

Curriculum Genres of Teaching Writing —Genre Analysis of a Midwestern ELL Elementary Classroom—

Marshall KLASSEN†

Abstract

This research focuses on a discourse analysis of teacher discourse in a rural elementary school writing classroom in the Midwest, one that had recently (in the past 10 years) experienced a significant growth in the number of English Language Learners (ELLs). This had affected the school district and the approaches to English Language development in the classroom. This study examines the discourse of the writing teachers, the classroom genres that teachers engaged in based on Christie's (2005) curriculum genres, and reports an analysis of language usage utilizing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Implications for teachers of writing and ELLs are based on this analysis according to genre stages featured in classroom discourse.

Keywords

education, English language learners, systemic functional linguistics, classroom genre analysis, discourse analysis, teaching writing

ライティング教育のカリキュラムジャンル —アメリカの中西部教室でのジャンル分析—

マーシャル クラッセン†

キーワード

教育, 英語学習者, 機能言語学, 教室ジャンル分析, ディスコース分析, ライティング教育

1. Introduction

The teaching of writing is one of the most critical, but overlooked areas of teaching pedagogy in the area of elementary writing for English

Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States. Many teachers are already overwhelmed by their responsibilities teaching English Only (EO) students as well as ELLs in the same classroom. Particularly

† mklassen@seiryō-u.ac.jp (Kanazawa Seiryō University, Liberal Arts and Sciences)

when teachers have had little experience teaching in their careers, many of them may lack awareness of the needs of young writers, teaching approaches and potential difficulties: this is often the case when teaching ELLs as well, as effective teachers must not only have knowledge of the teaching of writing, but also theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), sociolinguistics, and ELL development in general (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2011; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Harper & de Jong, 2004). Writing at the elementary school level is becoming more important as ELLs and EO students are being subjected to high-stakes testing at a greater frequency, and at the same time teacher evaluations are being tied to student performance and growth, regardless of student backgrounds (Gilmetdinova, Klassen, & Morita–Mullaney, 2014). Due to these changes, teachers need to be able to teach groups of students from various backgrounds and experiences as well as EO students, to not only meet the needs of high-stakes testing, but also their future careers (Magrath et al., 2003).

This research focused on a multiple case study of two elementary teachers in a rural school in the Midwest, one that had recently (in the past 10 years) experienced a significant growth in the number of ELLs, which had affected the school district and the approaches to English Language development in the classroom. This study examined the discourse of two writing teachers, the classroom genres (Christie, 2005) that teachers engaged in, and an analysis of language usage utilizing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Language, Discourse, Classroom Discourse, Writing Discourse

According to Gee (1999) there are two types of discourse: “little d and big D” discourse (p.7). These

discourses refer to pragmatic language usage: “little D”, the discourse of life, surface level language, in other words, language in use, while “big D” discourse refers to language use lying below the surface, representing underlying ideologies, values and beliefs that manifest themselves in spoken discourse, as well as other elements of culture such as appearance, context, audience and activity. Classroom discourse is shaped by both of these discourses, and influence how teachers address students, how they perceive students with good or bad attitudes, high or low aptitude students, students that share their culture and values, or those who are perceived to be from foreign cultures or have different values.

Christie (2005) extends our understanding of discourses through her analysis of discourse occurring in the classroom, commonly called “teacher talk”, focusing on how language is organized and expressed in this specialized context. Particularly in writing discourse, teacher talk can be used to model writing expectations to students, invite students to join the writing community and participate in the learning process by creating the context for writing in the classroom. Teacher talk has also been found to encourage active participation and a community of writing between teachers and students in elementary classrooms (Lemke, 1989; Mohr, 1998; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). This analysis by Christie treats classroom discourse as a structured experience which has actors in defined relationships and roles engaged in sociolinguistic activities. Although classroom discourse is a structured experience with defined roles and relationships, engagement and active participation is critical for the success of English language learners (Gibbons, 2006).

The expectations for writing are often much more difficult for students to understand, especially

for students that are more familiar with spoken language, making the need for mediation through classroom discourse and the transition to writing all the more critical. The importance of providing clarity about the difference between written and spoken English, even at the elementary level, can be helpful in establishing a strong foundation in using these different modes of language. Naturally, students' written abilities will develop from their development of spoken abilities, but if the teacher can guide students and clarify the difference between written and spoken forms of communication, this will help them to become more successful writers (Brisk, 2015; Halliday, 1989).

Furthermore, written language requires more attention to the use of different forms of language, namely academic discourse, including different grammar forms and vocabulary, while it does not offer immediate feedback, unlike spoken language. Students' ability to distinguish these expectations must be facilitated by the teacher, through teaching practices that help students to notice these differences, and then produce appropriate forms of written language. This is often accomplished through teacher talk during lessons and writing assignments.

2.1.1 Teacher talk. Findings from previous research on teacher talk in elementary classrooms includes an emphasis on active participation and community in the writing classroom, which encourages student-teacher cooperation and creating an interdependency during writing activities (Mohr, 1998; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Successful teacher talk includes the use of indirect requests, prompts to use reason and self-reflection, and question and answer sequences for example, as a way to direct students to accomplish goals and evaluate student knowledge of written English, using this teacher talk as a collaborative and

socially-mediated process from teacher to student (Mercer, 2000; Mohr, 1998). Due to the different expectations of written and spoken language, the use of teacher talk is essential in navigating students to become successful writers who can recognize and use appropriate written language in writing. Teachers of ELLs in particular, need to be aware of the difference between students' written and spoken language production, as well as the difference between students' knowledge of simple and complex language, known as BICS and CALP.

2.1.2 BICS & CALP. Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1979, 2008) is one aspect of the difference between written and spoken English. Teachers new to teaching ELLs are often surprised by students' language usage with peers, perceiving them to be fluent speakers of the language, but in academic settings, may struggle with producing language in classroom settings, particularly concerning written production: the student may not be able to use the appropriate language for these tasks, as the language expectations of content area speaking and writing are different (Cummins, 2008; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000). When teaching ELLs, differing proficiencies across modes and contexts must be taken into account when socializing learners into writing. The language proficiency of students is shaped by the interactions within their school settings: if they are not given explicit modeling to talk or write about the expected topics in their L1 or L2 (first or second language), then language production will remain undeveloped. Teachers should create opportunities in class to scaffold academic language production through teacher talk and guide student production in both spoken and written contexts (Schleppegrell, 2004).

Teachers of writing need to be aware of the

differences in expectations between spoken language and written language, particularly in regards to the expectations for writing tasks, which are often accompanied by vague directions or goals. Advice such as “use your own words” and “write clearly” offer little concrete detail about how to write for the target audience, and styling issues such as organization and linguistic features difficult for ELLs may be invisible for their teachers, which creates a gap between student needs and pedagogical approaches (Christie, 1991; Schleppegrell, 2004). These gaps are exacerbated by expectations of teachers based on differences in cultures and socioeconomic status, and different language backgrounds (Cummins, 2001; Heath, 1983; Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006; Valdes, 2001; Zeichner, 2009). Teachers that are aware of these gaps and student needs will be able to provide more meaningful detail in teacher talk, can make the purpose of writing clearer for students, and provide modeling for students to use language to reach the goal of each writing assignment in their classrooms. Therefore, teacher talk as classroom discourse will be the main focus of this paper.

2.2 Classroom Discourse Analysis with Systemic Functional Linguistics

Classroom discourse analysis is the primary focus of this research, with the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory of language guiding this research. Christie (2005) frames language as:

...the linguistic theories of language... have gained in sophistication, so too has come a much enhanced sense not only of the enactment of social practices in language, but also of the construction of various ideological positioning in language. Language is never neutral, for it is necessarily involved in the realization of values and ideologies; just as it

serves to realize such values and ideologies, it also serves to silence others. (p. 7)

Language used by the teacher unconsciously reflects their ideologies, values and beliefs, and this influences how teachers approach teaching of writing and communication of knowledge. Teacher talk is a social process: it is a social action that is communicated through discourse (Lemke, 1989). As defined by Fairclough (1992), teacher talk is “a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation” which is in direct relation to the “relationship between social practice and social structure” (p. 64). Furthermore, the SFL theory of language allows us to look at discourse as a system with purposeful actions and choices, with the following points being relevant to this research: That language is primarily a social semiotic, meaning making system, and that language furnishes us with information about how language works in each context (Eggins & Slade, 2004, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Schleppegrell, 2004).

2.2.1 Language as Meaning Making. SFL theory posits that language is a social semiotic system, that all language takes place within texts (Halliday, 1978). According to Halliday:

We can define text, in the simplest way perhaps, by saying that it is language that is functional. By functional, we simply mean language that is doing some job in some context...any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation, we shall call a text. It may be either spoken or written, or indeed in any other medium of expression that we like to think of. The important thing about the nature of a text is

that, although when we write it down it looks as though it is made of words and sentences, it is really made of meanings (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 16).

In classroom discourse, communication is multifaceted and multifunctional, depending on the rapport between teachers and students, the choices made by the speaker, and the goals of all participants engaging in the context. SFL allows us to observe language functions in specific contexts where this language occurs, as well as the language resources that are used to express these functions (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). SFL theory provides the resources to explain how language is used in situated discourse, such as classrooms, and within social contexts where language is used to create meaning through a set of language choices to accomplish specific communicative goals (Martin & Rose, 2008). Specifically, writing instruction in the language classroom accomplishes the goals of guiding students to achieve their writing goals, but teachers must be aware that “learning language” and “learning through language” are simultaneous (Halliday, 2007), meaning that teachers must focus on specific language structures that construct

meaning (Christie, 2005; Christie & Derewianka, 2010). Language usage depends on the social context, relationships between people and the purpose of the text, and shapes how the goal of the text is accomplished and the language used to communicate this.

2.2.2 Language in context: Genre, register & metafunctions. SFL features three dimensions of language: *genre*, *register*, and *metafunctions* which work together to create contexts for language usage (Figure 2.1). *Genre* refers to a social practice that occurs within the context of culture and operates at the level of culture (Christie & Derewianka, 2010). Genres are characterized as “staged, goal oriented social processes” (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 6) that occur within everyday situations, with specific rules, conventions and goals that are natural to those who participate in them, but difficult to explain to those outside of them. In each type of genre, there are three social functions of language that are present in all domains of language, called *register* (Martin & Rose, 2008) which include *tenor*, *field* and *mode*. Register changes within each genre according to differences in *field*: the topic being discussed, such as science or math, differences in *tenor*: the relationship between those involved in the text, such as students and teachers, or old friends, and differences in *mode*: the medium in which the communication occurs, such as through classroom discourse, an email, or an online chat. These three functions are directly related to three metafunctions, *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*.

Metafunctions are the primary means in which meaning making is created under SFL theory. The *ideational metafunction* provides information about experience, the who, what, where, when, and why, and the logical relationships between events, people or places. The *interpersonal metafunction* refers to the social relationships that are being established

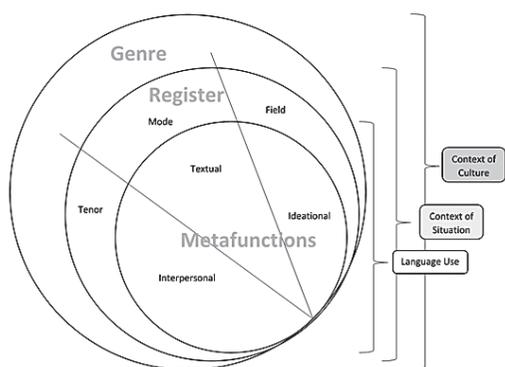


Figure 2.1. Context of Language. Adapted from Martin & Rose, 2008.

and maintained, and the *textual metafunction* is concerned with how language is structured and the flow of information (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Martin & Rose, 2008). These metafunctions show how language can be deconstructed to identify critical language features and focus on how meaning is being made through texts.

2.2.2.1 Ideational metafunction. The ideational metafunction is the representation of meanings embedded in language that “construe human experience” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 29). These features of language are characterized as *processes*, commonly realized as verbs, organized into a number of different types of processes according to different types of experiences. *Participants* are the actors of processes, and include different language resources depending on the processes, such as actors and goals: these are typically realized as nouns and pronouns. This metafunction is directly related to field, which is important for learners to understand how expectations of writing are being expressed through language in academic contexts, in specific school subjects, for instance. For teachers of ELLs in particular, paying attention to the ideational metafunction can help to see how these experiences are communicated in discourse and specifically in writing discourse and how they are directed towards students.

2.2.2.2 Interpersonal metafunction. The interpersonal deals with negotiating social relationships, such as interactions and uses resources such as mood, modality and person (Christie, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2008). On a clausal level, mood is concerned with the exchange of information between speakers through resources used for making statements, asking questions, giving commands, propositions, and making offers (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

2.2.2.3 Textual metafunctions. The textual metafunctions is concerned with the organization of text and speech and how information is conveyed between the speaker and listener. This metafunction is particularly descriptive when moving from unorganized, oral discourse to more focused written discourse, which features strict patterns of organization and structure (Christie & Derewianka, 2010). Teacher discourse about writing in a classroom context similarly relies on organized constructions of language to communicate meaning. At the clause level, textual organization is concerned with *theme* and *rheme*, where the theme is the beginning of the clause, usually the subject up until the first verb, and the rheme is what comes after the theme. For example, “Billy and I went to the theater”: “Billy and I” is the theme, and “went to the theater” is the rheme. The theme introduces the topic of discussion (or old information from a previous statement), and the rheme contains the new information about the theme. Beyond the clause, the theme can show us the cohesive devices and referent chains that connect the theme and rheme across long stretches of discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In spoken discourse, personal pronouns dominate theme, but in classroom discourse this is also accompanied by the topic of discussion, and is important that the theme, rheme, cohesive devices and referents be clear to the listener in order to clearly communicate. These resources of SFL will be used as the basis of classroom discourse analysis in this paper.

3. Methodology

This study investigated teacher discourse of two elementary school teachers, but due to the scope of this paper, it will focus on a single teacher who is a 3rd grade teacher with three years’ experience, and taught a mixed class of ELLs and EO students (10

ELLs 10 EO). This data was collected as part of a larger case study focusing on teacher perceptions of students' needs and approaches to writing in the elementary classroom. This research was conducted in a rural school in the Midwest of the United States, with a moderate density of ELLs, with this population having increased fairly rapidly over the past 15 years: recent census information indicating a 21.6% percentage of Hispanic population of the community population (US Census, 2010).

This case study approach facilitates the study of authentic discourse of a real-life contemporary setting to explore the systematic language of an English Language Arts (ELA) classroom. A multiple case study allowed observations of both school and classroom, to give greater context to the classroom genres happening in each situation (Yin, 2009). Classroom discourse analysis focused on how teachers presented the expectations of writing to students, the assistance, the structure and general language use they used in the classroom. Classroom discourse was analyzed through the lens of SFL, as well as curriculum genres (Christie, 2005), a framework to interpreting classroom stages and approaches.

3.1 Curriculum Genres & SFL Analysis

Within the greater context of a classroom case study, SFL discourse analysis was used in order to highlight meaningful segments of classroom discourse that emphasized common practices in each teachers' discourse, based on multiple classroom observations and interviews from the case study. This analysis focuses on the grammatical and lexical features of teacher discourse observed in the classroom, in particular the specific choices made within the ELA classroom to support students' writing based on curriculum genres through an SFL lens (Christie, 2005; Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012).

Key features of each analysis will be presented in this paper, based on the stages of curriculum genres.

3.1.1 Curriculum genres as analysis.

Language use in the classroom is more than an exchange of information between groups, but is a structured, planned and purposeful approach to addressing a text (Christie, 2005). These staged, goal oriented social processes (Martin & Rose, 2008) are also known as genres, hence why Christie (2005) proposed the idea of curriculum genres to specify their expectations of classroom discourse to students. The curriculum genres analyzed in this paper are based off of Christie's schematic stages of genres.

The classroom observations selected here are purposefully sampled from classes held near the beginning of the school year, where teachers typically provide students more guidance and often reference model texts (Creswell, 2008). This research has classified a four stage schematic structured curriculum genre called *modeling texts* which is characterized by the use of exemplary texts as a means of modeling writing through classroom discourse. This curriculum genre has the stages of task orientation, negotiation, deconstruction, and specification, with one stage of orientation, negotiation and deconstruction being featured in this research. These are operationally defined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Detailed Description of Stages of Curriculum Genre

	CURRICULUM GENRE: Modeling Texts			
	Task Orientation	Task Specification	Task Negotiation	Task Deconstruction
Description	During this part of the curriculum genre, the teacher orients the students to the task at hand, exercising authority as a teacher, or characterizing it as a group task. The teacher provides background, purpose of the task, background knowledge necessary and what is to be done in general terms. This is usually conducted at the beginning of the class, to orient students to the task to be completed.	During the task specification stage, the teacher specifies what is to be accomplished in the task by explicitly listing the task to be completed through the use of bullet points, guiding questions, or exemplification of details from a model text or student example text.	Typically occurring after orientation, this is when the students are given time to begin accomplishing the task in groups/pairs or individually, with teachers giving direction to students directly or indirectly, through conferencing with students, or during a classroom walk around.	This typically occurs after or during the negotiation stage, when the teacher works one on one with students to look closely at how the students are accomplishing or are attempting to accomplish the task, and the teacher is providing additional instruction such as language resources, organization, grammar or other resources used to accomplish the task.
Purpose	This is to orient the students to the task to be completed, familiarize or remind students what they need to know or motivate themselves about completing the task, and to provide schema (background knowledge) for the students to complete the task.	This stage expands on the task orientation and provides more details about what the writing task is meant to accomplish, in these observations mostly accompanied by guiding questions, graphic organizers, and reference to question prompts.	This stage gives students the opportunity to implement what they have learned or been directed to do in the orientation and specification stages. This allows the students to negotiate the task with help from teachers or classmates, or work independently.	This stage gives students extra support and can be illustrative with models or teacher direction to guide students to producing language that is valued by the teacher or is appropriate to the task. This is where the teacher points out valued language usage and helps co-construct language that requires additional scaffolding.
Example	“Today we are going to write a letter to XXX. Do you remember why we are writing a letter? Have you ever written a letter before? I want you to think about when you wrote a letter before...”	“When we are writing this letter, remember what we want to tell the reader. What do we want to tell them? Why is it important? What information do they need to know?”	“Now I’m going to let you get started on your letter. Remember you have to tell the reader about X, Y & Z. You can work with a partner, and I’ll be going around the room if you need help”	“Look at how M— used commas to make a list: ‘Let’s make a park for the boys with slides <COMMA> tire swings <COMMA> and see-saws because that way they’ll leave the girls alone’ “
<p>Teacher Direction, Teacher/Student Negotiation, Teacher Direction/Confirmation <i>The curriculum stages typically proceed from left to right, from more guidance to less.</i></p>				

3.1.2 Metafunction analysis. A metafunctional analysis on the sentence level of teacher discourse will be used on the clause level and “beyond the clause” (Martin & Rose, 2003). Table 3.2 displays what each level of analysis will achieve. This metafunctional analysis will deconstruct the language used in this text in order to identify critical language features and focus on how meaning is made.

Table 3.2
Genre, Register and Metafunctions

CONTEXT	CONTEXT OF CULTURE Genres as social processes for achieving purposes within the culture		
	CONTEXT OF SITUATION Registers as particular configurations of the field, tenor and mode		
	FIELD (Subject matter or topic) “What is going on”	TENOR (Roles and relationships) “Who is involved”	MODE (Organization of language) “What role is language playing?”
LANGUAGE	Ideational Metafunction	Interpersonal Metafunction	Textual Metafunction
	CLAUSE LEVEL		
	Types of <i>processes</i> (verbs) involved in activity, <i>participants</i> and <i>goals</i> involved in these processes, and the <i>circumstances</i> in which they occur.	Language resources for interaction, such as statements, giving commands, asking questions, making offers.	The beginning (theme) and end of a clause (rheme)
	BEYOND THE CLAUSE		
	The relationship between events (e.g. Where? When? Why? How?)	Focusing on language resources that create patterns of evaluation and engagement, through appraisal resources.	Describing the cohesion of discourse through cohesive devices and referents (referential chains)

(Adapted from Christie & Derewianka, 2010)

Building on the theory of language provided by Halliday (1978), discourse observed in the classroom can provide insight into how language is used and how knowledge about writing is being communicated through structured language interaction where teachers are in control of the dissemination of knowledge (Bernstein, 2000). This dissemination is done through curriculum (Lemke, 1989), which is understood through curriculum genres (Christie, 2005). The language exchange occurring within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) shows how language is used or can be used to apprentice learners into usage and eventual mastery of written English through structuring and scaffolding. This analysis provides a way to explore this discourse that occurs within curriculum.

4. Analysis and Discussion

This analysis will look at the discourse of the focal 3rd grade teacher’s classroom discourse based on Christie’s Curriculum Genres (2005), which is nested in the larger framework of SFL. In addition, the analysis shows the schematic structures of classroom discourse within the classroom genre: *Modeling Texts*. This focal genre models exemplary writing to students, and this analysis will examine the types of language used in selected stages of this genre.

4.1 Stages: Task Orientation, Negotiation, Deconstruction, Specification

The four separate schematic structures under this curriculum genre, Modeling Texts, are as follows: task orientation, task specification, task negotiation and task deconstruction. These were first

characterized by Christie (2005), and as being parts of specific curriculum genres, such as the “morning news genre,” but in this research it is being applied to explore what moves teachers are making in their classrooms, with this terminology being used as a reference point.

A typical classroom writing lesson may begin with introduction of the writing topic (task orientation), description of the expectations of the topic and writing task (task specification), providing specific details about what is expected and how to perform the task through, graphic organizers and examples, group or independent work strategies (task specification & negotiation), and conclusion and wrapping up or providing additional support to students, paying particular attention to showing how the task was accomplished (task deconstruction). These stages are conceptualized as first providing students support and context for the task, modeling and then providing support, and then providing confirmation of successful negotiation of the task or re-orientation/further negotiation of the task. This represents a gradual release of responsibility

from the teacher to the student (Fisher & Frey, 2007). The three metafunctions, *textual*, *ideational* and *interpersonal* provide us insight into how the language is being shaped and what is being communicated in each stage, which are further explained in the next section.

4.1.1 Textual Metafunction. The textual metafunction, concerned with the organization of new and old information, helps identify how the teacher is organizing information and expressing teacher and student authority and responsibility. This metafunction (Table 4.1) consists of the theme, the beginning of the clause which develops the topic and/or introduces old information, and the rheme provides new information to the listener building off of the theme (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In teacher discourse of the study, the theme and rheme showed not only how new and old information was transmitted, but also how responsibility for each stage of the task was established. Based on this observed phenomenon, theme and rheme will be discussed in the context of collective and student responsibility.

Table 4.1
Collective & Student Responsibility

	Theme	Rheme
Collective Responsibility	We	are going to look at an example today
	let's	look at this story together
Student Responsibility	You	are going to write a letter today
	Your group	is going to brainstorm some ideas

In addition to theme and rheme, information regarding cohesion and referents (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), was also illustrative in the analysis, and how this is used in classroom discourse. Speech is often unorganized and chaotic, however speakers still tend to include clear theme and rheme, in particular during formalized speech

within classroom genres. Cohesive devices (Table 4.2) will also be marked with superscript, tracking the meaning making within each clause.

Table 4.2
Cohesive Devices & Referents

Theme	Rheme
Last week, we	talked about the school day ¹ .
It ¹	starts at eight ² every day.
At this time ² , students	have breakfast

4.1.2 Interpersonal Metafunction. The interpersonal metafunction focused on the use of interrogative and information request questions to interpret the semantic purpose of the interactions between teacher and student. These questions were divided into two types, depending on the intention of the teacher based on the interactions with the classroom. Both information requests have similar structures, but the difference between the two is the expected interaction from students. Showing requests (Table 4.3) provide time for students to answer, while leading questions do not allot time to answer, relying on their ability to answer independently, or not allowing the chance for

students to vocalize their answers due to the formal nature of the classroom or the atmosphere created by this discourse. This analysis will also categorize the types of questions, between WH–Interrogatives and Yes/No interrogatives. According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2014, p. 143), Yes/No (Y/N) interrogatives are polar questions, and Who-What-Where-When-Why (WH–) interrogatives are requests for information. Y/N interrogatives have limited responses, and often the response from students is not required in classroom discourse. These questions offer very little opportunity for output from students, and are typically designed for students to answer chorally, without much thought.

Table 4.3
Information Request: Showing & Leading

Information Request: Showing	
Teacher Initiation	Who wrote “The Cat in the Hat?”
Student response	Mandatory: Teacher provides time for students to answer S: Dr. Seuss
Orienting students to same task: Task completion as a group response	
Information Request: Leading	
Teacher Initiation	Who wrote “Cat in the Hat?” What was it about?
Student response	Optional/Unsaid: Teacher does not provide time for students to answer
Relying on students to provide their own information: Task completion as an individual task	

4.1.3 Ideational Metafunction. The focus of this metafunction is the material processes, typically characterized as verbs that encompass the “goings-on” in language, participants, the actors in the text, and goals, the purpose of each clause. Especially in the context of writing, the processes used become

increasingly abstract as language becomes more complex, making it necessary to scrutinize language used in the writing classroom.

Table 4.4
Metafunctions Summary

Language metafunctions	Textual	Interpersonal	Ideational
Description	The textual metafunction will organize statements into theme and rheme , focusing on collective responsibility and student responsibility and illustrate the usage of cohesive devices and referents throughout the excerpt.	The interpersonal metafunction will examine the use of interrogative questions used in the classroom discourse to mediate the exchange of information in relation to the writing task.	The ideational metafunction will be concerned with the material process and the accompanying participants and goals .
Purpose	Identify the flow of information and how the teacher is directing students' attention to the classroom discourse, and the importance of these elements.	Identify how the teacher is communicating information through questions and the semantic meaning being achieved in these questions.	Identify the types of processes being used in classroom discourse and describe how these processes are being directed towards students in regard to writing discourse.
Resources	Theme & Rheme, Collective & Student Responsibility, Cohesive devices & Referents	Information Requests: Showing & Leading Y/N & WH- Interrogatives	Material Processes, Participants, Goals

This analysis illustrates the complex use of language in the writing classroom, how this may be problematic for ELLs, and how teachers may clarify their own language to better communicate with their students.

4.2 Curriculum Genre: Modeling Texts

Discourse Analysis

4.2.1 Task Orientation. The Task Orientation stage (Table 4.5) begins with a teacher centered classroom, students sitting at desks in groups of four and five, with attention directed at the Overhead projector (OHP) with a model student essay. The content of the lesson is a review of a writing prompt conducted the previous week. The text is a response to a prompt concerning students writing a letter to the principal requesting ideas about a playground to be built at the school.

4.2.1.1 Textual Metafunction. Collective responsibility is signaled through the usage of the pronouns *we* and *our* in the theme position, and

contrasted with student responsibility, which the teacher brings the attention of her students to with purposeful vocal emphasis. The language used in the collective responsibility section indicates that this will be led by the teacher shown by the repeated use of *we*, but that the responsibility of the completion of the task lies with the students, seen in the student responsibility category, which shows a pattern of second-person pronouns you/your. This move from collaborative to individual responsibility is signaled by the content in the rheme, whereas collective responsibility focuses on what the goals of the class are, and individual responsibility focuses on building off of the accomplishments completed by students previously, and extending this to the current writing task (Table 4.6).

Table 4.5
Task Orientation

<p>[Teacher stands at the front of the classroom, with an OHP and a whiteboard, with students sitting at their desks in the classroom.]</p> <p>T: Okay last week on Tuesday we did our 55 minute writing prompt = Yes= you remember?</p> <p>You got to write a...</p> <p>Ss: <<Letter!>></p> <p>T: A letter to your principal about a new...</p> <p>Ss: <<Playground>></p> <p>T: PLAYGROUND= and guess what. You have some really awesome writers in here, so we are going to look at THREE. that were PRETTY GOOD. They had some great things that we want to look at that maybe YOU can do in your writing next time, THEN, we're going to talk about rewriting our own, from beginning, a middle, an end. So we are going to rewrite one yourself= but let's look at some good examples first. Electrician lights please.</p> <p>...</p> <p>[Teacher rustling through papers]</p> <p><i>Dear principal</i>—here it is.</p> <p>[Teacher reads question prompt]</p> <p>oh boy=your principal was thinking about building a NEW ... playground, and needs YOUR ideas...</p>
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4.2.1.2 Interpersonal Metafunction. The task orientation stage features few questions (“you remember?”), which are directed to activating student background knowledge, which are leading information requests that the teacher provides no classroom time to answer.

4.2.1.3 Ideational Metafunction. The task orientation shows the material processes of writing goals connected with the participants, describing what expectations are in the next stage. The orientation (Table 4.7) shows the main material processes of writing and the goals outlined by classroom discourse: writing a letter, looking at three good texts, and rewrites to students’ own writing.

The first stage of this curriculum genre shows that the teacher is characterizing the task orientation with material processes, with students shouldering the burden of writing as the producers of writing, but with the support of the teacher and whole class. Responsibility of the task is shown through the textual metafunction, framing it within previous

writing accomplishments and expectations in the ideational material processes. The classroom discourse is beginning to point out exemplary language and constructions in the text that the teacher is directing attention to: “we are going to look at...”, as well as beginning the process of revising together “we’re going to talk about rewriting our own”. When specifically discussing the task of writing and expectations, the language included in the thematic position specifically refers to the students’ abilities and accomplishments: “you have some really awesome writers in here...” “... maybe you can do in your writing”. The ideational metafunction is similarly setting students up for the future task, with information requests leading students to activate their prior knowledge from their previous assignments. These moves are what characterize the orientation stage of this curriculum genre.

4.2.2 Task Specification. The next stage of the modeling text curriculum genre is the task specification stage (Table 4.8), where the teacher moves to listing how specific tasks were completed

Table 4.6
Task Orientation Textual Metafunction

	Theme	Rheme
Collective Responsibility	we	are going to look at THREE
	we	want to look at
	we're	going to talk about rewriting
	our own	from beginning, a middle, an end
	we	are going to rewrite one
	but let's	look at some good examples
Student Responsibility	Yes = you	remember?
	You	got to write a letter
	that maybe YOU	can do
	in your	writing next time

Table 4.7
Task Orientation Ideational Metafunction

Participants	Material Processes	Goals
You got to	write	a letter
we are going to	look at	three that were pretty good
that maybe YOU	can do	in your writing (next time)
THEN we're going to talk about	rewriting	our own

Table 4.8
Task Specification

<p>[The teacher moves from orientating the students attention about the topic to the actual task that the teacher wants the students to accomplish]</p> <p>T: Look she <u>UNDERLINED</u> that, oh she must've thought that was important.</p> <p>[student has underlined "Equipment" from the prompt "What equipment would you like to have on the new playground?"]</p> <p><i>tell him or her what EQUIPMENT you would like to have on the new playground</i></p> <p><i>INCLUDE IN YOUR WRITING=LOOK AT THIS,</i></p> <p>She numbered where they were going, and I checked them off because I graded. Did she reread this more than once=does it look like she did?</p> <p>Ss: <<Yeah>></p> <p>T: So ... what did she do?</p> <p>Ss: <<Marked up the text>></p> <p>T: SHE MARKED UP THE TEXT=that's right she is evaluating what she has to do.</p> <p>[Teacher reads question prompts]</p> <p><i>WHY is it important to have a new playground?</i></p> <p><i>WHAT equipment would you like to have on the new playground?</i></p> <p><i>And WHY would you want this new equipment?</i></p> <p>So let's read this. Okay?=It's not perfect, but it's a GREAT START</p> <p>so let's look at this one it has a title...BUT what was it supposed to be?</p> <p>Ss: <<Letter >></p> <p>T: it's supposed to be a letter. Okay?</p>

in the model text with the use of graphic organizers, and beginning planning of the writing task while proposing student strategies for students based on the model text. The teacher continues to emphasize the accomplishments, the student strategies used, and begins to direct student attention through information requests. This stage should clarify the expectations of student writing and establish the agency of the students in their writing. In this stage, the teacher is working through the model text on the OHP, highlighting specific areas of the model text.

4.2.2.1 Textual Metafunction. The textual metafunction (Table 4.9) shows the student strategies used in her own writing, as well as modeling possible thought processes that other students can produce in their writing. The introduction of cohesive devices may cause confusion for students if the visuals are not clear to students. In this early stage, it is important for this discourse to be as clear as possible. The rheme highlights the processes used to accomplish her writing goal, and is exemplifying the strategies used in the writing process, discussed later in the ideational metafunction.

Table 4.9
Task Specification Textual Metafunction

	Theme	Rheme
Student Responsibility	Look she	UNDERLINED <u>that</u> ¹ ,
	oh she	must've thought <u>that</u> ¹ was important
	She	numbered where they were going,
	Did she	reread <u>this</u> ² more than once
	what did she	do?
	SHE	MARKED UP THE <u>TEXT</u> ²
	what she	has to do

4.2.2.2 Interpersonal Metafunction. The use of information requests in this stage reinforces the idea that the class is cooperating to plan this task, with showing information requests being asked, and students replying chorally, having students

focus on the strategies used in the model text (Table 4.10). However, relying only on the students that are actively participating in class may exclude lower level students and/or ELLs.

Table 4.10
Task Specification Interpersonal Metafunction

	Type of Question	Question
Information Request: Showing	Y/N	Did she reread this more than once... does it look like she did?
	WH	what did she do?
	WH	it has a title.. BUT what was it supposed to be?

4.2.2.3 Ideational Metafunction. Promising practices are being listed by the teacher that are

being used in the student model text, such as *underline, number, reread, mark up* (Table 4.11),

with the highlighting of these processes showing models and achieve the goals of the writing prompt. promising practices in how students can review text

Table 4.11
Task Specification Ideational Metafunction

Participants	Material Processes	Goals
(look) she	UNDERLINED	that,
... She	numbered	where they were going...
...Did she	reread	this (more than once)...?
SHE	MARKED UP	THE TEXT

This stage of classroom allows the teacher to emphasize the usage of material processes with visuals while addressing the model text. Despite this multi-modal approach, isolating the usage of these verbs, on the whiteboard, for example, may also be useful in clarifying the expectations in this stage, and in this assignment. In a classroom with a significant number of ELLs, the explicit teaching of material processes as well as highlighting their

potential use in planning and review is of particular importance. The specification stage can feature the use of these metafunctions to describe how and what the model text accomplished, what will have to be addressed in writing, and the strategies and actions that are used to accomplish the task.

In this specification stage, the analysis of these metafunctions shows what the model text accomplished, what processes will be needed in

Table 4.12
Task Negotiation

[Teacher starts to read model text that had accomplished the task of the preliminary writing task and begins reading student text from OHP]

Getting a new playground. Guess what? We're going to get a new playground.

Our school already has two playgrounds maybe they are going to make one with a water slide the BIGGEST ONE IN THE WHOLE UNIVERSE

whoa=universe right?

We should probably get a pool or a hot tub for the girls and boys. (inaudible) get the Park. oh oh I just thought of one

WOW did it sound like someone was really talking there? *Oh oh I just thought of one good voice right?*

[looking at the student's writing on the OHP, there is a word that is illegible]

What do you think this is? GOLD. What do you think this is supposed to be?

Ss: <<Pennies? >> <<pencils?>>

T: I don't know I underlined it for a purple word. One gold..[inaudible] and diamonds—we'll come back to it when she can tell us what the word is.

[Teacher returns to reading exemplary text]

Everywhere—that will look SO beautiful Are those good description words? Gold and diamonds? *That will look so beautiful and cute*

oh STUDENT NAME! *Boys are lame* Did she use that word pretty good? Yeah, nice purple word right? *Boys are lame*—so you think a boy or a girl wrote this?

Ss: <<A girl >>

T: A GIRL

the completion of this task through strategies and actions highlighted by the teacher. For ELLs, direct highlighting of these material processes on the whiteboard and how they are represented in the model text as an additional scaffold may be helpful for students.

4.2.3 Task Negotiation. Task negotiation (Table 4.12) features the teacher guiding students through scrutinizing the processes in which the writer used to accomplish the task, highlighting parts of the model that were exemplary, and can be used in the future by the students in the class. In this stage, the teacher is emphasizing the meaning of the text while posing showing and leading information requests, asking students for interaction and engagement in the negotiation stage. These are guiding students

to notice, on their own, the language that is used to accomplish the writing task, but leaving the responsibility to the students to discover what is effective without much explicit guidance. This is key to the negotiation stage, to work with and negotiate with students to identify what rhetorical tools can be used in the writing assignment.

4.2.3.1 Textual Metafunction. In the negotiation stage, the textual function is directing attention towards the resources being used in the model text in the rheme, drawing attention to the actor in the theme position, framing it within student responsibility in Table 4.13. The use of pronouns *you* and *she* place the responsibility of the actions in writing with the students and the model text.

Table 4.13
Task Negotiation Textual Metafunction

	Theme	Rheme
Student Responsibility	WOW did it sound like someone	was really talking there?
	What do you	think this is?
	Did she	use that word pretty good?
	so you	think a boy or a girl wrote this?

4.2.3.2 Interpersonal Metafunction. The questions used in this negotiation stage (Table 4.14) should help students to highlight and jointly negotiate meaning concerning promising qualities of the model text, but only one instance of a showing question is included, which is met by a choral response from students with little opportunity for negotiation. This part of negotiation stage is critical to expand upon, due to the difficulty in identifying characteristics and usage of voice according to the teacher themselves (teacher interview). Giving students time to think and respond during this stage may be helpful in giving students time to identify potential resources to use voice.

4.2.3.3 Ideational Metafunction. The ideational function (Table 4.15) highlights some of the verbs used to characterize *voice* - use of voice is characterized by the use of *written* language which *uses spoken* language that allows the audience to learn about the identity of the writer, be it boy or girl, through the *use* of this unique register. Providing the audience information about the participants involved in writing is a part of voice, which is included in the assessment of each writing assignment in this class (teacher interviews), making it important for elements of this to be identified. The use of vocabulary, spoken discourse in dialogue, and connections with writer and audience are all

Table 4.14
Task Negotiation Interpersonal Metafunction

	Type of Question	Question
Information Request: Showing	Y/N	so you think a boy or a girl wrote this?
Information Request: Leading	Y/N	good voice right? whoa—universe right?
	Y/N	Are those good description words? Gold and diamonds?
	Y/N	WOW did it sound like someone was really talking there?
	Y/N	Did she use that word pretty good?

aspects of voice the teacher is negotiating with her students through the model text, and providing more emphasis on how these processes are used in writing could help negotiate students through including

voice in their writing. From here, the teacher moves to the task deconstruction stage, where more detail about how the writer achieves the goals of the writing task is provided.

Table 4.15
Task Negotiation Ideational Metafunction

Participants	Material Processes	Goals
(did it sound like)...someone was really	talking	there?
Did she	use	that word (pretty good?)
a boy or a girl	wrote	this?

4.2.4 Task Deconstruction. The task deconstruction phase (Table 4.16) has the teacher continuing to read through the text, focusing on how

the student addressed additional features of writing in the model text.

Table 4.16
Task Deconstruction

<p>[The teacher continues to read the model text on the OHP, and emphasizing the presence of punctuation on the OHP by pointing and vocally emphasizing commas] <i>boys are lame so let's make an lame Park for them, why don't we put a slide COMMA monkey bars COMMA and two swings</i> What did she just do there? Items in a series. that was really good right? Yeah she made a list, did she use commas right? wow. <i>It's important to have a playground BECAUSE... Kids and grown-ups will be happy there's going to have to be two rules NO boys</i> [boys booing] Ss: <<Boos>> T: <i>And no peeing in the hot tub or pool</i> Ss: <<Laughing>> T: <i>Please it's ...DISGUSTING, so don't do it</i> Is that good voice? Ss: <<Yeah>> T: Did it make you laugh? Ss: <<Yeah>> T: Did it have purple words? It's pretty good right?</p>

4.2.4.1 Textual Metafunction. The textual metafunction stage (Table 4.17) is characterized by the teacher identifying what the model text has accomplished in greater emphasis than in the negotiation stage, particularly in the language resources used. Emphasis is again placed on the student actions in her writing, with the rheme including strategies that are expanded in concurrent sentences through cohesive devices.

Here we can see the cohesive device referencing ideas in both the theme and rheme, highlighting how the student has used writing resources, but

what is accomplished is somewhat obfuscated by cohesive devices: in particular, *that was really good right?* does not provide much information about aspects of writing *that* refers to, nor do the references to *it* talking about what made the usage of voice effective. The rheme shows the desired effect of voice - making the audience laugh and using *purple words* (in class metalanguage for descriptive vocabulary), but there are no further details about what characterizes excellent use of voice in the classroom discourse.

Table 4.17
Task Deconstruction Textual Metafunction

	Theme	Rheme
<i>text1</i>	<i>why don't we put a slide, monkey bars, and two swings</i>	
	What did she	just do <i>there</i> ¹ ?
	<i>Items</i> ¹	in a <i>series</i> ¹
	<i>that</i> ¹	was really good right?
	Yeah she	made a <i>list</i> ¹
	did she	use commas <i>right</i> ¹ ?
<i>text2</i>	<i>And no peeing in the hot tub or pool</i> <i>Please it's ...DISGUSTING so don't do it</i>	
	Is	<i>that</i> ² good voice?
	<i>Did it</i> ²	make you laugh?
	<i>Did it</i> ²	have purple words?
	<i>It</i> ²	's pretty good right?

The deconstruction stage highlights elements of language used to accomplish the writing task, but more specific details concerning the use of vocabulary to create voice are necessary to make this clear to students. The use of cohesive devices here needs greater clarity, particularly when addressing the use of voice, which teachers and students need greater specificity in identifying language resources that accomplish this.

4.2.4.2 Interpersonal Metafunction. In the interpersonal metafunction (Table 4.18), the use of

questions that require responses from students has decreased, with the potential for this information to become obscured to students that may have difficulty following along. The use of leading questions was occasionally confirmed by the teacher, but this was not consistent.

Table 4.18
Task Deconstruction Interpersonal Metafunction

	Type of Question	Question
Information Request: Showing	Y/N	Is that good voice?
	Y/N	Did it make you laugh?
Information Request: Leading	WH	What did she just do there?
	Y/N	that was really good right?
	Y/N	did she use commas right?
	Y/N	Did it have purple words?
	Y/N	It's pretty good right?

4.2.4.3. Ideational Metafunction. The material processes that the teacher highlights here (Table 4.19), *made*, *make*, *use*, are all important actions used in the model text used to accomplish a valued goal in this writing task, *making a list*, represented by the cohesive device *items in a series*, also

used as metalanguage in this classroom. Making the audience laugh is another process related to successful production of voice in writing, in order to prompt a positive reaction to the letter, establishing author identity and empathy.

Table 4.19
Task Deconstruction Ideational Metafunction

Participants	Material Processes	Goals
(What did) she	just do	there?
(Yeah) she	made	a list
(Did) she	use	commas right?
(Did) it	make you	laugh?

This analysis shows the importance of the material processes involved in this discourse involved in the directing of students into becoming better writers involving voice, and accomplishing the various unspoken goals included in the expectations of the teachers. Through the highlighting of these processes, the actions that the student made in the model text took in the deconstruction phase was highlighted in the teacher discourse, and what goals they accomplished.

This analysis featured the initial 4 stages of the classroom genre, modeling texts, and these stages continue throughout the class. These stages

alternate depending on the needs of the students, and the goal of teacher discourse in each section. This analysis of these classroom genres can be helpful for both practitioners and researchers in identifying language resources that are used most to describe complex modes of language and language usage.

5. Implications for the Classroom

This analysis of classroom genres can be illustrative for both researchers and practitioners. In the focal teacher's classroom discourse, the analysis of the elements of each metafunction, such as cohesive devices, material processes and the use

of questions, seem to invite students to take part in the classroom discourse, but for the most part the teacher is very much in control of the discourse in the classroom, leaving few genuine opportunities for students to respond to the interrogative questions or make real contributions during the classroom discourse. In light of this research, teachers may be able to direct more attention to their language usage in the classroom, as well as developing more effective ways of communicating expectations through language and visuals, such as the OHP or classroom resources, such as bulletin boards, graphic organizers, and classroom décor. For ELLs, the modeling of academic language and the ways to fulfill the requirements of writing assignments should be clearly modeled for students, with detailed explanations built off of student responses. Each metafunctional analysis provides guidance for teaching practices and areas of potential improvement.

5.1 Textual Metafunction Analysis

The focal teacher shows a great deal of willingness to collaborate with her students and involve them in writing as we can see from her effort to show student responsibility with the use of *we* in the thematic position in the textual metafunction. The teacher focuses on the accomplishments of her students clearly when referring to the model text highlighting the achievements that the student has made with the use of their writing, and characterizes students' agency in this thematic position. The teacher is consistent in her use of textual organization and cohesive devices. The information referenced by cohesive devices is often included within the same stage or the same excerpt of discourse, in the beginning stages of the curriculum genre. This makes it fairly easy for ELLs to comprehend the flow of information and follow directions as well as suggestions that the teacher

makes concerning writing and promising practices in the model text. However, teachers should take care to keep their discourse clear as they move deeper into their lessons. Cohesive devices quickly become more abstract, and students may have difficulty connecting these with the concept being referred to, be it expectations in the writing assignment, or accomplishments made by the students, or any number of complex concepts. When the cohesive devices include complex concepts using complex metalanguage, such as "items in a series", which is a rhetorical strategy the teacher wants students to produce in this writing exercise, students and particularly ELLs may become lost if they do not have a solid grasp on the classroom discourse or expectations of the teacher. If the teacher is aware of how the organization of discourse can help students' comprehension, they can become more mindful of how they shape their lessons, how new and old information is communicated, and how to reduce the potential for obfuscation of cohesive devices as the expectations become increasingly complex.

5.2 Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis

The interpersonal metafunction showed how showing and leading questions were used in order to emphasize the promising practices seen in the model text, with showing questions emphasizing what was accomplished, and leading questions actively directing students towards the tasks that they were expected to accomplish, related in part to the student responsibility featured in the textual metafunction. Through interacting with the entire class with these questions, this use of language can orient students to understand how the model text was successful in accomplishing the expectations of the writing task, if students are aware of the goals of these questions.

Despite the number of instances of questions used in the interpersonal metafunction, the

number of questions that provided students with the opportunity to interact were few, with most questions only requiring a Y/N answer. These were usually asked and answered as an entire class, which makes it difficult for the teacher to determine which students are participating or which students are lost. Showing questions were mostly limited to simple Y/N, which were seemingly asked merely to confirm that students were paying attention. Leading questions required no input from students, and only hint to students what might be useful to use in writing, but this is not made explicit. The teacher could add more details and elaboration through showing questions, asking students more specifically about the qualities of the model text that created, for instance, good voice, and asking students directly, or to answer these questions to other students could foster a cooperative atmosphere and greater cooperation and coordination.

5.3 Ideational Metafunction Analysis

Combined with the textual and interpersonal metafunctions, the focus on the processes, participants and goals in the modeling texts genre can provide teachers with additional considerations to provide students with details of writing, and different ways of thinking about classroom discourse, especially in the language that is used to communicate exemplary writing and strategies conducted by the model text writer. Along with the metalanguage that teachers already use in the classroom, teachers can be more aware of the use of material processes and goals that are used in classroom discourse, and ensure that students have a solid grasp on each of these concepts and the expectations of the writing task. Careful use of in-class metalanguage and how processes and goals are used to accomplish this (*good voice* → talking, boy or girl wrote; *items in a series* → make a list, use commas) can provide students more concrete

details and strategies to meet the expectations of the writing tasks.

5.4 Limitations

This analysis only features small instances of classroom discourse due to space limitations. The classroom discourse analyzed was only a small sample of the large number of observed classes, and is selected for being representative of the six writing lessons observed. The curriculum genres and stages selected were based on the lessons that were most representative of each teacher's' observed classes observed throughout the year.

For data analysis the majority of the research has been focused on identifying common phenomenon and patterns seen within classroom discourse. Due to space concerns, selections of teacher discourse have been shown, and for the sake of continuity, one teacher was the focus of this paper. The SFL analysis pinpointed types of language used in the classroom by the teacher and scrutinized the language that was used in the classroom.

5.5 Conclusion

This language analysis shows that, despite the fact that spoken discourse is more disorganized than written discourse, teachers should be more aware of the structure of their classroom discourse, the language use that occurs within, and that this should be held to a greater standard (Christie, 2005; Christie & Derewianka, 2010). Scrutinizing language through discourse analysis may help teachers to further evaluate their own usage of spoken language in the classroom, and identify potential gaps in understanding, or disconnects between what teachers are expecting from students and what their discourse is providing to students.

One of the most important details to consider about classroom discourse is how quick and complex the flow of information can become, and how quickly layers of meaning may obfuscate

writing expectations for students, in particular the importance of cohesive devices and classroom metalanguage to have clear referents and clear means to meet these expectations. If teachers can provide additional scaffolding for cohesive devices with multi-modal resources such as classroom decorative resources or other visuals, this can provide ELLs an additional resource to follow the flow of information. Being mindful of the textual metafunction can help teachers better structure their spoken discourse, and can be helpful planning how best to model writing in classroom discourse.

Furthermore, the ways in which teachers describe their expectations for writing in the ideational metafunction through processes, goals and participants, which can provide a great resource in showing students what they need to do in order to meet the expectations of writing, how students can

do so, and build additional language resources and models to fulfill the tasks. This analysis discussed potential approaches for modeling and pre-writing, but can easily be applied to classroom discourse discussing revision and guiding group work. As teachers pay additional attention to their language use in the classroom, the potential to more easily identify useful language resources for different topics, writing approaches and different audiences will become clearer. Mindful use of language within classroom genres can help teachers to better communicate to ELLs the importance of language resources, gain a better idea of how their own classroom discourse influences students' writing practice, and scrutinize their own teaching practices to sculpt their classrooms into more "structured experience[s]" (Christie, 2005) in order to clearly communicate writing expectations to students.

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APPENDIX

Transcription Conventions

T: Teacher

S: Student

Ss: Multiple Students

Description	Example
Stage Directions [Brackets]	[The teacher starts reading from the overhead projector]
Reading text <i>Italicized</i>	<i>It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...</i>
Emphasized word UPPERCASE	It was the WORST of times, not the BLURST of times...
Rising Intonation ? Question Mark	What day is it today?
Eliciting information ...ellipsis...	Today is... ...Tuesday
Chorally Answering <<double angle brackets>>	<<Tuesday>>
Slight Pause , comma	Today we're going to read this story, and then we'll have lunch
Longer Pause (...) ellipsis within parenthesis	Does anyone have any questions? (...)
No gap, latched utterance = at point of utterance	What's for lunch today = do you know?
Self-Interruption - at point of interruption	It's Salisbury-no, it's just pizza today

