4 The pedagogic device and the production of pedagogic discourse: a case example in early literacy education

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Introduction

The point of departure for this discussion is a common domestic activity: caregivers reading books with children and talking to them. It is often one of the more relaxed aspects of domestic life, and at first glance perhaps not a likely site for intensive linguistic and sociological analysis. What makes the activity of more than passing interest is the fact that, recontextualized into schooling, it has become a key element in a pedagogic discourse of early school literacy. Today it is usual in most English-speaking countries to see joint book-reading as a significant part of children's early literacy education. Additionally, there have been many advisory handbooks for parents[1] which promote specific aspects of interaction during joint book-reading as appropriate family practice to ensure children's success in school literacy (NSW Department of School Education [nd]).

The research basis for this development in early literacy education is work describing relations between reading in the home and early pedagogic success. The most influential research was carried out by Durkin (1966), Clark (1976), Clay (1967), and Wells (1985, 1987), but there is also a large amount of lesser known case study data, typically produced by academics in faculties of education who have studied their own children's literacy development (e.g. Snow 1983). So persuasive has this discourse been that it is now a matter of commonsense that joint book-reading is a key aspect of a necessary *partnership* between home and school (Cairney and Munsie 1992, Dwyer 1989).

My interest here, however, is not in the efficacy of the activity. Rather, it is in the ways in which joint-book reading is recontextualized into school literacy practices from its origins in domestic life. I am particularly interested in the possibility of different variants of joint book-reading occurring in families in different social locations, and how these variants are positioned in relation to pedagogic discourses of early literacy development. Since the antithesis of partnership is preclusion, some important pedagogical questions derive from uses of the partnership metaphor: in particular, who may enter the desirable partnership to prepare children for school literacy success, and on what terms?

There is a strong basis in existing research literature for suspecting that variation in interaction during 'literacy events' (Heath 1983) will occur between fractions of families in different social locations. Variation has, of course, been a major focus of literacy research for many years, in fields as diverse as the history of literacies (Cressy 1980, Graf 1987); literacy, culture and cognition (Cook-Gumperz 1986, Goody 1987, Heath 1983, Street 1984, 1993), feminism and literacies (Christian-Smith 1993, Cranny-Francis 1992, Gilbert 1990, 1992) and in critiques of relations between ideology, discourses and educational practices (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990, Kress 1985, 1987, Gee 1990).

More specifically, in joint book-reading research there has been a good deal of interesting work on variation. The problem in thinking about the pedagogic consequences is not that variation is unresearched to this point. For example, it is a significant strand in Heath's ethnographic study of 'ways with words' in three south-eastern US communities. Heath found interaction during joint book-reading in the working-class families of Roadville to be markedly different from practices among the families of her teacher informants in Gateway. Additionally, there is Wells' report of variation in the time-sampled interactions he observed in the Bristol study (e.g. Moon and Wells 1979). Teale (1986) and Tizard and Hughes (1984) also discuss variation in interaction in association with speakers' social location. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

However, a real problem is that in none of the work of which I am aware has there been any detailed linguistic analysis of 'intact' sessions of joint book-reading, which explicates what variant practices there are, with what social features of speakers they correlate, why these relations might have arisen, and how the variant practices are positioned in relation to school pedagogic discourses. Nor has any study considered how research about precocious reading development, often regarded as an outcome of extensive joint book-reading, is projected into pedagogic discourses of the early years of schooling. Much of this research either celebrates or regrets difference without reference to any privileging text or the social structuring conditions through which it is produced.[2]

An enquiry which attempts to overcome these problems and develop a more fully theorized account of variation in relation to speakers' social locations requires two strategies. First, the research must give a detailed account of linguistic interaction during joint book-reading as a basis for observing whether or not significant semantic variation occurs across families in contrasted social formations (Hasan 1996), and then compare these accounts with typical school practices. The detailed linguistic analysis is necessary because it is *talk* around object texts, which typically pervades joint book-reading activity, not shared reading to children per se, which has been the focus of pedagogic interest. Wells (1985: 253) provides a succinct statement of a widely-held position:

it is not the reading of stories on its own that leads children towards the reflective, disembedded thinking that is so necessary for success in school, but the total interaction in which the story is embedded. At first they need a competent adult to mediate, as reader and writer, between themselves and the text; but even when they can perform the decoding and encoding for themselves, they continue to need help in interpreting the stories they hear and read and in shaping those that they create for themselves.

The manner in which the adult – first parent and later teacher – fulfils this latter role is almost as important as the story itself.

First, then, I will report on some aspects of a detailed exploration of interactive language across families in contrasted social locations, using a linguistic analytic framework developed by Hasan (1983, 1996) in which each clause of each utterance is analysed from a range of semantic perspectives. Second, some account is needed, based on sociological theory, of the social processes through which joint book-readings are selectively recontextualized into the pedagogic discourse of the first years of schooling. In interpreting the results of the linguistic analysis, the chapter explores the potential of a theoretical resource in Bernstein's work: the pedagogic device.

In his writing over the last decade or so Bernstein (1986, 1990) has drawn attention to the importance of two types of analysis of pedagogic discourse. In one type, analyses consider the differential effects of what is relayed, the content of pedagogic discourse and its differential effects on various categories of learner. Here the object of analysis is to reveal a 'double distortion' in communication: first, a privileging of the communication of principles of order and relation, and of specific content and skills associated with dominant social groups; and second, misrepresentation of the cultural practices of the dominated group in pedagogic discourse (Bernstein 1990: 171).

However, in the other neglected type of analysis the issue is pedagogic discourse as a relay. Such an account is required, Bernstein argues, in order to interpret the sets of relations into which a specific form of pedagogic discourse enters and the processes through which it is constructed out of other discourses. His account, given as a highly original description of the pedagogic device, is an important extension of analyses of the ways in which formal schooling participates in the cultural transmission of dominant social principles of order and relation. Here I will attempt to consider how one might approach research into ways in which the pedagogic device produces a particular form of pedagogic discourse in relation to typical linguistic interaction in families in different social locations.

More generally, the research addresses specific aspects of relations between symbolic structures and social structures. Bernstein has recently commented on a tendency in contemporary uses of 'discourse' as the centre of gravity for social analysis for the 'social' to be re-written by non-sociologists and taken over by sociologists, with the consequence that

The privileging of discourse . . . tends to abstract the analysis of discourse from the detailed empirical analysis of its basis in social structure. The relationships between symbolic structures *and* social structures are in danger of being severed (1996: 13).

The research approach

There were three phases of data-gathering in the research project: a preliminary survey of joint book-reading to map the distributions of the activity in a large number of families in different social locations; gathering samples of interactive language between mothers and four-year-old children in a smaller number of families, contrasted carefully on specific social features; and gathering samples of interactive language in kindergarten classes in the suburbs in which these families lived. The K samples were obtained during the first month or so of schooling.

The first rather straightforward task for the research was to establish whether or not joint book-reading was a widely-practised activity in families with pre-school children in different socio-geographical regions of Sydney. The results of a questionnaire survey suggested that it was. The regions were contrasted on the general criterion of how early childhood services were provided.[3] In the one, the state was largely responsible for this provision as a form of early educational intervention, in response to the region's many perceived educational disadvantages. Early Childhood Education centres (hereafter ECE centres) were built in the grounds of local primary schools. In the other, provision was through privately operated ECE centres, to which the families paid a daily fee for services. From an initial list of 603, 427 families, each of which had a child of approximately four years of age enrolled at one of the ECE centres, responded to the survey. Of these, there were 240 responses from among the state-funded ECE group, and 187 from the privately funded ECE group. Proportions of responses from the two regions were equal. From the responses it was evident that a large majority of families in both regions did read regularly to their pre-school children, and typically it was the mother who did so. From responses to many of the questionnaire items, such as those which asked about purposes for the activity and the types of text typically read, there were also strong informal grounds for hypothesizing that variation in interaction was likely.

In their responses many mothers in both regions indicated willingness to record interaction during joint book-reading. Since this was to be a study of intra-cultural variation a first selection was made of those families in which both parents had been born in Australia, used English as their mother tongue, and had attended school in Australia. The ensuing problem was to select from among the volunteers in such a way as to be able eventually to provide a theoretically explicit account of relations between social features of speakers and any finding of semantically variant forms of interaction common among members of social groups. This has been a key

difficulty with previous work describing joint book-reading interaction.

The strategy adopted for this research derives from Bernstein's concepts of classification, framing and field, and largely follows the approach developed by Hasan in her investigations of semantic variation in casual conversations in the home (Bernstein 1975, Hasan 1989). The concepts classification and framing provide a means for theorizing relations between, and relations within, categories in the social division of labour. Under conditions of strong classification and framing, categories of labour acquire distinctive meanings, and distinctive forms of communication tend to become associated with them because they are differentially distributed on dimensions of power. The variable possibility of an agent within a labour category exercising choice in effecting meanings associated with the category is a crucial distinguishing feature of categories. Variable degrees of choice can exist for both the meanings and the communicative practices within categories of labour. Using this perspective, the criterion specified by Hasan for selecting participants to form contrasted social class groups was *the relative autonomy of an agent to exercise power in the workplace* (e.g. 1989). With minor elaborations it was the criterion used in this study.

Professional autonomy is a relative rather than a fixed feature of an occupation. The feature gives a cline of relations between labour categories rather than sets of discrete levels of occupations. For example, a district manager in a government bureaucracy may have considerable autonomy from one perspective, as in making local budget decisions, but from another perspective, as in determining policy on staffing levels, the same worker has virtually no autonomy. Nevertheless it can reasonably be hypothesized that a social security clerk would *generally* have more workplace autonomy than a building labourer in making and transmitting decisions, but considerably less than a district manager in a government bureaucracy.[4]

The occupations of parents[5] in what I will now call the Lower Autonomy Professional (LAP) group, again following Hasan, are displayed in Table 4.1, and those of the Higher Autonomy Professional (HAP) group in Table 4.2.

Since the preliminary survey indicated that it was mothers who most frequently read to children, the study focused on their interaction. The key problem was to obtain audio-recordings of data with minimal intrusion into the usual family practices. Certain strategies used in previous research were excluded. The presence of an observer at pre-arranged times was considered to be too intrusive, and potentially to limit the spontaneity of occasions of reading and talk (Heath 1983, Teale 1986). For this reason, too, videorecording was considered not to be feasible, as it would have made unacceptable demands on the mothers (cf. Tizard and Hughes 1984). Remote recording devices were excluded because time-sampling was not appropriate in a project investigating the *whole* of the linguistic interaction in a session of joint book-reading (cf. Wells with Bridges *et al.* 1981). More positively, it has been shown in previous research in the semantic variation field that clear, natural data can be obtained from audio recordings made by participants (Hasan, 1989).

Table 4.1 Lower-Autonomy Professional group: parents' occupations

Child	Mother in current paid employment	Mother's occupation	Father's occupation
Philip	yes	packer	paint batcher
Dennis	no	clerk	loader driver
Janet	yes	child-minder	carpenter
Rhonda	yes	word processor	soldier
Angela	yes	clerk	drainer
Anthony	no	factory assistant	accounts clerk
Paul	no	shop assistant	boilermaker
Ashley	yes	waitress	blacksmith/welder
Robin	no	cleaner	(no father in this family)
Wayne	yes	barmaid	labourer

Table 4.2 Higher-Autonomy Professional group: parents' occupations

Child	Mother in current paid employment	Mother's occupation	Father's occupation
Simon	yes	librarian	engineer
Stephen	yes	teacher	engineer
Rachel	yes	company secretary	sales manager
Benjamin	yes	teacher	civil engineer
James	no	occupational therapist	financial consultant
John	no	secretary	engineer
Andrew	no	office manager	managing director
Glenn	no	dental assistant	investment planner
Emily	yes	teacher	barrister
Michael	yes	medical specialist	medical specialist

Participants were therefore provided with small, powerful audio recorders and tapes, and asked to record eight occasions of joint book-reading. They were invited to destroy recordings of sessions which they felt were 'unnatural', or which contained material they wished to keep private. All data from the family recordings were transcribed, and from this four occasions per family were selected for intensive analysis. For the LAP group these sessions were those with the largest number of interactive messages (an analytic unit which will be formally defined in the following section). For the HAP group the four sessions were those which most closely approximated the mean number of interactive messages.

It was also possible to gather samples of kindergarten classroom discourse for comparison with the family discourse. Teachers of kindergarten classes in the schools in which the children would ordinarily enrol in the subsequent year made eight recordings of joint book-reading sessions during the first month or so of the school year. This gave a total sample of 160 recordings. Approximately 50 per cent of these were transcribed, and random selections made from the first two recordings within each class. A check ensured that the selected session was not atypical of other recorded lessons.

So far as is possible under any recording constraint, the sessions appear to be essentially natural occasions of linguistic interaction. Unself-conscious use of language is evident throughout the recording when family matters are discussed, children and mothers joke together, and mothers yawn and comment ruefully on their domestic work. There is no evidence that the readings were rehearsed, or that the children were constrained by the presence of the tape recorder in what topics they could talk about. In fact, the children sometimes asked at the end of a recording session when recording would begin. All of the transcript data which was subsequently analysed is reproduced in Williams (1995).

Linguistic analysis of joint book-reading interaction

The lack of studies which consider linguistic interaction *during intact sessions* of joint book-reading is one of the difficulties besetting the modelling of pedagogic discourse of early literacy development. There are some case studies in which scholars have analysed samples of language from single sessions, for example Snow (1983) and Dombey (1983), and in the Bristol study Wells looked at fragments of many family sessions, fragments determined by time-interval recording techniques. Though Heath's *Ways with Words* (1983) is a very detailed ethnographic study, the discussion of interactive language is largely in terms of broad types of questions used in the different social locations she describes. Obviously, it is necessary to overcome some rather large methodological hurdles in order to be able to describe variation in linguistically explicit ways through analyses of whole texts.

The linguistic analyses used in this study were made possible by Hasan's development of a theory of semantic variation, including the methodologically crucial resource of a contextually open analytic framework (Hasan 1983, 1989, 1996). Hasan's work extends suggestions initially made by Halliday (1973) for the mapping of meaning resources available to speakers within a particular situation type as this is defined within systemic functional linguistic theory. I will briefly outline key aspects of Hasan's approach, introduce two fragments of her semantic network and then present the results of the analyses for these data based on the framework.

The unit which is the point of origin for analysis in semantic networks is message, glossed as 'the smallest semantic unit that is *capable of realizing an*

element in the structure of texts (Hasan 1995: 227). Message is typically realized at the lexicogrammatical stratum as clause. At a primary level of delicacy message is the entry point in the semantic stratum to the system of options [**progressive**] versus [**punctuative**]. For each semantic feature there is a statement specifying its lexicogrammatical realization. For example, for the feature [**progressive**] the lexicogrammatical realization statement is:

1.   preselect option *major* at clause rank;
2.   insert element *Predicator* in clause;
3.   preselect an instance of verbal group at Predicator (Hasan, 1992: 91)

Progressive messages are described through sets of related options.[6] These are given as:

i.   systems of interpersonal meanings, for example options in message function (questioning, informing, commanding . . .), options in personal evaluation, point of view, etc.;
ii.   systems of experiential meaning, for example the ascription of actional, evaluational roles, identification, definition; construction of time, etc.;
iii.   systems of logical meaning, for example cause, condition, and metatextual relations, etc.;
iv   systems of textual meanings, for example options in topic maintenance, topic change, etc. (Hasan, 1989: 244).

As a result it is possible for a researcher to model potential variation in terms of differential and differentiating patterns of selection of the semantic options available to speakers. The lexicogrammatical realization statements function virtually as recognition criteria for semantic features.

Punctuative messages are realized by clauses which do not select for Predicator, typically minor clauses. Some informal examples of punctuative messages are formulaic greetings, address, and reactive expressions such as 'gosh'.

For this research the range of analyses of semantic features was determined on the following criteria:

i.   features which, described in some reasonably comparable form, have been the focus of major interest in previous research;
ii.   sets of relevant features selected from those which Hasan and her colleagues established (Hasan 1989, 1991, 1992; Hasan and Cloran 1990);
iii.   those features which have not been widely discussed in previous research but which are of particular theoretical interest in joint book-reading as a context for literacy learning.

Illustration from the range of analyses, rather than comprehensive discussion, is obviously necessary here for reasons of space. However, it does create a difficulty in interpretation, which is that the realization of semantic variants may appear to be given only by configurations of the semantic features discussed. Such is not the case. The features are presented as illustrations only from the full range of analyses on which the general claims rest. These are available in Williams (1995).

The obvious place to begin the enquiry is with questions, or, more precisely, demands for information, since these have been central to researchers interest in children's early literacy development. Each question asked by mothers and children was analysed through the framework of Hasan's semantic network. Figure 4.1 presents the relevant fragment of the network, and it is followed by some brief examples of analysis procedures.
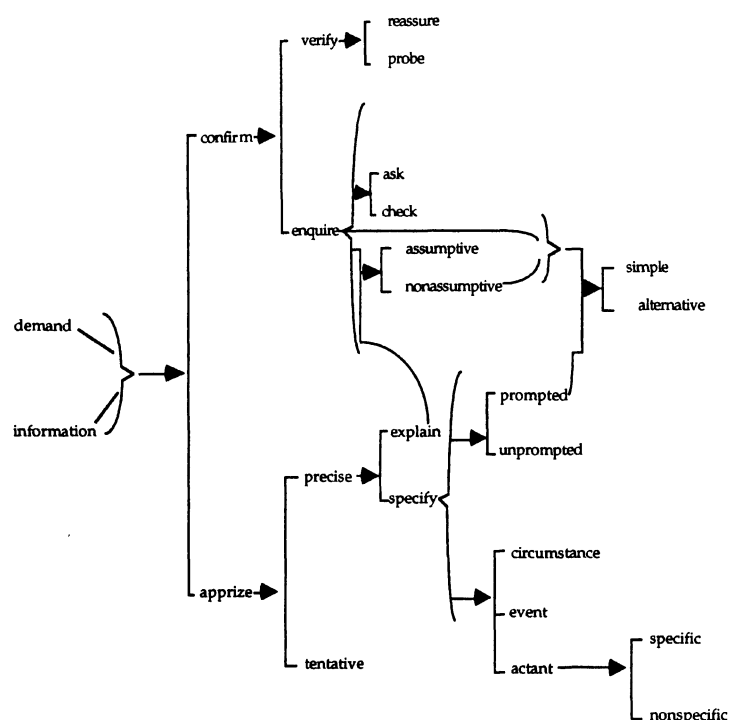

Figure 4.1 Hasan's network of choices in making demands for information

Reading the network from left to right, which is to say from the primary features to more delicate systems dependent on these features, produces selection expressions such as [demand; information: confirm: verify: reassure]. An example of a message selecting these features is: 'She's going to the beach, isn't she?' The lexicogrammatical realization statement for this option is [major: indic: declarative: tagged: reversed]. In contrast, a message selecting [demand; information: confirm: verify: probe], exemplified by 'She's going to the beach, is she?' is realized lexicogrammatically by [major: indic: declarative: tagged: constant]. To recapitulate, the analysis of each demand for information through the framework of the semantic network is based on an analysis of the lexicogrammar. So, when a child asks a question, 'Why is that there?', the semantic analysis of this message from the perspective of its interpersonal function as a demand for information is: [demand; information: apprise: precise: explain]. The ground for this claim is the lexicogrammatical realization [major: indicative: interrogative: nonpolar: wh conflated with Adjunct and Circumstance of cause why^F^S^P].7

Prefacing of messages was also of particular interest because it has been shown to contribute importantly to semantic variation in Hasan's research. Selection from the preface system plays an important part in the construal of 'point of view' (Cloran 1994) and has been shown to contribute to differences in extent of individuation (Hasan 1989, 1991).

In order to consider the nature of this resource it is necessary to slightly refine the earlier comment that a message is typically realized by a clause. The refinement has to do with the contribution of projecting clauses to messages. These are clauses such as 'They all thought that was such a funny idea'. Projecting clauses realize the feature [prefaced] rather than a separate message. Informally speaking, they realize the meaning that the message is a metarepresentation. For example, the clause complex 'I think that we can have a holiday in Port Douglas' realizes a single message, and this message selects the feature [prefaced], which is realized by the projecting clause 'I think'. This semantic feature is itself the entry condition to several further dependent systems which describe more delicate meaning options in 'metarepresenting', realized through further lexicogrammatical options selected by the projecting clause. The difference in lexicogrammar, for example, between 'I said that they could visit Port Douglas', where the projecting clause selects a Verbal Process and 'I think that they could visit Port Douglas', where a Mental Process is selected. In Hasan's description of [prefaced] messages, the first message is a metarepresentation of a locution, and selects the features [prefaced: experiential: saying]. The second message is a metarepresentation of an idea, but with the interesting further grammatical characteristic of the projecting clause acting as a form of interpersonal grammatical metaphor of modality (Halliday 1994: 354ff). This message selects the features [prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal].

There is also a potential for the experience of different figures to be

projected through the grammatical resources of Subject in the projecting clause, as exemplified in the following extract.

Example 1

Mh: 'Toad steals a motor car'. Toad eagerly scrambled into the seat
     vacated by the driver
     01 Remember he was dressed up like an old woman
     02 and the car came along
     03 and they offered he offered him a lift?
     04 Remember that?
Cd: 05 Mm.
Mh: 06 And then he said that he would like to have a go at the driving?
     07 And they all thought that was such a funny idea.

Message 1 '(Do you) remember he was dressed up like an old woman' is of course addressed to the child. It selects the feature [**prefaced: subjective: other: addressee: child**]. In contrast Messages 6 and 7, which concern some aspects of the experience of the fictive characters, select [**prefaced: subjective: other: third party: object text figure**], Toad and his friends. One interesting question about variation in these data is the frequency with which families and teachers make the subjective experience of the child the focus of enquiry, as in Messages 1 and 4 in Example 1. I will return to this question shortly.[8]

Describing semantic variation in joint book-reading

In all, 15,337 interactive messages were analysed: 8276 from the family data and 7061 from the K class data. Statistical comparisons[9] of the selection of semantic features in the two family data sets and in the two classroom discourse data sets were made. However, comparisons between the family and school data sets were not possible since the general constraints on the frequency of occurrence of semantic features could not be assumed, for statistical purposes, to be the same in the two environments. This restriction did not, though, prevent comparisons of *tendencies* to select sets of semantic features between the two family groups and the school groups. The central question for these comparisons was: if x semantic features, or constellation of features, appear to be implicated in variation in linguistic interaction between the two family social groups, is there any evidence that x (constellation of) features achieves prominence in linguistic interaction in joint book-reading in kindergarten classroom discourse?

For economy in the subsequent discussion it is useful to give the general finding that no significant differences were found between the sets of classroom discourse data in the two social locations. There appears to be no statistically significant difference which is associated with the social

area location of the schools on features relevant to this discussion. Further, this finding parallels those in Hasan's project, 'The role of everyday talk between mothers and children in establishing ways of learning, Phases 1 and 2'. It has therefore been most productive to collapse the two sets of classroom discourse data and describe median frequencies of features in the interactive talk for the whole set, thus providing twenty examples of classroom discourse across which comparisons with the family data could be made.

The first issue to be addressed in the family data analyses was the basic one of the extent of object text reading. The total number of object text messages read by mothers was very similar, though mothers were not constrained by the project instructions to choose any particular length or type of text. This finding is perhaps not very surprising given the age of the children and the conventions of publishing, which determine fairly standard lengths of text for this age group. Some mothers did, of course, read more than one text per session, but those who did so tended to be distributed evenly between the two social groups. Table 4.3 presents the totals of object text messages read during the four joint book-reading sessions for each mother-child dyad.

Table 4.3 Total number of object text messages read by mother–child dyads in four joint book-reading sessions

LAP group		HAP group	
Child	**Total**	**Child**	**Total**
Anthony	117	John	231
Philip	189	Simon	288
Wayne	281	Stephen	304
Angela	459	Ben	346
Paul	456	Glenn	220
Ashley	562	Michael	354
Rhonda	652	Emily	552
Dennis	763	Rachel	568
Janet	764	Andrew	692
Robin	796	James	1261
Total	5039		4816

The mean number of object text messages read is similar in the two social groups: for the LAP group it is 503.9 and for the HAP 481.6. The difference between medians is greater, with the LAP frequency of 510.5 a good deal higher than the HAP of 350.0. However this difference is not statistically significant (p<.6563). The HAP frequencies are distributed across a larger range, from 231 to 1261, in comparison with the LAP range from 117 to 796. For both groups, the dyad with the highest

frequency of object text messages is not that with the highest number of interactive text messages. Neither is the dyad with lowest object text message frequency the same as that with the lowest interactive text frequency. Clearly the extent of talk around a text is not directly related to the amount of object text read in a session. Therefore, any differences between median frequencies for the selection of semantic features cannot be explained as a function of the *extent* of object text reading.

A comparison of the total number of interactive linguistic messages exchanged in joint book-reading sessions is of great interest. Table 4.4 presents the results of this analysis for totals of punctuative and progressive messages, and Table 4.5 the medians of the distributions for the two social groups.

There is a statistically significant difference between the median scores for total interactive messages and for progressive messages (p<.0230 in each case). The difference between the median scores for punctuative messages is not significant (p<.1789). Despite the similarity of extent of object text reading the total number of interactive messages exchanged by the HAP group is more than 300 per cent greater than for the LAP group. This

Table 4.4 Total mother–child interactive messages

	LAP group				HAP group		
Child	Punct.	Prog.	Total	Child	Punct.	Prog.	Total
Philip	2	3	5	Glen	20	133	153
Angela	12	35	47	John	49	125	174
Dennis	7	47	54	Andrew	126	243	369
Anthony	36	28	64	Ben	72	335	407
Paul	40	162	202	Simon	61	374	435
Ashley	59	188	247	Michael	98	593	691
Robin	65	198	263	James	84	649	733
Wayne	62	214	276	Stephen	93	663	756
Rhonda	96	281	377	Emily	102	791	893
Janet	58	425	483	Rachel	318	1329	1647
Totals	437	1581	2018	Totals	1023	5235	6258

Table 4.5 Median frequencies of mother–child interactive messages

Social group	Punctuative median	Progressive median	Total median
LAP	49.0	175.0	224.5
HAP	88.5	483.0	563.0

percentage difference also holds for the total number of progressive messages exchanged. The median scores for total interactive messages differ by approximately 250 per cent, and for the progressive messages by approximately 275 per cent. Underscoring this difference is the fact that the HAP dyad transcripts selected for intensive analysis were those which approximated the mean number of interactive messages for each dyad, whereas for the LAP social group it was the four transcripts with the highest number of interactive messages.

It is important to emphasize, however, that although there is a large difference between the social groups, extensive linguistic interaction does nevertheless occur in the LAP social group around object text for most dyads. The results do not imply some general lack of linguistic interaction since, typically, mothers and children in this group exchange about 50 messages per joint book-reading session.

Were the LAP children relatively passive in talking about the books they read, as is a common pedagogic stereotype of children from lower working-class backgrounds? Given the difference in extent of interaction it might appear that the LAP children are relatively less interested in the object texts, or even perhaps that they demonstrate much less initiative in linguistic interaction about the meanings of books. The frequency with which children initiated interaction during joint book-reading is a useful indicator of the degree of their active involvement in the sessions. The median frequency is 15 for each of the two social groups, so the suggestion of a relative passivity of the LAP group children can be rejected with confidence. Figure 4.2 presents a graph of the frequencies of selection of the semantic feature [initiate] by individual children in the two social groups. (The realization of this feature is the first primary clause in a stretch of interactive text.)

Though the HAP children did tend to initiate interaction specifically by making a demand for information somewhat more frequently than the LAP children, the result was not significantly different. The median frequency for selection of [initiate; demand; information] was 2.00 for the LAP children, and 6.00 for the HAP group (p<.1789).

Since the pioneering research of Ninio and Bruner (1978) on changes in a mother's questioning as the child's understanding of literacy developed, questions during interaction have been central to previous research in this field. They have assumed particular importance in descriptions of differences in literate practice within different social formations, as well as more generally in studies of variation in mother–child interaction.

Almost all mothers asked questions of their children during the interactions. No significant difference between the social groups was found in the total number of demands for information made by mothers. However, when the selection of more delicate options was examined, significant differences were found in some options dependent on [apprise], and for one option dependent on [confirm]. Table 4.6 presents median frequencies and levels of significance for these features.
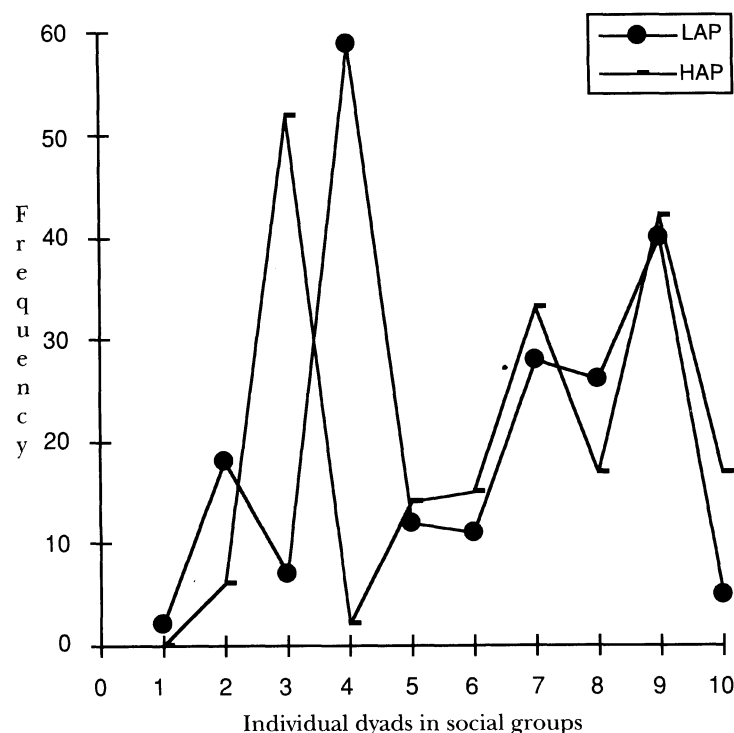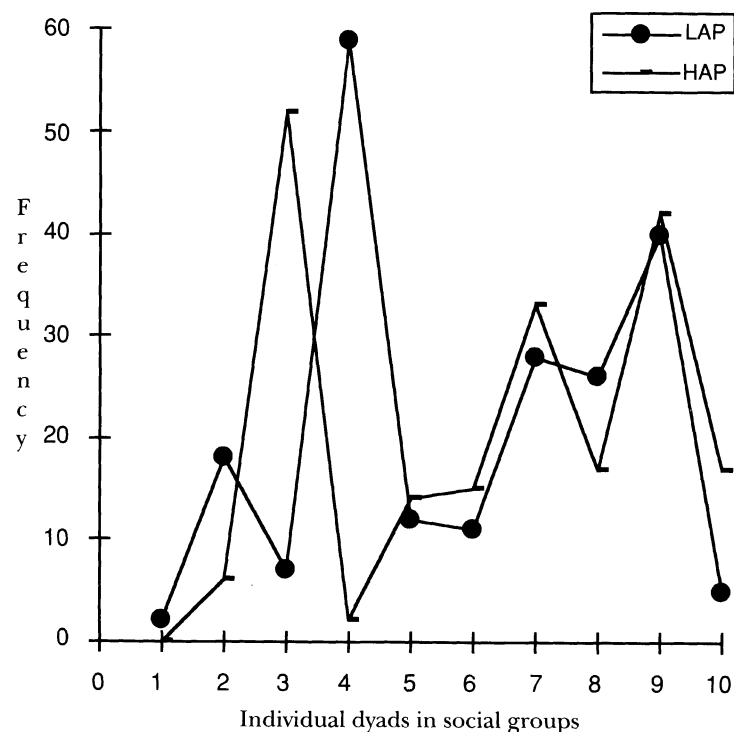
Figure 4.2 Frequency of selection of [initiate] in the two family groups

The option [explain] was selected significantly more frequently by the HAP mothers (p<.023). Selection of this feature is exemplified in a question James' mother asked him while they were reading *The Magic Pudding*: 'Why do you think Bill got in such a rage?' In the LAP group only Janet's and Rhonda's mothers select the feature, while in the HAP group eight of the ten mothers select it at least once.

The option [circumstance] is also selected significantly more frequently by the HAP mothers (p<.0055). In this data the type of demand frequently required the child to specify information about the location of a character or feature of the setting in a visual image, as when Emily's mother asked 'Where's Hannah?', and Emily replied 'Hannah? She's the big girl, isn't she?' The type of question is interesting in that, though in a sense it is closely related to questions which require the child to label object text features, it is somewhat more complex in that it assumes prior knowledge of the visual representation and requires the child to locate a

Table 4.6 Median frequencies of selection of some types of demands for information in the two social groups

Semantic option	Social group		Probability
	LAP	HAP	
[demand; information: confirm:]			
[check]	0.5	5.5	0.0055
[reassure]	3.5	26.5	0.6563
[probe]	–	–	1.0
[ask]	10.5	28.0	0.1789
[demand; information: apprize:]			
[explain]	–	4.5	0.023
[circumstance]	–	5.0	0.0055
[event]	1.5	6.0	0.1789
[actant: specific]	2.5	5.5	0.6563
[actant: nonspecific]	6.0	16.0	0.0198

narrative figure in *relation to* other figures in the image. Consistent with this finding, [non-specific actant] was also selected significantly more often by the HAP group (p<. 0198). However, the difference for [specific actant] was not statistically significant, nor was the difference for [event].

The option [check] is the one feature of those dependent on [confirm] to emerge as significantly different (p<. 0055). Only half of the LAP mothers select the option at all during the four occasions of reading, but in the HAP group all except Glenn's mother do so. A discussion between Michael and his mother about some troubles at the ECE centre provides a typical example.

Example 2

Mh:	01	Did you cry at kindy
	02	when you hurt your foot?
Cd:	03	No.
Mh:	04	So it was a bit sore
	05	but it wasn't quite sore enough to make you cry?
Cd:	06	No.
Mh:	07	Dear me.

60 ┬

50 ┼

F
r 40 ┼
e
q
u
e 30 ┼
n
c
y 20 ┼

10 ┼

0 ┴

```
┌──────┐
│ ●─LAP│
│ ──HAP│
└──────┘
```

0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Individual dyads in social groups

Figure 4.2 Frequency of selection of [**initiate**] in the two family groups

The option [**explain**] was selected significantly more frequently by the HAP mothers ($p<.023$). Selection of this feature is exemplified in a question James' mother asked him while they were reading *The Magic Pudding*: 'Why do you think Bill got in such a rage?' In the LAP group only Janet's and Rhonda's mothers select the feature, while in the HAP group eight of the ten mothers select it at least once.

The option [**circumstance**] is also selected significantly more frequently by the HAP mothers ($p<.0055$). In this data the type of demand frequently required the child to specify information about the location of a character or feature of the setting in a visual image, as when Emily's mother asked 'Where's Hannah?', and Emily replied 'Hannah? She's the big girl, isn't she?' The type of question is interesting in that, though in a sense it is closely related to questions which require the child to label object text features, it is somewhat more complex in that it assumes prior knowledge of the visual representation and requires the child to locate a

Table 4.6 Median frequencies of selection of some types of demands for information in the two social groups

Semantic option	Social group		Probability
	LAP	HAP	
[**demand; information: confirm:**]			
[check]	0.5	5.5	0.0055
[reassure]	3.5	26.5	0.6563
[probe]	–	–	1.0
[ask]	10.5	28.0	0.1789
[**demand; information: apprize:**]			
[explain]	–	4.5	0.023
[circumstance]	–	5.0	0.0055
[event]	1.5	6.0	0.1789
[actant: specific]	2.5	5.5	0.6563
[actant: nonspecific]	6.0	16.0	0.0198

narrative figure in *relation to* other figures in the image. Consistent with this finding, [**non-specific actant**] was also selected significantly more often by the HAP group ($p<. 0198$). However, the difference for [**specific actant**] was not statistically significant, nor was the difference for [event].

The option [**check**] is the one feature of those dependent on [**confirm**] to emerge as significantly different ($p<. 0055$). Only half of the LAP mothers select the option at all during the four occasions of reading, but in the HAP group all except Glenn's mother do so. A discussion between Michael and his mother about some troubles at the ECE centre provides a typical example.

Example 2

Mh:	01	Did you cry at kindy
	02	when you hurt your foot?
Cd:	03	No.
Mh:	04	So it was a bit sore
	05	but it wasn't quite sore enough to make you cry?
Cd:	06	No.
Mh:	07	Dear me.

Message 05 exemplifies the selection of [**demand; information: confirm: enquire: check**]. The difference between the social groups appears to be associated with a broader characteristic of the HAP group, that of requiring children to expand on a comment, either about an object text feature or about some aspect of individual experience.

The medians for the classroom data show that all of the options included in Table 4.6 make some contribution to classroom discourse. Comparisons of the family and school medians are reported as a graph in Figure 4.3.
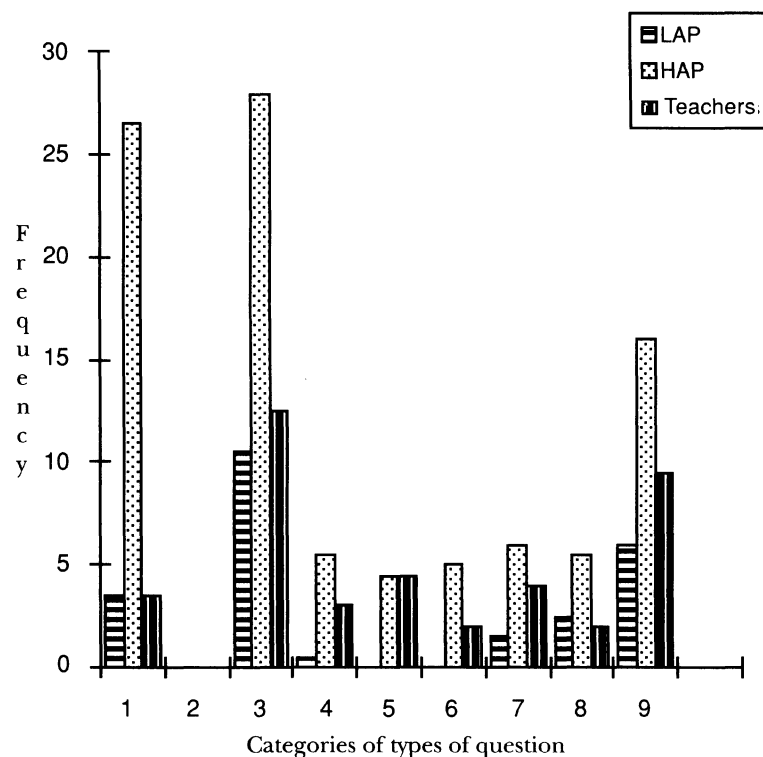
x axis categories:

1: [reassure]	5: [explain]
2: [probe]	6: [circumstance]
3: [ask]	7: [event]
4: [check]	8: [specific actant]
	9: [non-specific actant]

Figure 4.3 Median frequency of mothers' and teachers' selection of some types of questions

The sharpest contrast appears to be on the feature [**explain**], where the median frequency per individual lesson is 4.5, a prominence which is not typical of the LAP families. Recalling that the school median frequency is for an individual lesson, [**non-specific actant**] appears also to be comparatively more similar to the HAP practice.

Though the median scores for [**reassure**] appear to be very different, there is considerable variance in individual dyad scores for both the LAP and the HAP groups, resulting in the statistically non-significant findings. (The median for all the family data on this option is 15.) The extent of variance for the frequencies of [**ask**] in the two groups also accounts for the non-significant finding, though it can be seen from Figure 4.3 that this option did play an important, if not clearly contrastive, part in classroom discourse.

One specific function of mothers' questions is to expand children's responses in some way, to extend beyond a first specific comment. In the terms of the descriptive framework, they do so by selecting the feature [**develop**]. The option is dependent on simultaneous prior selection of the features [**demand; information**] and [**follow: maintain topic**]. In Example 3, Michael's mother selects the option in Messages 04 and 06.

Example 3

Mh:		**So he got ready to go to camp. He packed his**
	01	What would you pack . . .
	02	if you were going away to camp?
Cd:	03	Lots of toys.
Mh:	04	And what *else?
Cd:	05	*And that's all.
Mh:	06	What would you wear?

On this feature there was a marked contrast between the social groups. For the LAP group the median frequency was 7.00, and for the HAP group 58.50 (p<.023). For the school data the median frequency was 24.50 per individual lesson, so the school practice is again much more closely approximated by the typical HAP practice.

The result is interesting theoretically since it suggests that the HAP mothers and the teachers both seek to extend children's talk beyond the local and specific instance of the object text to develop a form of literate practice in which explicit linguistic reasoning about written text is valued. The reasoning does not necessarily take the form of an explanation – it can sometimes simply be a comment on a further aspect of the object text instance. Nevertheless the interaction, because of the semantic function of the question following the child's initial response, is always extended beyond the first, specific observation.

Children's questions have also been a major focus of research interest in the emergent literacy field, and in studies of social class differences in language use. In pedagogical literature children are almost stereotypically

represented as actively enquiring about characters and events in narrative text in particular. These data were examined, first, to ascertain whether there were significant differences between the median frequencies of children's questions.

All except two children asked questions at some point during the sessions, but there was a clear difference between the medians for the two groups. For the LAP group the median frequency was 5.00, and for the HAP group 18.00 (p<.0011). As a consequence the data was probed to a further level of delicacy, in order to examine the medians for children's selection of the features [confirm] and [apprise].

For [confirm] there was, again, a significant difference: the LAP group median was 1.50 and the HAP 10.50 (p<.023). Though the median figures are quite small it is notable from the raw frequency data, presented in graph form in Figure 4.4, that the difference tends to be sustained across individual dyads.
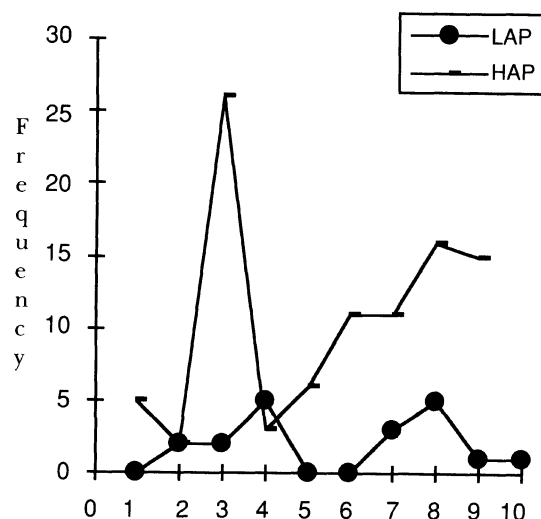

Figure 4.4 Frequencies of children's selection of [confirm] in the two social groups

There was also a significant difference for [apprise], where the LAP median frequency was 3.00 and the HAP 8.50 (p<.0011). The raw frequency difference is consistent across the dyads, with only one HAP dyad falling within the LAP range, though in this case there is much more variation in the frequency for the LAP children. Figure 4.5 presents a graph of this raw frequency data.
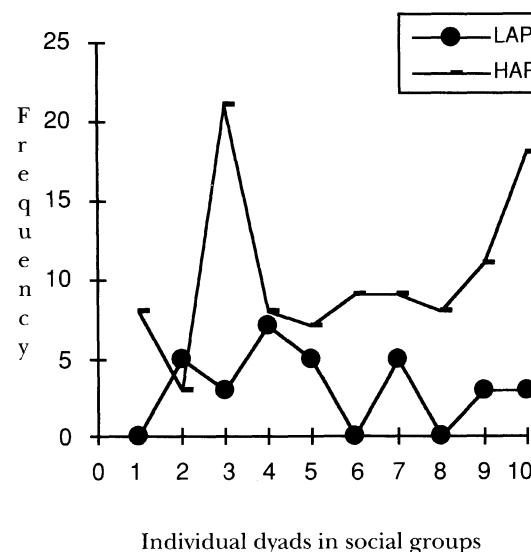
Individual dyads in social groups

Figure 4.5 Frequencies of [apprise] in children's questions

Though it was technically possible to pursue differences to a greater level of delicacy by examining children's selection from systems dependent on [confirm] and [apprise], the very low frequencies for selection of these more delicate features in the LAP group made this comparison fruitless.

In the classroom discourse there were few questions asked by children, consistent with results in the work of previous scholars. The median frequency for both types of questions was 2.00, and for both [confirm] and [apprize] it was 1.00. If children in the two social groups enter school with variable experiences in asking questions in joint book-reading, it is not likely to impact directly on initial school literacy learning. However, Heath's finding (1983) that some effects of difference in home and school literate traditions between Roadville and Gateway did not appear until much later in a child's school experience may be apposite to these results, since it is in the more advanced stages of schooling such experience would be particularly relevant.

I move now to consider the prefacing of messages. A range of perspectives will be taken on the selection of the feature [prefaced] and its dependent sub-systems, considering differences in the deployment of various features by the two social groups. Additionally, the simultaneous selection of [prefaced] and demands for information will be examined since in the contexts of everyday talk between mothers and children studied by

Hasan and her colleagues the prefacing of questions was implicated in the observed variance between the social groups (Hasan 1991). The simultaneous selection of [**prefaced**] with [**demand; information**] is exemplified in Example 4. James and his mother were discussing an event in *The Magic Pudding*.

Example 4

Mh:		**For you was both singing out 'Yoo heave ho' for half an hour and him trying to hold on to Bill's beard.**
	01	Who do you think's got the right story?
	02	The pudding reckons they pushed him off.
	03	They think that he fell off.
	04	Who do you think's got the right story?
Cd:	05	Pudding.
Mh:		(LAUGHS)
	06	I think you might be right.

All the interactive messages in this stretch select [**prefaced**]. (In 05 it is very likely to be taken as an ellipsed element.) Here, also, we can observe the simultaneous selection of prefacing with demands for information. Messages 01 and 04 are prefaced demands for information.

From an initial comparison of total prefaced messages, selected by both speakers, it was clear that there was likely to be variation in this semantic region for more delicate options. On this very general contrast there was a significant difference between the medians: for the LAP group the median frequency was 7.00, and for the HAP group it was 51.00 (p < .023). In the classroom discourse data the feature was selected at some point by all except one teacher, and the median frequency per lesson was 35.00.

The extent of the difference in total justified further probing of the more specific means through which individual points of view were constructed. There is a variety of resources available for this purpose. One particularly interesting resource for this project is that through which mothers implicated some aspect of the child's subjective state of consciousness in their talk. Formally, this is the feature [**prefaced: subjective: other: child**], selected by the mother. In Example 4, Message 01 is an example of this choice: 'Who do you think's got the right story?' Among the LAP group seven of the ten mothers selected this feature on some occasion, and in the HAP group nine of the ten, so its use was widely distributed in both social groups. However, despite this overall scope of use there was a significant difference between the median frequencies. The median for the LAP group was 2.50 and for the HAP group 14.50 (p<.023). Analysis of the classroom discourse again shows that this was a resource teachers frequently selected, despite some diversity across individual K groups. The median frequency per lesson was 9.50.

The frequencies of a related feature, children's selection of [**prefaced: self: exclusive**] were also compared. Informally these are messages in which the children construct a representation of their own subjective states of consciousness. When Emily and her mother were reading *The Great Wungle-Bungle Aerial Expedition*, for example, the mother commented 'He's playing a didgeridoo' and Emily replied, selecting this feature, 'I wish I had a didgeridoo'. For this feature the medians for the LAP and HAP groups were 2.00 and 9.50 respectively, but the results were not significant at the .025 criterion level.

From the resources for [**prefaced**] the discussion here focuses on one feature, [**prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal**]. The selection of this feature is exemplified by a message such as a mother's comment, 'I think he's using it as a paintbrush'.

Taking first a comparison of the frequencies of selection of [**prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal**] by either mother or child, there was a significant difference. The LAP median was 0.50 and the HAP 21.00 (p<.023). The feature was also quite extensively implicated in classroom discourse, where the median frequency of selection by either category of speaker was 10.00 per lesson. More specifically with respect to the mothers' speech, the selection of this feature was again significantly different between the two social groups. For the LAP group the median frequency was 0.50 and the HAP 18.00 (p<.023). In classroom discourse the feature was prominent in the teachers' speech, where the median frequency was 7.00.

In the children's speech the feature was not selected so frequently but nevertheless there was again a significant difference between the medians for the two social groups. No LAP child selected the feature, but the median for the HAP group was 1.5 (p<.023). Six of the ten HAP children selected the feature at some point in the interaction. In the classroom discourse the median frequency of selection was 2.00 occasions per lesson.

So far the discussion has treated selection of options in prefacing and in demanding information separately. However, the analytic framework enables the researcher to test simultaneous selection of features from these two meaning resources. For example, a speaker may ask a question such as 'Do you think he's using it as a paintbrush?', which simultaneously selects the features [**prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal**] and [**demand; information: confirm: ask**]. In Example 4 the mother's question 'Who do you think's got the right story?' simultaneously selects [**prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal**] and [**demand; information: apprise: specify: actant: specific: unprompted**].

Initially the frequency of prefacing for all types of demands for information by mothers was tested and, since the results were significant, further analyses were completed on the more delicate options [**confirm**] and [**apprise**]. Table 4.7 presents the details of these data. (A comparison of selection of this feature in the children's speech was not made since no child selected it.)

Table 4.7 Median frequencies for mothers' selection of [prefaced: interpersonal: nonattitudinal: modal; demand; information] with the options [**confirm**] and [**apprise**]

Social group	Median frequencies		
	Total	[confirm]	[apprise]
LAP	0.50	0.00	0.00
HAP	7.00	4.00	4.50
probability	0.023	0.0698	0.0198

For the total of both types of demands for information and for [**apprise**] there is a significant difference between the median frequencies. In classroom discourse the configuration of features did appear to play some role, even for children in their first school term. The median frequency for prefacing of all types of demands for information was 4.50, and for [**confirm**] 2.5 and [**apprise**] 1.5. The highest total for both types of questions for a K class was 39, and in seven of the twenty classes the configuration of features is selected on more than ten occasions in the one lesson. Conversely, there were six classes in which the frequency was either one or zero.

In summary, the data are consistent with Hasan's findings with respect to distributions of the selection of prefaced messages within the two social groups. Additionally, the statistical procedure adopted for this study enabled exploration of the selection of configurations of more delicate features dependent on [**prefaced**]. Perhaps the most striking finding has been the extensive use of prefacing to create modalities of possibility specifically with respect to individual states of consciousness.

These then are some illustrations of results from the analyses of interactive language. Together with findings from analyses of other features across all four metafunctions which are reported in Williams (1995), they provide a strong basis for claiming that there is significant variation between the sets of semantic features typically selected within the two social groups, and that one of these sets is strongly associated with typical practice in the first few weeks of schooling.

At this point in the research what one seeks is a set of integrative principles through which to make sense of the pattern of results of the semantic analyses. One of the problems most strikingly evident in previous joint book-reading research has been a cleft between analyses of social formations and their relations, and the analyses of linguistic interaction in families. Bernstein's theory of cultural transmission provides two sets of resources relevant to overcoming these problems. It presents, first, a theory of the development of coding orientations, which includes resources for modelling relations between family social positioning and typical interactive practices. Second, it presents a model of the pedagogic device, the discursive means through which pedagogic discourse is produced.

Since in the space available it is only possible to take up one of these, I will make the pedagogic device the focus in the remainder of the chapter. This will oblige me to assume, from the perspective of Bernstein's theory, an interpretation of relations between the social locations of the families and the communicative practices they adopt. However, it will enable me specifically to explore the structuring principles through which joint book-reading as a domestic activity is recontextualized into a pedagogic discourse of early literacy education.

The pedagogic device

It may be useful to begin the interpretation by taking a few moments to outline some basic features of the pedagogic device. The focus of interest in Bernstein's analysis is the means through which any particular form of pedagogic discourse becomes 'a symbolic ruler of consciousness' (Bernstein 1990: 180, Christie this volume Chapter 6, re the pedagogic device). The account of the pedagogic device is developed through a metaphor of a 'grammar', constituted by three types of rules which are hierarchically related: distributive rules, recontextualizing rules and rules of evaluation. As with the grammar of a language, the small number of rules is argued to be capable of producing an enormous variety of specific instances of pedagogic discourse. In the hierarchy, distributive rules regulate the recontextualizing rules, which regulate the rules of evaluation.

Distribution rules regulate who may have access to what knowledge, and therefore who may have access to discursive power. To develop this point Bernstein uses a distinction between mundane and esoteric knowledge, the 'thinkable' and the 'unthinkable'. In contemporary Western society access to, and control of, the 'unthinkable' tend to lie in the upper levels of the education system which, par excellence, require the use of an elaborated coding orientation. Since children from families in different locations in the social division of labour have differential access to this coding orientation, the pedagogic device is centrally implicated in distributing access to knowledge which is 'unthinkable' or esoteric.

Recontextualization rules provide a means for understanding the embedding of discourses which are produced in sites outside formal schooling within pedagogic discourse itself. To begin informally, consider the production of new knowledge in the culture about, say, the HIV virus. A significant question for cultural production and reproduction is: in what form should this knowledge be reproduced in pedagogic discourse? The move from the original site of discursive production to reproduction in pedagogic discourse requires selection and ordering of the content according to some set of principles, perhaps implicitly held. Recontextualizing rules are, in part, the rules which regulate the movement of discursive content from its initial production into pedagogic contexts.

The account of discourse embedding is extended to consider a more general aspect of cultural reproduction: relations between discourses of

social order, called regulative discourse, and those of educational knowledge, termed instructional discourse. The focus is, again, on general relations constituting the pedagogic device, not on any specific relations between content and specific discourses of order. Bernstein's argument is, pursuing the metaphor of grammar one step further, that the general structure of the pedagogic device is to embed instructional discourse in regulative discourse. That is to say, rules of social order selectively transmit contents and skills because pedagogic discourse is not formed independently in relation to a particular content to be relayed.

By the term regulative Bernstein does not mean simply the local regulative practices of management of learners as a function of the moral code, though these are relevant. The larger sense of order is the social regulation of discourse determined by those principles which themselves determine the principles of the social division of labour within a social formation. The general embedding relation between regulative and instructional discourse is derivable, that is, from the fact that distribution of power between categories is the primary determinant of the social order. The regulative must therefore necessarily embed the instructional. The argument is obvious with respect to the moral order, as Bernstein himself points out, but perhaps rather less obvious with respect to the ways in which 'order, relation and identity' are created in instructional discourse (Bernstein 1990: 184). The latter relation is crucial because it is the specific means through which specialized competencies are created for, and distributed to, specific categories of learners.

From the nature of this relationship it also follows that specific forms of pedagogic discourse will *always* be created through the recontextualization of other discourses. This is a much more radical form of the earlier illustrative outline. It is not just a matter of 'controversial' topics being subject to particular scrutiny, regulation and recontextualization. In its most general form the argument is that:

> Pedagogic discourse is a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition. (*ibid.*, 183–4)

The third set of rules for producing pedagogic discourse are evaluative. These derive from actual pedagogic practice and are the analytic means for interpreting specializations of variables such as time, space, context and age. I will pass over a detailed description of these in order to be able to develop the discussion of aspects of recontextualization which are relevant to joint book-reading research and pedagogic practice. To do so it is economical to present Bernstein's model of the general form of the pedagogic device. It is included as Figure 4.6. Attention will be drawn particularly to the following three features: recontextualizing field, the pedagogic recontextualizing field, and the primary contextualizing context.

The primary contextualizing context is that of the family and local commu-

nity, including peer group relations. In its function of providing primary contextualization the family uses a local pedagogic discourse (see the last lines of Figure 4.6), which may of course be in some conflict with local school practices, as well as with official pedagogic discourse. This difference can arise for many reasons, but particularly because of differential access within families to knowledge of how and why schools adopt certain practices. As an aside, it is interesting that joint book-reading is often raised by some families as a specific example of local school pedagogic discursive practice which causes perplexity.

In fact, Bernstein (1990: 179) suggests it is possible to distinguish between families 'with respect to the extent to which the "local pedagogic practice" is embedded in an "official pedagogic practice"'. Where local pedagogic discourse dominates the family, where there may even be a complete absence of official pedagogic discourse, then learners will be disadvantageously positioned with respect to privileging texts. The inverse relation is where official pedagogic discourse dominates the family, with a close fit, as it were, between the privileging text and family practice. This effectively gives the condition for two sites of access of discourse.

Relations between family joint book-reading practices and the pedagogy of literacy development in kindergarten are particularly interesting with respect to these relations. The question is: how is this relationship constructed? The model enables a critical re-reading of this relationship, particularly through the further concepts noted above: the recontextualizing field and the pedagogic recontextualizing field.

The general recontextualizing field can be considered briefly, given the preceding discussion. It is represented in the figure by the broken line and is the field in which the forms of content and the means of their transmission are determined: for example, both the 'what' and the 'how' of curricula. For the current purpose it is particularly important to note that discourse produced in the primary contextualizing context must be recontextualized to enter the pedagogic recontextualizing field.

The pedagogic recontextualizing field is broad, and includes a range of agencies specializing in normative judgements about 'best practice' in pedagogy, to use the phrase these agencies currently employ in the Australian state of New South Wales. The pedagogic recontextualizing field is defined by Bernstein (1990: 192) in the following way:

1. This will include university and polytechnic departments of education, colleges of education together with their research, and private foundations.
2. It will include specialized media of education, weeklies, journals, etc., and publishing houses together with their readers and advisers.
3. It may extend to fields not specialized in educational discourse and its practices, but which are able to exert influence both on the State and its various arrangements and/or upon special sites, agents and practices within education.
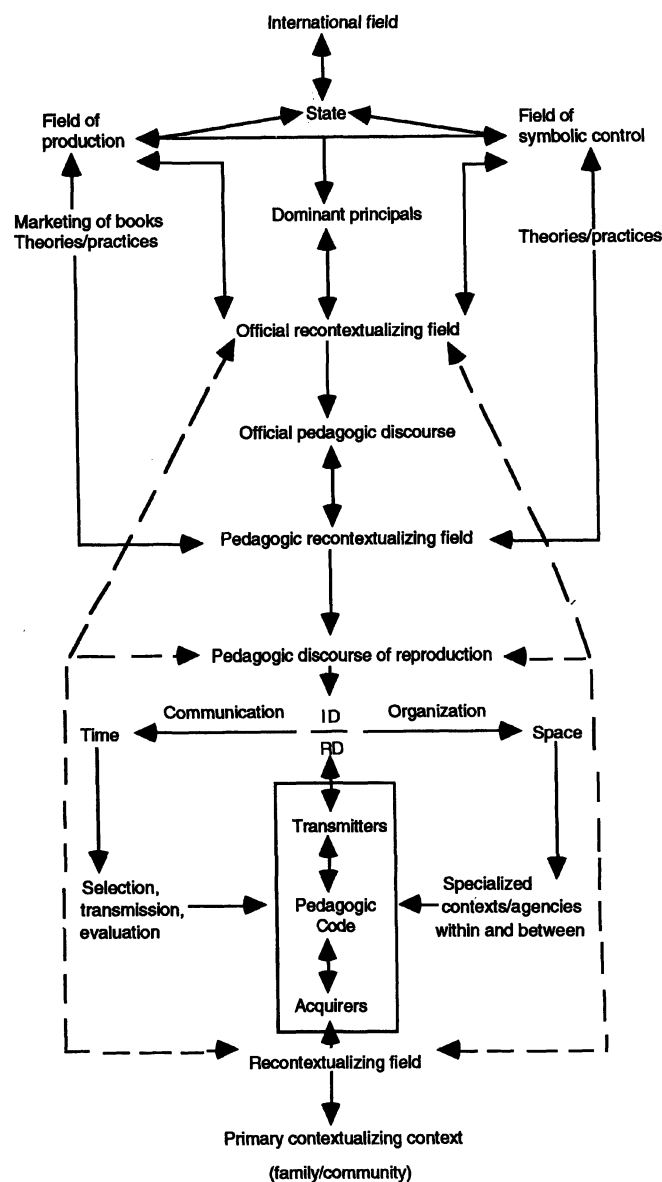
International field

Field of
production

State

Field of
symbolic control

Dominant principals

Marketing of books
Theories/practices

Theories/practices

Official recontextualizing field

Official pedagogic discourse

Pedagogic recontextualizing field

Pedagogic discourse of reproduction

Communication   ID   Organization

Time   RD   Space

Transmitters

Selection,
transmission,
evaluation

Pedagogic
Code

Specialized
contexts/agencies
within and between

Acquirers

Recontextualizing field

Primary contextualizing context

(family/community)

Figure 4.6 A model of relations of pedagogic discourse (from Bernstein, 1990:197)

From the model it can be seen that the pedagogic recontextualizing field is distinguished from official pedagogic discourse through a more direct relationship with the fields of production and symbolic control. This is a double relationship, in which these fields exercise both a direct influence on the discourses to be transmitted, and also more indirectly through the specific requirements of agents who will eventually participate in the primary fields. Various forms of teacher education are an obvious example.

Specific forms of literacy will be one set of those demands, though there may well be considerable internal difference with respect to those demands, given the different ideological orientations of the two fields of primary discursive production (Luke 1993). So the model would predict that work in the pedagogic recontextualizing field would select, integrate and re-identify discourse 'about' literacy (in the sense of specific knowledge and competencies). This work may well be accomplished to *some limited extent* independently of official pedagogic discourse: my understanding is that Bernstein's concept of relative autonomy predicts this potential difference. Under these conditions it is virtually certain that discursive re-shaping will be considerable.

But there will be other important influences on this process as well. One complex issue is the relation between the originating field of pedagogic interest in joint book-reading and primary contexts for joint book-reading discourse. The originating field is the pedagogic recontextualizing field though even here there are multiple discursive bases. On the one hand analyses of precocity in reading development and, on the other, interest in specific forms of semiotic mediation in child language development both contributed to the development of emergent literacy discourse. As predicted by the model, selected aspects of local pedagogic practice were (and are) recontextualized more or less directly into the pedagogic recontextualizing field.

Selection occurs in many ways, but primarily through two means. First, much of the research discourse is produced by specific agents in the pedagogic recontextualizing field (usually university staff in schools of education), who have studied their own practices or those of colleagues (e.g. Snow 1983). There is an unusual circularity here, but it is important to note that it is not a circularity purely internal to the pedagogic recontextualizing field. The research data about instructional practice in the primary contextualizing context of the family, which in these cases is already very likely to be dominated by official pedagogic discourse, is itself *recontextualized*, leading to the creation of the imaginary subjects in pedagogic discourse.

The problem here is not that previous joint book-reading research is fundamentally flawed as research discourse. Rather, the problem is that the process of recontextualization of research discourse is very likely to produce imaginary subjects in a pedagogic discourse of reproduction who are considerably removed from interactional practices of lower working-class families. Second, where variable local pedagogic discourse has been

the research issue, including research on social class variation in joint book-reading practices itself, various agencies in the pedagogic recontextualizing field have (implicitly) selected from and re-ordered the descriptions of local practice, thus privileging certain of them.

To reiterate, the crucial point in this argument is that 'recontextualize' does not mean simply to 'summarize' or 'restate' or even 'treat reductively'. Rather the process of reproducing research texts into a description of valued pedagogic practice reshapes them in relation to dominant and dominating principles of social interaction, principles which are common to only one fraction of the population. (Here the central vertical dimension in Figure 6 is crucial.) The process is likely to involve eliding of elements of research texts, reformulation of these texts in relation to other texts, and reorganization particularly with respect to desired rate of acquisition of skills and competencies.

In the case of joint book-reading the effect of this general feature of recontextualization in the pedagogic device is intensified by specific features of the content to be relayed. The intensification occurs because of the unusual circularity of the relations between specific agents of the pedagogic recontextualizing field and a dominating form of local pedagogic discourse in families derived from one fraction of the field of symbolic control. The intensity of the relations here create conditions approximating the ideal for the development of different forms of consciousness in young children as they commence school.

A model of pedagogic relations for joint book-reading in a pedagogic discourse of early school literacy development

To summarize, Figure 4.7 models some important aspects of relations between descriptions of joint book-reading practices in the two social locations, position of the family in social class relations and schooled literacy practice.

The most significant contrasts are in the relations described on the left of Figure 4.7. Beginning from the left, the model describes the primary condition for the development of variant forms of joint book-reading as principles regulating the social division of labour. Different coding orientations, deriving from speakers' locations in the social division of labour and the communicative practices associated with them, give the primary condition for the development of variant forms of interaction in joint book-reading.

These features of the model are a key aspect of the interpretation of the findings of this study. They represent a quite different claim about the antecedents of intracultural variation in joint book-reading from previous work.
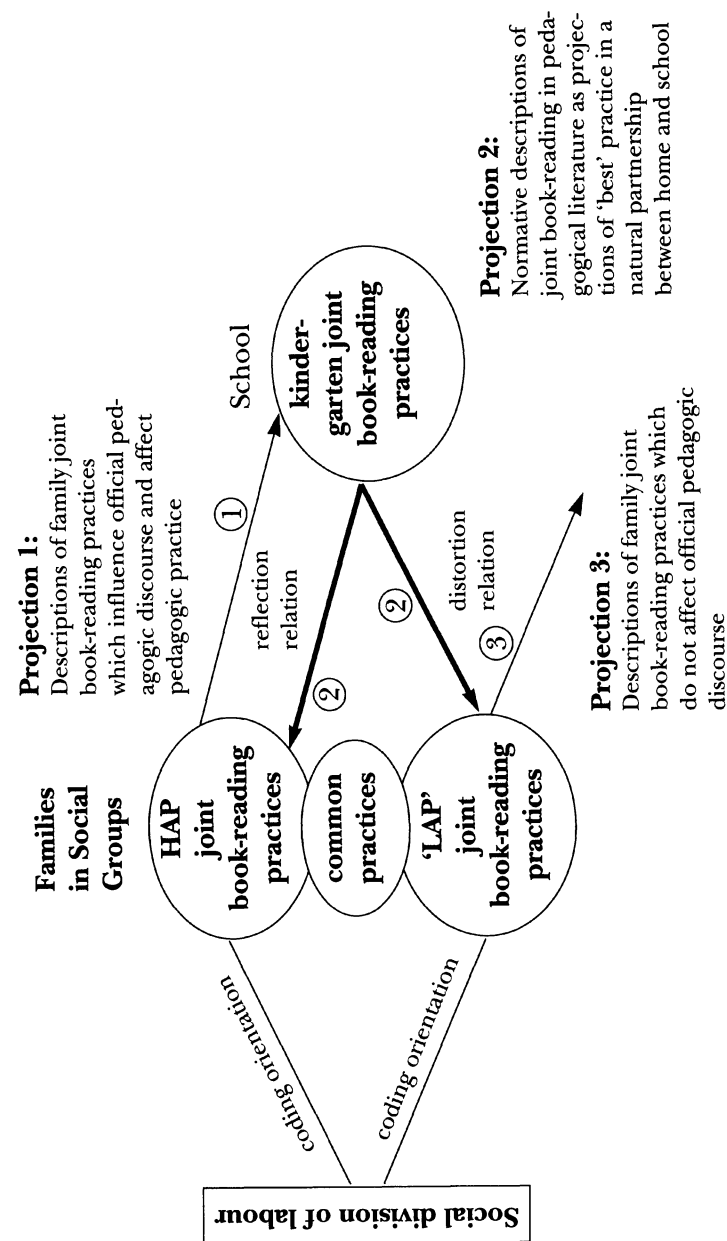

Figure 4.7 A model of pedagogic relations in joint book-reading

Variant practices in the two social groups are also shown as related through a region of common practices. This is an important condition for the development of misrecognition. Its inclusion is supported by many of the findings of this study such as, to cite just one specific example, children's frequent initiation of interaction during joint book-reading. Three projections of joint book-reading practices are critical for the development of pedagogic discourse: projections of 'HAP' practices, labelled (1); projections of 'LAP' practices, labelled (3); and normalizing projections of literacy pedagogy deriving from educational institutions, labelled (2). It is HAP practices which are forcefully projected through the medium of research and pedagogic text into school K practice, and it is these practices which are projected back as regulating discourse to both the HAP and LAP family groups in the discourse of literacy pedagogy.

A 'mirror' relation is created for the HAP group, but a distortion relation for the LAP group. The distortion is not just one of isolated specific aspects of interaction such as frequency of questions, even types of questions, nor of the tenor of relations between mother and child. It rather concerns a difference in the development of literate subjectivities within the social groups through joint book-reading. Where interactive language plays a reasonably prominent part in joint book-reading in the home, the activity appears to be a very similar set of interpretive practices when it is recontextualized in schooling. The evidence of this study suggests that this 'mirror' relation only holds for members of the HAP group. For members of the LAP group the basis for misrecognition is effectively laid.

One interesting aspect of HAP practice is that it appears to be an exaggerated version of school practice. HAP mothers generally foreground the individuation of consciousness through joint book-reading more intensively than do the K teachers. In this specific respect the findings contrast with results in Hasan's study, where the school practice was an exaggerated form of HAP practice. A plausible reading of the reason for this difference is that the idealized subjects of pedagogic discourse, projected back to the HAP group, act to magnify crucial aspects of interaction in joint book-reading in this social location. The HAP group appropriates features of official pedagogic discourse to inform family interaction in joint book-reading, but in so doing it is actually re-adopting features which were earlier derived from this region of social class practices for use in literacy pedagogy. This is a particularly intense form of partnership.

Final comment

The analyses of the pedagogic relations made possible by Bernstein's model of the pedagogic device and Hasan's semantic network as a framework for the interaction of talk in families and kindergarten classes seriously bring into question the use of metaphors of 'naturalness' and of a 'partnership' between home and school practices in emergent literacy. Certainly there is some form of partnership, but not of the kind usually

used in the discourse of literacy pedagogy. The sense of 'natural' is, of course, already seriously challenged by Vygotsky's theory of semiotic mediation, but the analysis made possible by the model of the pedagogic device implicates a much wider set of social relations in the construction of specific forms of pedagogic discourse.

The metaphor of pedagogic partnership is one which deserves close interrogation since it is very likely to be productive, however inadvertently, of pedagogic preclusion as young children enter school.

Notes

1 One of the starker examples is the following.
   Ten Commandments for Parents
   1. I will read to my child daily.
   2. I will help my child start a word collection of at least one unknown word daily.
   3. I will listen to my child read daily.
   4. I will take dictation (talk written down) of the stories, poems and sayings my child creates.
   5. I will help my child pursue an interest and find five books to read on the topic.
   6. I will praise my child for at least one success daily.
   7. I will arrange for my child to use the library and visit bookstores or counters to select his or her own books.
   8. I will help my child find a listener to read to (another child, grandparent or friend.)
   9. I will allow my child to buy books and educational games.
   10. I will listen to my child daily about his or her school reading of stories and progress in learning to read (quoted in Goldfield and Snow, 1984: 204-5).

   The text is quoted by Goldfield and Snow (1984) from a publication of the Parent Committee of the Michigan Reading Association.
2 Interestingly, though research on variation is mentioned in pedagogic handbooks quite frequently, the consequences of it are invisible in the practices projected by these resources (see, for example, in the influential text by Holdaway, 1979).
3 The following discussion of important methodological issues is necessarily attenuated. Further details are available in Williams (1995).
4 There is obviously some inherent difficulty in using occupation as an indicator of relative positions in social class relations while explicitly avoiding the implication that the research utilizes a theory of discrete class categories or levels based on occupation. Connell et al. (1982: 212) put the methodological dilemma succinctly, referring to:

   an ambiguity about our method which arises because we could not think of a way of sampling relationships without first sampling people. We should make it very clear, then, that we do not take our sampling categories as defining classes. The object of our study was class relations and class processes; we wished to reach through the categories, which had to be used

to get the research going, to the relations and processes behind them. We wished to make contact with situations where certain kinds of class processes could be expected to cluster thickly.

5 Details of the educational backgrounds of the participants, used to cross-check the occupational indicators of social class locations, are given in Williams (1995).

6 Hasan's description separates the experiential from the logical metafunctions, so that there is no internal grouping in an ideational metafunction as in Halliday's description.

7 The message further selects the features [nonassumptive: simple] in this region of interpersonal meanings. It would also, of course, be analysed from the perspective of experiential meanings, its role in turn-taking, topic maintenance and so on.

8 Further discussions of prefacing, including full presentations of Hasan's networks, together with realization statements, are to be found in Cloran (1994) and Williams (1995).

9 The statistical technique used to examine the results of the linguistic analyses was a test of significance of difference between median scores. Fisher's Exact Test was used, avoiding the requirement that the data be distributed in equal intervals, as is so for a commonly used test such as the Mann-Whitney. Given the relatively small number of cases, a significance level of $p < .025$ was set as the point below which results will be considered probably to be implicated in linguistically important variation.

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