a set of disembodied propositions rather than as authored perspectives.

In the **externalising** zone, all the students were able to use references and format them more or less conventionally, to synthesise to some degree from the sources, and to appropriate language from the texts judiciously. There were no incidences of plagiarism, although there was considerable 'plagiphrasing'.

Overall, then, the students' performance in the exam suggested emerging critical reading practices of attending to sources, engaging with them to construct internalised meanings, and externalising their own position on the basis of the evidence in the texts.

A paragraph from Hari's essay is included here as an example of a mid-range exam essay. In this paragraph, Hari referred to all three of the source texts, although his referencing format is unconventional. He addresses both the positive and negative impacts of teleworking on women, weaving his points together through the thematic use (or perhaps overuse) of textual markers; elaboration and extension; projected clauses; and clauses of reason, concession, comparison and extension. Although his position is left somewhat indeterminate in this paragraph, he resolved it later in the conclusion. In marking the exam, Lucy criticised his writing as 'very simplistic', and there was a sense in which this essay was redolent of the classic IELTS essay genre — an anathema to Lucy. Indeed, Hari's paragraph appears to be heavily dependent on the source texts, as it represents four points from the texts, tacked together, as it were, by discourse markers. Nevertheless, Hari's paragraph below shows an emerging ability to synthesise meanings from three texts and to position his own writing in relation to these texts:

Women are mostly benefited from teleworking because generally they handles the household and childcare activities at home. So now they can easily facilitate their work and family responsibilities together (as seen in extract one). Furthermore, some people think, "it would be boon for women because they could finally work in circumstances that release them from male control and authority of traditional workplaces". (from Extract two). Although, it provides women a flexibility to schedule their work and family responsibilities but there are few drawbacks also, like isolation and fewer career opportunities (As seen in Extract one). In addition to that some people do not consider it as a real job because they think the women who do teleworking do not work hard as they do in office. (As seen in Extract three). [CCHari_exam]

The students' critical reading practices were also frequently obscured by their inability to control their own texts at the clause level. Ken's exam essay, for example, which ranked in the low-middle range of the group, was so badly riddled with

grammatical errors that it was largely incomprehensible. An analysis at the clause level revealed 30 out of 47 clauses were seriously ill-formed (not including minor errors such as omitting plural 's', lack of subject-verb agreement and misuse of articles). Of those clauses that were well-formed, many had no apparent sense (eg *Male isn't the barrier between the professional and family*) or made no sense in conjunction with surrounding clauses (eg *Men are disagree to work at home because male can control female at the traditional workplace when they get a high level*). Grammatical errors included, for example, misuse of textual themes (such as *however, also*); inability to use embedded clauses; informal lexis; missing subjects; duplication of processes. In contrast, Lynn's essay, ranked highest in the group on my band descriptors, not only demonstrated most clearly the critical reading resources of my model, but was also far better controlled at the level of the clause. In Ken's essay the proportion of well-formed clauses was 17:30; in Lynn's essay the proportion of well-formed clauses is 38:6. This contrast suggests that there is a strong correlation between linguistic competence at the sentence level and the acquisition of critical reading resources.

5.3.2c City College reading exam

Unlike at Newgate College, the City College students also sat a reading exam which probed students' ability to **attend** to text. Apart from a mock exam, there was no specific test preparation apart from the normal classwork. Test items included: matching headings with paragraphs; true-false statements and short answer questions to test understanding of supporting propositions; matching synonymous noun groups; identifying anaphoric links. These items were similar in format to those in the IELTS, but much more demanding. Only 8 of the 18 students in the group passed this test, their average score being 20.72/ 40.

5.3.3 Summary of development at City College

In terms of **attending**, this module may have sown the seeds for future critical reading, although the microgenetic and ontogenetic evidence of student learning in this respect was limited. Apart from Hari, who seemed to make substantial progress, students had relatively few opportunities to participate in classroom discourse. Their

essay and exam scores demonstrate that as a whole this group was below the level of attainment expected by the institution at the end of the module.

In terms of **engaging**, the evidence of emergence was even slimmer. Although they had been exposed to rich and deep analysis of texts, the students' expressed little interest in the concepts they had met in the texts, and struggled to present an argued position in their final essays. In the final exam, they used non-integral references exclusively, using the source texts as disembodied propositions rather than as constructed, authored points of view. Furthermore, none of the students expressed a growing identity as critical readers: their confidence appeared to have been undermined rather than enhanced.

In terms of **externalising**, Lucy demanded very high standards and was disappointed when the students did not meet her expectations. However, the students had begun to use cultural conventions of referencing.

More than half the class failed the module. As Lucy claimed, this appeared to be largely because their language resources were insufficient to meet the high standards demanded.

In sum, although the overt evidence of emerging critical reading practices at City College was scant, both from classroom discourse analysis and from analysis of the students' text-responsible writing, the paucity of evidence does not mean that development did not take place. It is possible that students were participating silently, quietly internalising new understandings which would emerge at a later date. As van Lier (2004, p.11) suggests, citing Wittgenstein, 'Learning opportunities can be of a sowing or a reaping kind'. Lucy's intensive gaze at language was somewhat overwhelming for this group of students, who did not seem ready to respond to such detailed and abstract text analysis. However, it is possible that her classes sowed seeds of understanding that would bear fruit in the students' later interactions with academic discourse.

5.4 Summary of students' emerging critical reading practices

To some extent critical reading practices emerged in all three EAP learning environments, as shown in Table 30.

Table 30: Emergent critical reading practices in the three environments

	Sandstone College	Newgate College	City College
Attending to text	<p>YES</p> <p>Students able to identify topic sentences; main ideas; supporting ideas; vocabulary (synonyms)</p> <p>Unitary approach to text</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>Students able to take notes of main ideas and supporting ideas.</p> <p>Unitary, reductive approach.</p>	<p>YES / NO</p> <p>Hari participates in rich, multi-layered language analysis – many students overwhelmed/ excluded</p>
Engaging with text	<p>YES</p> <p>Identifying author's position; developing a stance.</p> <p>Strong engagement with texts.</p> <p>No development of critical language awareness</p>	<p>YES / NO</p> <p>Little sense of engagement until <i>Polygamy and Plagiarism</i> classes</p> <p>Little or no sense of texts as authored</p> <p>No development of critical language awareness</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>Lucy models critical language awareness but students show little or no engagement</p>
Externalising from text	<p>YES / NO</p> <p>Classroom discourse analysis shows evidence of emergent externalisation</p> <p>No opportunities to externalise understandings in writing</p>	<p>YES / NO</p> <p>Students understand principles of text-responsible writing, but tend to ventriloquate (except in <i>Polygamy and Plagiarism</i> sequences)</p> <p>Ability to present a position in relation to sources limited</p>	<p>YES / NO</p> <p>Students understand principles of text-responsible writing, but tend to ventriloquate</p> <p>Students fail to meet high expectations</p>

The primary focus in all three classes was on **attending** to text. At Sandstone College, the students were able to figure out meanings from the text by answering the multiple choice IELTS style comprehension questions, which drew them into identifying top-level propositions, supporting ideas and into matching synonyms at the word and phrase level: a structural approach. With the help of this scaffolding, students were able to make meaning from complex texts which would otherwise have been closed to them. It was the summarising (externalising) exercises, however, at the end of each text which consolidated their understanding and engagement with these

meanings, and led them into a deeper and more dialogic relationship with the texts. In other words, it appeared that a strong structural basis in attending to text facilitated the development of deeper, more critical engagement. The Newgate College context, surprisingly, took a more strongly unitary approach than the IELTS preparation class, as students were expected to produce responses which conformed closely to Andrea's, as 'arbiter of truth' (Palincsar, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978). At City College, in contrast, Lucy was keen for students to attend to multiple, laminated meanings in text; however, this very richness and complexity seemed to be confusing and alienating for many of the students.

Secondly, it was interesting that, although all three teachers were at pains to support students in attending to text, **engaging** with text was lower on their scale of priorities. The students at Sandstone College alone appeared to engage strongly with the texts, in particular the Cannibalism and Xenotransplantation texts. At Newgate College, students engaged with the Polygamy text, but did not understand the text as situated or authored. At City College, Lucy constantly emphasised the authored nature of the texts, but the students generally did not engage meaningfully with the topic of the texts despite her effortful teaching, perhaps because they were not able to participate in basic 'attending' to the focus texts in the first place, and as Lucy explained, the texts were *distant* or *remote* (CC_Lucy_Int) for them.

In terms of **externalising** from sources, students made valuable progress in each of the settings. Particularly at Newgate College and City College, the students were able to write from multiple texts without plagiarism and were beginning to use conventional referencing formats. This was a major learning outcome. On the other hand, a large proportion of the City College class remained marginalised from effective participation in academic discourse, especially oral discourse, and there often appeared to be a short-circuit between 'attending to text' and 'externalising'. Summarising and paraphrasing, for example, was often performed mechanically using synonyms and grammatical transformations, rather than via internalisation of meanings constructed from the source texts. This resulted in ventriloquation (Bakhtin, 1984). At Newgate College, the Polygamy sequence provided students with a good opportunity to externalise meanings from text in oral discourse as well as in writing. At Sandstone College, the students had little opportunity to practice text-responsible

writing as the reading and writing components of the curriculum were largely divorced. However, they had a valuable opportunity to externalise meanings from text in pairwork and then in class discussion. They also developed important new understandings of the practice of summarising and paraphrasing.

The evidence of emergence in this study is confounded by the fact that learning may not emerge directly from any one teaching event. As suggested above, it is possible that the City College learning environment had sown seeds that would bear fruit in the future, once the students had developed stronger language resources, while the Newgate College students might be constrained in the future by a continuing view of text as unitary and unassailable.

The nexus between language resources and emerging critical reading practices in the study is clear: students with fewer resources inevitably found it harder to attend, engage and externalise. Annie and Lili at Sandstone College, Shuji and Amarasiri at Newgate College, and Kim and Henry at City College all found it harder than their classmates to participate in critical reading. Nevertheless, limited language resources did not prevent the weaker Sandstone College and Newgate College students from participating in critical reading at least to some extent. In other words, a key finding from this study is that critical reading practices should not be reserved for advanced classes.

The most confronting finding of the study for me was that, while it could have been expected that students would have achieved critical reading outcomes most effectively at City College, the setting in which the teacher's orientation matched most closely with the dialogic model of critical reading, this did not seem to be the case. In fact, in many respects the Sandstone College environment, although locked into 'the tyranny of the IELTS' (SCMark_Int1), provided the most productive environment for the emergence of critical reading practices.

In conclusion, while students' progress cannot be directly compared across the three learning environments, one outcome was very clear: that students were more satisfied with their learning outcomes at Sandstone College and Newgate College than at City College. Students in these two settings finished the course feeling confident about their capacity to handle academic work in the future – a pragmatic goal achieved.

They had also developed a stronger disposition towards engaging dialogically with text – a critical goal achieved. If, as Ivanic (1998), Norton (2000), Gilyard (2006), and others would argue, learner identity is significant in the development of literacy practices, this positive view of self as a legitimate dialogic participant signals a significant step towards these students' future participation in academic discourse.

Chapter Six: Affordances for critical reading

This thesis explores the ecology of three discrete learning environments in EAP, attempting to answer the research question which was posed in Chapter 1: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices and dispositions, and if so, how?**

Chapter 4 addressed the first research question: **What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?** The characteristics of each environment were described through the lens of Activity Theory, looking in detail at:

- the goals of each setting in regard to academic and critical reading;
- the texts, tasks and talk used as mediational tools to work towards the goals;
- the respective roles of teacher and students in each setting;
- the characteristic reading practices of each environment; and
- the classroom community of each environment.

The elements of each setting represent, in van Lier's (2004) terms, 'affordances' for learning. Affordances, as defined by van Lier (2004, p.91), are 'what is available to the person to do something with'. van Lier points out that people respond to the affordances in their environment in their own terms according to their own orientations or motives. Affordances lead to meaning-making and the emergence of higher-level thinking: 'The affordance fuels perception and activity, and brings about meanings – further affordances and signs, and further higher-level activity as well as more differentiated perception' (van Lier, 2004, p.96). To take advantage of

affordances, learners must be actively engaged, directly participating in activity. Once engaged, the learner's attention may focus on features of the activity, and this deliberate focusing can lead to 'active control' and finally to a 'critical perspective' (van Lier, 2004, p.100-101).

Chapter 5 addressed the second limb of the research question: **What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?** using the framework of the dialogic model of critical reading developed in Chapter 2. This model assumes three zones of critical reading practice: **attending** to the author's meanings; **engaging** with those meanings to construct new internalised and individually 'owned' meanings; and, finally, **externalising** these meanings.

Chapter 5 showed that in every setting, **attending** to text – that is, listening for the text author's meanings, was the predominant zone of classroom action. However, 'meaning' was viewed differently in the three settings, with Andrea and the Newgate College students taking a more reified, unitary view of meaning than Lucy, who expected students to participate in constructing laminated, complex meanings rather than conceiving of meaning as chunks of information to be itemised.

Evidence of **engaging** with texts was much less prevalent, and seemed to be limited to those occasions in which students were affectively involved, particularly in the Cannibalism and Polygamy classes at Sandstone College and Newgate College respectively. At City College, despite Lucy's strenuous efforts, the students appeared to remain alienated from the texts and their content.

Evidence of **externalising** was limited in the Sandstone College setting, as reading and writing were treated as segregated skills. At both City College and Newgate College, on the other hand, the students learned to write from sources, and to follow academic conventions of referencing. However, there often seemed to be a 'short circuit' between attending and externalising. The outcome for many students was that they tended to 'ventriloquate' rather than writing from an internalised construction of meanings from the source texts.

This chapter builds on data presented in the two previous chapters, drawing together the discrete findings of Chapter 4 (what did the learning environments 'look like')

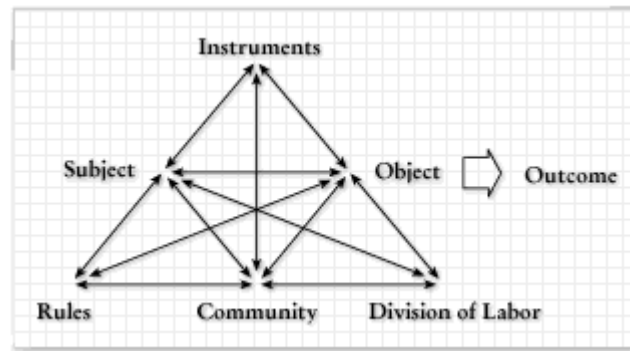
and Chapter 5 (what did students actually learn) in an attempt to understand in more depth which aspects of the three learning environments appeared to afford potential for students' development of critical reading practices. The chapter attempts to answer the third and fourth limbs of the research question:

3. How did the affordances available in the three settings contribute to students' emergent practice of critical reading?

4. What implications can be drawn about the nature of effective learning environments for fostering critical reading in EAP?

As Platt and Brooks (2002) point out, the evidence of student learning is always tangential, and it is rarely possible to claim a direct link between classroom events and student learning. However, by cross-referencing student learning with classroom activity, it is possible to draw strongly plausible hypotheses which can contribute to understandings of EAP pedagogy. As emphasised in Chapter 3, this thesis does not aim to prescribe a 'recipe' for effective critical reading classes. An ecological approach to learning, as espoused by this thesis, understands a prescriptive 'teaching by numbers' approach to be unlikely to achieve positive outcomes. Every class is different; teachers and students differ in their goals and experiences of learning; and teaching-learning contexts are constantly changing. Teaching is essentially a creative and constantly challenging activity, to which there can be no easy-fix or irrefutable solutions. Nevertheless, teachers can, and do, examine their own practice in an on-going action learning cycle of renovation, as their beliefs and priorities shift and develop (Tsui, 2003). Hence, this chapter teases out the affordances offered by the activity systems of these three learning environments as a contribution towards teacher self-reflection in the field of critical reading in EAP. The chapter concludes with an idealised model of an activity system to support the emergence of critical reading in EAP (see Figure 24).

Engeström's original representation of activity systems, introduced in Chapter 3, serves as a framework for the chapter, and is repeated here for ease of reference.

Figure 22: Engeström's model of Activity Theory

Source: Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work, University of Helsinki (2004a)

6.1 Goal setting for critical reading in EAP

Individuals' response to affordances within an activity system will depend on their motivation. As Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p223) stress, citing Leont'ev (1981) and Engeström (1999b, p 380-1), all activity is fundamentally goal-directed, and it is this goal that 'gives shape and direction to activity'. While activity focuses on broad, aspirational goals, particular actions focus more immediately on the production of an object or objects (such as the Polygamy debate, the final exam, the IELTS comprehension exercises) (see Table 7). This object is a 'nexus of power and resistance' (Lantolf & Thorne, p.223) in language learning contexts, depending on who is controlling this object and determining how it will be assessed. Furthermore, members of a learning community, while they are usually involved in the same physical task, may not be engaged in the same fundamental activity as they may conceive the long-term motives differently (Coughlan & Duff, 1994; Spence-Brown, 2007).

The three learning environments in this study represented very different orientations. At one extreme, Andrea took a highly pragmatic approach, in which task completion was a dominant theme, both in terms of completing the micro- and macro-tasks for the course, and in 'skilling up' the students in preparation for completion of future academic tasks (see Chapter 4.2.3). This pragmatic orientation matched the students'

own view of academic literacy. Only at the end of the course, once the majority of tasks had been completed, did Andrea pay attention to the ‘critical’, in the sense of analysing and synthesising arguments from sources to build up a personally owned position – what Jones (2006) calls a ‘downward-looking’ criticality. Andrea’s students, closely scaffolded, rose to the new challenge of critical engagement with the texts, as described in Chapter 5.2.1b in which one mid-range student’s development was traced in detail. The students gained a palpable sense of satisfaction from completing the multiple and demanding series of ‘products’ demanded in this learning environment. Although they had largely rejected the concrete strategies presented by Andrea, they had developed their own strategies for dealing with the demands of the course, which would equip them to handle the academic tasks ahead of them in terms of attending, engaging and externalising from text – at least to a performative level. It can be argued that transformation had occurred in this setting: the students had become confident ‘do-ers’ of academic tasks. They had learned practical skills of pacing their academic work, structuring essays, writing reference lists and so on. However, while the students gained confidence (see chapter 5.2.2a), they tended to see reading in purely instrumental terms. Even Charity, perhaps the most committed student in the class, finally rejected reading:

Charity: Plus, in the beginning I used to like reading a lot, but now after doing this assignment, you just don’t want to read any more because it’s so much work. I’d rather just sit down and listen.

[NGCCharity_FinalInt]

At the other extreme, Lucy, at City College, took a strongly critical approach, emphasising both ‘takes’ on the critical defined by Luke (2002b):

We can think of the critical, then, in at least two ways - as an intellectual, deconstructive, textual and cognitive analytical task AND as a form of embodied political anger, alienation, and alterity. In both senses it entails an epistemological Othering and ‘doubling’ of the world - a sense of being beside oneself or outside of oneself in another epistemological, discourse, and political space that none typically would inhabit. (Luke, 2002b, p.26)

Like Wallace (2003), Lucy aimed to develop her students’ critical language awareness through her attention to detailed textual analysis. As shown in Chapter

4.3.2a, she was keen for students to learn how to listen to the ‘voice’ of the author, for example by raising students’ awareness of evaluative language, and providing tools with which to identify the author’s position, and to ‘read between the lines’ (Patrikis, 2003). Also, like Pennycook (1997) and Pohl (2005), Lucy wanted students to be critically aware of the hegemonic nature of the western education they had sought in an era of globalisation, and of social injustices embodied in the worlds they encountered through text and mirrored in their own worlds (exemplified in her discussion of the labour ‘market’).

For Lucy, critical pedagogic goals were paramount, so much so that she suppressed the topic of the essay which the students would have to write until close to the end of the course. As she explained, once the students were given the title their focus would be entirely pragmatic and product-oriented: focused on the immediate object rather than aspirational outcomes (see Table 24), which, for Lucy, were predominant. Sure enough, once the essay topic was announced, the students burst into a frenzy of action, much of which was directed instrumentally at task completion to the exclusion of engaging critically with text. Although scaffolding tasks were provided in the institution’s curriculum materials, Lucy tended to resist using structural supports which, she claimed, would endorse a pragmatic orientation to literacy. For their part, however, the students had little understanding of ‘academic literacy’: they had no experience of tertiary study in the Australian context, or of the type of tasks they might be expected to undertake. While Lucy’s demanding critical orientation engaged Hari (seen, for example, in his head oscillation described in Chapter 5.3.1), other students appeared to become more and more alienated by the gap between their pragmatic understanding of the goals of the course, and Lucy’s critical orientation (see Chapter 5.3.2a). Clearly teacher and students were involved in different activities: for Lucy the motive was to arouse a critical, emancipatory awareness of text, whereas for the students the motive was to complete the level and move on to the next step of their tertiary pathway. Thus, the City College learning environment exemplified the ‘same task, different activity’ phenomenon described by Roebuck (2000) and more recently by Spence-Brown (2007).

Learning to read was synonymous for Lucy with learning how to become a critical reader: taking on the identity of the critical, engaged reader. This goal, however, did

not clearly communicate to the students, perhaps because Lucy attempted to impose transformation rather than encourage it to blossom, using, in Bakhtin's terms, 'the voice of authority' rather than fostering 'an internally persuasive voice'. Her very emphasis on empowerment and her earnest desire to transform the students became, ironically, a form of oppression which provoked resistance rather than emergence. As Morson (2004) warns:

As teachers we find it difficult to avoid a voice of authority, however much we may think of ours as the rebel's voice, because our rebelliousness against society at large speaks in the authoritative voice of our subculture... We are so prone to think of ourselves as fighting oppression that it takes some work to realise that we ourselves may be felt as oppressive and overbearing, and that our own voice may provoke the same reactions that we feel when we hear an authoritative voice with which we disagree. (Morson, 2004, p.322)

Mark, on the other hand, was able to blend the pragmatic and the critical. As described in Chapter 4, his interpretation of the critical was strongly coloured by his view of texts as cultural artefacts. Reluctantly, Mark acknowledged the 'tyranny of the IELTS' — the powerful motivating force arising from the students' need to pass the IELTS. Mark's classes were characterised by multiple, short, but highly challenging and carefully sequenced tasks, which gave the students a sense of task completion, scaffolded their dialogue with text in the 'attending' zone of critical reading, and assuaged their anxiety about the IELTS. In addition, however, Mark was able to lead the students into the 'engaging' zone of critical reading, through his challenging questions, and to a limited extent into the 'externalising' zone. In this way, even at this more elementary level than the other two contexts, he was able to start developing his students' identities as readers and encourage them to start taking a critical orientation to text. A significant aspect of Mark's teaching was that he explained his goals in terms which related to the students' needs, thus working towards a mutual alignment of goals (see Chapter 4.1.2a). For example in the 'learning moment genre' he stressed the importance of summarising, linking the current classroom activity to the students' future needs:

Mark: OK ... [Summarising] is something that when you move into the university system here you will be required to do frequently and you will need

to think critically about these texts and form your own point of view in relation to them. [SC_02_28-2]

Although the students in Mark's class had little understanding of the term 'critical thinking' and only moderately agreed that they had increased their ability to think critically (56%), they strongly agreed that their reading skills had improved (93%) (see Chapter 5.1.2c).

Mark, like Lucy, was concerned with students' developing identity as language users (Norton, 2006). In particular, he wanted them to become 'readers', reading regularly and with appreciation of the language, as well as engaging with ideas from text. By setting up the reading diary macrogenre, introducing the students to a range of provocative texts, and paying particular attention to engaging the students' interest, he attempted to engender this transformation rather than impose it, managing to align his own and the students' motivations.

To sum up, at the level of action (see Table 7, p.93), it seemed that carefully sequenced tasks with specific 'product' objects:

- **enabled students to build up new language resources and practices**
- **reduced alienation by providing an understandable and rewarding pathway for students' development**
- **orchestrated the pace of classroom activity.**

Conversely, lack of product focus left students confused and frustrated.

In addition, at the level of activity, where the teacher pressed her own understanding of highly aspirational goals without recognition of the students' pragmatic goals, the classroom climate suffered. More successful learning outcomes seemed to be achieved where the teacher was able to both accommodate and extend students' original goals.

This finding suggests that teachers who hope to achieve transformational learning outcomes in terms of critical reading will need to provide affordances for their students that:

- **provide carefully sequenced short-term product goals**

- **recognise and respect the students' pragmatic goals**
- **extend and enhance these goals by introducing tasks which engender an increasingly critical orientation.**

In other words, product goals and structural supports should be regarded as stepping stones towards higher-level critical reading goals rather than as potential impediments. This does not mean to say, however, that the critical should be regarded as 'icing on the cake', to be tackled only once the students have mastered certain basic skills. Rather, as Mark's classes demonstrated, **a critical orientation can suffuse reading events from the very beginning of an EAP course**, and probably earlier - though that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The study strongly suggests, therefore, that reader identity cannot be imposed, either as a set of critical reading practices, or as a set of cognitive strategies, but that through engaging, scaffolded tasks, including tasks with a critical orientation, students can develop an 'internally persuasive' (Bakhtin 1984) identity as critical readers.

6.2 Tools: texts, tasks and talk for critical reading

6.2.1 Texts

The texts which students encounter in EAP learning environments constitute a major affordance. The three settings featured in this study contrasted strongly in this regard. At Sandstone College, Mark was able to select texts which would extend students into their ZPD. The texts were not authentically academic, but were very challenging linguistically and conceptually: the students could not have managed to make meaning from these texts without the systematic scaffolding which was provided by the carefully sequenced comprehension exercises. The students, (rather to my own surprise), appreciated the challenge of such demanding texts, especially if they found the topic engaging (see Table 22, p.218). Interestingly, as pointed out in Chapter 5, the students rated the Cannibalism text as less difficult but more interesting than the Xenotransplantation text, although readability analysis suggested to the contrary. In

other words, their engagement with the topic made a difficult text appear more accessible and enabled them to cope with challenge.

At City College, the choice of texts was dictated by the institution's curriculum rather than the teacher, and engagement with the topic was given low priority. Like the Sandstone College texts, they were dense, rich in grammatical and semantic metaphor, and took the students into a new content field, which they might not previously have considered. Significantly, a single topic area was selected for the entire five-week course, with no recognition of students' prior exposure to the topic, and little attempt to engage the students' interest. While language and meaning are intimately entwined, and Lucy frequently emphasised this point, it was evident in the City College environment that a focus on linguistic analysis predominated over engaging with meaning: texts were presented as objects for deconstruction, remaining 'distant' from the students[CC_LucyInt1], rather than as sources of dynamic meaning which would connect and enrich students' broader understandings of the world. In other words, there was a turning inwards towards the text, rather than an outward-looking orientation using the text as a lens on to the world. Kern (2003) calls this a 'text-centric' view of literacy.

At Newgate College, the teacher-selected classroom texts provided little challenge for the students. Generally, too, content was sidelined, although the reading of the Polygamy text differed in this regard. Classroom texts hopped from one disconnected topic to the next with no time or coherence which would allow students to develop a sustained engagement with the field. Conversely, the students had to choose their own texts for the major essay with little guidance from their teacher. Striking out on their own into the vast array of available texts caused the Newgate College students to expend considerable effort hunting for suitable material and then dealing with remote content with little support. There was a potential for students to flounder in this context. In fact, this lack of scaffolding is not typical of authentic academic contexts, in which students are generally exposed to a conceptual framework through lectures and textbooks before being required to embark on their own research.

In summary, **the findings of this study suggest that in addition to the definition of scaffolding as 'high challenge, high support' (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005;**

Mariani, 1997), a further dimension should be added: high engagement. Texts need to be chosen – or presented – first and foremost as embodying meanings with which students can engage through the critical reading zones of ‘attending – engaging – externalising’. Johns and Davies (1983, cited in Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001), writing from an information processing perspective, distinguish TALO (Text As Linguistic Object) and TAVI (Text As Vehicle of Instruction). This study suggests that a new acronym could be coined from a sociocultural perspective: TAMP (Text As Meaning Potential). Although linguistic analysis of texts can be a useful tool in interacting with text as will be discussed below, the activity of reading is fundamentally about meaning-making. Where the goal of teaching is to develop students’ identities as engaged academic readers, the meaning potential of texts must be foregrounded. In addition, students in EAP need the opportunity to engage with serious knowledge (Christie, 2002, p.62; Freebody, Maton, & Martin, 2008). Who chooses the texts, the authenticity of texts, and the challenging nature of texts will be important, but secondary, considerations.

Analysis of the activity systems of the three learning environments brings forward a further important insight into the role of texts as affordances. Positioning texts as ‘instruments’ or ‘tools’ in the activity system in effect ‘devoices’ and objectifies them. In the Newgate College setting, this was indeed the case: texts were treated as containers of information which could be extracted by identifying reified main ideas. At City College, although Lucy worked hard to identify the voices within the text, drawing students’ attention to language signalling the author’s stance (for example, in the phrase: *but in the worst instances, call centres have been called the ‘sweatshops’ of the digital era* [NGC04_26]) (see Chapter 4.3.3e), her intensive linguistic analysis tended to objectify the texts, effectively treating them as linguistic artefacts. On the other hand, in the case of the Xenotransplantation texts, Mark was able to draw the students’ attention to the contrasting voices of Oogyes and Cowan (see Chapter 4.1.2b), so that the texts themselves became participants in dialogue, as voices within the learning community rather than instruments or tools. **The study suggests then, that in order to foreground the meaning potential of texts, the EAP classroom should be constructed as a dialogic community where texts play a role as participants rather than as objects** (see Figure 24).

6.2.2 Tasks

The central role of tasks as affordances in learning environments for critical reading has already been indicated in the discussion of product goals above. Frequently, the concept of ‘task’ is taken for granted in the pedagogical literature. Hammond and Gibbons (2005) and Michell and Sharpe (2005), for example, use the term extensively without defining ‘task’. As discussed in Chapter 2, Nunan (1999, p.25) defines tasks in language learning as: ‘A piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language’. Tasks have a defined beginning, middle and end, which is usually, as proposed in the earlier part of this chapter, a clearly defined ‘product’ which relates in some way to the authentic world beyond the classroom. According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p 237-238) the task is what is designed for students to work on, whereas the activity is what students actually do. In all three environments in this study, the tasks were imposed on the students, either by the teacher, at Newgate College and Sandstone College; or by the institution, at City College.

Michell and Sharpe (2005) highlight features of task design which provided effective scaffolding in a Year 7 English class:

- task conditions (active participation by students in challenging, but supported activity);
- task engagement (enhanced by clearly specified goals, suggested/ modelled performance strategies, reinforcement and encouragement)
- task trajectory (developmental sequencing, whereby agency was progressively passed from teacher to students)
- task context (students participated in collective activity: those who were participating were representing those who were observing) and
- semiotic resources.

All of these features were seen to contribute to effective tasks in this study. The Polygamy sequence at Newgate College, for example, neatly illustrated these elements of task design. The task design involved all students actively in participation in critical reading (attending to text, engaging with text, and externalising from text). The seamless switching of genre from task collaboration to task negotiation and

finally to individual action, and the carefully staged progress of the task components ensured a smooth task trajectory, with students playing an increasingly agentic role. Task engagement was ensured not just by the emotive topic and successful task orientation, but by clear objectives, opportunities for feedback on reading, and positive reinforcement of participation. The input text as well as the note-taking proformas provided semiotic resources for the students to utilise when they were asked to externalise their constructed position in the debate and later the written critique.

Similarly, the Cannibalism sequence at Sandstone College, provided an excellent example of task design in EAP reading, combining all the features mentioned by Michell and Sharpe (2005). A notable element of this task sequence was the engaging orientation to the text provided by Mark (see Chapter 4.1.2e). Rose, Lui-Chivizhe, McKnight and Smith (2003, p.43) suggest that a scaffolded reading cycle for pre-tertiary students would consist of ‘preparing for reading – detailed reading – elaborating meanings’. In Rose’s approach (Rose, 2003), preparing for reading, or ‘text orientation’ involves such detailed pre-reading that students cannot fail to make meaning from the focus text. This technique may be useful for early childhood, or very inexperienced readers who need to experience success in reading. In EAP settings, however, most students have already developed a reader identity in their own language. Mark’s orientation to the cannibalism texts did not provide a detailed precursor to the text content: rather, by his use of questions which ‘increased prospectiveness’ (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) he stimulated students’ interest and awareness, preparing fertile ground for their subsequent dialogue with text. His questions included, for example, the following link between the Xenotransplantation texts and the Cannibalism text:

Mark: So I’m going to pose a question for you: (to Rina) you might eat pork meat, and you might put a pig heart [into a human], and you might use a human heart, would you eat a human? (All laugh) Would you? Does that not mean that there’s a difference (between eating pork and using pigs for xenotransplantation)? [SC02_28-4]

Similarly, Andrea spent time in the Polygamy class on a thought-provoking orientation to the task. This rich task orientation phase was missing in some less

successful task sequences in the data, for example in the Marketing Concept note-taking task at Newgate College [NGC03_16_3], Similarly, at City College, in the ‘Life at work in the information economy’ sequence [CC04_24a], Lucy used some features of text orientation suggested by Rose et al (2003), but did not include an effective orientation to content. Noticeably, students continued to lack engagement with the text content in both of these sequences.

While the study provided some excellent examples of clearly defined and carefully sequenced tasks, there were also examples of tasks which fizzled out, or perhaps even had negative effects. Tasks which had not been planned beforehand; were not carefully sequenced; were insufficiently challenging; did not allow adequate time; had undefined goals; provided inadequate semiotic resources; or did not allow for active participation by students, tended to be less successful. For example, at City College the students were asked to work in groups to deconstruct the sub-heading ‘Life at work in the information economy’ (see Chapter 4.3.2b). This task fizzled out rapidly, as students were unsure of how to tackle the task – what they were supposed to ‘do’. They claimed that they were not economists and so could not attempt the task. Rather than encourage the students to use dictionaries – a semiotic tool at their disposal – Lucy denied the students agency by immediately returning to the task negotiation genre and herself explaining the term ‘economy’ at some length. A failed task can, in itself, be an affordance, as demonstrated by Mark’s instantiation of the ‘learning moment genre’ exemplified by Mark [SC_02_28-2] (see Chapter 4.1.1b), but Lucy missed this opportunity by taking over control, rather than by ‘scaffolding up’ the students’ participation at this juncture. Another aspect of task design which contributed to the students’ growing alienation at City College was the lack of defined objectives. For example, although the students were asked to fill in a chart summarising the main points of the ‘Spatial distribution of employment’ text [CC04_26a], Lucy barely referred to the chart in the follow-up session. There was no defined phase of reporting back, so there was no opportunity for students to get feedback on their ideas. Moreover, the lack of a reporting back phase with nominated turns led to a growing sense that it was pointless to participate in the task collaboration genre, as Lucy would herself supply the answers. Lucy assumed (incorrectly) that her students would be mature enough to participate without extrinsic

motivators of this kind, and refused to modify her approach in response to their unwilling participation.

To sum up, the study found that tasks (both macrotasks such as the essay, and microtasks such as IELTS exercises) played a central role in all three learning environments. Tasks which were most successful in developing critical reading practices:

- **were carefully designed and sequenced, with a powerful text orientation and clearly defined tangible outcomes,**
- **made use of rich semiotic resources,**
- **allowed for active participation by students,**
- **were challenging, but adequately supported,**
- **were engaging intellectually and affectively.**
- **encouraged student agency.**

6.2.3 Talk

Teacher talk, and indeed student talk, is a crucial mediational tool for learning. The three teachers offered quite different affordances in this regard.

Using Christie's (2002) classroom discourse analysis, three principal genres were identified in this study: task initiation (including task orientation); task collaboration (in which students worked autonomously either individually or in small groups); and task negotiation (in which the teacher dominated the discourse using some variation of the IRE (initiate, respond, evaluate) sequence. Task closure was minimal in all three settings.

Task initiation, the stage in which students are oriented to the text and task, has been discussed in the previous section on task sequencing. The study showed that students were more engaged in meaning-making if the task initiation stage stimulated an affective and intellectual engagement with the text content (as in the Polygamy and Cannibalism macrogenres).

Christie (2002, after Bernstein, 2000) distinguishes between regulative and instructional discourse. In realising the task collaboration and task negotiation genres, the three teachers used these registers quite differently. Lucy, at City College, predominantly used the instructional register in both the task collaboration and task negotiation genres. Her attempts to set up the task collaboration genre were not very productive, and when she did use this genre, her talk retained the same instructional register that was characteristic of the task negotiation genre – except that in this genre she talked to small groups rather than to the whole class. In the task negotiation genre Lucy made full use of the instructional register. She made extensive, and extended, use of the ‘E’ (evaluate) turn of the IRE sequence to model insightful, analytical reading practices and to raise students’ awareness of text and the voices embodied in it. Overt regulative discourse was rare, but was suffused through her instructional discourse (as Christie (2002, p.173) puts it, ‘the regulative register appropriates or speaks through the instructional register’): in the ‘E’ phase she frequently gave strong feedback (‘Good!’ ‘Absolutely!’); furthermore, in the ‘I’ phase she made regular use of ‘WH’ demand questions. These questions, on the one hand, modelled a reflective stance and challenged the students to follow. As Christie claims, this merging of the instructional and regulative registers ‘operates to position pedagogic subjects to address questions and/or to reason in particular ways, or to adopt certain values and/or habits of working’ (Christie, 2002, p.173). On the other hand, the IRE sequence served to assert her position of authority in the classroom, and this was further reinforced by her power to evaluate answers. In this way, Lucy almost unwaveringly spoke in the ‘voice of authority’, effectively silencing the students’ own voices. In addition, her eschewal of nominating students to respond meant that one or two students came to dominate the ‘R’ (respond) phase of the IRE sequence, while the majority of the class were increasingly marginalised.

Lucy’s positioning through talk was somewhat ambiguous. On one hand, she expected the students to be independent, autonomous learners who would volunteer answers, take responsibility for their learning, study conscientiously, and develop a strong personal voice. On the other hand, she exerted a strong control over the class through her use of the instructional register, unerringly retaining the right to hold the floor, to pose questions, and to provide the answers to these questions. Paradoxically,

this voice of authority, in Bakhtin's terms, made it hard for the students to assert their own voice in the way that she desired (Morson, 2004), especially for the East Asian students whose cultural background had taught them to defer to the teacher.

In contrast, Andrea used the regulative register more frequently and overtly than Lucy. The multiple tasks in this setting meant that much time was spent explaining tasks (task initiation), moving students into groups, reminding them of their roles and so on. Andrea's short, snappy turns meant that the class maintained a brisk pace. On the other hand, students could have benefited from more instructional input, more mental modelling of strategies (Pani, 2004) and, particularly, more opportunities to discuss content, that is to engage with and externalise from text. Andrea's insistence on particular answers also contributed to the reification of meaning. Nevertheless, the Polygamy class, in particular, provided an excellent example of Andrea's use of the regulative register to set up and maintain students' direct interaction and engagement with the text, and to promote opportunities for them to externalise meanings derived from text.

Mark was the only one of the three teachers to make a clear distinction between his use of discourse in the task collaboration and task negotiation genres. The task collaboration genre typically preceded the task negotiation genre, throwing the onus on to the students to engage with the texts and the mediational tasks directly rather than relying on him to mediate meaning (see Figure 23 below). During the task collaboration genre, Mark used minimal teacher talk, unobtrusively monitoring the students' progress, redirecting their attention to the text, and occasionally asking questions which would increase prospectiveness. Questions were initiated by the students. The action during the task collaboration phase was clearly with the students, although they were supported by the clearly designed and product-focused tasks. In contrast, in the task negotiation genre, Mark asserted his authority, using the instructional register with its typical IRE pattern, distributing turns inclusively around the class, giving clear feedback and from time to time modelling reading practices or strategies. He also used the instructional register to reaffirm and clarify goals.

Mark's use of 'the learning moment genre' was also notable. Faced with a gap in students' ability to complete a task unassisted, despite the scaffolding provided, Mark

reversed the order of the task collaboration-task negotiation cycle, ramped up the level of scaffolding by extending the length of his instructional turns, introducing more metadiscourse, recruiting the whiteboard as an additional semiotic tool, asking more direct questions, and re-establishing the link between the task in hand and the long term, transformational goals [SC_02_28-2]. Having exploited the rich potential of the task negotiation genre, Mark then shifted the action back to the students, returning to the task collaboration genre in which the students' voices again became predominant.

At Sandstone College, in particular, the task collaboration genre provided opportunities for students to scaffold each other's emerging reading practices. For example, the collaboration between Miho and Hong reported in Chapter 4.1.2b gives an excellent example of the students 'puzzling through' (Donato, 1994) together. Opportunities for task collaboration were highly valued by the students in every setting; Wanda was typical of other students when she said:

Wanda: I think the most interesting is the last three or four weeks.

Kate: Why is that?

Wanda: I think there is more activity. Just like the critical thinking debate, argues.

Kate: Yes?

Wanda: We have more chance to speak. I think it is the biggest reason.

[NGC_WandaFinalInt]

An important difference between the teachers in the instructional genre was in the field of discourse. Andrea's and Mark's use of metalanguage typically concerned cognitive strategies and text structure (eg. 'topic sentences', 'identifying main ideas', 'guessing meaning from context') whereas Lucy used metalanguage derived from systemic functional linguistics (eg. 'noun groups', 'concessional clauses', 'the language of cause and effect'). Lucy worked hard to build the language of the field, deepening and enriching students' understandings of language ('the glass ceiling', 'a female ghetto' and so on). Hammond (2006, p.269) describes a year seven English teacher's skill in interweaving language and content, showing how the explicit teaching of language contributed to the students' successful learning of, and engagement with, content. As suggested in the discussion of text choice above, in

EAP reading classes, language IS content. However, in Lucy's classes the focus was so strongly on language that content (ie. engaging with meanings) became secondary to analyzing language. Only in the Polygamy class at Newgate College, and in the Cannibalism, and the final stages of the Xenotransplantation macrogenres at Sandstone College did students really engage in meaning-making.

To sum up, in terms of teacher talk, the study found that:

- **Learning, and student agency, was enhanced when the teachers clearly distinguished between the task negotiation and task collaboration genres.**
- **In the task collaboration genre, teacher talk was most supportive when it involved unobtrusive task management, re-redirecting students' attention to the text, increasing prospectiveness, and giving sensitive feedback.**
- **In the task negotiation genre, teacher talk was most successful when it combined a focus on language with a focus on content.**

The metalanguage of systemic functional linguistics had the potential to enrich students' awareness of how language is used to make meaning experientially (field), interpersonally (tenor) and textually (mode). However, students needed to be able to 'own' this awareness through ample opportunities for active participation and opportunities for constructive talk, voicing and consolidating their individual and collective understandings constructed from text.

6.3 Critical reading practices

The teachers' different orientations to text in the three environments were reflected in different reading practices. In terms of 'attending' to text, Mark scaffolded students' meaning-making somewhat indirectly through his use of the IELTS formula of reading comprehension questions, which encapsulated a reading strategies approach to picking out main ideas, identifying anaphora, guessing meaning from context and so on. Occasionally he referred to these strategies, overtly raising students' metacognitive awareness in the expectation that they would transfer these behaviours to future academic tasks. However, Mark's use of summarising and critiquing in the

Xenotransplantation class also allowed students to engage and internalise more deeply, and provided opportunity for externalisation.

In contrast, Andrea took a highly structuralist approach, focussing overtly on metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, using concrete tools, such as note-taking charts and worksheets, to promote habit-formation. She endorsed a unitary, monolithic view of text as 'a faceless and voiceless package of propositional information' (Lähteenmäki, 1998, p.85). Later in the course, she turned to more 'critical' reading practices, encouraging students to interact more with content and develop their own position, in the understanding that there can be multiple perspectives on any topic or issue. However, the authorial voice of the young Moslem woman remained veiled behind the surface of the text.

Lucy, for her part, drew on the lens of systemic functional linguistics and post-structural understandings of language to deconstruct text. The penetrating gaze of SFL offered insights into the language of the texts, and the delicate use of grammar to express the author's position. While Mark and Andrea's practices offered a broad sweep at identifying propositions, Lucy's hermeneutic practices offered rich potential for understanding text as layered with meaning. Word meanings, for example the term 'labour market', were not reduced to a unitary dictionary equivalent, but were revealed as having multiple connotations, enriched by the infinite gamut of social exchange behind them. Complex noun phrases such as 'the spatial distribution of employment' were revealed as grammatical metaphors for the complex interrelationships between underlying, interwoven concepts. Texts were shown to have complex chains of lexical and grammatical coherence running through them. Lucy demanded that students see deeply into text, rather than content themselves with surface meanings. Yet her focus remained on language rather than on meaning, and the students remained aloof from the meanings that she unpacked for them.

As discussed in the previous section, the three learning environments in this study were characterised to greater and lesser degrees by the interweaving of talk about language and content (Hammond, 2006). In Lucy's class, language gained centre stage. Her approach was to deconstruct text through linguistic analysis rather than to construct meaning through dialogic interaction. Lucy's rich and thorough meaning-

making practices, then, left something of a gap. By placing herself as mediator between the text as object and the students, their personal dialogue with text was to some extent impeded rather than enhanced. Rather than setting up contexts in which students could relate directly with the texts in genuinely co-constructed development of meaning, Lucy tended to dominate the task negotiation genre, effectively imposing her own interpretation of the texts rather than encouraging the students to see the meaning potential of texts through their own eyes. While she helped them to see meaning as emergent through multiple readings of the texts, she did not encourage students to view the texts through the lens of their own experience, allowing them the freedom and the power to experience that words have a different flavour for every reader depending on their own unique range of linguistic, cultural and social encounters (Lähteenmäki, 1998, p.42).

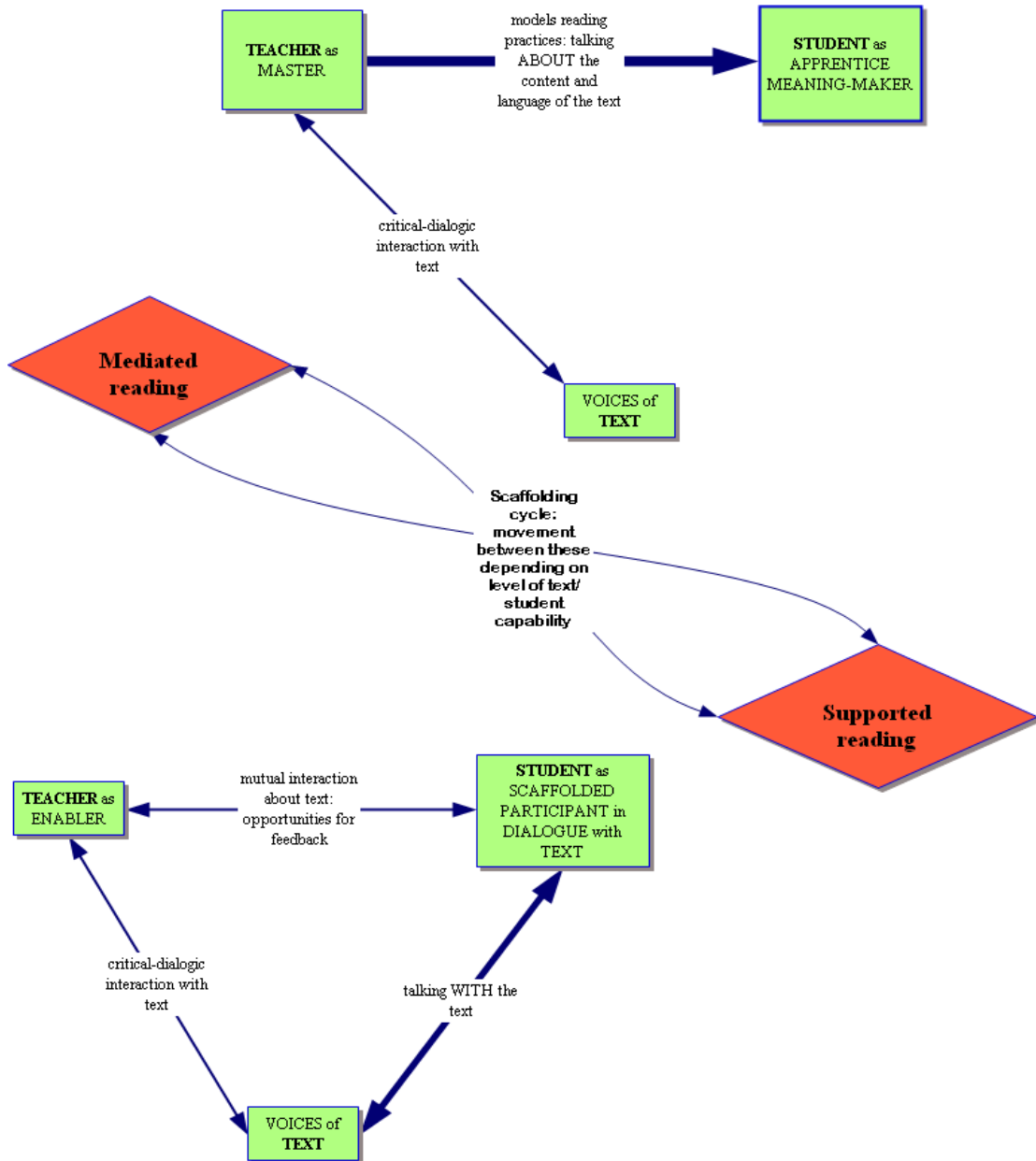
To sum up, the study revealed a range of reading practices in EAP classrooms, including traditional ‘comprehension’ exercises, cognitive reading strategies, and text deconstruction. Although Lucy’s practices offered much richer potential for text analysis than either Mark or Andrea’s, the students in her class remained distant and even alienated from the texts. The findings suggest that, for genuine ‘meaning-making’ to occur, **EAP needs to stimulate active dialogue with texts, invoking the lens of individual experience and perspective, and viewing text as meaning-potential (TAMP) rather than as linguistic object (TALO).**

6.4 Teacher-student roles in critical reading classes

The previous section has foreshadowed new understandings of teacher-student roles in EAP reading which are represented in Figure 23. In all three settings, the teachers at times took the role of ‘master’, positioning the students as ‘apprentice’ meaning-makers (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003). According to Watkins (2007), teachers tend to see this as an authentic teaching role. In the ‘master’ role, the teachers used their authority and their superior knowledge and experience to model higher level interactions with text, to provide linguistic and metalinguistic input, and to offer guidance on reading strategies and text analysis. Most significantly they acted as mediators between the students and the text. While this role was useful in allowing

students to see into texts and to observe new practices, it also tended to alienate the students from text.

Figure 23: Scaffolding critical reading: student-teacher-text roles



At other times, however, the teachers acted as ‘enablers’ setting up scaffolding tasks which allowed the students to interact more directly with texts, while steering them towards particular reading practices. The IELTS exercises and the Polygamy class exemplified sequenced tasks which allowed students to develop understandings in this way. Not only did these tasks allow students to interact directly with texts

(mediated only by the task), but they also allowed students to get feedback on their reading both in peer group, task collaboration sessions, and through subsequent task negotiation sessions. Importantly, when the teacher stepped back from a position of authority into the role of enabler, the students were positioned as active participants in meaning-making in direct dialogue with text rather than as passive onlookers. This sense of agency is an essential contributor to students' development of a critical reading identity and their continuing motivation to engage with text. As Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.239-240) stress, 'each outcome of a local action and operation should enhance an individual's sense of agency'.

This is not to say that development of student agency is necessarily excluded from the master-apprentice role. For example, during Mark's instantiation of 'the learning moment genre' the students were enthralled by his just-in-time, pithy explanation and modelling which he was able to link directly to their future needs. Lucy similarly was able to catch students' active attention at times. Michell and Sharpe (2005, p.49) suggest that in the task negotiation genre students can participate in the activity as onlookers at first, but that there must be a move towards students taking control of the activity. As Gee (2000, p.201) has suggested, 'any efficacious pedagogy must be a judicious mixture of immersion in a community of practice (Lave, 1996) and overt focusing and scaffolding from 'masters' or 'more advanced peers' (Vygotsky, 1987)'. This cannot happen without well-structured scaffolding and subsequent teacher 'fade-out', as was achieved so smoothly by Mark in scaffolding the students' summaries of the Xenotransplantation texts (see Chapter 4.1.2b).

A key finding of the study, then, is that EAP reading teachers need to make conscious shifts in their role, clearly distinguishing between the role of 'master' and 'enabler', and implementing cycles of scaffolding within their courses that move between mediated reading and supported reading so that students are able to engage directly in dialogue WITH texts and develop a positive sense of agency and identity as critical readers.

6.5 Classroom communities: connectivity and critical reading

The study has also highlighted the significance of a positive classroom community itself as a learning affordance. Where the classroom community was characterised by mutual respect, cooperation and good humour, there was also a sense that a learning community had formed, with students and teacher involved in the same, or similar, activity. This was particularly the case during the Cannibalism macrogenre at Sandstone College and the Polygamy macrogenre at Newgate College. A similar classroom climate was generated at times during the early stages of the City College module, but as the module progressed this community became increasingly fragmented, as described in Chapter 4.3.3d.

Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) suggest that there are four phases to forming successful classroom communities: formation, transition, performing, dissolution. Particularly crucial are the formation and transition phases, during which relationships and group norms are established. Surprisingly, none of the teachers paid much attention to group formation. At City College, for example neither the students nor the teacher knew each other's names properly even by the end of the 5-week module—a crucial factor, according to research by Kenny (1994, cited in Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003, p.26). At Newgate and City Colleges, the members of the community knew each other only as fellow members of the class, although some small cliques had formed. Only at Sandstone College was there a strong sense of community – perhaps because of the class members' interaction in the associated core module class.

Both Mark and Andrea, however, paid attention to establishing group norms: submitting homework, arriving on time, participating actively in groupwork, and so on. While Mark established norms through the gentle use of humour (see Chapter 4.1.2b), Andrea took a more controlling approach which effectively positioned students as lacking in responsibility (see chapter 4.2.2e), and caused some frissons of resentment among the students. Lucy, for her part, assumed that these were adult students who would take responsibility for their own actions. This was one reason why a small core of students came to dominate the discourse turns in the task negotiation genre, why the task collaboration genre frequently collapsed, and why an

increasingly alienated, demotivated spirit settled on the class. As Lucy became more discouraged by the students' lack of participation and inadequate language resources, as well as by the institution's lack of support for its teachers, so the students became more despondent.

One notable feature of the positive classroom community of Sandstone College and the later stages of the Newgate College community which contributed to positive learning outcomes was the element of humour and fun. Mark's good humour and dry comments, and the bantering element of competition in the Polygamy debate contrasted with the unalleviated seriousness of the City College class. In addition, the topics chosen by Mark and Andrea: Xenotransplantation, Cannibalism and Polygamy caught the imagination of the students as well as providing them with intellectual challenge. As discussed in Chapter 2, Janks (2002) refers to this quality as 'hard fun', while Buranapatana (2006) talks about 'sanuk', a Thai term which encompasses the collaborative classroom climate – a sense of shared fun in learning.

6.6 The impact of neighbouring activity systems

One reason for the dispirited classroom climate at City College was the impact of external activity systems, particularly of the institution itself. First, the restrictive curriculum imposed by the College allowed little room for Lucy to adjust the affordances of texts and tasks to the students' linguistic resources. Furthermore, as Lucy frequently complained to me, the students had been pushed into this level before they had acquired adequate language resources because of the commercial and managerial context of the institution. In particular, Lucy was strongly affected by what she perceived as the institution's undervaluing of its teachers, exemplified by the salary reduction she experienced (see Chapter 4.3.3d) and the high level of staff casualisation in the institution. Another factor impinging on all three activity systems was the students' prior experiences of education. Lucy did not appear to take this into consideration in her teaching, assuming (with the best of intentions) a 'bald cultural assimilationist' approach (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p.34) that students should learn the 'rules of the game' (see Chapter 4.3.3f):

Lucy: My understanding of empowerment is that you recognise that power does exist and does position you, and you're not this free-floating agency who's got agency and who can do whatever they want. Because the rules are there before you – you're not making the rules of the game. Empowerment is all about understanding how the rules work, and then being able to navigate and use the rules for your purposes, and in some cases, if it's your purpose, to challenge the terms of those rules [CC_LucyInt].

Andrea and Mark, on the other hand, were more accommodating. They had adjusted their teaching style, whether consciously or not, to allow for their students' previous culture of education – for example, by nominating students to take turns, and providing language exercises which were in some way familiar to the students. They were both well aware of the demands of the tertiary system into which their students were moving, and recognised their pragmatic needs as well as attempting to introduce a more critical dimension to their teaching. Finally, they both had considerable autonomy from the institution so that they could adjust the curriculum flexibly to suit their students' resources and needs.

The study, then, suggests that **EAP institutions can support their students' development of critical reading practices most effectively by valuing teachers' professionalism, allowing them the flexibility to adapt curriculum to their students' needs and expectations.** Teaching in the transcultural contact zone of EAP on the margins of universities poses immense challenges: teachers in this zone require considerable awareness, knowledge and skill which should not be under-estimated.

6.7 The subjects

Activity Theory assumes the centrality of the subject(s) in activity, as the activity system exists by virtue of the subjects' participation. The research methodology, using classroom discourse analysis, interviews and extended observation, attempted to get as close as possible to the subjects' emic perspective. In Engeström's model, shown in Figure 22, the subjects occupy prime position as actors within the system.

However, as discussed in the previous section, in some circumstances the students in this study were denied agency, and became positioned as objects of the teacher's activity rather than active subjects. As Wells (2002, p.47) points out, when teachers retain the role of 'primary knower', students are cast into a passive role to be acted upon, rather than agents of their own learning.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.222) suggest that the notion of subject be 'infused' with understandings of social identity in language learning (Cadman & O' Regan, 2006; Ivanic, 1997; Norton, 2006). Indeed, **learning to be a critical academic reader is understood throughout this study to be a process of 'ideological becoming', involving active participation in the appropriation of new understandings, a new repertoire of language resources, and new academic identities.**

A further interesting aspect which could have been more deeply explored was the extent to which teachers were open to transformation themselves as a result of affordances offered by the students, the community and its practices, and the tools at their disposal.

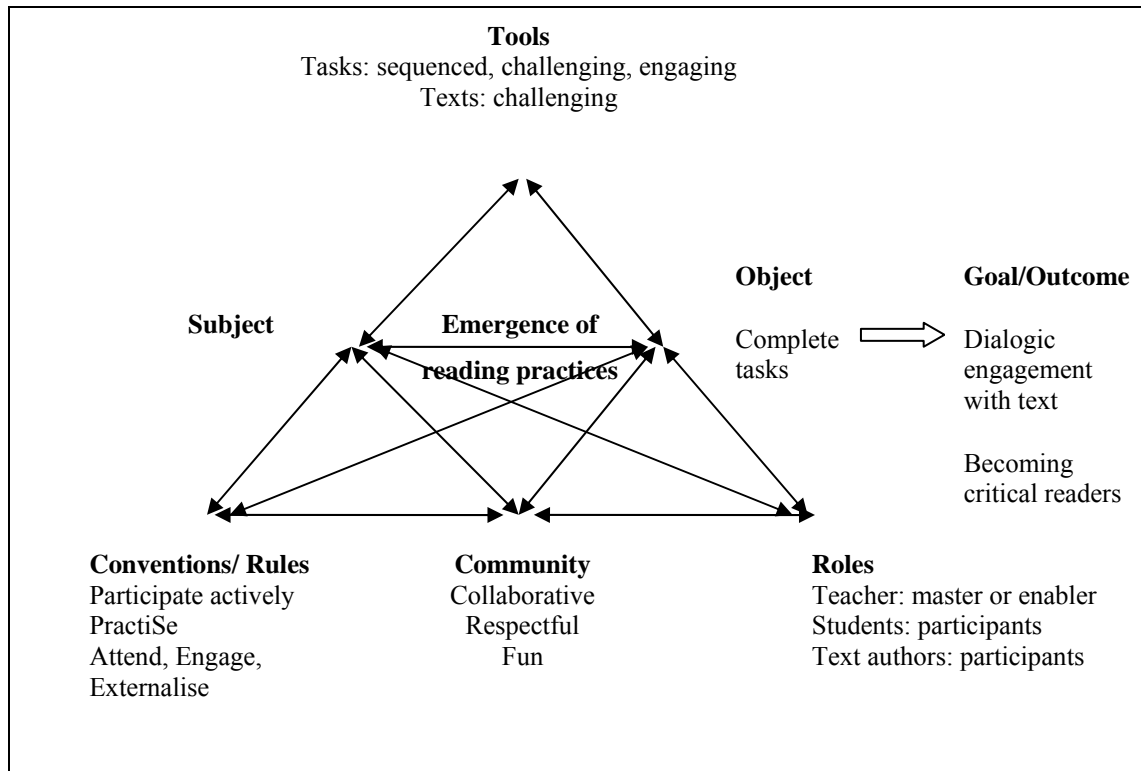
6.8 Conclusion: towards an activity system for critical reading in EAP

The lens of Activity Theory has shed a rich and dynamic interplay of light on to the three activity systems explored in this study. Each environment contributed in complex ways to students' emerging critical reading practices, offering multiple affordances including the texts and tasks which were introduced, the distributed roles of teacher and students, the reading practices which underpinned the classroom activity, and the classroom community.

The study has not set out to produce a blueprint for teaching critical reading in EAP, nor to identify one among the three learning environments as a paragon of excellence, but to explore how the multiple interactions within activity systems are implicated in student development. The ever challenging, holistic 'art of teaching' means that there are no perfect solutions. However, some generalisations can be drawn from the data

about affordances which can effectively support the emergence of students' critical reading practices. These are summarised in Figure 24, which attempts to represent an 'idealised' learning environment for critical reading in EAP.

Figure 24: An idealised activity system for critical reading in EAP



As shown in Figure 24, the affordances that were found to contribute to the emergence of critical reading practices can be summarised as follows:

- The central feature of a dialogic learning environment for critical reading in EAP is that students are actively involved in participation in meaning-rich critical reading practices. All the students and teachers who participated in the study reiterated that 'practising' (as opposed to 'practicing'), that is 'DOING' reading, was an essential element in emergence. Reading practiSe was enhanced by the rich tools of SFL, explorations of the field, tenor and mode of texts which facilitated critical reading practiCes. Even more importantly, however, 'doing reading' came alive when students were engaged in making meaning at intellectual and affective levels. Texts, tasks and talk needed to be imbued with high engagement, as well as high support and high challenge.

- Through participation in critical reading practices, students were able to take on emerging identities as critical, academic readers. Their development was enhanced by interaction with challenging texts and tasks, provided adequate support and opportunities for feedback were available. Opportunities to voice understandings in both the task collaboration and task negotiation genre were valuable, and made possible when the teacher stepped back from a position of authority.
- The learning community itself offered affordances for learning, particularly where a strong, mutually respectful and collaborative climate had been established, and the task collaboration genre was purposively established. This community was strengthened by engaging tasks, clearly established classroom norms and joint activity leading to shared goals.
- Building a shared understanding of goals between teacher and students, so that both the pragmatic and the critical were recognised, contributed to strong learning outcomes. Clearly defined, intermediate product goals (objects) played an important part in galvanising activity and contributed to the emergence of longer-term transformational goals (outcomes).

Although this study has culminated in an idealised model of a hypothetical learning environment for critical reading, it must be acknowledged that activity systems are constantly in flux, often in unpredictable ways. For example, Lucy's discovery that her salary has been decreased had a profound effect on the City College learning environment. Likewise, the arrival of Hari, a new student from a quite different cultural background totally changed the balance of the classroom community. Even carefully planned tasks can fall flat. Teachers may have the power to deal with such set-backs, and to steer the progress of the activity in positive directions, but sometimes they are themselves disempowered by impinging activity systems, dysfunctional relationships in the community, or simply lack of awareness.

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to capture the impact of the diverse affordances which were offered to students in the context of three EAP learning environments, and to draw implications from that analysis for the teaching of critical

reading in EAP. However, it must be recognised that there are no easy solutions to teaching and learning in the complex and marginal territory of EAP.

Chapter Seven: Towards critical engagement

This ethnographic and ecological study of three EAP learning environments has aimed to answer the question: **Do learning environments in EAP support the development of critical reading practices and dispositions, and if so, how?** Four limbs of the question were identified:

- 1. What is the nature of the learning environments in EAP reading classes, and how is critical reading understood by the teachers and students in each environment?**
- 2. What is the evidence, if any, of students' emergent practice of critical reading in these environments?**
- 3. How did the affordances available in the three settings contribute to students' emergent practice of critical reading?**
- 4. What implications can be drawn about the nature of effective learning environments for fostering critical reading in EAP?**

This final chapter of the thesis will first sum up the findings of the study, and then will make some final reflections concerning the important contributions of the study in terms of:

1. The methodology of the study, and in particular, the use of Activity Theory as a framework for analysis;
2. The dialogic model of critical reading presented in Chapter 2;
3. The implications of the study for EAP pedagogy;
4. The implications for the international education industry.

7.1 Summing up the findings

7.1.1 Participation in critical reading practices

The findings in Chapters 4 and 5 showed that the three learning environments embodied different perspectives on critical reading and led to different relationships between students and texts in terms of the dialogic model of critical reading. Overwhelmingly, the emphasis in every setting was on **attending** to text: that is, struggling to hear the author's intended meanings. At Newgate College, however, meaning was presented as unitary and unassailable, whereas at City College meanings were presented as complex, laminated and constructed.

There were opportunities for students to develop practices in **externalising** from text, especially at City College and Newgate College, where students were asked to write text-responsible essays. There were some notable opportunities for students to talk about meanings (the Polygamy debate at Newgate College and the Xenotransplantation discussion at Sandstone College, for example) which allowed students to enter into an overtly dialogical relationship with text; however, in general, opportunities to externalise were limited and in the essays it was apparent that some students were merely 'ventriloquating' (Bakhtin, 1994) from the texts.

In terms of **engaging** with text, the data were very mixed. The City College teacher, Lucy, vigorously modelled practices of critical language awareness (C. Wallace 2003), hoping to enable students to engage with the embedded and nuanced meanings of the text. However, there was little overt evidence of the students' uptake of such practices and students tended to remain distant, even alienated, from the texts. Nevertheless, two macrogenre sequences in the data, in particular, provided evidence of engaging with text: the Polygamy macrogenre at Newgate College, and Xenotransplantation macrogenre at Sandstone College. These two sequences were characterised not only by high challenge and high support, but also by high engagement. Students attended carefully to the author's meanings, constructed their own understandings, and used these understandings to engage in further dialogue, demonstrating participation in all three zones of the critical reading model proposed in this study: attending, engaging, and externalising.

In summary, critical reading, as defined in this thesis, was largely confined to **attending** to meaning. Only two of the environments emphasised **externalising** from text. Students rarely **engaged** with meaning, arguably the most crucial zone of the dialogic model of critical reading.

7.1.2 Affordances for critical reading in EAP

On the basis of the ecological description of the three learning environments presented in Chapter 4 and the analysis of students' developing critical reading practices presented in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 identified the affordances offered by the three environments that contributed to students' development, and presented an idealised activity system for critical reading (see Figure 24). This was not intended to represent a 'recipe' for good teaching, as the study was based on the premise that learning environments are dynamic and fluid: teachers, students, texts, tasks, contexts all interconnect to influence each other. In this dynamic context, flexibility and responsiveness to students' needs and objectives are of prime importance. Changes in one element of the system may have complex, rippling effects throughout the system. However, the model is a distillation of the key insights from the study and, hopefully, can offer a basis for reflection for EAP teachers in developing their own praxis.

Affordances that appeared to lead towards critical reading practices included:

- A mutual understanding of the long-term goal of EAP, as contributing towards students' emerging identities and resources as critical, academic readers
- Clearly defined, tangible 'product' goals, at the level of classroom action
- Texts that were challenging and engaging; and a view of text as meaning potential (TAMP)
- Tasks that involved not only high support and high challenge, but also high engagement
- Teacher talk that distinguished clearly between task negotiation and task collaboration genres, allowing ample opportunities for students to learn through their own talk

- Teachers acting with authority as masters, but also positioning students as active participants in engaging with text, rather than placing themselves predominantly as mediators between students and text (see Figure 23)
- Opportunities to **attend to**, **engage with** and **externalise** from text
- A learning community which is collaborative, mutually respectful and values ‘hard fun’ (Janks, 2002), and which includes the texts as participating voices rather than objects
- Institutions which support their teachers as professionals and develop shared understandings of goals and practices with them.

Of these factors perhaps the most significant was high engagement: only when students were ‘touched’ by meaning could they begin to construct meaning for themselves, engaging with different voices and externalising their own ideas in dialogic response.

The main findings of the study can be summarised as follows:

a. Understandings of critical reading in EAP ranged from an analytical, skills based approach in which meaning tended to be reified, through to a ‘literacies’ (Lea & Street 1999, 2006) approach in which meaning was presented as complex, laminated and multivocal.

b. ‘High engagement’ was an important factor for students in developing an identity as critical readers.

c. The features of ‘high engagement’ learning environments for critical reading included not only high support and high challenge but also:

- **a positive and harmonious classroom community**
- **stimulating opportunities for the students to participate actively in the task collaboration genre, engaging in dialogue directly with texts, rather than through the mediation of their teacher**

d. Opportunities for participation depended on the teacher distinguishing clearly between the role of ‘master’, during the task negotiation genre, and ‘enabler’ in the task collaboration genre (see Figure 23).

e. Attempting to raise students’ critical language awareness offered rich potential, but did not necessarily lead to the development of critical reading practices if other features of a high engagement class were missing.

7.2 Contributions of the thesis

7.2.1 Activity Theory as a framework for analysis

In terms of methodology, the thesis makes a contribution to classroom-based research in its use of Christie’s classroom discourse analysis in combination with Engeström’s Activity Theory. A major challenge of classroom ethnography is dealing with the vast quantities of ‘messy’ data which are generated. Activity Theory, in combination with the diachronic perspective offered by Christie’s classroom discourse analysis, offered a holistic view of the teaching and learning of critical reading in the three environments. A holistic study necessarily entails enormous complexity, seeking not simple one-to-one cause and effect relationships, but to understand the complex ecological interrelationships between the multiple facets of an environment. The structural simplicity of Activity Theory provided a practicable tool to gain insights into the complex reciprocal relationships between the goals, tools, practices, community and distributed roles of the three learning environments. For example, it became evident that the rich meaning potential offered by practices of post-structural linguistic analysis in the City College setting was countered by uncomfortable community relationships, lack of support from the institution, the students’ impoverished language resources, and limited opportunities for students to gain agency through dialogic participation.

On the other hand, Activity Theory perhaps obscured the inevitable limitation of holistic analysis: a complete understanding of any activity system (let alone three

activity systems!) is necessarily an oxymoron. It is impossible to fully account for the myriad and dynamic interactions in human activity from moment to moment. As with any qualitative study, this study is therefore constrained by my own interpretation of the activity systems under investigation, and by the aspects of these systems that I have selected for closer scrutiny.

Furthermore, the tools of Activity Theory were not sufficient to explain the data. Other compatible theories within the ambit of sociocultural analysis had to be recruited to add clarity of vision. Christie's tools of classroom discourse analysis were useful in providing a diachronic perspective and lent an enhanced focus to the discussion of teacher talk, while Hammond and Gibbons' (2005) and Mitchell and Sharpe's (2005) work on scaffolding was an essential lens through which to understand the contribution of tasks to the three activity systems. Arguably, however, the capacity of Activity Theory to interact with other systems of analysis is one of its very strengths.

In the following paragraphs, I discuss in more detail the aspects of Activity Theory that were problematic in this study, and propose a revised representation of Activity Theory (see Figure 25).

7.2.1a Problems of categorisation

A major difficulty in implementing Activity Theory analysis is the slippery nature of categorisation. For example, 'language awareness' could be positioned either as a semiotic tool enabling students to make meaning from text (see Wells, 2002), or as a practice instantiated through actions in the activity system. Similarly, classroom dialogue could be analysed as a tool, mediating the construction of meaning, or as an object in itself, the product of activity, as Wells (2002, p.61) argues.

However, this slippage between categories is also a strength of Activity Theory as it serves to highlight interesting relationships and contradictions between elements of the system. Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.218) discuss, for example, slippage between object and goal, as occurred in the City College setting in which for some students, their overwhelming focus on completing the object (the essay) appeared to obscure

the long-term transformational goal of becoming competent participants in academic discourse (see also Spence-Brown, 2007).

Another example of slippage between categories was evident in the summarising practices used in the three settings. A quite different outcome was achieved when the texts were treated as participants in the community, that is as voices contributing to dialogue (for example in the Xenotransplantation class), rather than as mediational tools/ objects to be mechanically summarised through the use of technical practices such as grammatical transformation, for example changing noun phrase to verb phrase, or interposing synonyms (for example in the Marketing Concept class).

Slippage between categories was also an indicator of the interpenetration of categories. Engeström uses the notion of ‘division of labour’, traceable to the influence of Marx on Vygotsky and Leont’ev, the originators of Activity Theory, whereas more recent activity theorists have reconceptualised this node as the distributed ‘roles’ of participants in the activity system (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Spence-Brown, 2007). The enactment of roles, however, becomes evident through the talk and other semiotic tools used by participants. Separating out ‘roles’ and ‘talk’ became a tricky analytical task in this study, but one which generated fascinating insights into the positioning of teachers and students. Particularly interesting was the ambiguous positioning of Lucy, who expected students to participate in democratic turn-taking, and yet retained a strong position of authority which effectively disempowered the students.

7.2.1b The role of subject

Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p.222) suggest that the notion of subject is still undertheorised in Activity Theory. Indeed, it is not clear whether activity should be understood holistically, from multiple perspectives, or from the perspective of individual participants. An interesting insight from Coughlan and Duff’s (1994) and Spence-Brown’s (2007) research is that participants can be involved in the same task, working towards the same physical object, while participating in different activities with different long-term goals or motives. This was indeed the case at City College

where the teacher, Lucy, had in mind a critical literacies goal which did not match her students' pragmatic goals.

Another issue that became clear through the analysis in this study was that teachers are sometimes inclined to view students as objects to be transformed rather than as agents, or co-participants, involved in 'becoming' through classroom activity (another example of slippage between categories). Andrea, for example, attempted to impose actions on students, for example insisting on certain note-taking formats. Lucy, on the other hand, adopted a laissez-faire approach, expecting students to take responsibility for their own learning. Accustomed to activity systems in which teachers are positioned as all-knowing, students found it hard to fulfil this agentic role. Students in Mark's class, however, did not experience role confusion: they were able to participate confidently in the tasks and roles that Mark set up for them, and yet gain an increasing sense of agency as legitimate participants in this and future academic contexts.

Rather than sidelining the notion of subject, as in Engeström's model, the revised model proposed in Figure 25 positions the subject at the heart of activity, engaged in actions which lead to immediate outcomes (whether concrete or abstract Wells, 2002), and further transformational goals of 'ideological becoming' (Morson, 2004).

7.2.1c Problems of representation

A further problem with Engeström's second generation Activity Theory is the tension between the structuralist origins of the theory and its application in the more fluid, post-structuralist contexts of twenty-first century thinking. Engeström stresses the dynamic nature of activity systems, constantly in a state of flux and development, as goals, roles, tools and communities shift and develop. The triangular representation of the theory, however, belies this dynamism. Wells (2002, p.61) attempted to improve on Engeström's diagrammatic representation by adding further complexity to represent the respective contribution of novices and experts to the activity, showing how novices can collectively and individually appropriate understandings through collaborative dialogue, but his diagram still does not contribute to better understanding the dynamic nature of activity.

Figure 25 is an attempt to reconfigure the activity system diagrammatic tool in a way which both places the subjects at the centre of the activity, and recognises the contribution of intermediate objects to the on-going development of the activity. By removing the rigid triangular structure of Engeström's diagram which 'freezes' a moment in time in the activity, the revised diagram attempts to represent greater fluidity, while highlighting the interplay between the elements of the bounded activity system.

Wells (2002, p.47) also criticises the unidirectional form of Engeström's diagram, which does not take into account the multiple objectives of disparate participants or the potentially regressive changes that may emerge. Furthermore, the diagram does not take into account the shifting, intangible and often unconscious nature of goals. As C. Wallace (2005, p.86) points out, students (and their teachers) never become fully critical, analytical readers – there can be no final target, only a constant striving to fuller realisation of the goal. For this reason, in the model proposed in Figure 25, the goal has been placed outside the immediate circle of activity to represent the 'becoming-ness' of transformational goals. The object, however, has been located within the ambit of the activity, acknowledging the role that task (non)-completion can play within the activity system in contributing to further tasks, classroom climate and role distribution.

7.2.1d The role of contradiction: two contrasting forms of development

Finally, analysis of contradiction in the three activity systems explored in this study made it possible to identify two contrasting forms of development. Development is defined in Activity Theory as 'the resolution of contradictions' (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p.233). The multiple arrows in Engeström's model (see Figure 3.4) indicate possible sites of tension, friction and contradiction, which are potential zones for development.

At times in this study, the resolution of contradiction clearly led to development. For example, Mark's use of the 'learning moment genre' was able to resolve the

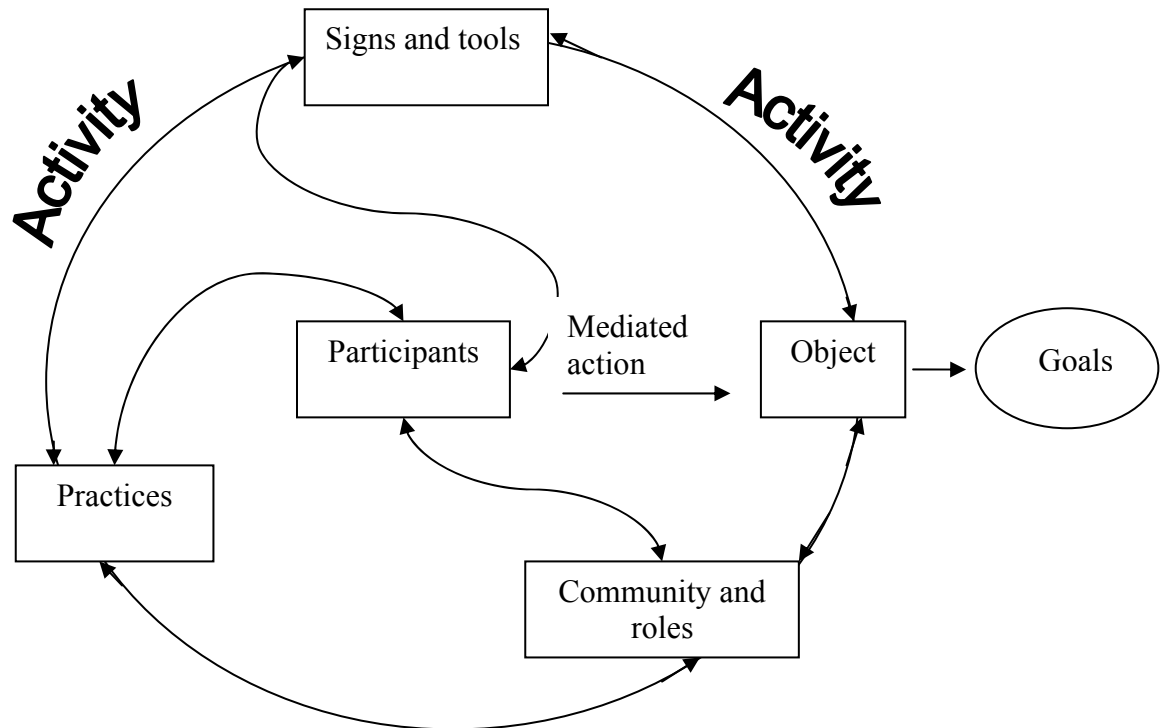
contradiction that occurred between subject and task when the students were asked to summarise the Xenotransplantation texts. Here was a task that they did not have the resources to perform: a contradiction which could be resolved by Mark's intervention and scaffolding. Similarly, in the Cannibalism task, students were faced with a text that would have been inaccessible to them without the support provided by Mark's scaffolding.

Elsewhere in the data, there were incidences of contradictions that remained unresolved. For example, the tension between Lucy's expectation of the students and their own understanding of their role. The transformation that Lucy hoped for in the students – a transformation from passive recipients of knowledge to active participants in constructing meaning from text - did not occur. Here there was unrealised potential for learning at the site of this contradiction. In fact, in the City College setting the myriad contradictions described in Chapter 4.3.3f appeared to inhibit rather than foster students' emerging practices.

Generally, the data in this study showed that learning took place in settings which were characterised more by harmony than by contradiction. For example, in the Polygamy class, all the elements of the activity system seemed to come together harmoniously to support students' appropriation of language, meanings and resources. The task orientation genre, the carefully sequenced tasks, the source text, the co-constructed dialogue during the task collaboration genre all contributed to students' emerging practices, setting up a strong platform for students' development. It seemed that for contradiction to be resolved in one area (in this case, the task of participating in the debate presented the students with a major challenge), other areas of the activity system needed to be in relative harmony: for example, a clear understanding of roles, a productive classroom community, clearly sequenced tasks.

It seems that what I was witnessing in this study were two different types of emergence: one which involved the on-the-spot, instant resolution of contradictions such as in Mark's 'learning moment genre', and the other which involved a steady deepening and augmenting of students' resources through on-going participation in reading practices – in other words 'practiSing'.

Figure 25: A revised Activity Theory diagram



7.2.1e Activity Theory summary

Activity Theory, like any good theory, does not provide answers, but stimulates reflection which can lead to enhanced praxis. The revised model in Figure 25 retains the key features of Engeström's model (the bounded, goal-oriented activity system encompassing mediated action), but attempts to represent more effectively the dynamic interplay across time between the elements of the system: the community and distributed roles, the mediational tools and the shared practices (or 'rules' according to Engeström). Importantly, it places participants/ subjects at the centre of the activity, working with the affordances of the activity system towards the production of objects and the elusive goal of transformation.

7.2.2 Revisiting the dialogic model of critical reading

The dialogic model of critical reading presented in this study comprises a second major contribution of the study – a contribution to theory-building in the realm of academic literacy. Importantly the model highlights the intimate relationship between reading and writing in academic literacy. As discussed in Chapter 1, literacy theory and practice very often focuses on literacy events from the perspective of writing: the tangible product of literacy events forms a convenient subject for research and pedagogy. This model highlights the crucial aspect of engaging in dialogue with the texts of the discourse community as an integral and richly productive and constructive element of academic literacy.

Through the reiterative process of data analysis and theory building at work in this study, it has become increasingly clear to me that a flaw with the original dialogic model of critical reading proposed in Chapter 2.2.3 is the linear nature of the model. The diagram represented the three zones of critical reading as consecutive sub-processes. Reading IS undeniably a process. It occurs over time: beginning with initial meetings with the text, located at a point in time in the reader's sociohistorical development, and perhaps preceded by specific encounters with related ideas and events; proceeding through more intensive interactions with the texts; and continuing into the future as the reader revisits or recalls the text in various ways. However, the data showed that students struggling to attend to a writer's viewpoint could only do so through the lens of their own experience. It was through engaging with the text (for example, by visualising women at work in call centres; or by weighing up counterarguments for xenotransplantation) that students actually were able to attend to meaning. And conversely through attending to text, students were able to make shifts in their own understanding of, for example, ICT-based work from home. Similarly, opportunities to externalise their understandings gave students opportunities to add depth, shift their understandings, and more fully appropriate concepts and language through engagement with the sources. Thus, the three zones of critical reading were shown to be not discrete and linear, but mutually supporting, interwoven and dynamically related.

As an outcome of the study, the critical reading model presented in Chapter 2 has been reconstructed into a more fluid diagram to represent this dynamic, recursive interaction between the three zones of critical reading (see Figure 26). Nevertheless, the linear arrow showing ‘appropriation’ has been retained as an indication of the reader/ student’s development over time as s/he interacts dialogically with the text, developing conceptually and linguistically through engagement with others’ voices in the zones of attending, engaging and externalising. Appropriation is meant here in the Bakhtinian sense, not as mere ‘ventriloquation’, but as the reader taking ownership of language and ideas, and re-constructing and using them to ‘express his [sic] own semantic and expressive intention’ (Bakhtin, 1994, p.77). The interaction between the three zones in the revised critical reading diagram is crucial, as it is partly through this interaction that meaning emerges. As Bakhtin puts it:

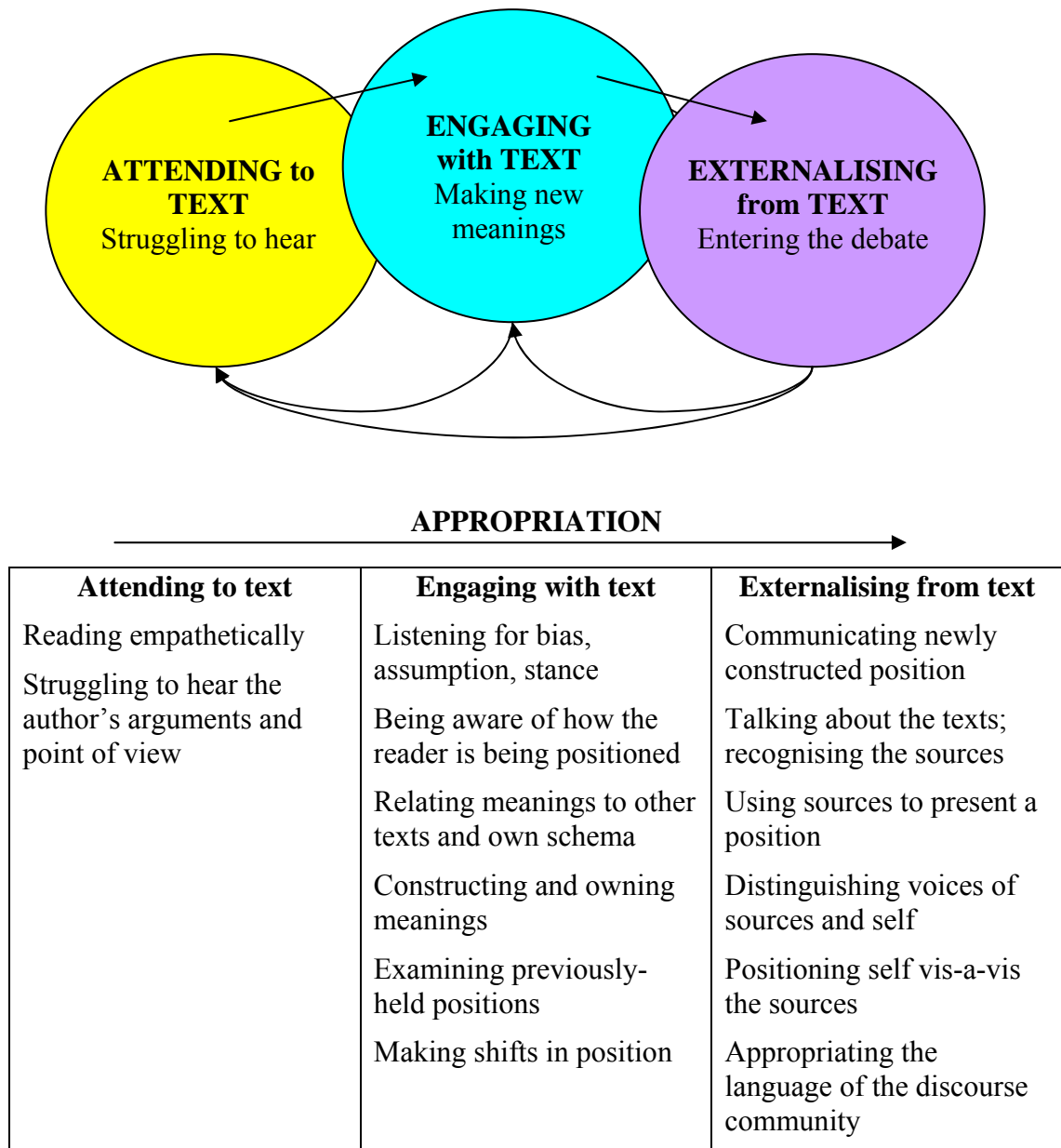
To some extent, primacy belongs to the response, as the activating principle: it creates ground for understanding, it prepares the ground for an active and engaged understanding. Understanding comes to fruition only in the response. Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other. (Bakhtin, 1994, p.76)

In other words, it is THROUGH the processes of engaging (intramental response) and externalising (intermental response) that students reach deeper understandings and are better able to attend to text. Similarly, Platt and Brooks (2002, p. 374) argue that ‘it is in the act of production itself that thinking emerges’.

The data demonstrated, as well, that it is possible to externalise meanings from texts without much activity in the ‘engaging’ zone of critical reading, leading to ventriloquation rather than appropriation. Arguably this pragmatic, short-circuiting between ‘attending’ and ‘externalising’ occurs very frequently as students prepare assignments in academic contexts. Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Pujol (2003), for example, found that successful students in three contexts, two in the US and one in Spain, used what they called ‘planned information management’ as their strategy for preparing assignments. An avenue for further research would be to identify to what degree this short-circuiting of the engaging zone is condoned, and perhaps even valued, in university settings.

The revised model has the potential to refocus EAP teachers’ attention in teaching reading, as it represents the significance of attending to the multiple meanings of the source texts, but also the importance of being able to construct meaning in personally meaningful ways that can contribute to students’ active participation in the dialogues of their discourse community. Teachers who understand reading as a recursive, participatory engagement with meaning-making, and as an intensely social and dialogic interaction will be most able to support and sustain their students’ emerging identities as critical readers.

Figure 26: The dialogic model of critical reading revised



A further contribution of this study is the set of band descriptors which were developed as a means of assessing students' development of critical reading practices (see Table 8). In general, assessment has tended to lag behind in the evolution of sociocultural pedagogies. As discussed in Chapter 3.4.3, the assessment of reading has generally been confined to identifying propositions, matching vocabulary and so on. The band descriptors developed for this study offer a way forward for future development in the area of reading assessment, as they provide a tool for the subjective assessment of students' inter- and intramental activity. Further development of this tool could lead to a more stable means of plumbing the depths of students' critical dialogue with text.

7.2.3 Implications for EAP pedagogy

Most importantly, the thesis makes a contribution to EAP pedagogy, stressing the importance of high engagement, as well as high challenge and high support. The following section teases out the major implications of the study for the EAP profession, returning to the vulgar pragmatism–critical pedagogy debate, and skills–literacies debates introduced in Chapter 1.

7.2.3a Critical pragmatism

As emphasised in Chapter 1, critical reading is fundamental to participation in university learning in the fluid, dynamic contexts of the globalising world. Without the resources to read effectively, international students will struggle through their university studies and possibly resort to compensation strategies such as 'plagiphrasing' or outright plagiarism. Starting university at the level of IELTS 6.5 or lower, many international students' language resources are still developing. Most are unaccustomed to dealing with English text, let alone dense academic text. For these reasons, at base, students need pragmatic skills in finding information, identifying key points, and using this information in their own writing. Skills such as identifying text structure, skimming and scanning are indispensable pragmatic, academic reading skills which allow students to get a foothold in terms of 'attending' to text.

Pragmatism, however, does not preclude a critical approach, even at the most introductory levels of EAP (and probably at more elementary levels of language learning too, although this study cannot generalise beyond EAP). Mark, bound though he was to responding pragmatically to ‘the tyranny of the IELTS’, nevertheless was able to suffuse a critical approach into his teaching. Rather than simply performing the ‘attending’ exercises, he drew his students into deeper engagement with meaning by having them compare the arguments presented in the texts and develop their own position in relation to them. He presented text as ‘voiced’, and had students respond in their own voices. Reading became dialogue rather than transmission. His students gained confidence in interacting with texts that were well beyond their original capacity; and furthermore gained confidence to reflect on these texts and to externalise their reflections.

Furthermore, pragmatism does not necessarily entail ‘dumbing down’. Mark’s approach, although pragmatic in some ways (answering the questions correctly, applying test-taking strategies), also challenged the students linguistically and conceptually in new domains. Through struggling to deal pragmatically with the IELTS comprehension questions, students were also able to develop a dialogic interaction with texts, externalising newly shaped constructs and evaluating them. Their readings were not only pragmatic but also reflective. As Wallace writes, critical reading is ‘a thinking process evidenced and supported less by automaticity than by enhanced reflectiveness’ (C. Wallace, 2005, p.101). This does not, however, imply that automaticity does not play an important foundational role in enabling reflectivity.

In fact, the pragmatic also provides a secure footing for students. A sense of structure, if it is understood as enabling and flexible rather than as constraining and immutable, can provide a framework from which students’ emerging critical resources can flourish. For example, the highly structured scaffolding in the Polygamy debate afforded students the opportunity to externalise new understandings from the launch pad of text in ways which challenged them to work at the outer limits of their zone of proximal development. Conversely, many of the City College students found that Lucy’s rejection of the structural left them confused and even panic-stricken.

Thus, a significant finding of this study is that, in the emancipatory quest for the critical, skills and structure should not be entirely sacrificed. The study supports the call by Harwood and Hadley (2004) for balance between the pragmatic and the critical in EAP, as well as Lea and Street's (1998, 2006) reminder that 'skills' and 'socialisation' can contribute to a 'literacies' approach EAP as discussed in Chapter 1 (see Table 1). It demonstrates that the pragmatic and the critical in EAP reading are complementary rather than mutually exclusive: critical pragmatism.

7.2.3b Critical, post-critical engagement

The most important finding of the study was the crucial role of **engaging** in critical reading. It became evident that this aspect of critical reading was frequently overlooked and undervalued in these EAP classrooms in teachers' dedicated thrust towards the development of academic reading practices. Although students were able to produce academic essays without much participation in the 'engaging with text' zone of the critical reading model, these essays appeared to ventriloquate from the source texts, suggesting 'compliance' (Platt & Brooks 2002, p.373) and 'compensation' (Adamson, 1993), rather than demonstrating a critical interaction with text. Fostering engagement, therefore, must be an important role for teachers, outranking perhaps the more traditional teacher roles of mediating meaning and giving feedback on reading.

Hand in hand with engagement lies agency. In their analysis of two paired language learning communication tasks, Platt and Brooks (2002, p.392), identified 'the moment of engagement' as 'gaining control of the task'. In addition, however, these researchers noted 'a renewed sense of accomplishment and motivation to continue' as well as 'achieving intersubjectivity', enjoyment (having 'fun'), and a strong sense of purpose, all of which, they claimed, demonstrated the microgenetic transformation that was occurring through engagement. Platt and Brooks (p.393) argue that it is necessary for teachers to understand how this moment of engagement comes about: 'If learners are transformed during task engagement, then we must determine the genesis of this transformation.'

Unlike Platt and Brooks (2002), this ecological study did not identify specific moments of engagement, but was able to identify some key features of the three learning environments that afforded engagement with text:

- Challenging texts, introducing substantive and sustained content, which can invoke students' interest and allow them to engage deeply in dialogic participation
- Well-designed tasks (including a provocative orientation genre, and clear product goals/ objects), and which supported a direct interaction between students and text
- A collaborative, dialogic classroom community
- Opportunities for externalising through speaking as well as in writing
- A shared understanding of goals.

Only when students are engaged with text will they be able to produce the objects that are highly valued in academia, and participate in transformational learning.

Furthermore, the study has highlighted that students needed to relate to texts as individuals, although working within social contexts. EAP students are not simply representatives of monolithic, static 'Asian' or 'non-Western' societies; nor can they be categorised amorously as 'international students'. In Singh and Doherty's words, EAP students are not 'passive, reactive subjects of globalisation, but active participants in hybridisation.' (Singh & Doherty, 2004). In the increasingly diverse and rapidly globalizing world, they are global citizens coming from widely differing, complex and dynamic social contexts, and entering into widely differing academic and professional domains. EAP classrooms, as Singh and Doherty maintain, are cultural contact zones in which students can learn to confront and engage with change, diversity and challenge. While the work of Pennycook, Bourdieu and others has served to highlight the inherent power struggles between those with social capital and those without, between western and non-western, 'Self' and 'Other', increasingly such boundaries are shifting, breaking down, and dissolving as we enter what Doherty and Singh (2005, p3.) call an age of 'liquid modernity' in which individual identities undergo constant reconceptualisation. International students, like local students, need

access to powerful academic Discourses, and an awareness of how such Discourses work to position them and others. Above all, however, they need to relate to these Discourses as individuals, engaging personally and directly in dialogue with text, using tools that can be made available to them in EAP classrooms to forge ever-deeper and more critically insightful relationships with text.

7.2.3c Materials development

In Chapter 6.4, it was proposed that teachers need to shift consciously between the roles of master and enabler, so that students can develop agency in critical reading. Rather than mediating between the students and the text, teachers need to be able to foster a direct relationship between them so that students develop an emerging identity as competent critical readers (see Figure 23).

Well-designed tasks which can support students' direct engagement with texts were shown in the study to be a key affordance for autonomous critical reading. However, developing such tasks is a major endeavour. In an EAP environment in which teachers are over-worked and underpaid, there is an urgent need for commercially available materials which support a critical pragmatic approach to reading. Such materials would:

- Incorporate highly challenging, authentic, or quasi-authentic, academic texts in a range of genres
- Scaffold students' interaction with these texts with challenging, clearly defined, product-oriented tasks and macrotasks
- Include cycles of scaffolding that allow students to engage directly with texts and to develop a positive sense of agency and identity as critical readers
- Adopt a rich approach to critical language awareness using tools of systemic functional linguistics to explore the meaning potential of texts
- Be clustered around a range of sustained and engaging thematic areas which can provoke students to engage profoundly with meaning and penetrate deeply into the language/ concepts of the field

- Encourage students to go beyond the given texts to seek out other related texts once they have built up a repertoire of language and concepts in the field.

As discussed in Chapter 1, one of the significant challenges for EAP in its marginal position on the fringes of the University is deciding on content, as students may be progressing into widely differing fields of study. The findings of this study show that students benefit from sustained and substantive engagement with content, provided the thematic area is made accessible and relevant to their lives. Importantly, teachers themselves need to find the topic engaging. Conversely, students who were asked to read in fields which they had chosen themselves, but without sufficient support, tended to be overwhelmed by the enormity of the task.

7.2.4 Implications for the international education industry

Finally, the thesis makes a contribution to the wider context of the international education ‘industry’. In the increasingly competitive, commercialised context of international education, EAP continues to be pushed into marginal territory where the pragmatic wins out over the critical, and a literacies orientation is swamped by a skills-based approach. All three of the EAP institutions in this study, typical of EAP institutions nation-wide, exist on the periphery of universities. Others are independent organisations, even more subject to commercial pressure and uncertainty. In this environment, EAP teachers have been increasingly exploited and undervalued, as was abundantly clear in the case of Lucy in this study, whose pay was actually reduced during the study period. Furthermore, students may be pushed through the *sausage machine* [City College_Lucy_Int] of EAP due to the commercial practice of making packaged offers to international student applicants which include a pre-determined number of weeks’ English study.

International education, as mentioned in Chapter 1, is Australia’s third largest export, and the growth in international students studying English in Australia is well ahead of its competitor countries: in 2006, Australia experienced a 21% increase in numbers as opposed to a 6% increase globally (Healy, 2008). But while international education is experiencing healthy growth, fierce competition between universities scrambling to attract international students, a symptom of the dramatic decline in government

funding during the past two decades, has led to price wars in which EAP is a recurrent victim.

This study has highlighted the professionalism and dedication of three EAP teachers; however they are working against the odds. Their students expect to press on into the university despite inadequate language resources, in order to capitalise on their investment as quickly as possible; and commercial pressures force EAP institutions and their parent institutions into endorsing this progression. To counteract this damaging pressure to undercut standards, there is an urgent need for quality enhancement and assurance in EAP. The development of a national curriculum for EAP; funding for teacher-training; and minimum standards of employment in EAP could all contribute towards improving quality in the 'industry'. Restructuring EAP into a more inclusive position within the university curriculum could also prove effective.

However, as Wallace (2005) points out, it must not be assumed that EAP can ever be a total solution to students' literacy development. Like all students, local and international, EAL students' literacy resources and identities should continue to develop after they commence their studies:

We may wish to challenge not only the notion of progressive, readily identifiable steps in reading skill but also the view that the final outcome of this process is the achievement of some kind of 'full' competence as a reader. Inevitably, just as total comprehension of a text is never attainable... reader competence and skill is not describable in finite and unvarying terms. Experienced readers,,, feel continually challenged, critically and cognitively. The process of becoming a writer or reader is open ended.' (C. Wallace, 2005, p.86)

On-going attention to literacy development, both in-discipline and generic, as students move through university courses is essential. Universities need to ensure that there are adequate resources and processes available to contribute to students' developing mastery of academic and professional discourses and critical engagement with text. Course-mapping techniques, for example, can ensure that students continue to receive systematic support while dealing with more and more demanding literacy

challenges (Devereux & Wilson, 2008). In addition, there will always be a need for flexible, individual support for students who do not have access to the linguistic and cultural capital required to engage critically with academic texts.

7.3 Final reflections

7.3.1 Teaching EAP reading as a moral endeavour

Finally, the study has underscored for me that teaching is a moral endeavour. In other words, EAP reading teachers are teachers of students first, and teachers of reading second. EAP teachers may be inclined to see themselves as ‘redeemers’ of students ‘shackled by deficit’ (Doherty & Singh, 2005, p.11). However, by keeping students and their learning at the forefront of classroom activity, and imagining students as confident and competent critical readers, it may be possible to restructure EAP classrooms into constructive zones of intercultural contact. Particularly when it comes to making the shift back and forward between the role of master and the role of facilitator advocated in Figure 6.2, teachers need to develop a level of perceptiveness, self-confidence and even humility, in order to open up possibilities for dialogical relationships between students, between students and teacher, as well as between students and text.

Further, as Singh and Doherty (2004) point out, EAP teachers occupy a unique territory in global intercultural encounters. Although Pennycook (1997) and Pohl (2005) might argue that it is the EAP teacher’s responsibility to raise students’ critical awareness of the way they are positioned by the neo-imperialist English language education they have chosen, I would argue, as do Singh and Doherty (2004), that the responsibility has a more interpersonal and inclusive role. The EAP teacher is in a crucial position: ‘a very necessary part of the global machinery, lubricating the local points of contact’ (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p. 35). In addition to awareness raising, EAP teachers are in a position to facilitate and ‘smooth’ students’ intercultural encounters. As international students confront new and potentially overwhelming intercultural challenges, EAP teachers have a responsibility to ensure that strong and

positive foundations are laid for individual students' continuing critical engagement with new ideas, new people and new cultures. The EAP reading class offers rich potential for transformative learning in these initial global encounters.

In building students' identity as participants in academic discourse, teachers also need to be aware of the 'by-products' of their teaching, the affective and social changes brought about by participation in their classes (Katznelson, Perpignan, & Rubin, 2001; Perpignan, Rubin, & Katznelson, 2007, p.163). The impact of an EAP reading course, in addition to affecting students' academic identity may also have far-reaching impacts on other aspects of their lives. Students are 'trapped' by the power of their teacher, whether for five weeks or fifty. Teachers need to exert this power with all respect. As Mark commented:

Mark: It's just like a big family really. This is going to sound terribly mushy — I think in the broader sense you have to love your students. It's a funny word 'love'..., and I'm not a dedicated Christian, but I mean in that Christian sense of actually really caring — that every student is important. [SC_MarkInt1]

7.3.2 Where to next?

A holistic, ecological study such as this opens doors in multiple directions. Its strength is in providing insights into how student learning emerges over time and how particular conditions contribute to emerging practice. Further studies could pick up the themes identified in this study – particularly the theme of critical engagement in reading – and explore them in other settings. There is also a need for more empirical research, such as the experimental case study conducted by Buranapatana (2006), in which radical approaches to critical reading are implemented and evaluated. It was notable, for example, that two of the teachers in this study made no use at all of information technology, and that all three implemented pedagogies firmly based in authoritarian, teacher-fronted tradition. Further questions arising from this study include: Is it possible to design more democratic EAP classrooms which might lead to a greater sense of agency? And would such classrooms prepare students realistically

for the pedagogical contexts they will meet? What is the impact of designing classrooms which engage with serious content knowledge in EAP? Do more opportunities for scaffolded co-constructed talk about text lead to more engaged critical reading practices? To what extent do universities require ‘critical’ reading in the implementation of their courses, and to what extent is ‘ventriloquation’ recognised or condoned? In particular, there is a need to follow through with international students graduating from EAP courses to see how their language resources continue to develop as they progress through university.

The activity of teaching reading is infinitely complex. There can be no single or simple solutions. Contexts, students, teachers and texts are involved in a dynamic interplay in which some interactions will be more successful than others; some will have more impact than others. It is my hope that this thesis will provide further stimulation for EAP teachers and institutions to continue to reflect on praxis; and consequently more opportunities for EAP students to take on new identities as engaged and critical dialogic participants in encounters with text.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample semi-structured interview sheet

Questions for final interviews with students (City College)

1. How are you feeling now – at the end of Level 8 – about your ability to read academic texts? Have you made any progress – how do you know?
2. What do you think ‘academic’ and/or ‘critical reading’ means?
3. How do you think you’ve changed over the five weeks? Do you think your ways of reading have changed? How do you feel about reading (academic/general) now?
4. Were there any outstanding moments in the course from your point of view?
5. What was the purpose of this 5-week course: for you, and for your teacher?

Let’s talk in particular about some of the tasks and activities

1. Was Lucy’s approach to reading different from what you had met before? Can you explain?
2. How did the in-class work help you to deal with text (understanding this text vs skills that you could use in reading other texts?) eg looking at the construction of words? pulling apart noun phrases?
3. What do you think Lucy meant by asking for your position – or the author’s position?

4. Reading Mitter – you had to do this more or less on your own – how did you go?
5. What activities in class helped you most?
6. Completing the essay was a very challenging task, how did you go about it?

Appendix 2: Inventory of interviews

Sandstone College	City College	Newgate College
21/2/06 Miho, Lili, Pom	24/4/06 Jo, Rama	2/3/06 Yoshi, Elaine
22/2/06 Hong, Jane, Annie	26/4/06 Clint, Hari, George, Kim	2/3/06 Charity
1/3/06 Mark	2/5/06 Lucy	9/3/06 Hassan
7/3/06 Miho, Lili, Pom	3/5/06 Mon, Panon, Ken	15/3/06 Andrea
8/3/06 Hong, Jane, Annie	15/5/06 Clint, Yangli, Michael	28/3/06 Andrea
16/3/06 Lili, Jane, Annie	16/6/06 Val	29/3/06 Yoshi, Elaine, Charity
16/3/06 Hong, Miho, Tommy, Lin	16/5/06 Hari	29/3/06 Carol
16/3/06 Mark	16/5/06 Kim	6/5/06 Shuji
		6/5/06 Charity
		18/5/06 Wanda
		18/5/06 Carol
		19/5/06 Andrea

Appendix 3: Sandstone College questionnaire: sample page

EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN EAP READING CLASSES

SANDSTONE COLLEGE GROUP

END OF MODULE QUESTIONNAIRE

During this module you were asked to read several different texts and do tasks associated with them. For each text, please could you read the evaluative statements and mark with a 'x' to what extent you agree, and add comments if possible.

1. Xenotransplantation

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I learned useful new vocabulary					
I gained confidence in reading in English					
I enjoyed this reading text					
I learned useful reading strategies (eg guessing meaning from context; skimming; etc)					
It helped me to think critically					
I learned interesting new information					
It helped me to improve my reading skills					
I was challenged by this text					

Comments (eg which particular **tasks** did you find helpful; was the **level of difficulty** suitable? Did you learn anything about **HOW** to read? Why did you enjoy the text, or not?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix 4: Transcription conventions

= =	Latched utterances
..	Short pause
...	Long pause
(comment)	Editorial comments
‘word’	Words quoted from the course book or elsewhere
?!	Utterances judged from the intonation to be interrogative or exclamatory
CAPS	Words spoken with emphasis
(...)	Section omitted

Appendix 5: An example of analysis of logogenesis in the Polygamy debate

Intro- duction	Report on main points	Evaluat -ing main points	Prepar -ing debate	Debate	Written table	Essay
Charity						
A: Charity? [What do you think?] F: Well, actually taking care of the children (???)	Because more men go to war and then they die, and they leave behind women. And Moslem women don't work so they depend on their men and they don't have financial stability, but once they get married, the chance of the men dying is more and plus there are no men for the women to marry. And even if he dies, you have to (inaudible) (Anna intersperses throughout with positive backchannels)	-	(Charity's group not recorded)	(Rebutting the argument that women need to be supported by a husband, and after a war there may be a shortage of husbands So women work, (inaudible) the women and children.) There's actually the government which pays women whose husbands have died in war. So they can look after them. And there's also community help. Because communities usually have fund-raising and they provide money for them. And there are friends and relatives who can always assist them if the husband dies. And if you think about it, it's like one husband dies more women and he goes to war and then dies. The woman has to cater for her whole life, a number of people then he has to get more than one wife. (this last sentence doesn't make sense as far as I can tell, but is delivered with a calm air of certainty)	The writer argues when the first wife is chronically sick or disabled, some husbands cannot manage thus instead of divorcing which might create other conflicts, in addition the wife might still respect him and want to stay married on the other hand the other wife doesn't want to break up a happy family and be stigmatized by society hence the remarriage of another wife in the Polygamy context might be the best solution.	The second argument "sickness and disability" is a strong point but was not discussed appropriately; the author stated it as an issue but did not examine it further to build on its importance. Again the author raises certain issues and doesn't evaluate them fully 'Some husbands can manage this situation, but no one would deny its potential hazards' which potential hazards? The author also argues that the three parties will benefit from this arrangement yet she hasn't evaluated them separately. The writing is unclear ideas are just suggested not discussed hence creating confusion in the writing. Due to lack of evidence we can stipulate the writing is biased and subjective.
Single clause, loses confidence, voice dwindles	11 clauses in turn Subordination Coordination Causation, reasoning Poor summation of source text as she struggles to make sense of the argument it presents			Embedded clauses. Dependent clauses – reasoning, causation, circumstance	Positions the author as theme. Uses embedded clauses and subordination. Complex noun phrases. Nominalisation. Use of modals to hedge. Appropriation of lexis	Critiques the article (not the concept) as she was asked to do. (Themes: the second argument, the author, the writing) She doesn't mount a counter argument. Structured writing, with a paragraph addressing each point in turn. Punctuation? But coherent development. reasoning, addition, contrast(critique), result (causation). Use of quotations to highlight authors voice. Appropriating wordings from the original eg 'the three parties', combined with own wordings from other sources.

Appendix 6: Newgate College: summarized analysis of students' essays

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Gde/20
Charity	Comprehending and learning (see interview) 4	Highly engaged with topic – really wants to find answers (See interview). Good presentation of argument, 4	Excellent paraphrasing, synthesis of wide variety of sources, appropriation of language without plagiarizing though conclusion somewhat confused (a problem with expression?) 3.5	11.5	15
Shuji	Excellent 4	Critical and confident positioning Good synthesis 4	Good paraphrasing, appropriation of field. Coherent. Well-developed argument 4	12	15
Carol	Good understanding and learning (see interview) (eg paragraph on wool) 4	Confident argument (eg intersection of political and economic influences) Synthesizes from a range of sources together with own views Strong sense of voice 4	Appropriation of lexical bundles and some whole sentences but generally good paraphrasing Reasonable use of referencing conventions Clearly delineates voices of the sources 4	12	15
Wanda	Understanding questionable 2	Low engagement (see interview) Very hard to understand the argument Some paragraphs off-track But attempts synthesis 2	Appropriation of lexical items and bundles. Many typos. Attempts to paraphrase. Piles in theories and terminology with little sense of understanding. Does not communicate effectively. Teacher's marking shows lack of understanding 2	6	10.5
Hussein	Overall comprehension: but conflicting statistics, unclear perspective, and irrelevant information 3	Strongly engaged with topic but not with the reading. Very confused positioning. A level of synthesis, but lack of cohesion. Piles in statistics without linking to argument. Does not effectively answer question 3	Some appropriation of lexical bundles. Voices confused. Some paragraphs not referenced. But some reasonable referencing. 2	8	9

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Grade /20
Elaine	Good understanding 4	Very good positioning. Sense of engagement. Good synthesis. Own voice (eg Canberra examples of Body Shop and L'Oreal) 4	Some sentences plagiphased, good use of lexemes, but no lexical bundles. Well organized. Sense of Lin's voice writing from the sources 4	12	14
Hassan	Good understanding (though poor choice of sources); reliance on previous knowledge? Lack of depth of thought and consideration – immature (eg section on corruption in dictatorships) 3	Clearly stated, but superficial, position. Presents for and against arguments. Own voice confident and clear 3	Synthesizes from sources to create an argument. Appropriates language effectively while maintaining own voice. Problems with referencing conventions 4	10	14
Chandra	Pretty good understanding, though irrelevant quotes and examples Poor sources (except textbook) 3	Fairly descriptive (though she includes some comparison and evaluation) Comes to a reasoned conclusion 3.5	Some sections incomprehensible. Conclusion on motivation not linked to body 2	8.5	10.5
Yoshi	Pretty good understanding (though it is not clear what he did NOT understand). Some written from own knowledge (eg David Beckham). Lack of synthesis suggests superficial understanding 3	Engaged with topic. Good positioning. Not much synthesis 4	Jo's voice dominates. Incorrect referencing. Some, but not enough appropriation of field 3	10	13
Amarasi	Understands topic and has struggled to understand readings 3	Presents a position but struggles to synthesize ideas 3	Some sentences incomprehensible. Assumptions not explained. Lack of coherence at sentence level. Good attempts to paraphrase. Many disconnects (see conclusion). Good organisation and paragraphing 2.5	8.5	10
Average	33/10 = 3.3	34.5/10 = 3.45	31/10 = 3.1	3.28	12.6/20

(Kumar returned to Pakistan after mid-semester: Kay from the US is also not included)

Appendix 7: Newgate College: summarized analysis of students' exam essays

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's grade
Charity	Shows excellent understanding and processing of source material Paraphrases effectively 4	Synthesizes from all three sources and also includes own examples. 4	Follows conventions well, though topic sentences could be better (only gives one side of the argument) Appropriates language of field Strong sense of personal voice 4	12	23/30
Shuji	Shows good understanding and integrating of source material Some clumsy paraphrasing. 3	Good synthesis from all three sources to support his own position Good attempt at critiquing sources 4	Strong argument excusing plagiarism Clever attempt to voice a position though argument not always clear. His voice interacts with voices of source texts and is clearly distinguished. Uses language of field Follows conventions reasonably effectively 3	10	20/30
Carol	Good understanding Paraphrases/ summarizes effectively 4	Uses all three sources but does not synthesize No critique 3	Confident argument against plagiarism Strong sense of voice Appropriation without reliance on sources Insufficient use of referencing conventions – own voice and voice of sources not differentiated 3	10	20/30
Wanda	Shows good understanding and processing of source material 3	Sound, clear argument (addresses both sides) Synthesizes from all three sources, but inclined to simply repeat arguments. No integral refs Some critique 3	Follows conventions reasonably well Plagiphastic Voice becomes over-personal – not text-responsible. 3	9	18/30
Hassan	Understands well. Summarizes, but does not paraphrase effectively. 3	Generally does not synthesize from sources, but attempts to reflect to some degree (eg p3) 3	Writes confidently in own voice while referring to other sources; but often does not recognize sources. Some conventions not followed (eg 'cited in') 3	9	14/30

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Grade
Elaine	Shows good understanding of two texts – perhaps didn't read the third? Conscientious paraphrasing 3	Draws on two articles but ignores the third. Develops the arguments presented in the sources, but does not critique. 3	Uses voices of sources to support her argument. Clear position established 3	9	15/30
Yoshi	Misses key points but paraphrases conscientiously 3	Repeats arguments from sources with little integration/ synthesis. Juxtaposes texts but does not synthesize. Shows critical stance towards the texts. 3	Doesn't always reference accurately/ appropriately, but clearly distinguishes own voice and sources. Presents a clear position, informed by the texts Appropriates language to some extent. Own voice evident 3	9	16/30
Chandra	Understands superficially, but does not summarize effectively No misunderstandings 3	Reflects on each argument in the sources. Does not integrate different sources. Very little synthesis 2.5	Distinguishes voices of sources but own position confused. Poor referencing conventions 2	7.5	18/30
Hussein	Little attempt to paraphrase – direct copying Flashes of apparent understanding comprised by poor coherence 2	Conflicting ideas from separate sources juxtaposed within one paragraph with no connection made clear, although a good contrast is made on p5. 3	Generally distinguishes sources. Own voice over-personalized Clearly established position in conclusion, though confused in the body - lack of control of argument Inconsistent attempts to follow referencing conventions 2	7	15/30
Amar	Undigested info from readings into essay – little evidence of understanding 2	Uses sources but does not synthesize or show any links at all. No attempt to critique Includes irrelevant ideas 2	Some direct copying in inappropriate voice Omits references completely Very confused position – see conclusion 1	5	12/30
Average	3.1	3.5	2.7	8.8/12 =av 3.1	18/30

Appendix 8: City College: summarized analysis of students' essays

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Bandscore	Teacher's Grade
Lynn	Excellent understanding 4	Excellent synthesis No critique 3.5	Clear position stated. Own voice clear, plus effective reference to sources. Effective appropriation of the language/ concepts of the field 4	11.5	B
YangLi	Has understood most of the implications of all three sources. A few misunderstandings 3	Excellent synthesis No critique 3	Reasonably clear position. Good ownership of concepts while recognizing sources. Good appropriation of language. Some unsubstantiated claims 3	9	B-
Titi	Generally good but some incorrect inferences 3	Good synthesis No critique 2.5	Position reasonably clear. Uses sources to support her points 3	8.5	B
Rama	Shows many misunderstandings and over-interpretations 2	Good synthesis No critique 3	Position confused but uses sources to back up points. More appropriation would help 2.5	7.5	C-
Hari	Paraphrasing reveals lack of understanding at some points 2.5	Good synthesis of sources No critique. Position somewhat confused 3	Uses sources to back up points. 3	8.5	C-
Faith	Appears to understand generally but has difficulty expressing 2.5	Not really digested Tendency toward over-compartmentalization. No critique 2.5	Position rather equivocal - somewhat confused Not enough appropriation of language 2.5	7.5	C
Ken	Appears to understand 3	Good synthesis No critique 3	Position confused but uses sources to back up points. More appropriation would help 2.5	8.5	C-
Austin	Understanding questionable 2.5	Minimal synthesis No critique 2.5	Position unclear Appropriation of some terms 2.5	7.5	

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Bandscore	Teacher's Grade
Jo	Glimpses of understanding Some misunderstandings 2	Refers to sources No critique 3	Position unclear Ineffective appropriation of language and concepts 2	7	D
Mon	Frequent misinterpretations BUT overall sense of understanding 2.5	Uses sources No critique 2.5	Position confused – meaning comes through with difficulty 2	7	D+
Kim	Only two of three sources used. Misunderstandings. 2	Undigested use of sources No critique 2.5	An attempt at establishing a position. Ineffective appropriation of language 2.5	7	D
Nid	Understanding weak Misunderstandings apparent 2	Refers to sources. Some synthesis 2.5	Position unclear Ineffective appropriation 2	6.5	D
Clint	Misunderstandings evident 2.5	Sources used but without coherence No critique 2	Confused position. Some sentences copied in total. 2	6.5	D+
Yili	Misunderstanding and ineffective paraphrasing 2	Uses sources to support her points 2	Sections off track – position unclear. Over reliance on voice of sources. 2.5	6.5	C+
Michael	Misunderstandings evident 2.5	Sources used but without coherence. Sweeping generalizations No critique 2	Meaning hard to draw 1	5	D
Average	2.5	2.3	2.1	6.9/12 =2.3	

Appendix 9: City College: summarized analysis of students' exam essays

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Grade
Val	Demonstrates good understanding of sources Refers to all three sources 4	Synthesizes effectively Does not contrast sources, and rarely foregrounds voice of sources. No critique of sources 3.5	Excellent sense of ownership/ positioning Appropriates language of the field well and refers to sources appropriately 4	11.5	C
Lynn	Demonstrates good understanding of sources Refers to all 3 sources. 4	Synthesizes very effectively Does not contrast sources, or foreground voice of sources. No critique of sources 3.5	High level of appropriation of language (bordering on plagiaristic??) Clear statement of position and reasonable development of position 3.5	11	C+
YangLi	Refers to all 3 sources Some evidence of misunderstanding (control of modals?) 3.5	Synthesizes effectively. Does not contrast sources, and rarely foregrounds voice of sources. No critique of sources 3.5	Statement of position somewhat confused but refers to sources appropriately Appropriates language of the field well 3.5	10.5	C
Titi	Shows oversimplified understanding of readings 3	Juxtaposes sources rather than integrating them No critique 3	Position stated but over-simplified Paraphrasing loses subtlety of original text Appropriates at word level 3	9	C
Rama	Some misunderstanding implied Paraphrasing loses original meaning 2.5	Synthesizes from sources and occasionally foregrounds voice of sources No critique 3	Position very confused. Appropriated language poorly embedded. Refers to sources appropriately. Own voice distinguished 3	8.5	C-
Hari	Refers to all three sources. Has not understood cultural viewpoint of texts – continues to assume a traditional view of women's roles 2.5	Juxtaposes sources rather than integrating them No critique Superficial use of sources 2.5	Position stated but confused. Referencing techniques inappropriate, but no plagiarism 3	8	C-

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Grade
Faith	Refers to all three sources but some misunderstandings evident 2.5	Juxtaposes sources No critique Superficial use of sources 2.5	Position not very coherent Appropriation of words but collocation poor 2.5	7.5	C-
Ken	Refers to all 3 references Confusion reveals lack of understanding Incorrect assumptions drawn from texts 2	Juxtaposes sources rather than integrating them No critique Superficial use of sources 2.5	Position very confused Appropriation reveals lack of understanding 2	6.5	C- / D
Austin	Uses all three references Paraphrasing reveals some unclear understanding 2.5	Clumsy attempt at synthesis No critical awareness 2	Presents a position though not well developed Not able to appropriate language effectively 2	6.5	D
George	Uses all three references, but reveals lack of understanding. Incorrect inferencing 2	Synthesizes No critique In accurate use of sources 2	Refers to sources but does not use them to develop a coherent position. 2	6	C-/D
Nid	Uses all three references Paraphrasing reveals lack of understanding 2	Synthesizes – but without coherence No critical awareness 2	Position very confused Not able to appropriate language effectively 2	6	D
Jo	Uses all three references Misunderstandings evident 1.5.	Synthesizes – but without coherence No critical awareness 2	Infers own view not based on texts Does not answer question Some adoption of lexis from texts 2	5.5	D

	ATTENDING Understanding/ comprehending	ENGAGING Relating/ critiquing	EXTERNALISING Positioning/ appropriation	Band- score	Teacher's Grade
Michael	Uses all three references Incorrect inferencing Misunderstandings Paraphrasing weak 1.5	Synthesizes –but without coherence No critical awareness 2	Attempts to argue a position but hard to get meaning Some appropriation of vocabulary 1.5	5	D
Clint	Uses all three references Incorrect inferencing 1.5	Synthesizes – but without coherence No critical awareness 2	Attempts to presents a position – but unclear. Off the point Highly plagiphastic 1.5	5	D
Yili	Uses all three references Incorrect inferencing Misunderstandings Paraphrasing weak 1.5	Synthesizes – but without coherence No critical awareness 2	An attempt at developing a position based on the sources 1.5	5	D
Kim	Only uses two of the sources Misunderstandings Paraphrasing weak 1.5	Synthesizes to some extent– but without coherence No critical awareness 1.5	Attempts to argue a position but hard to get meaning Some evidence of appropriation 1.5	4.5	D
Mon	Little evidence of understanding, though refers to all three sources 1	Little evidence of engagement 1.5	Hardly developed position 1.5	4	D
Panon	Little evidence of understanding, though refers to all three sources Misunderstandings evident 1	Very little evidence of engagement 1	A minimal attempt at creating a position 1	3	D
Average	2.2	2.3	2.3	6.9/12 = 2.3	

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