PAPER 1

Shaping the future

Purposeful talk for discipline thinking and writing

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Why disciplinary dialogue?

Limited attention to oral language by policy makers (Edwards-Groves et al., 2017; Thompson et al, 2025)

Policy gap

Talk fosters learning and literacy development (Alexander, 2020; Rojas-Drummond, 2020).
Talk is important for the development of disciplinary literacy and understanding (Resnick & Schantz, 2015)

Substantial oral language research

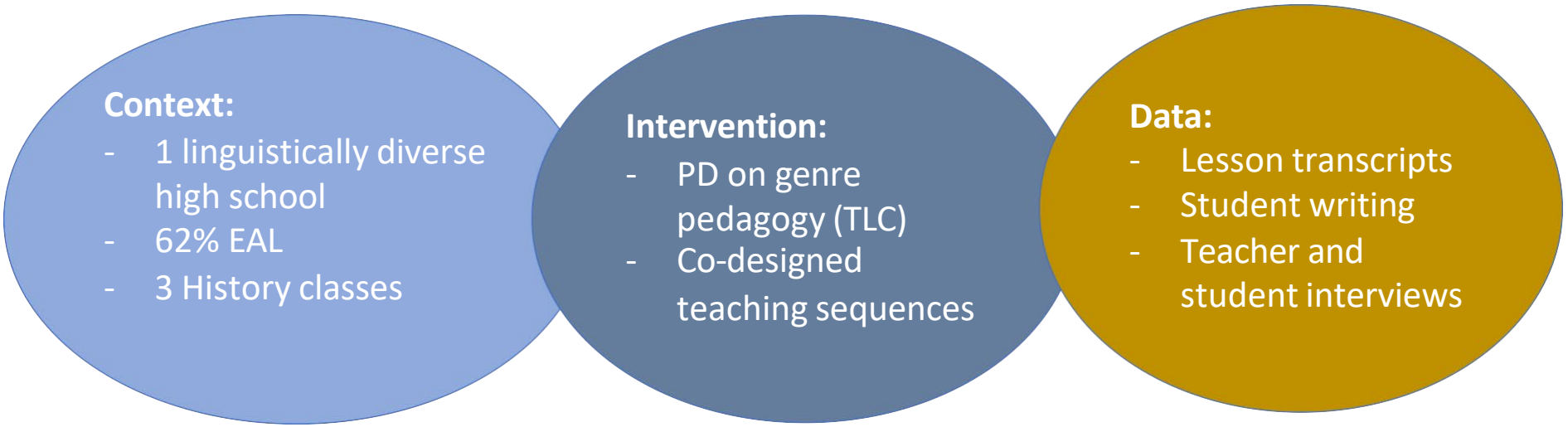
Gap in humanities research of disciplinary-specific dialogue
(Laird-Gentle et al., 2023)

Research gap – disciplinary dialogue

Particularly for EAL learners, talk is a bridge into educationally valued language and knowledge of the curricula
(Hammond & Gibbons, 2005; Harper & Parkin, 2023).

Equity issue

Research interest: *What is the nature of dialogue that apprentices disciplinary literacy in secondary History?*



The in-class writing task

Explain the nature of the Cold War

Make it clear to someone by describing it in more detail or revealing relevant facts

The basic features, character, or qualities of something …

- Start by analyzing the question to understand exactly what it is asking
- Note down all technical terms that you could think of that relate to this question
- Make sure you use connectives to connect your ideas and force yourself to elaborate: ***which, as, whereby, consequently, as a result of, thus***
- Think of specific examples to reference to support your explanation

Technical terms

Abstraction

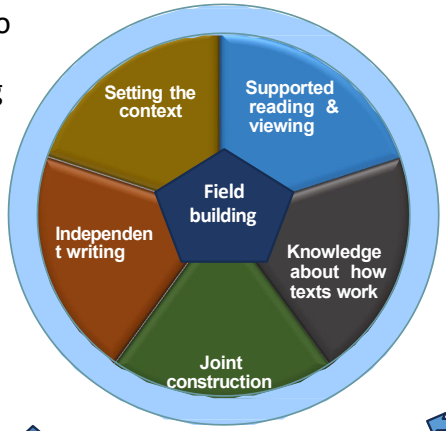
Writing

The Cold War began after World War II but it wasn't your typical war that people might think of, no, this was a war made up of proxy wars against the two major superpowers the USA and USSR. This was a time when both superpowers had access and control over nuclear weapons which **could cause** devestating destruction and major radiation poisoning that impacted generations of people. The reason these two superpowers were even at war was because they passed two conflicting and opposing ideologies, capitalism and communism, but they never engaged in any serious conflict. Why? Because of the nuclear weapons they both possessed. and both superpowers knew that if they used these weapons against each other the other would respond in kind. Thus, they were neck and neck and that is the whole concept of MAD (mutually assured destruction). and the concept of the cartoon of Uncle Sam and JFK (russian leader) about to press buttons that would release nuclear weapons.

Teaching sequence informed by the Teaching Learning Cycle

2. Use colour coded maps to introduce Alliances and ideologies of capitalism and communism

1. View video and images, read texts to build background knowledge of the Cold War. Recap World War II learning from previous unit



3. Read and analyse model texts explaining causes and consequences of Cold War.
Create mind map

5. Students complete written task in class explaining the causes of the Cold War

4. Students and teachers collaboratively write a paragraph on the causes of the Cold war

Joint construction lesson

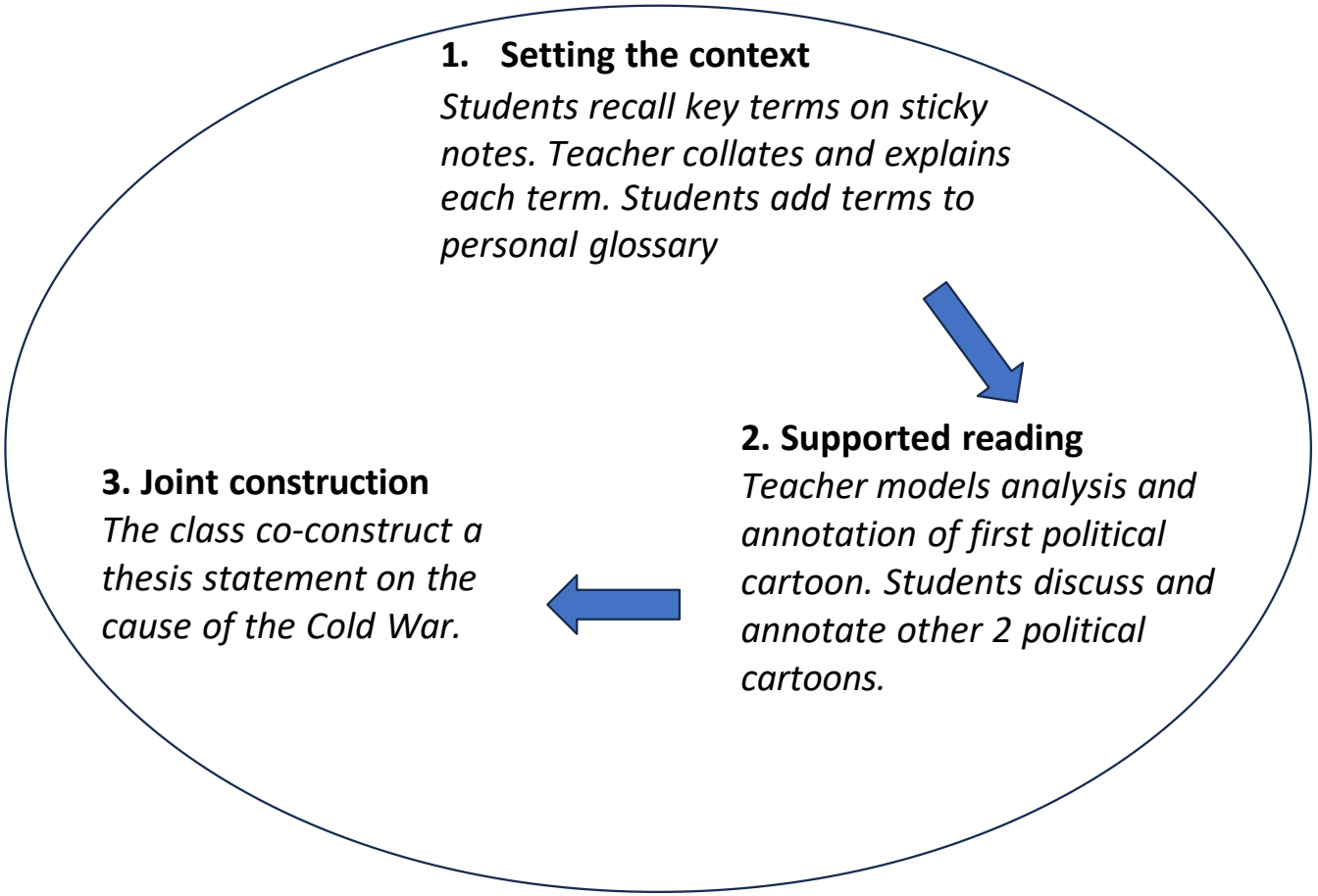
Setting the context
Students recall key terms on sticky notes. Teacher collates and explains each term. Students add terms to personal glossary

Supported reading
Teacher models analysis and annotation of first political cartoon. Students discuss and annotate other 2 political cartoons.

Joint construction
The class co-construct a thesis statement on the cause of the Cold War.

Jones & Derewianka (2023)

The deliberate design for talk in the joint construction lesson



- **Staging for gradual handover**
- **Message abundance**
- **Focusing on the target language**
- **Visibility** of target language
- **Praise**

1. Shunting between everyday and the technical, explaining, connecting ideas, praising

		Commonsense ⟺ Technical and abstract	IRF
1	T	When we talk about the Cold War are there any words that come to mind that are specific to the Cold War	I
2	S	The Russians?	R
3	T	He just said it's the Russians. But what do we call it instead of Russia?	I
4	Ss	UNITED SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC. (Teacher writes term on board)	R
5	T	Yeah okay, exactly. So what you guys recognised is that the USSR is a state that includes what is now modern day Russia, but also other states together. And together, it's the USSR. What's another term? Pick any.	F I
6	S	US Alliance	R
7	T	US ALLIANCE. (Teacher writes term on board) Alright good, so when we talk about the Cold War, because so many countries are involved, in the same way that we talked about World War One and World War Two, and we would use Alliance names to talk about groups. Sometimes we will often talk about the East and the West. So when we talk about the US aligned West, we're talking about Western Europe, mostly, and especially those countries that had an allegiance to the United States. So when we were colouring them in do you guys remember what colour we used as a reference?	F I
8	Ss	Blue (many overlapping voices)	R
9	T	So they were blue, and we use red for the other side. Can anyone tell me why I picked red in particular?	F I
10	S	Because that's COMMUNISM. (Teacher writes term on board)	R
11	T	Thank you, because those red countries are communist countries. And this is the ideology that relates to the USSR and all other communist countries. So this topic is a lot about opposition, right? A war against two major countries, conflict or tension between two groups. Whenever you're thinking about one term, there's usually another term that represents the other side. So we just talked about US aligned West. Can anyone remember? What did we call the other side?	F I
12	S	East	R
13	T	Great job, EASTERN BLOC (Teacher writes term on board) The Eastern Bloc was the block of countries that weren't aligned with the United States.	F

The talk trajectory in the joint construction lesson

	1. Setting the context	2. Supported reading	3. Joint construction
Changing IRF pattern	Using the F move for detailed teacher explanations		
Connecting ideas	Linking new learning to prior learning		
Shunting between everyday and abstract	Extensive shunting through teacher talk		
Targeted praise	High praise for correct responses		

Student uptake

Teacher handover

Activity 2 Supported reading – The use of sources provide a structure to reasoned discussion

October 29, 1962 in the British newspaper The Daily Mail.
(Leslie Gilbert Illingworth)

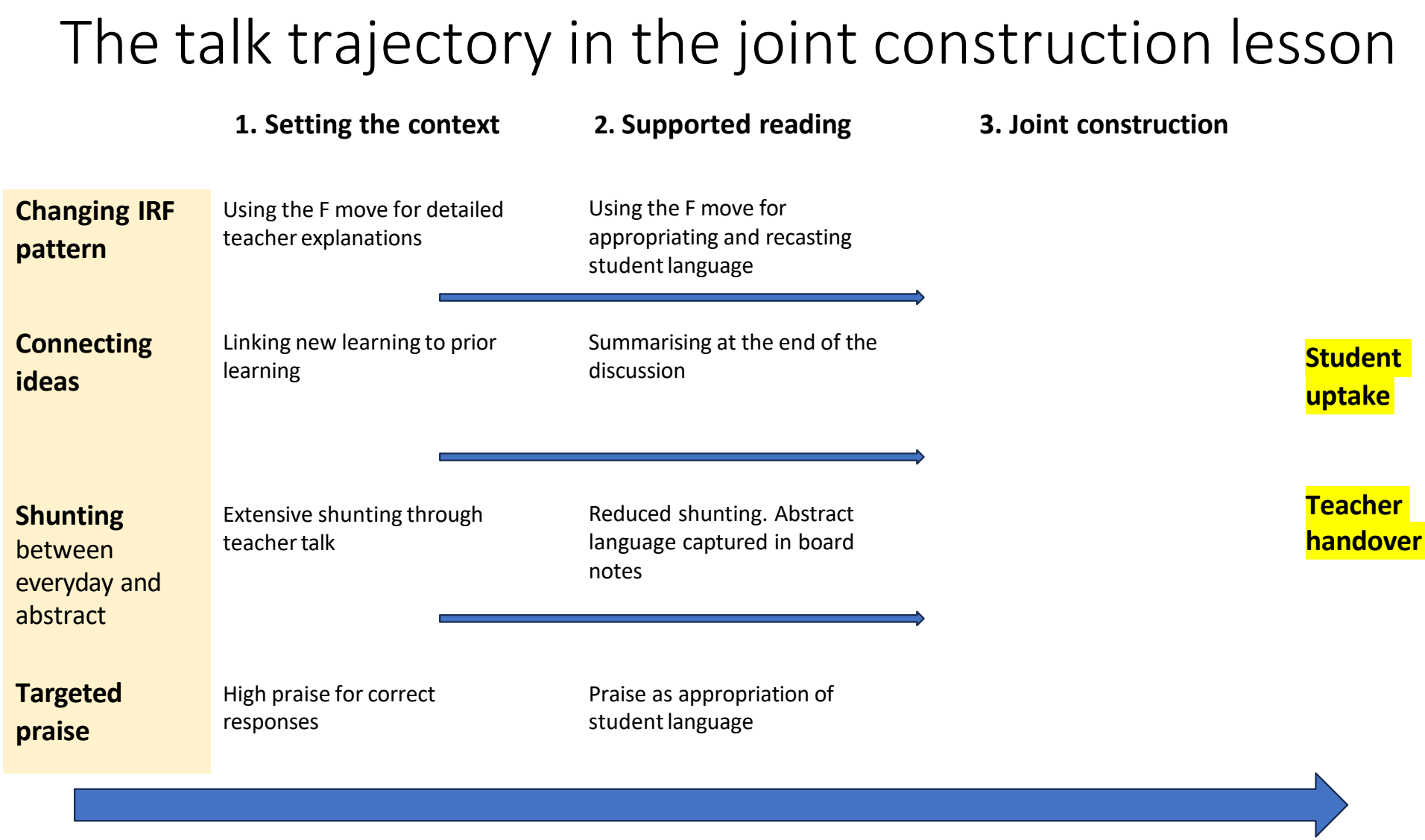
This specific cartoon is attributed to Philip Zec, published in The Daily Mirror, 1941

Author and date unknown

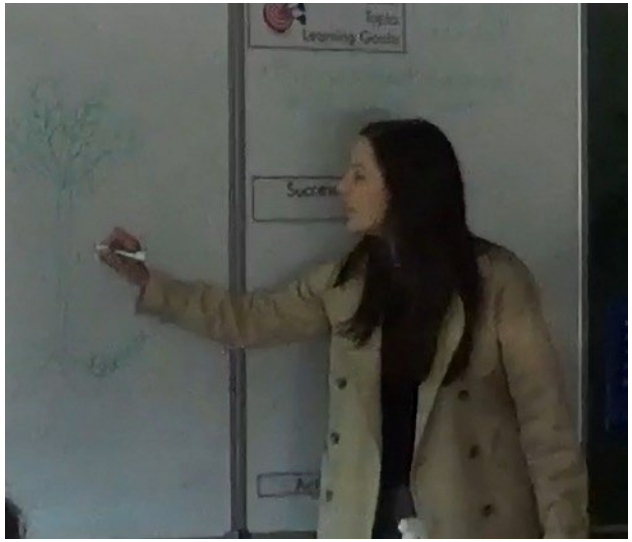
2. Supported reading - Shunting, appropriating & recasting student language, connecting ideas, praise

		Commonsense ⟺ Technical and abstract	IRF
1	T	Now I need you guys to have a look, (teacher points to the board notes). Which term that we used just before really summarises exactly what's happening here?	I
		Now, we kind of get what it's trying to say. But how does this source give me information as to why the Cold War began?	
2	S	One thinks that they're better than the other.	R
3	T	Yes, they're in competition.	F
		What's the point of an arm wrestle?	I
4	S	→ To show dominance	R
5	T	'STRENGTH AND DOMINANCE' (Teacher annotates the slide image of the cartoon)	F
		But why doesn't this turn into a hot war? If everyone wants to show dominance. Why is there a Cold War instead of a hot war according to this image?	I
6	S	MAD	R
7	T	Meaning? What does MAD stand for?	I
8	Ss	→ Mutually Assured Destruction! (chorus)	R
9	T	(Teacher writes MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION on the cartoon)	F
		Instead of countries, we're going to call them? These two countries they were big…?	I
10	S	→ SUPERPOWERS. (teacher writes 'superpowers' on the cartoon)	F
11	T	Yes. So, what we have here is we have the competition. So how does it explain the Cold War? Well, on the one hand, it tells us that there's competition that each country wants to assert its dominance, (Teacher writes 'COMPETITION FOR DOMINANCE' on the cartoon). But on the other hand, it tells us why it's a Cold War, specifically, because both of these Superpowers had the technology to effectively wipe each other out through → Mutually assured destruction	

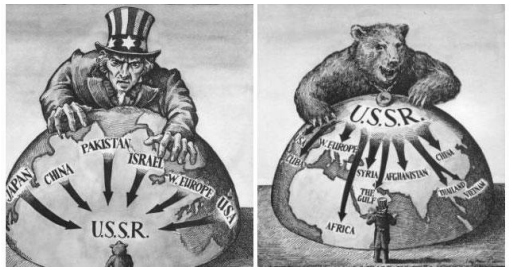
The talk trajectory in the joint construction lesson



Joint construction



'The Cold War began after the end of World War II due to competition for dominance by the world superpowers, the lack of Common Threat to unite them and because of their opposing ideologies which each saw as a threat to the other.'



3. Joint construction – minimal shunting, extending student language, recapping learning, praise

		Commonsense ⟷ Technical and abstract	IRF
1	T	Alright guys, **what you have here through these sources is a few key reasons as to why the Cold War broke out.** We know this competition between the superpowers, we know that what kept them together at the end of World War Two. That fell apart. So they had less reason to work together to be united. We know that each saw the other as a threat; that their ideology was spreading as was their sphere of influence and their alliance and that the two saw themselves as ideologically different.	
	T	And what you guys need to do is to now put this into a paragraph. So what were some of the key reasons?	I
2	S	The Cold War began	R
3	T	Yeah, that's a good start. 'THE COLD WAR BEGAN?' …(Teacher writes on the board)	F, I
6	S	AFTER WORLD WAR TWO (Teacher writes on the board)	R
7	T	Okay, so: 'The cold war began after the end of world war two' (The teacher reads)	F
	T	So now even though that's a great point to orientate ourselves, Why? I want you guys to tell me why..	I
12	S	Because of competition. COMPETITION FOR DOMINANCE BY THE SUPERPOWERS (Teacher writes on board)	R
13	T	So they had competition. So 'THE COLD WAR BEGAN DUE TO COMPETITION FOR DOMINANCE BY THE WORLD SUPERPOWERS'. (Teacher reads the text) Why else?	I
14	S	They feared a tri-level threat	R
15	T	Okay, exactly.	F
	T	'SO DUE TO COMPETITION FOR DOMINANCE BY THE WORLD'S SUPERPOWERS, THE LACK OF A COMMON THREAT TO UNITE THEM.' (teacher reads as she writes the text)	F

The talk trajectory in the joint construction lesson

	1. Setting the context	2. Supported reading	3. Joint construction	
Changing IRF pattern	Using the F move for detailed teacher explanations	Using the F move for appropriating and recasting student language	Using the F move to extend student utterances	
Connecting ideas	Linking new learning to prior learning	Summarising to connect ideas in the discussion	Synthesising in preparation for the joint construction	**Student uptake**
Shunting between everyday and abstract	Extensive shunting through teacher talk	Reduced shunting. Abstract language captured in board notes	Minimal shunting. Only evident in the teacher's prepare move.	**Teacher handover**
Targeted praise	High praise for correct responses	Praise through appropriation of student language	Minimal praise	

And so...

- **Staging for gradual handover –** Cumulative opportunities for students to rehearse language as they progressively assumed responsibility for historical explanation leading to independent writing
- **Recycling of target language and key concepts** – focused the talk trajectory. This ensured student participation in the joint construction
- **Making the target language visible** – sticky notes, board notes, cartoon annotation
- **Changing interpersonal language** – praise as warm demand

References

PAPER 2

Scaffolding academic literacy at the transition from primary to high school

Building critical resources for success

Emma Rutherford Vale · University of Tasmania

Research focus: **How does writing develop in science for students of varying attainment across the Year 6 to Year 7 transition?**

Context and data

- 3 co-educational primary schools and 1 high school.
- Monolingual, socio-educationally diverse

- Year 6 and Year 7 science writing
- Semi-structured interviews (n=11 x 3 over 12 months)

Findings

What trajectories **of development are evident in student writing** in the enacted **science** curriculum at the transition from year 6 to year 7?

I. What **kinds of writing experiences** do students have in year 6 and year 7 science and what **understandings about writing** are they developing ?

II. What **kinds of meanings** are students communicating in their science writing in year 6 and 7?

III. What **indicators of development** are evident in the writing of students of varying attainment levels in year 6 and year 7 science?

What were Year 6 students writing?

Note taking, short answer response

Reporting
Descriptive and classifying reports
Animals • states of matter • space • geological phenomena

Recording investigations – variable experience
Procedural recounts consisting of:
Aim ^ Hypothesis ^ Equipment ^Method ^ Results ^Conclusion

Explaining — limited examples
Typically *explanations were embedded within other texts e.g. discussion of results, information reports*

Reflective journaling
Reflection as part of science journaling at Mirabelle only.

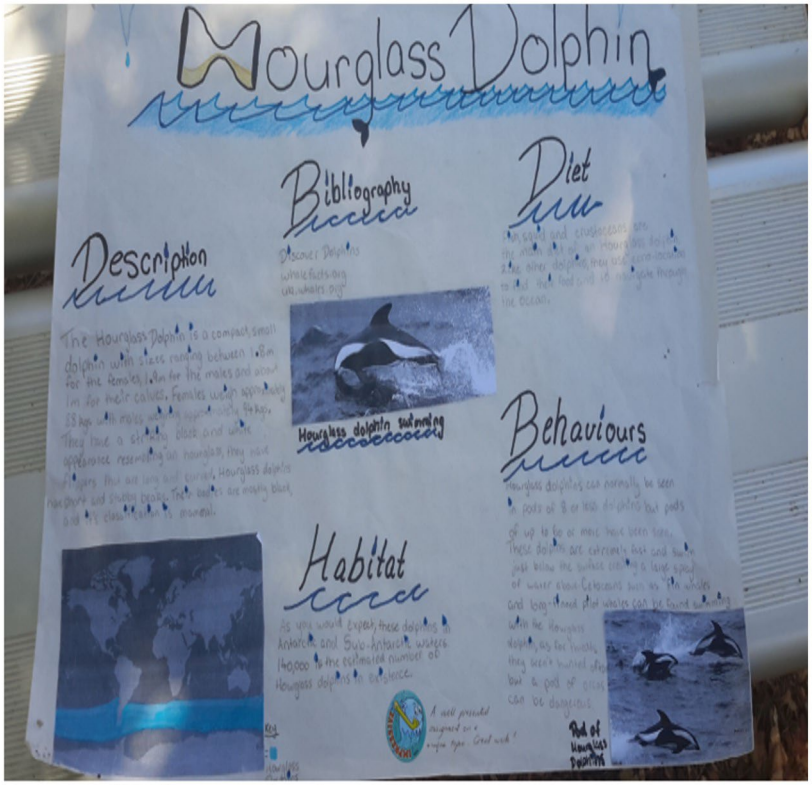


Figure 6-1 Information Report – Hourglass Dolphin

What were Year 7 students writing?

Note taking, fill in the gap cloze, short answer response.
Extended independent writing was relatively limited.

Recording investigations
Aim ^ Hypothesis ^ Materials ^ Method ^ Results ^Conclusion

Explaining
e.g. *Cause of the seasons*

Persuasive writing
Hortatory exposition
Why a scientist should feature on the $100

Classifying report
e.g. *Types of energy*

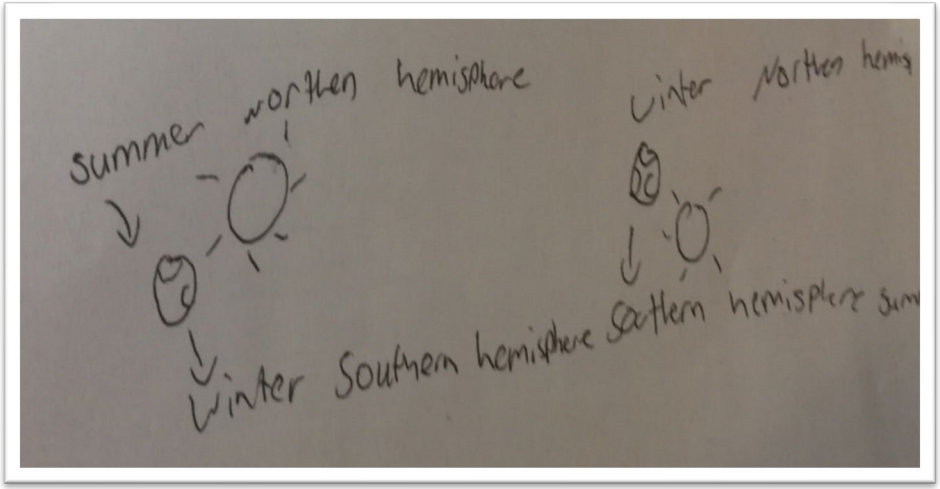


Diagram accompanying explanation of seasons

Year 7 teacher observed: They know a million facts, but they can't explain anything. We want to know how and why phenomenon occur.

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A linguistic view of writing development – what do we know?	
Texts and structures lengthen	text length increases (Nippold et al. 2005, Hunt 1969) sentence length increases (Loban, 1976) clause length increases (Berman & Verhoeven, 2002, Lewis, 2014, Hunt 1969)
Sentence level (clause complexing)	A shift from clause coordination to greater reliance on subordination (Perera, 1984, Harpin,1976, Allison et al. 2002) Coordination continues to be prevalent in some student texts into upper primary (Allison et al. 2002) Clause complexing and patterns of subordination vary by genre (Allison et al. 2002, Durrant et al. 2020)
Word and group	More Latinate/ Greek origin vocabulary in high rated writing (Myhill, 2009) Older writers use more abstract nouns than younger writers (Nippold et al. 2005). Increasing noun phrase complexity (Durrant & Brenchley 2022, 2023, Schleppegrell, 2006). Nominal group is an indicator of writing development (Durrant & Brenchley 2021, Lewis, 2015).
Condensation of meaning	Gradual increase in lexical density. (Christie & Derewianka,2008 Lewis, 2014)
Increasing diversity of structures & purposeful deployment	Increasing syntactic diversity - more deliberate and diverse deployment of grammatical structures Beginning to exert flexible control of clause combining. Differences more obvious by attainment than age. (Myhill, 2009)

A linguistic view of writing development – what do we know?	
Patterns of development	From spoken-like patterns to written-like patterns (Perrera 1985, Kroll 1981, Myhill, 2009) From declaration to elaboration (Myhill, 2009) From commonsense knowledge in congruent lexicogrammar to uncommonsense knowledge increasing condensed, technical and metaphorical lexicogrammar (Christie & Derewianka, 2008).
Widening range of genres Increasingly disciplinary accounts	Expanding range of genres - increasing complexity within genre families • from sequential explanations to causal and theoretical • from factual recount to historical account (Christie & Derewianka, 2008, Veel, 1997, Martin & Rose, 2008).
Science writing	• Increasing technicality and abstraction – a shift into 'uncommonsense knowledge' (Veel 1997) • Increasing lexical density • from temporal to more frequent consequential relations • from external to increasing internal connexion. (Veel, 1997, Christie & Derewianka, 2008) • Nominalisation emerging in primary school to construe technicality, textually oriented nominalisation (GM) in secondary school for managing explanation sequence (Unsworth, 2000)

Findings

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What kinds of meanings did students make in their science writing?

The Harbour Bridge*

What was the harbour bridge made of?

The harbour bridge is a steel [bridge]. But not mild steel, plain carbon steel.

The structure sits on 4 large concrete 'skewbacks'. 2 on either side of > the bridge.

The workers were worried about certain parts of > the bridge rusting. They [workers] used a product [[called porous]] which exposes the steel and barely any rust. They[workers] only put this product on places [[they [workers] thought would rust]].

The main strength of > the bridge is the 2 large beams underneath holding the whole structure.

Another very big part of > the bridge are the millions of little rivets holding the steel together like glue.

The twin arches of > the bridge are made up of chord beams that are loaded with compressions. This means they can bend to hold more weight.

Language choices build taxonomy through classification, (de) composition and measure

Classifiers precisely identify entities

- mild steel, plain carbon steel (bridge),

Quantifiers and measure dimensions to describe size and scale

- 4 large concrete skewbacks
- a total of 52800 tonnes of > steel.

Focus ^Thing structure identify part/whole relations:

- 2 [skewbacks] on either side of > the bridge
- another very big part of > the bridge
- the twin arches of > the bridge
- the main strength of > the bridge

Nominalisations realise technicality and abstraction
compressions, strength

Mix of simple, compound and complex sentences

A static view of phenomenon in Year 6 – taxonomising entities

Hourglass Dolphin – Sage (high attainer)

….

Description

The Hourglass Dolphin is a compact, small dolphin with < sizes ranging between 1.8m for the females, 1.9 m for the males and about 1m for their calves. Females weigh approximately 88kgs with males weighing approximately 94 kgs. They have a striking black and white < appearance resembling an hourglass, they have flippers that are long and curved. Hourglass dolphins have short and stubby beaks. Their bodies are mostly black and its classification is mammal.

Habitat

As you would expect, these dolphins live in Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic waters. 140, 000 is the estimated number of > Hourglass dolphins in existence.

Diet

Fish, squid and crustaceans are the main diet of > an Hourglass dolphin. Like other dolphins, they use echo-location to find their food and to navigate through the ocean.

Behaviours

Hourglass dolphins can normally be seen in pods of > 8 or less dolphins but pods of > up to 60 [dolphins] or more have been seen. …

Describers precisely identify perceived qualities
- A striking black and white appearance
- Flippers that are long and curved

Abstract nouns make visible the basis of taxonomy :

- a black and white appearance
- the main diet of > an hourglass dolphin
- 140000 is the estimated number of > hourglass dolphins…

Nominalisations name scientific activity and construe technical terms e.g. classification, echo-location

Afford an authoritative written like voice e.g. existence

Passive voice focuses on the identity being described

Mix of simple, compound and complex sentences.

Indicators of development in Year 6

The nominal group is a powerhouse for taxonomy in science.

- A striking black and white appearance resembling an hourglass
- The magnitude of > an earthquake
- [in] the mantle where there is an extra hot plume of molten rock which heats the Earth's crust and causes it to thin

Qualifiers are a major contributor to increasing nominal group length and lexical density

They function to:

- specify behaviour of Things e.g., *very runny lava that travels a long way*
- describing composition and spatial location e.g. *hard and rocky surfaces that are broken into large sections on the Earth's surface,*
- the two large beams [[underneath, holding the whole structure]].
- exemplifying a class of entity e.g. *cetaceans such as fin whales and long-filled pilot whales,*
a hard matter like a rock

Other indicators of development in Year 6

Other indicators of development in Year 6

Writing remained distinctly spoken like for some students and some writing tasks.

Some texts predominantly consisted of simple and compound sentences.

Clause complexing evident in phases of explanation and reasoning.

Gaps evident between students' exposure to scientific discourse and their uptake of those resources. Exposure does not equal uptake.

No transparent relationship between extent of experience of science in Year 6 and progress in Year 7.

Some writing tasks did not appear to position students to take up a disciplinary stance, nor require one.

Indicators of development evident in Year 6

Stages	**Seismometer experiment**
Discussion of results	The straight lines represent no movement. Our earthquake started out little then went to really strong the lines went crazy.
Method	We made a seismograph by a large piece of paper, pencil and a table We had someone shake the table while I was drawing a line.

Did Tracy understand the scientific purpose of the writing?

Why is there such a large gap between the writing recorded in Tracy's workbook and that produced independently?

Congruent grammar – speech written down.

Everyday lexis, intensifiers, colloquial language with inscribed attitude

Still developing control of sentence level syntax

Development was not uniform

Low average

Describing the tents

The tents were calico and had wooden poles. There was a mattress on the floor. There was a fire outside with a flagpole.

Time off

In their time off miners played cricket, music, cards, two-ups, also drank beer and into fight or a brawl.

Average

I learnt that the tectonic plates move in three different ways, which are converge, diverge and transform. Another thing [that I have learnt] is that when Newcastle had an earthquake in 1989, the earthquake could travel far enough [[we could feel it in The Oaks]]. The Richter Scale is one way [[to measure the magnitude of > an earthquake]]. (The amount of > energy released.)

High attaining

Volcanoes can be formed in three different ways, the first being the converging of the tectonic plates. When the tectonic plates converge they collide and one plate is pushed deeper into the mantle where it melts and rises to the surface> [of the earth] again to form volcanoes. This formation of volcanoes normally occurs around the boundaries of > tectonic plates.

Experiential grammatical metaphor evident in explanation texts

Title	Volcanoes
GENERAL STATEMENT	
Classification evaluation DESCRIPTION	The fiery, roaring, majestic, lava spewing mountains [[that reach up and touch the sky]] are called volcanoes. Named after the Roman God of Fire, Vulcan, these massive mountains are an important but deadly part of > our planet. There are three major types of > volcanoes, the first type> of volcanoes are Cinder-Cones. These volcanoes are quite common and have small sloped < sides; they [cinder cones] are made up of ash and debris from other eruptions. The next type of > volcano is a shield volcano; these volcanoes are small in < height but are very long and wide. They don't have a forceful eruption; instead, they produce very runny lava that travels a long way...
Explanation	Volcanoes can be formed in three different ways, the first being the converging of the tectonic plates.
- *convergence*	When the tectonic plates converge they collide and one plate is pushed deeper into the mantle where it melts and rises to the surface> [of the earth?] again to form volcanoes. This formation of volcanoes normally occurs around the boundaries of > tectonic plates.
- *divergence*	The other way volcanoes are formed is the diverging of the tectonic plates. When the plates diverge, they allow magma to rise up and cool down creating layers of > molten rock that eventually releases pressure [[that causes an eruption]].

Blue = nominalisation/ activity entities/ technical terms

Yellow = logical grammatical metaphor

Red = experiential grammatical metaphor

What changed in Year 7 science?

Text Stages and *phases*	
Phenomenon Identification *explanation preview* *compositional taxonomy*	The seasons on Earth are created by [[the way the Earth moves around the Sun]]. The Earth is created with two halves the northern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere. **So while** the Earth is rotating around the Sun, it tilts towards and away from the Sun.
Explanation Sequence *activity sequence* *causes and effects x* *+ cyclical nature of phenomenon*	**When** the northern hemisphere is tilting towards the Sun, that means that it is summer in the northern hemisphere. **And because** the northern hemisphere is tilting towards the Sun, that **means** that the southern hemisphere is tilting away that would **mean** that it is winter in the southern hemisphere. **And** the tilting changes every 6 months.

Expectation for and valuing of causal reasoning.

Logical grammatical metaphor emerging in causal explanations.

Pressure for complex sentences linked in temporal and consequential relations.

Intricate embeddings to manage causal reasoning point to nominalisation as a next step in writing instruction.

Not all students managed the task of causal reasoning in the first draft

Stages		*phases*
Phenomenon Identification	I believe that we have seasons because of [[how the Earth is on a tilt of 23.5 degrees]] **and** the way it orbits **and** every part of the Earth is a different angle **and** distance from the Sun	*explanation summary* *factor 1* *factor 2* *factor 3*
Explanation Sequence	**and as** it slowly rotates	*activity x*
Closure	**and** that's how the seasons change and continue to pass before our eyes	*conclusion*
	as temperature rises and drops the seasons change.	

Some students were not able to connect activity in complex sentences realising temporal and consequential connections.

Compound sentences that add/ list information in a spoken like manner persisted in some student texts.

What are the implications for writing development in science across the transition?

A need for more sustained opportunities for extended writing in science across Year 6 and Year 7.

A need for continuity of experience:

Nedda: *Science in primary school was 'nothing at all' like what we do in high school.*

Focus on the extent to which task instructions, topic and genre support, model and guide students to make valued disciplinary writing choices.

Nominal group development and control of clause complexing important across the primary to high school transition.

A need for curriculum to more precisely specify language structures and features by genre and discipline to support disciplinary literacy instruction.

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