"Is the story on my face?": Intertextural conflicts during teacher-class interactions around texts in early grade classrooms

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Abstract
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Keywords
story, grade, early, texts, face, class, teacher, during, intertextural, classrooms, my, around, interactions, conflicts

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This paper reports on a three-year naturalistic inquiry into intertextuality in early grade classrooms. Specifically, the paper focuses on intertextual conflicts during teacher-class interactions where teachers are reading and modeling texts as well as guiding children to read and talk about text content, purposes, genres, and structures. These conflicts are identified and examined within a conceptual framework that accounts for intertextuality in terms of written texts, lived experiences, lessons, and processes in individuals. In exploring these conflicts, the study reveals that intertextuality in classrooms is not a systematic business. Rather, intertextuality can take on many guises in classroom interactions around texts and is a highly idiosyncratic and often elusive affair. The paper further concludes that the greater power of mandated syllabus documents over teachers and the greater power of teachers over children make intertextuality a complex venture, for children are expected to locate and articulate preferred, predetermined intertextual meanings in ways that teachers expect and state syllabus documents mandate. This expectation renders intertextuality very challenging for teachers and children alike.

Introduction

Teacher-class interactions around written texts carry many possible meanings for classroom participants. These many meanings arise from what a given text might mean, what the teacher sees as relevant meanings, and the meanings that children ascribe to texts and to a teacher's intentions. According to Halliday and Hasan (1985).

Part of the environment for any text is a set of previous texts, texts that are taken for
granted as shared among those taking part. . . . Every lesson is built on the assumption of earlier lessons in which topics have been explored, concepts agreed upon and defined, but beyond this there is a great deal of unspoken cross-reference of which everyone is largely unaware. (pp. 47–48)

This multiplicity of intersecting meanings is referred to in this paper as *intertextuality*. While intertextuality in classrooms has been viewed as an aid to literacy instruction, this paper critically examines how intertextuality is deployed in classrooms. Given the often implicit nature of intertextual referencing in lessons (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) and the processes whereby intertextual links among texts may or may not be recognized by participants in a lesson (Bloom & Egan-Robertson, 1993), intertextuality is a very complex phenomenon to orchestrate effectively in classrooms.

In the context of 7 Australian classrooms located in the state of New South Wales, our study asks what intertextual conflicts arise during teacher-class interactions around written texts? By focusing on conflicts, we do not mean to suggest a negative view of intertextuality. Quite the contrary, we view intertextuality as a pervasive and powerful resource for learning if it is marshaled as such. Our concern, however, is that the power of intertextuality is not always realized. It is in highlighting conflicts that we hope to understand more of the complexities that intertextuality presents for teachers and children in their classrooms.

Since the mid to late 1980s, there have been shifts in Australian schools toward explicit reading instruction in terms of written texts and reading strategies. In the early school years text types such as recounts, narratives, procedural texts, and factual information texts are selected and prioritized for particular study with young readers, as they are seen to be critical to school success. This instructional emphasis paves the way for children's working with these and other genres in later school years.

A predominant feature of classroom interactions, then, is talk about the purposes and organization of these different types of texts to enhance children's school success. This emphasis marks a significant pedagogical shift from reading instruction that previously was built more around content than structure in the early school years. This shift was catalyzed by the work of functional systemic linguists such as Derewianka (1990), who raised concerns about how children access, understand, and talk about the kinds of texts that are foregrounded at school. For example, in a culturally diverse region in Sydney, Australia, the genre movement, informed by this linguistic research, addressed itself to diverse student populations by generating and providing professional development about practices for providing explicit instruction about how different text genres work—their purposes, their overall patterns of organization, and their language features.

In order to provide explicit instruction about texts and how they work, a teaching/learning framework is now commonly used in early grade
classrooms. This cycle involves three key phases: modeling by the teacher, guided construction of texts as readers or writers by the teacher with the children, and independent functioning by the children as readers or writers (Derewianka, 1990; Mooney, 1990; Painter, 1991).

In relation to reading instruction in early grade classrooms, this cycle has been adopted from the work of Mooney (1990) in New Zealand classrooms and has been taken up in Australian syllabus policies such as the New South Wales (NSW) English K-6 Syllabus (1998) and support documents such as the NSW Board of Studies Teaching Reading: A K-6 Framework (1997). More specifically, the phases can be described as follows:

1. Modeled reading, which emphasizes teachers’ reading to children and demonstrating and explaining aspects of reading and written texts, while children engage and participate through viewing, listening, and sharing their responses in teacher-led talk. Modeled reading involves high levels of teacher support to developing readers.

2. Guided reading, which emphasizes teachers’ reading with children and prompting and guiding children’s reading. Guided reading involves more or less equal amounts of teacher support and child control.

3. Independent reading, which emphasizes children’s reading by themselves. Teachers’ roles in this situation include encouraging children and constructing supportive situations for independent reading, while children practice their reading skills and strategies. Independent reading involves less teacher support and greater control by the child than guided reading.

This study focuses on intertextual conflicts during teacher-class interactions where teachers are reading, modeling texts, and guiding children to read and talk about text content, purposes, genres, and structures. The way in which this focus and its significance are conceptualized is explained below.

Theoretical Framework and Related Research

Teacher mediation between children and written texts lies at the heart of early literacy instruction in Australian classrooms and indeed constitutes mandated classroom practice. The NSW English K-6 Syllabus (1998) characterizes its view of the ideal climate of interactions during these phases in its recommendation that “Students learn best when they feel safe yet challenged, when responses are accepted yet extended, and when expectations are realistic yet high” (p. 8).

Sociocultural theorists of learning assert that teachers’ mediation of children’s learning can be successful only when intersubjectivity between teacher and child is established (Bodrova & Leong, 1996; Cole, 1996; Moll, 1992; Rogoff, 1990; Wells, 1999). Intersubjectivity occurs when definitions of an activity are shared and agreed upon by participants in that situation.
Achieving this agreement is complicated by the fact that participants have different backgrounds and histories. Moll and Gonzalez (1994), in their studies of literacy pedagogies in diverse settings, have portrayed the ideal role of teachers as “to enable and to guide activities that involve students as thoughtful (and literate) learners in socially and academically meaningful tasks” (p. 440). In this portrayal, children’s cultural resources—or “funds of knowledge” (p. 441)—are valued and deployed in order to maximize learning. These resources are not viewed as isolated units but rather as constituents of children’s interconnected social networks. Herein lies a key issue relevant to the study at hand: orchestrating children’s resources—what we view essentially to be intertextual resources—in classroom instruction. We contend that establishing intersubjectivity is highly challenging in classrooms, given the presence of these multiple resources among classroom participants.

The study reported in this paper, therefore, critically examines intertextual conflicts that arise in teacher-class interactions with a view to examining how teachers manage these conflicts in ways that are or are not conducive to achieving intersubjectivity. Intertextuality theories provide powerful tools for identifying and explaining conflicts that can arise and undermine intersubjectivity during reading instruction. We examine the theories that form our frame below in terms of three dimensions: intertextual features of texts, intertextual functioning within individuals, and intertextual features of teacher–class interactions around texts.

**Intertextual Features of Texts**

We first consider intertextual features of written texts because normally in teacher–class interactions about texts in Australian classrooms (and certainly in the classrooms of this study), at least one shared written text provides the focus for mediation.

Intertextuality theories hold that no singular meaning is carried by a text (Kristeva, 1984) and that all texts are inherently intertextual for they embody elements of other texts implicitly or explicitly (Fairclough, 1989). While a teacher may have some preconceived notions about a text, there ultimately is no one correct interpretation. Thus, even before a teacher opens a book or talks about a text, there is much potential for intertextual conflict. There are many ways in which a text echoes or is linked to other texts—whether by open or covert references, by the inclusion of the forms and meanings of an earlier text, or simply by being part of a common stock of literary and linguistic procedures and conventions (Kristeva, 1984).

The notion of intertextuality in reference to written texts has been referred to as *transtextuality* (Genette, 1992), embracing at least four kinds of textual relationships:

1. Intertextual links between and among texts in ways described by Kristeva (1984), which create possibilities of meaning in a text;
2. Intratextual relationships between and among elements within a text. This category includes links between written and visual aspects of a text, such as between words and pictures in a children’s picture book narrative; this category also includes links between the content of a text and how it is structured. While these relationships may be viewed as part of intertextual relationships, we view intratextuality as a separate category, especially given this study’s focus on books written for children which typically integrate words and pictures.

3. Paratextual links between a main text and its surrounding elements such as front and back covers, title page, and end papers, which may serve to cue possible meanings of what the text is about.

4. Architextual links between single texts and the broader genres to which they belong (such as between a children’s story and the broader narrative genre to which it belongs), which may signal broad social purpose and structure of a text at hand. These links also include links among different text genres (such as links of similarity and difference among narrative genres and factual information genres).

These categories are relevant to this study in that they enabled us in the first instance to identify what kinds of relationships among texts were being expressed or sought. Then we were able to determine conflicts arising from participants’ divergent foci on different kinds of relationships. For example, a teacher may have been focusing on architextual links between a particular text and the genre to which it belonged to develop children’s understandings about genres such as narratives. Children, however, focused on links between the text at hand and other specific texts they had read or heard, in terms of similar characters or events on those texts.

**Intertextual Functioning within Individuals**

Intertextuality is not only a phenomenon related to texts. Individuals also make intertextual links as they shift frames of reference, such as when individuals make a mental leap from a text at hand to another text which they recollect (Kristeva, 1984). The individual and often idiosyncratic nature of making intertextual links augments potential for conflict in teacher-class interactions around texts.

In describing texts as “tissue[s] of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of cultures,” Barthes (1988, p. 170) asserts that it is the reader’s role to achieve unity of meaning. By implication, this view places quite an awesome albeit appropriate responsibility on the shoulders of beginning readers. Readers must find their own path through a text. Reading may be characterized as a shuttling process, as Scholes (1975) has put it, “back and forth between the language of the work and a network of contexts which are not in the work but are essential for its realization” (p. 147).
As a process, intertextuality is not always conscious or explicit (Kristeva, 1984). In young children a shift from one text to another is often signaled by utterances that only partially express what they mean. Behind children's often puzzling utterances—sometimes, it seems, spoken apotropos of nothing—can lie a very complex set of understandings of written texts and how they interrelate. For example, in a previous classroom study, we observed a six-year-old child who, upon hearing the word "nephew" read aloud, responded "Duckville" (Harris & Trezise, 1999). To us, this response was very cryptic. However, further discussions showed that the child was making links to Donald Duck's nephews in comics and TV cartoons that he (and obviously not we) had experienced at home.

Kristeva (1984) refers to these kinds of utterances as instances of condensation, which can be cryptic and incomplete because meanings are not yet fully articulated at the moment of speaking. The concept of condensation is a powerful tool for illuminating the apparent obscurity of children's utterances and the understandings that are consequently concealed. How to unpack children's condensed utterances when they occur is essential to achieving intersubjectivity in teachers' mediation between children and written texts: Without understanding what children mean, intersubjectivity is not attainable.

Some (e.g., Hartman, 1995) have argued that intertextual processes should be an important aspect of how teachers assess reading comprehension. Hartman portrays effective reading comprehension in terms of linking what readers are reading to other texts. Comprehension therefore cannot be assessed in terms of the focal text alone but also in terms of links readers make.

Experiences themselves are considered lived texts. Broadened this way, intertextuality is viewed as a resource for learning, a process of seeking and identifying patterns. When considering a reader's intertextual functioning, some theorists (e.g., Ruddell & Unrue, 1993) incorporate links a reader makes to their own experiences as well as written texts. These links have become apparent in studies of young children as writers by researchers such as Dyson (1993) and in terms of their diverse yet interconnected worlds (Moll & González, 1994).

Intertextuality is also a resource for participating in lessons. Effective lesson participation in part involves anticipation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985), a process of contextualization and building up expectations of what is to happen when and how. To explore this aspect of intertextuality further, we need to turn to the third and final dimension of our conceptual framework: intertextual features of teacher-class interactions around texts.

Intertextual Features of Teacher-Class Interactions around Texts

As we argued at the beginning of this paper, lessons may be portrayed as intertexts (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). That is, lessons are made up of previous and forthcoming lessons and activities, written texts that are under focus at the
time as well as those that have been previously shared by participants, and children’s and teachers’ own encounters with written texts and lived experiences. There is a sense in which these interactions constitute one long text, bound together by intertextual assumptions about what has gone before and what is to follow, as well as by references to other texts as a means of providing bridges from old to new learning (see, e.g., Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). There is much, however, that remains implicit. For example, assumptions about participants’ recollections and interpretations of what’s gone before or about participants’ experiences with particular texts or experiences, while possibly justified, increase the potential for intertextual conflict.

Conflict arising from intertextual features of lessons may be further understood by drawing on Erickson’s (1982) notion of academic and social content of pedagogic encounters in classrooms. According to Erickson the academic content of classroom learning encounters—such as teacher-class interactions around texts—is made up of subject-matter, specific topics, materials, and texts, a teacher’s instructional goals and emphases, and steps and sequences used to structure this academic content.

One lesson may echo another intertextually in academic terms. For example, these links may be related to aspects such as how one topic builds on what has gone before and paves the way for what is to follow; how what is being read from the text at hand relates to the academic content and structure of an activity shared by the class; how the format of the lesson at hand echoes the format of similar lessons and so cues children to particular ways of functioning; and how the text at hand relates to other texts that have been shared by the class.

And so on. Lemke (1990), on the basis of his observational classroom research, has identified four categories of intertextual links that commonly characterize lessons. These categories are summarized in Figure 1.

As with Genette’s (1992) categories that we discussed previously, Lemke’s (1990) categories raise questions about intertextuality in teacher-class interactions around texts. By being able to identify the type of link being made or sought by teachers, we can consider whether or not children are operating within that same frame.

The social content of lessons also has an impact on intertextual conflicts in lessons. This social content is made up of social relations, status sets and roles, participant structures, and interaction patterns, as conceptualized by Erickson (1982) and researched in several classroom studies (for example, Au & Mason, 1981; Green & Weade, 1985; Harris, 1989). This social content is shaped and ordained by the broader sociocultural context of school and the system in which it is located and co-exists (albeit not always comfortably) with the academic content of learning. This social content has important implications for understanding intertextual conflicts in teacher-class interactions around texts. While intertextuality opens up worlds of possible meanings, the

Intertextual Conflicts during Teacher-Class Interaction

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
<th>APPLICATION TO THIS STUDY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-actional links</td>
<td>Links among activities and experiences in and outside the classroom that for the purposes of our study, include children's prior experiences, shared classroom experiences, and assumed experiences.</td>
<td>These kinds of links are often used in teacher-class interactions around texts to cue children to thinking about particular meanings or using particular skills and strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-thematic links</td>
<td>Links between texts or activities in terms of their content.</td>
<td>Teachers often seek to foster children's meaning-making processes by exploring recurring themes across texts, by exploring differences in terms of content such as characters and events in narratives, or by exploring factual versions of the same topic across different texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-generic links</td>
<td>Links between genres of texts in terms of their purposes and structures.</td>
<td>These links comprise a very common feature of teacher-class interactions around texts in Australian classrooms. For example, teachers compare and contrast different genres in terms of their purposes and structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-curricular links</td>
<td>Links between different curriculum areas such as English and mathematics.</td>
<td>Links between a lesson at hand and the syllabus that is shaping it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Lemke's (1990) Categories of Intertextual Links.

The greater power of the teacher in the classroom situation increases the complexity of the intertextual venture for children in terms of what intertextual insights they are able to articulate and explore (Harris & Trezise, 1997a, 1997b; Kaser & Short, 1998; Oyler & Barry, 1996); how their contributions are judged in terms of perceived relevance and significance (Hasan, 1996); and how they may express their contribu-

social content of lessons can constrain this access to meanings, to varying degrees (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Ruddell & Unrath, 1993). For example, teachers’ instructional goals shape the selection and prioritization of some meanings over others. Or associations with other texts that spontaneously spring to a child’s mind may have to be deferred while the child waits to be nominated for a turn.
tions according to classroom participant structures and relations (Au & Mason, 1981; Delpit, 1988). Teachers are figures of authority who by their position generate and privilege the construction of particular intertextual meanings (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Hasan, 1996).

Often in classrooms, then, children's active roles are undermined by these authority structures and power relationships (Harris & Trezise, 1997a; Hasan, 1996; Luke, 1993; Ruddell & Unrath, 1993). Teachers, by their position of authority in classrooms, select particular meanings over others (Harris & Trezise, 1997a, 1999; Hasan, 1996). Predictably perhaps, teachers select those meanings that will best work toward fulfilling particular instructional goals. At the same time, children read more than the particular text under focus. They also read authority structures and power relationships (Ruddell & Unrath, 1993), often giving priority to control (e.g., saying what they think the teacher wants them to say) over instruction (saying what they really mean or understand). Often, when children choose the former option, they do not necessarily understand what it is they are saying—they can appear in such instances to be grasping at straws (Harris & Trezise, 1997a).

The selection and prioritization of particular classroom practices reflect broader practices whose purposes and values are ordained by the sociocultural contexts from whence they originate. In relation to reading or, more broadly, to literacy, different literate traditions are selected and prioritized across different sociocultural contexts—school being a most pertinent example of this privileging phenomenon (Freebody, 1992; Luke, 1993, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999). These processes of selection and prioritization establish a "culture of power" (Delpit, 1988, p. 282) in classrooms. Figure 2 summarizes five key principles that Delpit has identified in relation to culture of power and shows the application of each principle to this study.

With this notion of power in mind, this study examines teachers' selection and prioritization of intertextual links for developing children's understandings about written texts. Amidst a multitude of possible meanings and connections, and in the face of intertextual conflicts as teachers and students struggle for control of the intertextual framing focus, we ask, "Whose meanings get a voice?" and "Whose meanings count?"

**Method**

**The School and Classrooms**

The study was conducted as a naturalistic inquiry in 7 Australian classrooms. Over 3 years 2 cohorts of children were tracked from kindergarten to Year Two at a socioculturally diverse school on the east coast of Australia. Six different teachers worked in these 7 classrooms. Tracking the children enabled us to contextualize observed lessons and the intertextual links therein in terms of what had gone before and what followed in children's schooling experiences.

The school chosen for this study was located in a socioculturally diverse community in a coastal town south of...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>APPLICATION TO THIS STUDY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Issues of power are enacted in classrooms.</td>
<td>Relevant to this study is the notion that this enactment is not just between teacher and children, but also between the teacher and higher authorities, as they enact mandated curricula, which necessarily shape teachers’ intertextual practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are rules for participating in power.</td>
<td>In teacher–class interactions around texts, these rules pertain to participant structures that determine who can speak when and about what, which are constituents of the social content of a teacher’s intertextual practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the culture of those who have power.</td>
<td>In relation to this study and as previously discussed, the rules of a classroom reflect rules of its teacher but also of the broader socio-cultural context, that is, the school and system in which the classroom is located and with which classroom interactions form an ongoing intertext.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being told explicitly about rules makes acquiring power easier.</td>
<td>This study is investigating whether explicit instruction about rules enhances or inhibits children’s participation in ways that are expected, given Au and Mason’s (1981) assertion of tension that frequently exists between instruction and authority in classrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those with power are likely to be least aware of its existence.</td>
<td>Both teachers and children may be unaware of the intertextual agendas operating in interactions around texts in their classrooms.</td>
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*Figure 2. Delpit’s (1988) Culture of Power Applied to This Research.*

Sydney. At the time of the study, the school had (and continues to have) a long-standing relationship with the university where we worked. In particular, a positive partnership with our teacher education programs had developed over the years. The school principal expressed much enthusiasm for involvement in the project. In part, this enthusiasm came from a desire for consolidating our partnership as well as for more direct involvement in the region’s school-based research. In no small way, too, this enthusiasm came from the fact that the school was in the early stages of implementing the newly introduced NSW English K–6 Syllabus. Our research was seen to provide an opportunity for teachers and researchers together to reflect upon practices as the syllabus was implemented.

The K–2 teachers were willing participants. They displayed much interest in the kinds of new understandings that would emerge from the inquiry that might further inform their own practices. Figure 3 shows the flow of research across the 7 classrooms. We
began in kindergarten in the first phase; we followed this class through to 2 first-grade classrooms in the second phase, while also collecting data in another kindergarten class; and in the third phase we followed the first-grade children into 2 second-grade classrooms and the kindergarten children into 1 first-grade classroom.

Classrooms were parallel and diverse in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, school success, and reading ability. All classrooms were sites where the teachers were making shifts from talking just about a text's content to also talking about how it is structured. This shift was very relevant to the outcomes of this study, as it afforded excellent opportunities for observing teachers and children engaging in explicit talk about texts—in particular, using links among texts to facilitate children's understandings of text meanings and how texts are structured. This shift was directly influenced by the requirements of the new state syllabus, which foregrounds the need for children to develop explicit understandings about the purposes and structures of text genres.

Theoretical Rationale for Study's Methodology

This study was undertaken as a naturalistic inquiry, as there is a high degree of compatibility between the purposes and assumptions of such inquiry, on the one hand, and the purposes and theoretical framework of this study, on the other hand. Two purposes of naturalistic inquiry—contextualization and interpretation of the particular phenomenon under investigation (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)—match this study's purpose of documenting intertextual conflicts in classrooms. This study's premise that lessons are based on tacit understandings about what has gone before and what will follow presents a methodological issue as much as a pedagogical one. Building familiarity with context and ensuring continuity of data over time was essential to understanding the construction of intertextuality—when it was happening explicitly and, as importantly, when it was happening in implicit and/or unrecognized ways. A classroom observational approach therefore enabled us to contextualize instances of intertextual conflicts.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Figure 3. Tracking Classrooms in Study*
Another purpose of naturalistic inquiry—to understand participants’ perspectives (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)—dovetails with another theoretical premise of this study: that individuals, by virtue of their intertextual experiences, value and bring different meanings to lessons. Exploring intertextual conflicts involved probing individuals’ perspectives, in particular children’s perspectives of links among texts and of the links teachers foregrounded, as well as teachers’ understanding of children’s intertextual links.

Two key assumptions of naturalistic inquiry are that reality is socially constructed and that individual perspectives give rise to multiple realities. These two assumptions cohere with our premise that intertextual meanings are constructed in interactions among teacher and children (as borne out in Bloom & Egan-Robertson, 1993), with some meanings valued more highly than others. Given the multiplicity of meanings existing in lessons as intertexts, this study probes teachers’ and children’s perspectives as well as the realities that are given greatest credence in teacher-class interactions, at the expense of other, less valued realities.

Another key assumption of naturalistic inquiry—that variables are complex and interwoven, necessitating a holistic approach to inquiry (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992)—correlates with the notion of intertextuality as a phenomenon of interwoven meanings, embracing those which are made explicit and those left implicit or unexplored.

The use of multiple means to gather data which is associated with naturalistic inquiry enables triangulation across data sources (e.g., teachers and children) and across data types (e.g., observations, transcripts, interviews, artifacts) to highlight consistencies as well as inconsistencies and contradictions that reflect the complexities of intertextuality.

Data Collection
Data collection spanned 3 school years. Data were collected for 20 teacher-class interactions around texts in each classroom. The validity of the study was ensured through data collection in actual classrooms and the ongoing member-checking of our data with teachers and children.

Data were triangulated in three ways. Data were cross-checked across methods (observations, transcripts, and interviews), across data sources (teachers, children), and across researchers. Triangulation allowed us to discern consistencies, inconsistencies, and contradictions in the data. Reliability was maintained through the use of audio equipment to record the data accurately and cross-checking of our records with participants in the study.

Data types comprised observational field notes, audiotape transcripts, teacher and child interview transcripts, and photocopies of texts used during teacher-class interactions around texts. Interactions were audiotaped and transcribed. Non-verbal behaviors were recorded as observational field notes. Texts used in these lessons were photocopied. Teachers and children were interviewed to understand their perspectives on what happened during
teacher-mediated reading experiences. These interviews were informal and unstructured, coming about as they did in response to what was observed. These interview data were used to corroborate interpretations of what children said and did in observed lessons.

The emergent design of this study, in conjunction with its use of multiple theories, was important to the analysis and interpretation of teachers’ intertextual practices in this context. As instances of these practices emerged in the data—many of which were unexpected or else presented puzzles—we moved recursively across the array of intertextuality theories previously explicated, as well as between these theories and the data collected, to understand these instances and the phenomena they represented.

Data Analysis

Audiotape data were transcribed and accompanied by annotations from observational field notes. Data analysis began by identifying the types of intertextual links made by teachers when talking with children about texts. This initial step provided information about the academic content of teachers’ intertextual practices. Links emerged that were similar to Lemke’s (1990) and Genette’s (1992) categories as previously described. However, using an emergent data analysis approach, we refined these categories in ways suggested by our data. These categories are summarized in Figure 4.

Having identified and described these intertextual categories, we then focused our analysis on intertextual conflicts that arose within each category. We defined conflict as instances where teacher and children did not recognize intertextual contributions, misconstrued them, and/or failed to validate them in the pursuit of preferred meanings. We did not define it as divergence of meaning when divergence was welcomed and encouraged by teachers.

Every conflict was viewed as an opportunity to explore nuances of intertextuality in classrooms. Therefore we treated and categorized each conflict as such and did not ascribe differential significance to them. We did not undertake frequency counts so as not to risk sideling some conflicts while foregrounding others in the face of disparate frequencies.

Examination of these conflicts initially involved identifying both recognition and non-recognition of links in the data. As in Bloom & Egan Robertson (1993), identification of recognition involved instances when recognition occurred explicitly, such as “I remember that, too,” or implicitly, such as when an intertextual proposal was taken up and elaborated upon in the next utterance of the interaction. In both cases acknowledgment signaled that recognition was occurring, based on Bloom and Egan-Robertson’s finding that recognition and acknowledgment occur simultaneously.

Due to the high level of inference involved in this part of the analysis, there was ongoing member-checking with participants. Member-checking alleviated the risk of labeling as non-recognition instances where recognition...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>EXPLANATION AND EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Links between a particular text and personal experiences, in terms of</td>
<td><strong>Includes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common themes (co-thematic links)</td>
<td>- Links to children’s experiences outside their classroom, e.g., when a teacher drew links between witches’ spells and recipes which “your mum uses when she cooks.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Links to experiences shared by teacher and children, e.g., when a teacher commented that a snake in a text was “like the one we saw at the zoo last week.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Links to hypothetical experiences, e.g., in a lesson focusing on a class excursion, when a teacher asked children to imagine a situation where “Mum was to take you to the Art Gallery.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between different individual texts in terms of their content</td>
<td><strong>Links among specific events and topics in texts and how they were alike or different across different individual texts or how they related to a broader theme under study in the classroom.</strong> For example, a teacher built links in terms of common content among three texts called <em>Babe</em>, <em>Henny Penny</em>, and <em>The Little Red Hen</em>; as well, she linked these specific textual themes to the class’s broader study on farms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(co-thematic links)</td>
<td><strong>Links to classroom activities (co-actional links)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Links between lessons to build continuity as well as links to classroom activities (e.g., jelly making; a class debate) and excursions (e.g., a class visit to the zoo).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links within a single text (intra-textual links) between its words and</td>
<td><strong>Links within a single text (intra-textual links) between its words and pictures</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pictures</td>
<td>- Links between words and pictures in a text in order to infer meanings, interpret characters and events, seek supporting details, and confirm or modify predictions. For example, when sharing a text called “Our excursion,” children were asked to elaborate on meanings made explicit in the written text by interpreting accompanying illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between the main text in a book and its surrounding elements</td>
<td><strong>Links between the main text in a book and its surrounding elements (paratexual links)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(paratexual links)</td>
<td>- Links between a main text and elements that surround it, such as front and back covers of a text, end papers, and title pages. For example, teachers frequently introduced a new text by asking children to focus on the cover and title page, so as to predict its contents and purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links within a single text (intra-textual links) between its content</td>
<td><strong>Links within a single text (intra-textual links) between its content and the structuring of that content</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and the structuring of that content</td>
<td>- Links between content and how that content was structured in a particular text. For example, a teacher shuttled between content and structure of a story, talking about content (e.g., “They disturbed the bull”) and what section of the narrative that bit of content was (e.g., “‘Disturbing the bull,’ we call that part the complication”).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Links between individual texts and the genres to which they are deemed to belong (architectural links) | Includes:  
Links across two or more individual texts (either physically or through spoken discourse) with exploration of their common structures and purposes that identified their membership to a similar genre. For example, a teacher explored spells and recipes as instances of the procedural genre.  
Links between a single text at hand and the broader genre to which it belonged, in terms of the name, purposes, structures, and/or elements of that genre. For example, a teacher explored a particular story in terms of its technical label (“narrative”) and its purpose of enjoyment for readers.  
Links across similar individual texts to highlight their common purposes, structures and elements. For example, a teacher explored fox-and-hen narratives over a series of lessons. The teacher led talk about these stories’ common purpose (to entertain); their common organization (such as beginning with an “orientation” that sets the scene, moving on to events and “complications” that sustain reader interest, and closing with a “resolution” of complications, as identified by the English K-6 Syllabus); and their common elements, such as stories which contain wrong-doing characters called “villains.” |
|---|---|
| Links between different genres of text (architectural links) | Includes:  
Links between different text genres in terms of how they are structured in similar and different ways. For example, one teacher explained to children that “a narrative is like a recount, except it has complications.”  
Links from familiar genres to unfamiliar genres. For example, teachers used narratives that were a familiar genre to children as a springboard to introducing unfamiliar genres, such as factual reports procedural texts. |
| Links among a particular text, a particular activity or set of activities, and genre which characterizes the organization of both | Links among a focal text at hand, an activity that had been/was to be completed by the class, and the common ways in which text and activity are organized, marking their common membership to a particular genre. For example, a teacher had involved her class in a jelly-making activity, which involved following instructions in a recipe. She then read a text called Meg’s Eggs, which chronicled the misadventures of a witch whose spells always go wrong. The teacher focused on a spell in this story and made links between the recipe for this spell and the recipe used by the children to make jelly. |
| Links among a particular text, the class’s jointly composed version of that text as a re-tell or innovation, and the genre that characterizes the organization of both texts | Links between a text that had been shared with the class and a teacher-guided joint rewriting of that text. For example, after sharing a story called Enoch the Ennu, a teacher guided the children in constructing a written re-tell on chart paper. The teacher used the original text to guide the structuring of the written re-tell. Once completed, the teacher then focused on the similarities in structure of both texts. |
actually was occurring but not made explicit.

Data analysis also located instances where recognition did not occur. These instances led us to probe underlying conflicts that may account for why intertextual proposals were not recognized. Such instances were signaled in the data in the following ways: lack of response to a proposed link, indicating either lack of understanding or perceived lack of relevance so that recognition was not verbalized and the link was not taken up; clarification and negotiation, whereby an attempt was made to resolve ambiguity and so aid recognition; correction, whereby the link was explicitly or implicitly amended; and rejection, whereby the link was explicitly refused. Again, ongoing member-checking supported this analytical process. As we explored our data, a number of conflicts emerged in relation to each type of intertextual link made.

Limitations of the study include possible effects of researcher presence in classrooms. We tried to minimize these effects by carefully briefing teachers before a school site was finally selected and by being as sensitive as we could to the needs of others in the classrooms. As a result, both the teachers and the children seemed comfortable with our presence. Mobility of teachers was a potential problem but one which did not eventuate.

Results
The teachers in this study used a range of intertextual links to mediate and develop children’s understandings about texts and reading. These links, along with frequencies of their occurrences in each classroom, are shown in Table 1. These frequencies are given in terms of number and percentage of lessons in which they were in evidence.

This table reveals that, in any one lesson, many different kinds of intertextual links could (and did) come in and out of view. Potential for ambiguity and complexity is thus created. In this study’s classrooms, teachers and children needed to shift mental gears as they slipped out of one intertextual frame and into another. They needed to do so in a way that was synchronous for intertextual coherence and harmony to be maintained. However, several conflicts arose.

The purpose of this section, therefore, is to identify and explore conflicts as they arose in the data, within and across the intertextual categories shown in Table 1. This systematic examination will allow us to peel back some layers of intertextual complexities that underlie these conflicts.

We now turn to these conflicts that pertain to each intertextual category. We include examples that have been carefully selected on the grounds that they typify the conflict in question and serve to further explain it.

Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links between a Particular Text and Children’s Personal Experiences in Terms of Common Themes or Content
Intertextual conflicts arose in this category in regard to assumptions made by teachers about children’s personal experiences; classroom power relations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF INTERTEXTUAL LINK</th>
<th>CLASS A</th>
<th>CLASS B</th>
<th>CLASS C</th>
<th>CLASS D</th>
<th>CLASS E</th>
<th>CLASS F</th>
<th>CLASS G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Links between text and personal experiences, in terms of common themes (co-thematic)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between different individual texts in terms of their content (co-thematic links)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to classroom activities (co-actional links)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links within a single text between its words and pictures (intratextual links)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>95% (19)</td>
<td>90% (18)</td>
<td>70% (14)</td>
<td>65% (13)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between main text in a book and its surrounding elements (paratextual links)</td>
<td>90% (18)</td>
<td>75% (15)</td>
<td>85% (17)</td>
<td>75% (15)</td>
<td>85% (17)</td>
<td>95% (19)</td>
<td>80% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links within a single text between its content and structuring of that content (intratextual)</td>
<td>55% (11)</td>
<td>75% (15)</td>
<td>85% (17)</td>
<td>95% (19)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>60% (12)</td>
<td>85% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between individual texts and genres to which they are deemed to belong (architectual links)</td>
<td>40% (8)</td>
<td>60% (12)</td>
<td>60% (12)</td>
<td>85% (17)</td>
<td>90% (18)</td>
<td>50% (10)</td>
<td>65% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between different genres of text (architectual links)</td>
<td>10% (2)</td>
<td>15% (30)</td>
<td>20% (40)</td>
<td>60% (12)</td>
<td>45% (9)</td>
<td>10% (2)</td>
<td>15% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links among a text, an activity, and a genre that characterizes the organization of both</td>
<td>30% (6)</td>
<td>15% (5)</td>
<td>25% (5)</td>
<td>10% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>30% (6)</td>
<td>10% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links among a text, a jointly composed version of that, and a genre that characterizes the organization of both</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>25% (5)</td>
<td>15% (3)</td>
<td>45% (9)</td>
<td>55% (11)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>10% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observed lessons per class n=20

*Intertextual Conflicts during Teacher-Class Interaction* 25
and protocols that prevented or constrained children from making this kind of contribution at the moment that was relevant for them; children's insertions into classroom talk and use of the condensed sign when linking texts to personal experiences; and privileging of classroom discourses over home and community discourses when linking texts to personal experiences.

Assumptions about Children's Personal Experiences

Inappropriate assumptions about children's intertextual experiences and competencies appeared to underlie several intertextual conflicts within this category of intertextual links. As we explored this problem, we also found it recurring in a number of other categories of intertextual links.

There were times when teachers were observed making links between texts and experiences with which they inappropriately assumed children were familiar. For example, in a lesson focusing on Meg's Eggs (Nicolle & Pienkowski, 1975), talk focused on cooking lasagna at home, with the teacher focusing on "ingredients" and "methods" as labels. The teacher attempted to draw an analogy between Meg the witch, her spell, and cooking in the cauldron, on the one hand, and mothers, their recipes, and cooking in the oven in children's homes, on the other hand. The children struggled with this analogy, especially with references to recipes in women's magazines that were not part of the children's experiences. Thus the problematic nature of analogies like this example and others that arose in the data stemmed from inappropriate assumptions about children's home experiences, for example, in referring to cooking activities making unwarranted assumptions about who is involved, what kinds of food are prepared, and how cooking is done with or without recipes.

In this intertextual category of making links between written texts and personal experiences, inappropriate assumptions also related to how children perceived and explained their relevance in ways that their teachers expected. For example, one teacher was sharing a book with the class when they came to a page that featured a building site. A child, without being asked, volunteered a link to his own lived experience: "I've lived, I've lived near a building site." The teacher responded by asking the child, "What are they building on that building site [in the book]?" to which the child answered, "I don't know that much." The child possibly could have elaborated upon the building site in his own experience with which he was familiar, but without the opportunity to do so and the mediation from the teacher, the bridge between his experiences and the text appeared, by his own admission, too difficult to build.

Classroom Power Struggles and Protocols When Making Links between Texts and Personal Experiences

The previous example of a child's volunteering a comment without being asked is atypical of participant structures in the data. Indeed, in all the classrooms of this study, teachers most frequently asked convergent questions...
about texts. The prevalence of convergent questions meant that children were required to approximate the teachers’ intertextual agendas, which teachers could and did promote through recourse to authority and protocols that required children to answer questions with predetermined answers. This finding was common across all categories of intertextual links that are summarized in Table 1.

When children made intertextual links that were sought by their teachers’ convergent questions, their teacher validated these links. This finding prevailed across all categories of intertextual links. Children were praised for their ideas, and their teacher’s instructional agenda moved on to its next step. Teachers’ validations in this study made clear what answers were desired. These validations also reinforced the authoritative position of the teacher in the quest for intertextual meanings, for the teacher bestowed selective validation on children.

Conversely, when children’s intertextual links did not match teachers’ links, three consequences emerged: The teacher moved on, repeating the question or allowing another child to contribute; the teacher sought to clarify and negotiate the child’s meaning; or the teacher corrected the child’s response.

Where teachers moved on without responding directly to what the child had said, there was implicit non-validation of children’s meanings. Responses such as “What does [Child B] have to say?” or repeating the question with or without some elaboration were typical in this situation. While perhaps less harsh than explicit rejection or correction of the child’s response, a non-response to a child’s contribution failed to attach any kind of significance to what the child had said, thereby leaving it understood that the intertextual link proposed by a child was inappropriate without seeking clarification of what the child meant.

While teachers at times did clarify and negotiate children’s intertextual contributions, such instances did not prevail across the data in any classroom. As we followed this issue up with teachers in interviews, time emerged as a key constraint. While clarification and negotiation of children’s intertextual meanings are important processes that require time, time was something teachers felt they lacked. When talking about the NSW English K-6 Syllabus and links to their own class programs, teachers all felt pressured by the scope and nature of the new syllabus requirements. They felt this pressure especially in terms of their tentative understandings of what was required. They also felt pressure from perceived limitations of time during which children were to achieve particular understandings. In the face of mismatch between pedagogic goals and children’s contributions, curricular relationships to the mandatory English syllabus took precedence over those relationships proposed by children. Confronted with conflict between intertextual concerns and interactional issues (such as taking too much time, or going off on to other tangents), teachers often used their authority to correct children’s
perceived inappropriate contributions and to steer them back to their planned agendas.

Children’s Insertions into Classroom Talk and Use of the Condensed Sign When Linking Texts to Personal Experiences

On some occasions in our data, children took it upon themselves to go against the grain of established classroom relations and protocols and actually initiated their own intertextual contributions by bringing their personal experiences to bear on the text at hand. Such occasions were not frequent in whole class interactions. Indeed, they were explicitly discouraged in all classrooms, as made evident by teachers’ comments such as, “You didn’t have your hand up” and “Don’t call out.”

However, we consider children’s insertions to be highly relevant to our study: They serve to further illuminate how protocols constrain children’s intertextual opportunities, and they shed some light on how children intertextually function. When children inserted themselves into teacher-led interactions, they made links to their own experiences in concrete and specific terms. These links appeared to be prompted by the text at hand or the talk of the moment, as illustrated when S.’s teacher was seeking synonyms for “paddock.” S. interjected,

S: There’s another one.
T: What’s that?
S: Pasture. . . . I thought of that when I played with the nanny goat in the paddock.

J’s teacher was talking about domestic attributes of the hen in “The Fox and the Little Red Hen.” J. interjected, “Lots of children don’t clean their house. They don’t help their Mum.”

C’s teacher was introducing a book to the class, when C. said, “This one’s not the same as mine at home on my video.”

M’s class was talking about trams, trailers, and tractors, clarifying differences among these terms. M. volunteered his explanation of a tram and validated his explanation on the basis of his own experience: “It’s [the tram] a train to help some people up somewhere. ’Cause I’ve been on a tram before.”

In the same lesson as M’s, R. volunteered an explanation of how trams run and again validated it on the strength of her own personal experience:

R: It’s like a cord that goes onto the wires, but it’s not, it’s not onto a pole or something. It’s onto a really metal pole—
T: Electricity. So it’s run by electricity.
R: ’Cause I went to Melbourne—
P: Well, I’ve been on one at Perth and you have to catch one two times because we caught one [tram].

These examples of self-initiated links to personal experiences were a means for children to bring their experiences into play when they saw it relevant to do so rather than waiting to be asked or stumbling on a question for which they didn’t have a ready answer. They also used their experiences as validation of their own contributions (as indicated, for example, by the child’s
explanation, “cause I went to Melbourne”).

Further, it appears that verbalizing links between texts and personal experiences was a desirable way of functioning as readers in these classrooms—as evidenced in teachers’ ongoing questions that asked children to make these connections. However, while these kinds of contributions were accepted, they were not explored. In each occurrence teachers moved quickly back to their own plans and line of questioning.

Children’s insertions also revealed their streams of intertextual processing. Instances of children’s insertions illuminated aspects of how children may function intertextually even at unconscious or partially conscious levels. Intertextual ideas lurking at these levels may not be fully grasped by the child at the moment of speaking, yet they erupt into verbalization anyway. For example, S’s class had been working on a theme about farms. His teacher was talking about a new text, when S, suddenly said, “God made, God, we’re the prince, um, he’s, I mean, we’re the shepherds, and he’s the, um” and trailed off. His teacher took this comment up briefly, which allowed S. to explore his intertextual angle a little more:

T: Who’s the people that look after the sheep? What are they called? You’re remembering one of our Religion stories, aren’t you?
S: The shepherd.
T: What made you think of that, S?
S: ‘Cause there might be some sheep in the story?

T: There could be some sheep in the story, too.

Sometimes children did not abandon their stream of intertextual processing. For example, one teacher was talking about information reports, defined by the teacher and the NSW English K-6 Syllabus as factual texts that present information about a certain topic, such as the sea. While the teacher focused talk on what a reader might find in a factual information report, a child interjected with, “There’s been, um, a lot of bus crashes.” This child had held on to the intertextual thread related to newspaper reports, which was mentioned earlier in the lesson. This comment, with no immediate relevance to the teacher’s question at hand, was nonetheless pertinent in terms of its links to previous talk about newspaper reports and a recent spate of bus crashes in the child’s state.

Children’s insertions also showed their use of analogies to express connections as they built new learning (see also Harris & Trezise, 1999). For example, a teacher was explaining circle stories that end at the same point that they begin. The class had been reading a circle story called The Farmyard Cat. After this reading the teacher began to draw a schematic representation of the story as a circle with events marked on it. A child intervened, saying, “It’s like a life cycle”:

T: It is, good boy. It’s like a life cycle. It sure is. It could continue because in the end of our story the cat didn’t
get into trouble and feel sorry and say I'll never do it again. She went off and said, 'I've got you all. I got you all.'

Another child then inserted his comment:

S: Like a motorbike, your wheel going round and round and round and round.

T: That's right. That's like a circle. Like a wheel isn't it?

In coming to terms with the relatively abstract notion of story formats, these two children stepped beyond the content of *The Farnyard Cat* and likened its structure to a factual text or a lived experience encountered in another time and place. These children’s analogies signify an abstract kind of thinking that is relevant to an analysis of intertextual conflicts.

Children's intertextual insertions, however, were not always clear, as may be seen in the previous examples. Indeed, children's ways of articulating intertextual links emerged in our study as a critical issue for teachers, children, and researchers alike. To locate instances of intertextual links being made, they need to be recognized as such. However, an important finding of this study is that children's expressions of intertextual meanings are often cryptic, brief, and fleeting. Yet, as we have seen, behind these utterances lie some complex understandings about written texts and how they interrelate (Harris & Trezise, 1999).

Privileging of Classroom Discourses and Home/Community Discourses When Linking Texts to Personal Experiences

When children either inserted themselves or responded to their teachers' questions about links to personal experiences, conflicts emerged between classroom discourses and other discourses in which children were immersed. For example, one teacher was talking about *The Little Red Hen*, focusing on the story's lazy characters. A child referred to these characters as "wusses." When asked to explain what he meant, he said, "Sometimes when I don't want to do something that my sister says and my Mum and my sister, they say, 'You're a wuss.' . . . my sister, she says, 'You're a wuss.'" While the children appeared to enjoy the humor of this incongruity between home and school talk, their teacher quietly said, "Oh dear," and moved on. In another classroom interaction, while a teacher was referring to wrong-doing characters in narratives as "villains," a child interjected with the comment, "My mum calls them dummies." The teacher rejected this comment by saying, "Dummies? They're called *villains*.

At other times these impromptu contributions by children were met with more fully explained alternative ways of talking about a subject, ways that fitted classroom discourse and the subject at hand. For example, a child was predicting what a fox might have been up to in a story when he said, "He really wants to try and make them spew up." The teacher responded thusly:
T: What's a better word than "spew up?"
That's really a slang word. We don't find that in our dictionary. It's not a proper word. You go to the doctor, does he say, "S., did you spew up?"
What does he say?
S: I forget, my Mum goes to the doctor.

This latter example brings together the conflicts that we previously identified when making links to personal experiences: assumptions about children's experiences; struggles with power relations that constrain participation; endorsement of desired responses and rejection of others; and children's insertions and condensed signs which find an uncomfortable place in classrooms—especially when, by their very nature of emerging into thought and speech at the same moment, they are often cryptic and framed in terms of children's own discourses rather than official classroom discourses. These issues prevail in the remaining intertextual categories as well.

Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links between Individual Texts in Terms of Their Content
Data reveal that links across texts in terms of their content were proposed by teachers as prompts to children's recollections of themes and ideas. Sometimes, these prompts were almost throw-away lines such as, "Oh, that's like a book we read last week," without it being explored further.

At other times these prompts had a more substantial intention of using recollected content for jointly constructing a text with the class. For example, a teacher was embarking on composing with the class a factual text about the sea and asked the children to pull together content from a number of texts they had read by asking, "What type of things in the books were we reading about?" A child responded, "The sea," and so the way was paved for children to begin collating facts about the sea for their class text.

It was for these purposes that teachers substantially explored links among texts in terms of content—not to make comparisons among individual texts but rather to collate information and build concepts about broader, factual themes.

Intertextual conflicts came into play, which appeared to stem from how children were expected to recollect specific ideas and articulate them in abstract and generalized terms. For example, as the class composed their factual text about the sea, they decided upon dolphins as their focus. The class was asked to recollect facts about dolphins from what they had read. One student responded, "They don't bite people." The teacher sought to rephrase what the child had said in a slightly more technical way:

T: OK, so. They're not? [no response]
What's the word? [no response]
C: Dangerous.

Then, the teacher sought to negotiate this terminology further:

T: OK, what's another way of saying that? Dolphins are not dangerous,
they are? [no response] The opposite, if they’re not dangerous, they must be?
S: Friendly.
T: Dolphins are?
P: Harmless.
T: All right.

Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links to Classroom Activities
When making links to classroom activities, teachers often signaled a link without elaborating—such as when a teacher introduced the title of a book called *Henny Penny* and asked the class, “What else could start with /h/? That’s our sound for the week.”

Teachers also used classroom activities more substantially to explore links to written texts and lessons at hand. In these cases conflicts arose that related to underlying tensions between how teachers and children interpreted and labeled classroom activities. We found, predictably, that individual interpretations of activities and their perceived relevance varied. This variation was made especially apparent between a teacher’s pedagogic interpretation of an activity (that is, in terms of an activity’s instructional goals and links to future texts and activities) and children’s more literal interpretations in terms of what they actually had seen, done, or heard.

Teachers used and structured these interpretations as bridges to new learning about texts. For example, a teacher was making links to a classroom activity where the class had made jelly. The teacher’s goal was to develop children’s understanding of how procedural (or instructional) text genres are structured. Such genres are defined in the NSW English K-6 Syllabus as texts that show someone how to perform a particular action or carry out a certain procedure. Their structure is characterized as containing a goal (what the outcome will be, for example, apple pie); a list of materials or ingredients that are needed to complete the procedure; and steps that describe what to do, how to do it, and in what order to do it. For the teacher, then, the jelly-making activity, or procedure, was very relevant both to her goal and to the text at hand.

With the generic structure of procedural texts in mind, the teacher asked the children to recollect the steps in their jelly-making activity (italics indicate words that were stressed):

T: What did we have to do first. Who can remember the first thing we did?
D?
D: We put the jelly crystals [trails off]
T: In a?
D: In a jar, in a bowl.

The teacher validated this response and sought to clarify use of the word “put”:

T: Good boy. We put the jelly crystals— did we put them in a bowl?
C: No, poured.
T: Good, we *poured* the jelly crystals in a bowl.

The teacher then guided the children in describing the second step in their procedure:
T: Then what did we do? What was the second step we made? The second step? J.

J: Boiling water, we tipped it into the jelly, jelly crystals.

Again, terminology was brought into question, this time by another child:

D: We poured—[trails off]
T: That’s right, we poured the boiling water into the——
D: Jelly crystals.

The teacher sought greater precision that she saw congruent with a procedural text (unlike how some children possibly viewed the activity they were reconstructing):

T: Or into the bowl. Very good. Then what did we do? R.?
R: Stirred it up.

This time, the teacher implicitly corrected a child’s terminology:

T: We mixed the jelly crystals and the water. And the jelly crystals?
C: Vanished.
G: Dissolved.
T: They vanished, OK, they dissolved. Very good. They disappeared, they dissolved. What happened next? M.?
M: We put the bowl to set.

This time another child corrected this response to a more technical label:

G: The mixture.
T: Good girl. It was a good word that G. came up with, wasn’t it, ’cause that’s exactly what happened.

These interactions serve to illustrate tensions that arose in our data when teachers made links to classroom activities. While activities such as jelly-making were shared by all, their interpretations and frames of reference were not always shared. To make links to classroom activities, like jelly-making, in the relatively abstract and technical way we have just reported, is to begin to transform the concrete, highly situational, and specifically contextualized meaning of those activities to more decontextualized objects of reflection and abstraction.

Teachers’ ongoing insertions of preferred terms were meant to serve instructional goals of developing children’s metalanguage and concepts about texts in these more abstract ways. However, the data show that these insertions were at odds with children’s own language for talking about their classroom activities. This finding is congruent with occasions such as those we previously documented, when children tried to insert their own terminology into classroom talk about texts, which the teachers often felt were not appropriate to the situation and subject at hand.

**Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Intratextual Links between Words and Pictures**

Intratextual links between words and pictures commonly were made to engage children’s attention to picture
books. For example, a teacher was reading a text about koalas to the class. In introducing the book she focused on the illustrations and said, “Now these are bright and colorful pictures, aren’t they?” As she read the text, she continued to refer to the pictures for what they showed in relation to the words. For example, the text was describing the eucalyptus trees and the leaves that gave koalas food and shelter. She stopped reading, pointed to the trees, and said, “Look at all those leaves.” Ongoing commentary of this type did not create overt conflict, for questions were not being raised.

However, this commentary seemed to invite children to insert their own comments, as they did in this particular lesson. Children became so engaged that they blurted out links to their own experiences. For example, the book depicted animals making noises, which led to children volunteering their own experiences:

L: In the holidays I went to the zoo with my cousin and he was eating his sausage and like, he didn’t want the bread and his sausage together, so he took the sausage out and this kookaburra-
T: A kookaburra?
L: Yep, and it swooped out and took his sausage but not the bread.
T: Oh, right. So he had no lunch left, did he?
L: No, but he had the bread.
T: All right.

Seeing that other children were trying to insert their comments, the teacher intervened and redirected the children’s attention back to the illustrations by asking, “Hold your questions for the moment please.”

Such instances see the recurrence of authority and protocols to direct children’s intertextual functioning. Pictures, it seemed, were nice things to look at, and they evoked many associations with children when they were given the opportunity to do so. However, these eruptions were reined in quickly by teachers so they could continue to pursue the lesson and intertextual agenda at hand.

Teachers also used illustrations to encourage children to cue into how written texts were structured. Rather than explore these instances here, we will return to these when looking at “Intertextual conflicts associated with making intratextual links between a text’s content and how it is structured.”

**Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Paratextual Links between a Main Text and Its Immediately Surrounding Elements**

The data reveal that when teachers sought out children’s thoughts on what surrounding elements of a text—such as book cover and title page—might signify about the main text, at times they explicitly encouraged divergence. For example, a teacher responded to a child’s prediction by saying, “That’s a good idea. Who has another?” Such encouragement is consistent with the teacher’s goal of engaging children with the text at hand by motivating children through anticipation.

However, at other times teachers
sought convergent responses. As we have already noted, in the face of intertextual possibilities, on the one hand, and instructional goals and power relations, on the other hand, the latter prevailed.

For example, we found that book titles evoked different predictions among children. Consider, for example, what a reader might find in a text called *Keep Out of the Kitchen, Mum.* This task was put to a class in our study. The teacher read aloud the title, *Keep Out of the Kitchen, Mum* and asked the class, "What do you think is going to be in this?" She then pointed to the title and said, "It is said distinctly, 'Keep out of the kitchen Mum,' and it's got all this stuff around it," pointing to illustrations of food and kitchen implements on the cover. A child responded, "A surprise" and did not elaborate. However, this prediction does not seem incongruent with the book's title, which is all the information the children had at this stage. It seems quite feasible that this text could be a story about someone planning a surprise in the kitchen for his or her mother.

However, the teacher rejected this child's response and moved on to another child, who built on the previous child's prediction by suggesting, "They want their Mum out of the kitchen because they're gonna make a pancake for her." While pancakes specifically were not shown on the book's cover, the child's comment about pancakes appeared to be an intertextual reference to an earlier part of the lesson where the class had been discussing making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday at the beginning of Lent.

The teacher did not reject this response as directly as the previous response. Instead, she pointed out another paratextual element of the book by saying, "Well look, how many pages in this book. Do you think we need all that for pancakes?" This question may seem puzzling, if a reader continues to frame his or her predictions by narrative genre and so expect a story.

The teacher then commented, "All right. Well, C. [the child who had predicted pancakes] is well and truly on the right track. Follow it through a bit further. They want their Mum to stay out of the kitchen because, because—why? Why do you reckon, G.?" Children continued with their predictions of stories about children's cooking for their mothers until the teacher explained, "It's a cook book that has things in it that children can make by themselves and it's going to be very handy to us because later in the year we are going to be making our own healthy lunches."

This interaction is characteristic of many observed interactions where teachers asked children to make predictions about a text from its cover and title. Such requests, we found, are inherently complex—not only because of the many possible ideas that a title may evoke about what a text will contain but also because of different frames of reference for what kind of text is at hand. Thus, paratextual links were made complex and could create conflict when teachers prioritized certain predictions and when their questions were framed by one genre while children's responses were framed by another genre.
**Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Intratextual Links between a Text's Content and How It Is Structured**

When teachers intratextually linked content of a text to how it was structured, tensions between how the teachers and children built meanings became apparent. For example, when talking about the content of specific shared narratives, talk was typically anchored in particular details of characters and events in a story; the text being discussed was the immediate concrete text at hand; and content, while decontextualized in terms of children's actual situations, was relatively contextualized in terms of the story itself. These relatively particularized, concrete, and situational meanings appeared to be in tune with children's ways of building meanings, as made apparent by their readiness to offer and elaborate on ideas about textual content.

On the other hand, when teachers talked about how a narrative was structured, more generalized, abstract, and technical meanings were constructed. These different ways of building meanings are illustrated in the following sequence where a teacher shuttled between the specific content of a particular text and the more abstract and generalized nature of its genre. This sequence occurred after many explorations of narratives that involved modeling and jointly composing such texts. As these experiences unfolded, the teacher continued to fine-tune and negotiate the kind of terms used to talk about the narrative genre.

In this sequence, we have italicized talk that focuses on genre, capitalized talk that focuses on content, and both capitalized and italicized talk that focuses on both genre and content. The teacher's opening comment drew children's attention to the first part of a narrative (“orientation”) and its function:

**T:** In the beginning of the story we learnt about who the story was meant to be about, didn't we? And it was going to be about?

**ALL:** Farmyard cat.

**T:** So that, the beginning part of the story is called the what?

**E:** Orientation.

**T:** Orientation. Good. Then what was the next part of the story, E.? All these things started to happen.

**E:** Well they disturbed the—

**T:** They disturbed the—bull, they disturbed the—

**M:** Nanny goat.

**E:** And then they disturbed the horse.

**T:** OK, that part of the story is called what?

**P:**

**P:** The complication.

Shuttling between a particular text's content and its structure, the teacher guided the children in making a shift from concrete talk about story (“what's happened”) to a more technical and abstract talk about story structures. The teacher's choice of words shifted accordingly as he mediated this shift—for example, from specific and situational language such as “They disturbed the bull” to the more abstract and general...
term “complication.” The shuttling here between story content and structure appeared to progress quite smoothly.

However, in other situations where teachers sought to build intratextual links between textual content and structure, conflicts emerged between more particularized, concrete, and situational meanings, on the one hand, and more generalized, abstract, and decontextualized meanings, on the other hand. These conflicts are illustrated by visiting a lesson in a series of lessons focusing on the picture book narrative called Meg’s Eggs. We again have capitalized talk about the structure of the text and italicized talk that focuses on the text’s content. The teacher focused on a spell within this narrative to talk about the structuring of the spell as a procedural genre. As she progressed, she pointed to illustrations as prompts to content and bridges to structure:

T: All right, do you think the spell would be the same [as recipes at home, previously discussed]?

C: No.

T: So if some, let’s have a look, let’s have a look at what Meg did. OK, well, when Meg put all her ingredients together, [reading Meg’s Eggs text], “lizards and newts, three loud hoots, green frogs’ legs, three big eggs.” What’s this part of the spell? C.?

C: The ingredients.

T: Good girl. That’s the ingredients, that’s what Meg used and she made her spell. Tony, are you listening? And then, [reading caption in illustration next to three cracking eggs] “Plunk plonk plunk.”

The framing of the teacher’s next question is critical as she asked, “What’s happening there?”

As we learned from a follow-up interview with the teacher, she intended this question to focus on the ingredients being mixed together as the method section of a recipe. Thus her question was framed by reference to the procedural genre that contained a goal (what will be made or done), ingredients, and method. Her use of the word “happening” was meant to refer to the text’s methods section, rather than Meg’s specific actions of mixing her ingredients. However, children took up this question in the latter sense, describing what the text specifically portrayed in the story:

C: Three—

T: No, what’s happening? E.?

E: Eggs are coming out of the—

T: But what’s happened? What’s happened? All the ingredients have what? What have they done?

C: She’s got big ones!

T: That’s right, she’s got huge ones because all the ingredients have mixed together to make something—

C: Big!

T: To make something new and it was big eggs. So what’s happened is all the ingredients have been put together and the method showed us how to put them all together and something new comes out of it. So a spell does work the same way.
Such conflicts can be further interpreted in terms of competing genres coming in and out of view—as we explore below.

**Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links between Individual Texts and the Genres to Which They Are Deemed to Belong**

Our classroom data reveal that architectual questions that link a specific text to its broader genre, such as “What kind of text is this?” require children to shift from a specific text at hand to more intangible possibilities of how the text might be categorized. More abstract architectual questions such as “What’s a report?” require children to start their journey at an even less specific point and to arrive at generalized statements about a certain genre. In cases such as this we found that children negotiated this journey by changing its terms of talk—that is, by defining genres in terms of recalling their specific experiences with such a text.

In the face of relatively uncertain possibilities, there remained an underlying sense that children were searching for answers sought by their teachers (as prevailed throughout our data across all intertextual categories). Consequently, this uncertainty was reduced as teachers validated correct answers and rejected or corrected undesired responses. However, correction or validation made answering these kinds of questions more risky for children.

Embedded in these architectual situations are a number of concomitant conflicts that we will now attempt to disentangle. These conflicts concern competing genres coming in and out of view; negotiating abstract, generalized, and technical ways of talking about texts; and the privileging of certain definitions of genres. We explore each of these in turn.

**Competing Genres Coming in and out of View**

Asking children to consider and identify links between specific texts and their genres elicited many possible associations. For example, one teacher read aloud a rhyming spell from a narrative called *Meg's Eggs*: “Listen to this. ‘Lizards and newts, three loud hoots, green frogs’ legs, three big eggs.’ What does that sound like?”

The teacher was seeking architectual links between the spell and procedural genres to which she deemed the spell belonged. Instead, a child promptly answered, “Like a rock-a-bye,” thereby making links to a different genre than that intended by the teacher. As revealed in subsequent conversations with the child, the child’s analogy between rock-a-bye rhymes and the rhyming spell related to her home experiences of listening to rhymes at bedtime.

Across our classroom data we found that competing genres came in and out of view as links to genres were being sought. This phenomenon was apparent, for example, in our earlier sequence where a teacher read the title of a children’s cook book (*Keep out of the Kitchen, Mum*) to the class and asked them to predict what the text might be about. Children’s responses were framed by expectations of a narrative whereas

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the text was an instance of the procedural genre. Children’s responses were congruent with the text’s ambiguous title that could indeed suggest a narrative. However, in that particular lesson, using narrative to frame their predictions led to responses that, while not wrong, were incongruent with the teacher’s procedural frame of reference and what the teacher knew about the particular text.

The presence of divergent genres saw teachers and children struggle to establish particular genres as their framing focus. In the earlier Meg’s Eggs sequence, where the teacher was attempting to make intratextual links between content and structure of the text, conflicts arose between more concrete and more abstract ways of building meaning. These conflicts were further fueled by tensions between two competing genres: narrative genre, in which the witch’s spell embedded and which children appeared to use as their framing focus, and procedural genre, which characterizes the witch’s spell and which the teacher used as her framing focus. For example, the teacher’s question, “What’s happening there?”, which was designed to focus children’s attention on steps in the procedure, was interpreted within a narrative frame of reference by the children. Children focused literally on what happened to the witch’s particular ingredients, thereby retelling specific narrative action.

The use of divergent genres by teachers and children as their framing focus saw teachers and children struggle to negotiate labeling of textual elements. We saw this struggle happening in our previous Meg’s Eggs lesson where terms such as “mixture” and “ingredients” were given priority over less technical terms offered by children. In another earlier example where we explored children’s insertions, we saw a teacher label and talk about “lazy characters” in a narrative. A child, however, invoked another genre—a spoken genre that characterized family members in the child’s home challenging his own lazy behavior—and said, “Sometimes when I don’t want to do something that my sister says and my Mum and my sister, they say, ‘You’re a wuss.’” In this genre and in its broader familial and discursive context, the term “wuss” had its place. However, in the written genres of narrative and in the broader classroom context, the teacher deemed this label unacceptable. Thus, endorsement of context-appropriate terminology was shaped by both official classroom discourses and the genres that were being presented and discussed at the time.

Teachers endorsed children’s contributions that fit the genres that formed teachers’ frames of reference at the time. However, this kind of endorsement became problematic when children were drawing on competing genres that were not recognized by teachers. For example, in a series of interactions about wrong-doing characters in narratives, a teacher posed the following question, with an explicitly right answer in mind that was framed by narrative genre: “If there’s somebody that’s mean in the story, and we’ve seen lots of these mean people in movies, we call them the baddies, but what’s the right word for them? Do you know, R.?”

*Intertextual Conflicts during Teacher-Class Interaction*
R. did have an answer. However, it was one that was framed by factual information report genres rather than by the teacher's narrative frame: “Predators?” The teacher, with a perceived right answer and a different genre in mind, responded, “Predators? That’s a big word.”

While it might be “a big word,” it was not the preferred narrative term given the teacher’s frame of reference. She sought clarification by asking, “What does that mean?” The child responded with a simple and generalized definition, accompanied by an example: “Um, some like, um, an animal that eats another animal, like a fox eats a hen.”

The teacher reframed the child’s response in terms of narratives, which constituted her framing focus: “Good boy. Yes, there might be a fox in this story that’s waiting to eat the hen.” The teacher then went on to reinforce narrative by explaining, “But all those meanies in stories, whether they’re animals or they’re people that try and cause harm, they’re called the villains. Usually they never win.”

Negotiating Abstract, Generalized and Technical Ways of Talking about Texts
This last example also illustrates that making architectural links between specific texts and their genres invokes more abstract, generalized, and technical ways of talking about texts (as did linking content and structure). As suggested by our classroom data, we use the term technical to refer to terms that are endorsed by the genres to which they are being referred and by the discursive context of the classrooms in which they are being used. Thus terms like “villains” to refer to wrong-doing characters in stories were endorsed in classrooms while children’s labels such as “dummies” and “predators” for villains were not accepted.

Abstraction also was seen to pose difficulties when linking specific texts to their genres. For example, a teacher was beginning to read a fairy tale to the class: “All right, let’s have a look at our story. [reading] ‘Once upon a time.’” The teacher then paused, repeated the opening phrase of the text, and asked the children to identify an architectural link between this text and the broader genre to which it was seen to belong: “Oh,’ once upon a time.’ What kind of stories usually start with ‘Once upon a time?’ S., what stories mostly begin like that?” A child answered, not by identifying a genre in generalized and abstract terms, but rather by naming a particular instance of the fairy tale: “Three Little Pigs?”

The teacher rejected this answer, as it was not in terms that she sought:

T: That’s not, now listen to this again. What kinds of stories, not, I didn’t say tell me a story. You didn’t listen. What are all the stories called that begin with “Once upon a time?” I’ll give you a clue. S. It starts with /f/. Say it. Come on, think. M.?
M: Fairy tale.

In this example and in many other similar examples across our classroom data, teachers appeared to become frustrated with children’s responses about
text genres that did not approximate their own instructional agendas. Children, indeed, were thinking but not necessarily in terms and in ways that were preferred or shared by their teachers.

Privileging of Certain Definitions of Genres and Ways of Talking about Them

When teachers asked children to identify text genres, they did so with convergent questions that sought preconceived answers. In one of our previous examples, a teacher read aloud the "lizards and newts" rhyming spell and asked her class, "What does that sound like?" A child answered, "Like a rock-a-bye." The teacher rejected this response and instead sought links to procedural genres (such as recipes and instructions whose purpose, as defined by the syllabus, is to explain to a reader how to perform particular procedures or make particular things): "It doesn't sound like something that would put me to sleep." Another child inserted the desired response that allowed the teacher to move on to linking spells to procedural genre: "It's a spell." to which the teacher responded, "Good boy."

In every lesson we observed in our study, text-based talk was framed by the mandatory NSW English K-6 Syllabus document's selection, prioritization, and definitions of text genres for the first three years of school. For example, the syllabus places emphasis on recounts, narratives, procedural texts, and information reports in these years. Outside school, however, children experienced a wider range of text genres that had varying purposes and value in their lives. Tensions subsequently arose in terms of how particular genres were defined. This tension was most found in relation to information reports, the most abstract of these four genres, as such texts involve more abstract and generalized meanings than narratives and recounts, which are anchored in specific and more concrete experiences (lived or imagined).

We explore this tension around definitions of genres in terms of the following example that we have chosen because it reveals and typifies the nature of this particular intertextual tension as it occurred in our study. It documents a teacher's efforts to resolve the tension while continuing to work toward his original goal, reveals children's struggle to approximate their teacher's intertextual agenda, and illustrates several possibilities evoked by a single reference to one text genre.

The teacher's focus in this example was on information reports. For this lesson, and in terms of school literacy generally, the preferred definition was that stated in the NSW English K-6 Syllabus: A report is a factual text that informs the reader about certain phenomena. Its features include the use of technical language, classification of phenomena, and description of facts related to the phenomenon in question. Such purposes and definitions were embedded in the teacher's opening question, "What's a report?"

While a preferred definition of "report" was underlying this question, there are other possible intertextual associations with this term, as suggested
by this child's very prompt response: "You get one every end of the year."

The teacher's preferred definition of "report" led him to marginalize this association and others made by the children, including news reports, weather reports, scientific reports, crime reports, and reports to the Principal about naughty behavior. The teacher moved on to another child: "What does S. have to say?" S. responded, "Like if she did something and um, and you report it to the other person and tell to the other person."

From his intertextual experiences, S. drew some kind of generalization that was nonetheless put in terms of content—"what happens." S.'s response was also removed from the preferred definition. However, recognizing the children's focus on such scenarios, the teacher shifted his questioning over three successive questions: "Can I report something to somebody? Tell something to somebody? What's something that I might need to report? J.?" Asking these questions seemed to be an attempt to approximate children's terms more closely; however, these questions also indicate an ambiguous shift away from information reports as officially defined in the syllabus. However, children readily offered a range of intertextual associations, as snippets of hypothetical events:

J: It's like um, if you found something like treasure, or something on the ground or maybe some jewels or something or other [stops]
T: Yes, yes.
M: When you've invented something.

C: When you report that means that something happened and you have to report to somebody like to a police station or so.

At this point the teacher attempted to refocus the discussion with a question that shifted meanings away from particular details to something more general and abstract: "Why would you be reporting something? What's the purpose of reporting something?" E. responded, "So everyone can learn about life."

While the children's previous responses may not have matched the preferred syllabus definitions, the shift in their ideas toward purposes of text genres may be an intertextual achievement in itself, for such a shift deals with how texts generally may be linked through common purposes and is expressed in relatively abstract terms. This achievement is one endorsed by the syllabus and by the teacher who responded to the last child's contribution by saying, "So people can learn things, people can get information. Good girl, learn about life, what a good answer."

Power relations and protocols that existed in these classrooms were used to privilege preferred definitions and ways of talking about texts, just as they were used to exclude other possible associations.

*Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links between Different Text Genres*

Teachers' recourse to authority in order to select preferred meanings and resolve or eliminate differences in how
children and teachers built meanings and talked about texts also became apparent when teachers sought links between different text genres.

We found that teachers used narratives as a springboard to other text genres. For example, one teacher compared narratives with factual information reports, focusing on a report about cows that the class had composed under the teacher’s direction. As they reached the end of this report, the teacher summarized key points about distinctions between factual information reports and narratives. As the teacher sought out differences between these genres, some ambiguous and contradictory meanings came into play:

T: A narrative is a, a make believe story. Like the story we wrote last week. And it’s all made up. [Pointing to the class report about cows] Is this made up? Did I just make this up out of the top of my head? This is all what?

The teacher sought responses such as “true” or “facts”; one child instead focused on the “I” in the teacher’s question and answered: “What we made up.” The teacher ignored this response and moved on: “All the things that you?” J. filled in, “Um, remembered.”

This child’s response seemed to more closely approximate what the teacher sought. The teacher emphasized “remembered” through repeating it and then shifted this mental process to one of knowing: “Remembered. All the things that you know that are?” Again, the teacher sought reference to “facts” that allegedly are “true,” but another child instead responded, “Cows.”

While the teacher was seeking a more abstract notion of truth that brings information reports together as a genre, this child’s response referred to what this particular text was about, once again indicating differences between concrete and specific meanings, on the one hand, and more abstract and generalized meanings, on the other hand. The teacher did not take the “cows” response up, instead giving more explicit phonological clues to the desired response: “That are /tr/?” The children answered the prompt with a chorus of “True!”

While using narratives as a springboard may be seen to be appropriate for building on children’s ways of making meanings, our data have shown that this strategy inadvertently could anchor children at the end of the continuum that focuses on concrete and particular meanings. Factual text genres such as information reports, referred to by teachers across the classrooms in our study, contain more generalized and decontextualized meanings than narratives.

*Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links among an Individual Text, a Jointly Composed Re-tell of That Text, and the Genre That Characterizes the Organization of Both Texts*

This last example sees a teacher use a jointly composed class text to talk about reports more generally. In all the classrooms of this study, teachers used a similar technique. That is, they used a
jointly composed re-tell of a familiar text or a composition of a closely aligned topic as a go-between for talking about texts and their purposes and structures. The jointly composed text to some extent seemed to provide an effective mediator for linking content to structure and helped reduce some of the difficulties associated with making this kind of intratextual link.

In regard to this strategy, retelling shared narratives was the most common feature across the three years. For example, one class had shared a picture book narrative called *Enoch the Emu*. The teacher then set the task of retelling the story to the children by describing the intertextual relationship between a re-tell and its original story: “Re-tell the story. . . . When you retell the story it’s the same story but it’s shorter and it’s in your own words.”

As the children proceeded to contribute to this retelling, the teacher continued to focus children’s attention on the original text as source for verification. She did so with questions such as “Was that first?” and “Is that what happened?” When the retelling was finished, the teacher reviewed the structure of the narrative text by writing on the board:

1. Who is there
2. What the problem is
3. What happened
4. How it was solved

In this way the teacher developed an intertextual link that explicitly bridged an original narrative, the class’s retelling of the narrative, and the narrative structure of both texts.

However, building this kind of intertextual link was not without its problems. Conflicts that arose with this intertextual strategy across our classroom data involved ordering of textual content and confused boundaries between retelling and story-telling activities.

These difficulties may be illustrated by returning to the above retelling of *Enoch the Emu*. Following the teacher’s definition of a re-tell, she asked the children to focus on the first part of the narrative: “First of all we had? N.?” N. answered, “Enoch was sitting on the nest.”

The teacher questioned this contribution in terms of the order of events in the original text (italics indicate words that were stressed):

T: Was that *first*? Who came *first*? K.?
K: Um, um, um, she was cleaning up and she said, “I’m sick and tired of sitting on the eggs.”

The teacher again questioned the ordering of content:

T: Did that come *early, first* or what?

Another child volunteered:

E: A long time ago in the Australian outback there was an emu called Enoch. Enoch was—
T: That’s the very *first* thing, remember? What was *after that*? G.?
G: When he came home from, um, came home from the club of emus, at three o’clock [trails off]
T: What happened? She?
G: She went mad on him when he came home.
T: She went mad on him. What else can you tell us?

A child, however, jumped ahead to a later part of the story, instead of focusing on the next part as asked by her teacher: “Well, then, um, then he was sitting on the eggs, um, trying to hatch them and he wrote a letter to his wife.”

The teacher acknowledged the leap and tried to bring the children’s (Chn) attention back to the very next part of the story:

T: You’re remembering from the first time we read the story. That’s right. OK, let’s go onto the very next part, where he never ever did anything special for her anymore, and she said?
T & Chn: [recalling direct text] I am sick of you, Enoch. I am sick of your no good ways.
T: So, [paraphrasing] I am sick of you, Enoch. I am sick of sitting here by myself on our eggs, so sit on them yourself or there will be no babies for you to boast about. With that she went off.

As the teacher proceeded to direct the children’s retelling, she continued to reinforce their remembering of the story as opposed to embellishing content or inferring meaning from illustrations. For example, when a child volunteered that Enoch “wrote a letter,” the teacher replied,

T: Is that in the story or is that in the pictures?
Chn: Pictures.
T: We’re getting a lot of our information from the pictures. What do you remember?

For children in situations such as this, it seemed they struggled to talk about what appeared salient to them; their recollections did not necessarily follow the same chronological order as the original text. Further, it appeared that they recalled what they enjoyed and that they enjoyed their teacher’s retelling, too:

T: [citing original text] “Not so fast, my fine feathered friend. Not so fast. I’m only here to tell you that I’m off for a little holiday with my friends. I’ll be back when the eggs are hatched.” “But, but, but, but, I’m. I’m, I’m hungry, and I’m in the—and what about my lunch? Come back!”

Although the children apparently enjoyed this rendition, their teacher redirected them to the task of contributing to the retelling: “Stop sitting there grinning and enjoying this story and do some work. What have you got to add?”

Thus, in situations such as this one, we found that tensions emerged between spontaneous recall and enjoyment, on the one hand, and the fulfillment of predetermined instructional goals, on the other hand. Retelling, it emerged, was “work”: something done to develop children’s understandings about text structures and accom-
panied by meta-textual talk about structures and purposes.

**Intertextual Conflicts Associated with Making Links among a Text, an Activity, and a Genre That Characterized the Organization of Both Text and Activity**

Across the 7 classrooms of our study, teachers worked toward developing children’s understandings about text structures by setting up particular activities that resonated with a particular text genre and then drawing analogies between the activity and text genre in terms of how they were both structured. The lesson where a teacher was making links between a jelly-making activity and a procedural text exemplifies this use of analogies. Data reveal conflicts that were similar to conflicts associated with making links to classroom activities. That is, conflicts emerged between more concrete and commonplace ways of talking about texts and activities on the one hand and more abstract and technical ways on the other hand. We again find that teachers redressed these conflicts by establishing and reinforcing preferred ways of talking about texts and activities.

A series of whole class interactions around texts appear in our data that mark a departure from the norm of classroom protocols in our study. These interactions represent an isolated instance in our study and its uniqueness serves to illustrate what may happen to exploration and expression of intertextual meanings when teachers shift their classroom protocols and power relations.

The example comes from a second grade classroom in our study and concerns the development of children’s understanding about discussion genres. The underlying preferred definition of *discussion* from the *NSW English K-6 Syllabus* is a genre whose purpose is to identify pros and cons to an issue, state a position on that issue, and make recommendations on the basis of that position.

To develop children’s understandings about the genre of discussion, the teacher involved the children in a class activity that was a debate about “Where do our shoes come from and where do they go?” With this question the teacher began to lay foundations for later drawing an analogy between the spoken debate and written discussion genre.

In order for the debate to proceed, the teacher changed the existing protocols for participation. She explained the ground rules for participating in the general debate—“anyone is free to join in”—and reminded children to let one speaker “Finish first. A proper debate works this way. The person speaks and then when he’s finished you give your answer to what he said. It’s like a tug of war but we take it in turns.”

Thus children were given a newfound freedom in this classroom to speak in whole class interactions as they wished, provided they waited their turn and only one person spoke at a time. This protocol marked a departure from the usual interaction patterns in this classroom, where the teacher led class talk through direct questioning and appraisal of children’s responses.

A main conclusion that children
drew from this debate was one initially expressed by a child who said that many shoes "end up getting thrown out and end up in the garbage tip." The teacher then asked, "What happens after that?" The children had different opinions, and they freely offered these. Their talk focused on the material that shoes are made of and whether therefore they would rot or not. Discussions of plastic and leather entered the debate. Children then focused on different parts of the shoe and their compositions and whether all or only part of the shoe would rot.

The debate continued for a second day with a particular focus on different parts of the shoe. Drawing on their prior knowledge, children initiated their own connections between plastic shoes and plastic bags, leather shoes and cows, and woolen shoelaces and sheep. Children linked what happens to cows when they die with what might happen to leather shoes when they are thrown away. Similar connections between sheep and woolen shoelaces were explored.

Some children voluntarily pointed out that their ideas were just conjecture and could not be verified until their ideas were tested through direct observation. Children also initiated links to their prior knowledge and the need to research the topic further. On the third day the class reconstructed the debate and stood aside from it to talk about its structures and features.

Several consequences arose from the teacher's break away from the usual protocols for participation. First, different opinions were allowed to come to the fore. One child described this exchange of ideas by saying, "It was like an explosion of words." The change in protocols generated much intensity and enthusiasm in children's discussion, which stood in sharp contrast to other teacher-led talk in this classroom and the other classrooms in our study.

This freeing up of participant structures seemed to have a positive impact on children's expression and exploration of their ideas. Consistent with our previous explorations of children's spontaneous insertions and condensed signs at the beginning of this presentation of findings, one child reflected that "Ideas just kept popping into my head, everyone in the group kept on bringing in ideas." Another child said, "I was full of ideas." Children were able to express these ideas as they came to them, provided they waited their turn for another child to finish speaking rather than wait to be nominated for a turn that might never come.

Further, these ideas were seen to be expressed in more sustained fashion, as opposed to the more constrained, single-line utterances made by children in the rest of our transcripts. More time and space allowed for children's elaboration and justification of their ideas, as well as allowing children to challenge and explore one another's ideas. For example, children were at the point of debating what materials rot and do not rot:

S: I think I've got the answer, 'cause J. sort of said that plastic bags and rubber soles aren't the same thing but then I said, well maybe she doesn't mean that and maybe she means the plastic, the plastic bag and rubber

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soles aren’t the same thing. But because the plastic is rubber the fact is plastic might be able to rot and plastic can rot and rubber can rot, we don’t know ’cause we have to test them.

J: There’s a lot of sort of plastic. There’s plastic bags, there’s plastic spoons, there’s plastic laces.

S: Well, the plastic bags. That’s what you said. You mean that rubber and plastic are sort of bags but they still might be able to rot. You don’t know. ’Cause you’ve never been to a dump and seen those two things rot.

Similarly the teacher took on this role of clarifying children’s ideas in a way that validated rather than rejected their contributions, as opposed to the trends we otherwise found in our classroom transcripts. For example, children were discussing materials that rot when the teacher explicitly invited a child to explain his intertextual links that led him to his conclusion about rotting processes:

C: I was pointing out that shoelaces can’t rot and I—was saying they can rot.

T: Now, I think you need to take L’s opinion. L., that was an excellent idea you brought in. What, where did you bring that in from, the fact that when an animal dies it rots away? Droughts and things like that. Is that something you remember seeing on television or when you were driving around on a holiday or something you talked about last night with your family or—where did that idea come from, because you didn’t have that one yesterday?

L: Well, once I was watching the news and they were talking about the drought down the coast and they. Um, showed what happened—it showed you what it was like before the drought.

In this context children also negotiated and challenged one another’s choice of terminology. While previously teachers and children struggled with terminology in terms of school and other unofficial discourses, here the negotiation appeared to more comfortably fit a discussion than a lesson based on trying to approximate a teacher’s frame of reference:

E: Metal rots as well.

S: No, that’s rust.

T: Ah, rust, that’s interesting.

L: With these little things on your shoes, after a while they will not away and they’ll just spread around and you wouldn’t be able to see them. And I think everything on your shoe has a fair chance of either rotting, either rotting away or rusting.

This debate was constructed as an activity by the teacher to build bridges to the discussion genre, just as another teacher constructed a jelly-making activity to build bridges to procedural genres; hence the shift in protocols. When the teacher then engaged the class in making intertextual links between this particular class debate and discussion genre more generally, the
protocols that we saw prevail in our data of teacher-class interactions about texts returned:

T: OK, let's put up the heading, "Debating." [writes on the board] All right, what do you now think debating is? Debate, what is it? J?

J: An argument about trying to know something.

S: An argument about something that nobody knows about.

This last comment stands in contrast to the many times we saw children appear constrained by their teachers' perceived greater knowledge about texts and the perceived need to approximate that knowledge. However, the teacher's next comment indicates that these intertextual constraints had returned now that the class had moved away from the debating activity to teacher-led interactions about the debate:

T: Actually, what did I tell you it was like, it's a bit like?

One child tentatively responded:

S: Two people arguing?

The teacher rejected this intertextual analogy in pursuit of her own:

T: Not quite, I said something else. When you asked me how you got into it S, what did I say?

S: That you didn't have to speak.

The teacher ignored this response and moved on:

T: I told you, I said it's a bit like a sport—It's a competition. It's a bit like a, a bit like a—a what? It's a bit like a something, [inaudible] It's a bit like a [inaudible], a what?

B: A fight?

T: No, it's definitely not a fight. No, it's like, I said it's a bit like one of our sports, one of the sports. It's a bit like being in, in something. One of the, one of the sports.

C: Arguing?

T: Sports, one of our sports? Come on you can't really give up.

S: Tennis. Hit back.

T: A bit like tennis except that it has to be doubles because we've got more than one person. A debating team usually consists of, what is it, three? Three people. Three people on a team. Three people on team. So we can say it's [writing on the board] a bit like a relay race. Ok? Think of a, think of a, watch, we're going to the big pitch having relay races. What happens? Who's been in the relays? C., have you been in relays?

C: [nods]

T: A debate's a bit like a relay race, OK? There's a team of you, OK? And when you're having a relay race you tend to put your best runner last. You have any idea why you put your best runner or your best swimmer last in a relay race? P?

P: I don't know but my brother said he's the last person in his debating team and he said the last person's the most important of the team.

T: Exactly, now why would they put the, does anyone have any idea why we might put the last person, the best
person last in a running race or a swimming race? Why?

H: Because in the running race um, if the person that knows how to run and go fast could beat all the rest of them.

And so the class continued to explore the teacher’s analogy between debates and relay races with discussion genres lurking in the background. As we previously reported in episodes where teachers made links to classroom activities, this example illustrates tensions that relate to assumptions about children’s experiences (in this case, of sporting events which debates might be seen to resemble); different ways of interpreting and talking about activities; and use of classroom protocols to establish preferred associations and interpretations.

Discussion

By attempting to categorize and untangle intertextual nuances in teacher-class interactions around texts, this study has revealed many of the complexities and conflicts associated with intertextuality in early grade classrooms. We do not suggest we have provided an exhaustive identification of these complexities and conflicts. Rather, we have explored those relationships and conflicts that were apparent in the classroom data within a comprehensive conceptual framework that accounts for intertextuality in terms of written texts, lived experiences, lessons, and processes in individuals. In making this exploration we have peeled back some layers of intertextuality to reveal tensions that lie beneath the surface.

What is revealed at the heart of these layers is the conclusion that, despite teachers’ instructional plans and intertextual agendas, intertextuality in classrooms is not a systematic business. Rather, as theorized by Kristeva (1984), it is a highly idiosyncratic and often elusive affair. Teachers may put plans and protocols in place and use authority in ways that try to channel intertextual links toward their desired goals and preferred meanings. However, intertextuality can take on many guises in classroom interactions around texts, as reflected in the categories of intertextual links that this study has identified. In this study’s classrooms these different types of links slipped in and out of view throughout lessons as teachers and children struggled to control the framing focus as they grappled with intertextual conflicts.

When posing questions and trying to invoke intertextual powers in children, teachers need to be able to recognize and acknowledge what they awaken—such as the links children make and the ways in which they make them—as well as the intertextual possibilities that their questions can evoke. Otherwise, intertextuality can frustrate rather than serve teachers’ goals and become like a double-headed dragon in classrooms.

From an intertextuality perspective this study has shown that every question, regardless of its intentions or desired responses, has many possible answers—just as every text has many possible interpretations and associations. Intertextuality theorists such as
Barthes (1988), Kristeva (1984), and Scholes (1975) assert that the onus rests with readers to make choices and achieve coherence of meaning among many possibilities. Teacher-child interactions around texts would seem to be a worthy context for nurturing children's skills for making choices and achieving coherence where coherence does not mean consensus.

However, these interactions consist of both an academic and a social content of instruction (Erickson, 1986). In this study the academic content of teachers' intertextual agendas consisted of the selection and prioritization of particular texts and genres (after Freebody, 1992; Luke, 1993, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999). It also consisted of intertextual links among these texts and genres—particularly those specific links and preferred ways of talking about them—that teachers sought in children. Tensions emerged when children's contributions digressed from their teachers' planned agendas. In the face of these conflicts, teachers used the underlying social content of their lessons—that is, classroom protocols and power relations—to prioritize desired links and marginalize all others.

Teachers, however, were subject to the greater power of statutory authorities that mandated syllabus outcomes and practices. Thus the enactment of power in classrooms (Delpit, 1988) in relation to intertextuality was not just between teacher and children but also between teachers and higher authorities.

However, just as Delpit (1988) has argued that those with power are likely to be least aware of its existence, our study suggests that both teachers and children were unaware of the intertextual agendas that were operating in their classrooms. Teachers may have understood that many of their questions explicitly sought links to other texts. However, they did not appear aware that children's off-track answers and insertions were part of children's intertextual agendas that unfolded as lessons progressed. Without this awareness mutual understanding of meanings (intersubjectivity) was not achievable.

What teachers as authority figures intertextually require from children makes intertextuality a more complex venture for children (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Harris & Trezise, 1997; Hasan, 1996; Kaser & Short, 1998; Oyler & Barry, 1996). In the classrooms of this study, this complexity was not borne out of a requirement that children explore diverse and multifarious meanings. Rather, this complexity came from the requirement for children to do the opposite. That is, children were expected to locate and articulate preferred, predetermined meanings in ways that teachers expected. This expectation, while understandable in terms of teachers' instructional plans and goals, rendered intertextuality a risky business for children.

In closing, a child in one of our classrooms was being rebuked by his teacher for not paying attention:

T: I don't really think you can see from there because you were reading and looking at me. Is the story on my face?
The child answered:

C: I was looking with one eye at you and one eye at the book.

At the end of the day in classrooms, perhaps it stops mattering to children what intertextual links spring to their minds as they learn that it is only what’s on the teacher’s mind that counts. This statement may seem a pessimistic note to end on, but we would rather see it as a fruitful challenge to be taken up and pursued. For, what is a child to do amidst infinite intertextual possibilities, on the one hand, and extant power structures and agendas, on the other hand, in their classrooms?

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References


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2002 Promising Researcher Winners Named

Jill Heinrich, University of Iowa; Yolanda J. Majors, University of Georgia; and Ronald Pitcock, Texas Christian University, have been named the 2002 NCTE Promising Researchers. In commemoration of Bernard O'Donnell, the Promising Researcher Awards are for articles based on a dissertation, thesis, or initial independent study after the dissertation, and are sponsored by the NCTE Standing Committee on Research. Heinrich's research is entitled Boys' Talk: Mediating Masculinity in the English Classroom. Major's research is entitled Shoptalk: Teaching and Learning in an African American Hair Salon. Pitcock's research is entitled "Let the Youth Beware!": The Sponsorship of Early Nineteenth-Century Native American Literacy.

The 2002 Promising Researcher Award Committee members are Joanne Larson, Chair, Arlette Willis, Kevin Leander, and Cindy Brock. Standing Committee on Research: Kris Gutierrez, Chair.