A Classroom Languaculture Offers Perspectives for Learning a New Genre

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Abstract

This study examines student perceptions while crafting an extended junior-year writing task in the discipline assignment. Bazerman (2009) posits that adapting to new genres is a kind of tool for cognitive development. He suggests that we "design our writing assignments precisely to put students in a position where they need to combine information and ideas in ways new to them, or which requires them to consider issues from an unfamiliar stance" (p. 279). Drawing on Sociocultural Theory and the ecological perspective of Leo van Lier (2008), I suggest that how instructors frame classroom interaction may provide affordances for perspective taking. As genres are socially situated (Swales, 2009), the classroom culture within which students adapt to a new genre is impacted by affordances for social interchanges. Shared social interchanges have the potential to mediate and disrupt classroom hierarchies such that perspective taking is valued within the classroom culture. Through the context of activity and interactivity around their own and others' texts, a new *languaculture* (Agar, 1997; van Lier, 2008) emerges. The languaculture around text builds students' abilities to look on their own texts through the perspective of others. The students internalize perceptual and conceptual frames communally developed in the languaculture, with the result of increasing their abilities to monitor and reflect on their writing, thereby developing as writers.

Keywords: university writing, classroom culture, student reflections

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Resumen

Esta investigación examina las percepciones de los estudiantes mientras elaboran una escritura extendida de tercer año en la asignatura de disciplina. Bazerman (2009) postula que la adaptación a nuevos géneros es una especie de herramienta para el desarrollo cognitivo. Él sugiere que "diseñemos nuestras tareas de escritura precisamente para poner a los estudiantes en una posición en la que necesiten combinar información e ideas de maneras nuevas para ellos, o que requiera que consideren los problemas desde una posición desconocida" (p. 279). Basándome en la teoría histórico-cultural de Vygotsky y en la perspectiva ecológica de Leo van Lier (2008), sugiero que la forma en que los instructores enmarcan la interacción en el aula (salón de clase) puede proporcionar facilidades para tomar perspectiva. Como los géneros están socialmente situados (Swales, 2009), la cultura del aula (salón de clase) en la que los estudiantes se adaptan a un nuevo género se ve afectada por las facilidades de intercambio social. Los intercambios sociales compartidos tienen el potencial de mediar e interrumpir las jerarquías de la clase, de modo que la toma de perspectiva se valora dentro de la cultura del aula. A través del contexto de la actividad y la interactividad en torno a su propio texto y al de los demás, emerge un nuevo languaculture (Agar, 1994; Lantolf y Thorne, 2003; van Lier, 2008). La languaculture alrededor del texto construye las habilidades de los estudiantes para mirar sus propios textos a través de la perspectiva de los demás. Los estudiantes internalizan marcos perceptuales y conceptuales desarrollados comunalmente en la languaculture, con el resultado de aumentar sus habilidades para monitorear y reflexionar sobre su escritura, y así desarrollarse como escritores.

Palabras clave: escritura en la universidad, la cultura en el aula, las percepciones de los estudiantes

A classroom languaculture offers perspectives for learning a new genre

A problem in college classes, which I have observed over the years, is the social hierarchy, which occurs in teacher-centered classroom instruction. First, teacher-talk may dominate the discourse with a few select students establishing a role participating in exchanges with the instructor. Second, the social hierarchies, which become reenacted, privilege the few and render the rest of the class passive observers. Third, these social hierarchies position the passive observers to become reliant on the instructor for feedback. Even when

the class is organized as a writing workshop, students privilege the faculty feedback and do not value perspectives given in the feedback of classmates.

Moreover, students express great discomfort in sharing their written work at the start of the course. Without an openness for engaging in collaborative writers' workshops, students lose the benefit of gaining another's perspective. How then can college classes position student interaction such that students embark upon novel academic genres, learn to give and receive meaningful feedback, and overcome their discomfort with sharing their writing with a broader audience?

Having begun my career as a language teacher, I have employed a variety of cooperative learning structures as part of my tool-kit to engage students in collaboration. For example, the quality of class building activities sets the tone for how students begin to engage with one another. Furthermore, establishing student-lead teams, which run class activities, facilitates the emergence of unique classroom culture. Rotating roles throughout the class, students post blog questions in response readings; other student teams build on the blogs to lead classroom discussions; still, other teams create class activities extending themes with a goal of engaging classmates to discuss and debate perspectives on education which are important to them. As a result, the classroom culture, which evolves from these student-centered collaborations, builds trust and collegiality which students have repeatedly described as feeling like a "family."

As a consequence of all these arrangements, a classroom culture emerges supporting students' developing perspective taking while exploring writing in a new genre. These opportunities for perspective taking appear to support adapting to the new genre. This paper provides initial research into student reflections gained while writing in a new genre.

A genre is writing within complex social networks

Hyland (2006) has shown that learning to write academically involves learning to understand the genres and discourse of an academic discipline, as well as how knowledge is organized within the academic discourse community. Learning to write academically, especially at the college level, is more than learning to write; it is also writing to learn a language and concepts used within complex social networks to express complex ideas. As Swales (2009) points out, genres reflect "complex networks of various kinds in which switching modes from speech to writing (and viceversa) can —and often does— play

a natural and significant part" (p. 2). Moreover, in adapting to the complex networks reflected in a genre, an author must understand the perspective of the discourse community in order to consider how to frame language for the new audience. As such, course work for junior year students moving into their major discipline, while providing an important academic juncture for matriculating students (who began as first-year college students as well as two-year college degree transfer students), also presents considerable challenges as students come together in a pre-professional context to explore these novel academic genres.

To better understand the how student-centered collaborations provide affordances for perspective taking as they enter a new academic genre, I turn to van Lier's (2008) ecological view of language learning and Sociocultural Theory, arguing that writing to learn in a new academic genre collaboratively may generate a new *languaculture*. The languaculture evolves through the interactivity (or activity space) of apprentices collaboratively exploring the new genre.

Sociocultural theory and the ecological perspective of Leo van Lier (2008)

Van Lier builds on the Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky who saw cognitive and social processes as driving one and other in human development. In an earlier work (van Lier, 2000), he argued that learning does not happen within the brain, but learning relies on social interactions within a language ecology, which offers affordances for meaning-making. The language within a "sociolinguistic (or semiotic) ecology" acquires meaning relative to activity and participation, which stimulates "perceptual, cognitive, and emotional engagement" (van Lier, 1997, p. 783). In van Lier (2008), he extends this view by elaborating on Vygotsky's discussion of *interfunctionality*, namely that perception is central in both cognitive and social development. In cognitive development, perception consists of both actively looking for information and information actively driving a learner's attention. In social development, van Lier focuses on Vygotsky's use of *role*, which van Lier defines as *identity*. Identity is self-perceived within the social environment and emerges through social contexts (van Lier, 2008).

For first-generation college students, stepping into major disciplinary coursework as juniors, interfunctionality would appear to operate like learning in another language. Students are asked to read peer-reviewed journals

in a novel professional genre, which use specific language representing new concepts. Additionally, they are asked to write arguing with evidence drawn from peer-reviewed journal sources. The task parallels second language acquisition. While the learners may actively look for information in peer-reviewed journals, the academic language and the genre of the peer-reviewed journal may be difficult or incomprehensible to the learner.

Identity

More problematic is the learners' identity in the social environment, especially for first-generation college students. Van Lier explains that we are not merely:

> *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think therefore I am) but also *Cogitat, ergo sum* (They think, therefore I am). My identity is not just how I see myself in this context, but also how others see me (and how I think they see me) in this context. (van Lier, 2008, p. 4)

This example helps to illustrate the challenge students engaging in a new academic genre may face when they struggle with the language and novel academic content of a new genre. Not only are they novices to the academic content, but also the social context of the language. While a traditional teacher-centered classroom may isolate the passive observers, student-centered classroom structures provide the opportunity for a classroom culture to emerge around the struggle to adapt to the novel language and academic genre. With opportunities to know and develop relationships with classmates, students may see themselves as learners within the collective context of other apprentices. They become a language ecology. Through the context of activity and interactivity around their own and others text, students form a new *languaculture* (Agar, 1994; Lantolf & Thorne, 2003; van Lier, 2008).

Developing a languaculture

Languaculture, originally used by Agar (1994), bridges the gap between language and the social context of use or culture. Drawing on Goffman's (1974) definition of frames or particular schemata, which weave topically between speech acts, Agar writes that "frames take language and culture and make them inseparable" (p. 143). Van Lier (2008) uses languaculture to capture

the activity space of learner identities evolving in the "I think/they think" exchanges while grappling with new language and concepts. In a student-centered classroom structure, where students are both examining problems in education and writing about problems in education, a languaculture may emerge as students to push each other's thinking about the issues they explore in the new genre. As a result, the languaculture creates the activity space for perspective taking in the new genre as they develop their writer's voice.

Voice

Voice is how a speaker/author positions oneself in relation to the social environment (van Lier, 2008). Van Lier emphasizes that a learner needs an authentic audience to develop a voice within the diverse perspectives of the social space. Thus engaging students in peer-review within the social context of student-centered classroom culture provides the opportunity for students to develop a shared languaculture, in which students address a diversity of perspectives prompted by peers. The inter-relationships students develop in collaborative discussion support perspective taking as they together address a new, challenging, and often incomprehensible academic genre.

Methods

In order to investigate how student perspectives evolved over a semester, I collected student reflections at the beginning of the course and the end of the course after students had written an extended critical analysis paper. In choosing reflection as a data collection approach, my goal was to examine the metacognitive work of students (Avineri, 2017) as they participated in an extensive research and writing process while writing in a new genre. Moreover, I sought to understand how engaging with classmates contributed to perspective taking in writing. In the next section, I will discuss the design of the study, the participants, the writing task, and the data collection.

The design of the study

This is an action research study. The researcher collected data while teaching three courses. At the commencement of each course, the consent to participate was administered to the students in the class. The instructor collected the consent forms and secured them without noting which students had consented. All data was submitted in a google form. After the instructor

had submitted the final grades for the course, the instructor culled the data from the google sheet of the students who had not consented and eliminated their data from the analysis. In total, data was collected on 69 students from three courses: one during spring 2016 (N=21) and two courses during fall 2016 (N=22 and 26).

Participants

The students were predominantly female (75 %), Hispanic (67 %), and first-generation college students (81 %). The majority of students (83 %) in all three classes were between the ages of 20-25 at the time of the study, with 3 % over 30 and 6 % between the ages of 25-30. A majority of students (61 %) had transferred from two-year colleges.

The writing task

This study examines perceptions as students' craft an extended writing assignment, the Critical Analysis Paper. The genre of the paper mirrors a traditional research report including: 1) a focused investigation of an issue of the students' choice related to the major discipline, education; 2) a detailed background/literature review on the issue, including an examination of the perspectives of all primary stakeholders; 3) three potential solutions to the issue, examining the impact on the stakeholders; and 4) a conclusion which compares the three solutions' impact and recommends a solution acknowledging concessions. This paper is written in 4 sections over 10 weeks. Each draft of the four sections of the paper receives two levels of feedback (one peer review and one instructor review). Half the class drafts a section of the paper every week to be peer-reviewed on the first class meeting. Then the draft is revised and submitted to the instructor during the second class meeting. The following week, the instructor returns the paper with extensive feedback at the time when the second half of the class is presenting their draft for peer editing. This curricular cycle provides weekly, regular peer review, and feedback from the professor. After students compose the four segments, they revise and assemble all parts to produce an extended research paper, which is submitted for final assessment.

Data collection

At each juncture in the development of the critical analysis paper, students submitted a Reflective Memo answering the following guiding questions:

1. How would you describe this section of the paper to a friend? How is it the same or different from other writing experiences you have had?
2. What challenges did you face as you wrote this section of the paper? How might you do this differently, if you had to do it again?
3. What resources did you draw on? (For example, how did the feedback from peers, instructor, the librarian, friends, or writing center inform your drafting process?)

The pedagogical purpose of the Reflective Memo is to engage students in structured reflection (Avineri, 2017). Structured reflection allows students to routinely pause after developing a draft and strategically check-in with themselves to evaluate their metacognitive processes as the paper evolves. Students receive credit for submitting the memo but are not graded on the memo's quality. The instructor uses this information to address both individual and collective questions or needs, which inform mini-lessons on the development of the paper.

Data analysis and method of coding

This study presents data examining student reflections at the beginning of the course in Memo 1 and after the course in Memo 5 in order to understand students' evolving perspectives. An interpretive analysis (Avineri, 2017) was conducted on the students' post-draft reflective memos. The participants' responses were examined to compare responses at the start and completion of the course. Themes emerged which illustrated students' affordances for constructing meaning around the writing task. Van Lier (2000) draws on the ecological "notion of affordance, which refers to the relationship between the properties of the environment and the active learner" (p. 257). For example, what properties did students attribute to writing before beginning the task? How did they conceptualize the task? Then how did their perceptions of the task change? What resources did students find most valuable? From the responses, three major themes emerged: 1) *Self as a Writer*, 2) *Needing the Other*, 3) *Gaining Future Practices*. Within each major theme, several experiences, which contributed to the theme, are identified. I now turn to a discussion of the results by comparing the quantitative responses of students to selective data from reflective memo responses.

Results

Self as a writer

Within the theme of *Self as a Writer,* several changes were noted in the ways students conceptualized the writing process. These included differences in the genre and the need for extensive time to both research and draft this genre of paper. To begin, the Reflective Memo 1 confirmed that the writing task was a novel academic genre for the majority of students, as they report having almost no experience with writing in the social sciences. Only 2 students out of 69 had been taught APA formatting. While some had experience writing research reports, students reported that it was very different from research writing experiences in the past. One student encapsulated the experience of writing in this new genre in Reflective Memo 5 as:

> If I was explaining this paper to a friend, I would tell them about the process of writing this paper. I feel to just say it is a research paper doesn't really do justice to the effort put into this paper. *From start to finish this paper is by far the most elaborate paper I have ever written.* From research to style of writing, this paper is *has been a learning experience that hopefully will help me in writing my… [senior thesis] paper.*

In contrast, the genres students were familiar with included, "personal, informative, or persuasive" writing as well as "writing when it comes to expressing my feelings" such as "I love writing poems". While these genres may include argumentation, students did not appear to have been taught to create a conversation between sources.

The genre of the Critical Analysis paper requires students to 1) research and collect information about the topic, 2) present a discussion of the topic arguing with sources, and 3) to consider the perspectives of stakeholders in addressing the issue. Students understood that they must leave their opinion out and learn to argue with sources, which was a point emphasized by 9 students. As one student clarified, "This is a formal research paper, which means that all claims must be backed up by real deal research, and you must cite this research APA style." In order to achieve this, 45 students reported the need to read extensively. As one student wrote, "At first I thought reading abstracts was a good start, which is why my paper was off to a rough start.

I soon began to actually read and process my research and sources." And another student found,

> Although it is a lot of research and tedious work, you eventually get to a point where you can connect all the dots of the topic, and it's a smooth sail. I think I've spent as much [time] writing as I have read. In order to write, you must read articles and gather more information.

35 students reported much more time was needed to allow for this writing process.

Given that the paper was broken into 5 separate sections, students found that they could devote more time to individual parts of the paper.

> This paper is different in the way that its process is different. I had to do four parts of it before having the whole paper done. This was not like other papers I have done because for other classes I had to write the whole thing, get feedback, revise, and then submit the final paper. For this paper, I was given the chance to focus on single part of the paper, which I really liked.

Finally, another Self as a Writer theme that students reported was in developing their critical thinking. Although 9 students wrote that writing this paper improved their critical thinking, this theme overlapped with how collaboration pushed their thinking. To explore this more deeply, I now turn to the second major theme, students *Needing the Other*.

Needing the other

The theme, Needing the Other, reflected ways in which class collaboration changed how students thought critically and how they viewed writing. Most prominently, 35 students indicated that they valued the feedback they received in their writing. However, these comments about valuing feedback were couched in the different relationships they had formed with others, which included overall comfort with the class to bonds created between individual students. For example, the following student illustrated how "being comfortable with the whole class" had contributed to her challenge of overcoming "having people read over" her writing.

One of the challenges that I have overcome…[in] this course is having people read over my writing. I felt that was one of my fears. But I do not have a choice; I just need to be comfortable and I am glad because we all make mistakes that someone else can read and help us. Also, being comfortable with the whole class helps a lot too.

And another student wrote that developing a relationship with team members allowed for more effective communication, which contributed to improving his writing,

I have had many different copy editors, but the best one was XXX. She is in my group [, a] team member, and we sit next to each other. She really understands the goal and layout of this paper and was willing to open my eyes which is why my papers began to improve.

Other students discussed the ways in which the collaboration with others helped them to gain new insights on readings.

I worked with my group to understand information, ideas, and insights presented by diverse authors through written, oral, visual and electronic means of communication. It was really fun to work on every activity and to read the readings because we would discuss as a group and then hearing the different opinions, I would learn something new.

Not only did students learn new information from their classmates, but the diversity of life experiences expressed by their classmates also pushed their perspective to understand the challenges experienced in some communities.

Listening to classmates' opinions made aware of issues in our society I wasn't aware of. For example, listening to my classmates about how not every child has a device for using the internet at home reminded me that not everybody gets equal opportunities to be successful.

Because the Critical Analysis paper required that students examine the stakeholder perspectives concerning a particular issue in education, stakeholder perspectives also became a focus in student discussion as noted in the following:

My classmates helped me comprehend and interpret multiple perspectives. Many of our class discussions led to people sharing their thoughts on a subject and how it affected them directly or indirectly. My views were also opened up by learning what others thought as opposed to solely thinking of my own.

These discussions also contributed to how students developed ideas in their Critical Analysis papers, as noted by two different students.

The paper had to have different perspectives, and even if we did not agree with them we still learned how a person views situations differently. Taking a step back from what I personally believed and trying to see an issue from multiple points of view was a large lesson learned through this semester.

Student-lead class activities and discussions aided students in adopting alternative points of view.

Through the different opinions shared in the classroom, and the modules examined, I was able to have a better understanding of other people's work.

Students also reported gaining insights to their own writing through both giving and receiving feedback. For example, 7 students discussed, "Keeping the reader in mind" as the following quote illustrates.

Writing a paper is a lot different than reading it because as a writer you know what is in your mind, this is why you must keep in mind that the reader does not know "who, what or it" is unless you type it.

Additionally, 12 students brought up that reading other students' work informed their own writing as in the following:

Being a copy editor has helped me recognize errors that I also make in my own papers. It has also made me check my paper for similar errors that I did not think of until reading others' papers. I have used my peers to help review my paper and check for errors. So far, I learned that I can accomplish a lot of work when I am determined.

> My favorite part of the class was the collaboration between myself and my peers. I greatly appreciated the movement within the classroom; I was able to get to know a lot of people. As a result, I heard multiple perspectives on many topics.

In sum, students reported developing comfort with others' perspectives. They recognized and valued the perspectives others provided to help them think more critically about the readings as well as develop more polished writing. These experiences with their current texts then lead to students *Gaining Future Practices.*

Gaining future practices

Students reported Gaining Future Practices to support their writing. Students indicated that in future writing tasks, such as their senior thesis, a majority (45) reported the need to conduct extensive research, which included reading and learning about the topic. Additionally, 12 students indicated the need to become an expert on a topic and to "choose a topic you are passionate about." Several students (35) recommended "allowing a lot of time for writing" and 9 students recommended "breaking the paper into manageable chunks" in much the same way the curriculum was structured for the course. Many (18) discussed the need for organizing ideas before writing.

More than half of the students (35 out of 69) also reported that in the future, they would seek interactive feedback from others. As one student wrote,

> I had to put a lot of thought and planning into writing this paper and worked with a ton of people, including peers, resources, and the professor, to perfect this paper. Getting help in these ways has helped to guide my thinking and is something I will definitely still do in the future.

Another student wrote, she learned "not to be so self-reliant and to ask for help when I need it." A third student wrote, "I was not really comfortable with people looking at my writing until this class. It became more of a habit and being comfortable because no one is perfect and writing is a process." It would appear that the regular process of airing work in a supportive environment helped students discover the "…importance of working with others in order to make a masterpiece out of any paper I write".

Given the reoccurring themes throughout the data regarding students' value of peer collaboration in both the classroom discussions and in providing

feedback on drafts, students appeared to mutually support each other during the exploration of the new genre.

In summary, the themes of Self as a Writer, Needing the Other and Gaining Future Activity reflect the processes through which students grew as writers. As a consequence, several students wrote about the confidence they had gained in their ability to write, including "I have seen myself grow as a writer", and many expressed both "pride" and "confidence" in what they had accomplished. The theoretical implication of the results will be addressed in the following discussion.

Discussion

I return to the original research question: How can college classes position student interaction such that students embark upon novel academic genres, learn to give and receive meaningful feedback, and overcome their discomfort of airing their writing to a broader audience? I have suggested that student-centered classroom structures may allow for affordances in which a languaculture emerges which supports perspective taking. I have argued that perspective taking is key in developing a new academic genre. Using an interpretive analysis of student post-draft reflections, I have suggested that the themes, *Self as a Writer*, *Need for Others*, and *Gaining Future Activity*, illustrate how students acquire a languaculture for developing a new academic genre, the critical analysis of a problem in education.

In the theme, Self as a Writer, students recognize that good writing takes time. They also acknowledge that for them and others, the project requires extensive reading, researching, and drafting. In the theme, Need for Others, students learn not to "be so self-reliant" but to seek out help from others. They find that reading others' work helps them see how others "tackled the project". Moreover, students could see problems in other work, which they acknowledge in their own writing; therefore, peer-review helps them gain perspective on their own craft.

Conversely, feedback from others helps to push their critical thinking, to expand their topic, and catch surface errors. Finally, in the theme Gaining Future Activity, they report on activities they will put into practice in the future, such as allowing for more time to research, draft, and organize ideas. More importantly, students not only grow comfortable airing their work with others but they see this as a future activity they would practice

because they understand that writing requires having the maturity to accept the perspective of others to craft a polished text.

This study suggests that a student-centered curricular design draws on the language ecologies contributed in the classroom to provide affordances for a languaculture to emerge, which supports perspective taking in a new academic genre. As suggested in the framing of this paper, learning relies on social interactions within a language ecology, which offers affordances for meaning-making (van Lier, 1997, 2000, 2008). Through the context of activity in and around texts, a languaculture evolves. The activity space generating the languaculture in this study emerged through 1) social interchanges, 2) frames established through curricular themes, and 3) the goal of producing a challenging academic genre. The social interchanges within the classroom establish relationships creating the activity space for the languaculture. The class building, student-led activities, and routine, cyclical, weekly peer and instructor feedback break down social barriers and disrupt classroom hierarchies, which support collaboration. Second, the curricular themes present frames for exploring problems in education from multiple perspectives. Because the frames within the languaculture centered on examining problems in education and how these problems impact communities, perspective taking becomes privileged within the languaculture. Students value each other's perspectives, which help them to understand problems in ways they had not considered and strengthened their critical thinking. This diversity of perspective within classroom ecology is valued within the languaculture. Finally, the academic genre of the critical analysis paper is a challenging common "goal-directed activity" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), which contributes to the languaculture. Students must diverge from the familiar task of personal writing. Instead, they are challenged to research information from sources and position these referenced concepts to create a critical analysis of a social science problem in education. The novelty of the genre demands perspective taking as the author must learn to position works of others in building the argument. The genre is the goal-directed activity around which students struggle in tandem as they develop their critical analysis papers. The resulting languaculture is interactive, supportive, and values the diverse perspectives, which the language ecology of the classroom provides because they push each other's thinking around their topics.

This study also implies that within a student-centered classroom, the languaculture may shape learners' identities as writers as well as provide the opportunity to develop *voice* (van Lier, 2008), which is apparent in the theme

Self as a Writer. Students report that they look at their writing more critically, support claims with evidence, and reflect on the reader's perspective, which is a learner's *voice* or how a speaker/author positions oneself in relation to the social environment (van Lier, 2008). The social interactions students share provide them an ecological perspective on their writing—a sense of what a larger ecology of people reading their work might understand from, think about, or gain from their work. Students are less focused on writing for the instructor or what "the instructor wants" as a teacher-centered classroom may encourage. Instead, students are writing for a broader audience: each other and the instructor. The values students place on the diverse perspectives offered in class supports the development of voice and sense of identity as writers.

Bazerman (2009) posits that adapting to new genres is a kind of tool for cognitive development. He suggests that we "design our writing assignments precisely to put students in a position where they need to combine information and ideas in ways new to them, or which requires them to consider issues from an unfamiliar stance" (p. 279). Drawing upon van Lier's (2008) ecological view of Sociocultural theory, I have suggested that how instructors frame classroom social interaction is perhaps just as important as the design of writing assignments. In fact, from a Vygotskian perspective, it is both the cognitive and social processes which drive one and other in human development. The cognitive demand of engaging in a new genre within the shared activity space of a classroom language ecology would appear to create the circumstance suggested by Bazerman (2009) to support students' development in a new genre. Moreover, I have suggested that careful consideration of the classroom structures helps to mitigate social hierarchies such that students value the perspective of others and gain higher perspective, essential in developing a new academic genre, and for monitoring their own writing.

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