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EARLY INTERVENTION:

NARRATIVES OF LEARNING, DISCIPLINE AND ENCULTURATION

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Abstract

Current understandings about literacy have moved away from the belief that literacy is simply a process that individuals do in their heads. These understandings do not negate the importance of the individual aspects of literacy learning, but they emphasise understandings of literacy as a social practice. In many cases, responses to early literacy intervention seem to be grounded in theories that appear out of step with current literacy research and consequent evidence that literacy is socially and culturally constructed. One such response is the Reading Recovery program based on Clay's theory of literacy acquisition. Clay (1992) describes the program as a second chance to learn. However, others have suggested that programs like Reading Recovery may in fact work toward the marginalisation of particular groups, thereby helping to maintain the status quo along class, gender and ethnic lines.

This paper allows two professionals, who unwittingly found themselves involved within the institution of Reading Recovery, to bring their insider's knowledge to an analysis of the construction of the program. The paper interweaves this analysis with the personal narratives of the researchers as they negotiated the borders between different understandings and beliefs about literacy and literacy pedagogy.

Introduction

Despite current understandings that literacy is a social practice, traditional and more conventional beliefs – in particular that literacy is simply a process that individuals do in their heads – continue to inform school practices. Whilst Luke (1992) suggested that the move away from psychological views towards 'more contextual explanations of literacy as social practice' was not as evident in classrooms as in the research literature, pedagogical theory and teacher education (p.107), it now seems that the deployment of programs that draw on traditional discursive positions is an enduring response of education systems and schools to perceived low levels of literacy. One example of such a response is the Reading Recovery program, a systemic early intervention program that is currently used in numerous countries.

It has been argued that programs like Reading Recovery may work towards the marginalisation of particular groups of children by privileging the skills and experiences of middle- and upper-class children (Dudley-Marling & Murphy, 1997) and may also limit the development of richer conceptions and practices of literacy (Lankshear & Knobel, 1998). The purpose of this paper is to problematise school intervention practices, drawing on Reading Recovery as an example. The paper sets out to demonstrate how the regulating practices of such an institution discipline those involved, thus constraining the repertoire of possibilities available to them. In this way, we aim to show more generally how the pedagogical practices of schooling, particularly those aimed at providing intervention for low achievers, can operate to 'shape and train' bodies in particular ways (Wright, 2000, p.153) and construct children as particular types of literate subjects. Our concern is that a program that has

been called 'a second chance to learn literacy' (Clay, 1992, p.69) might in fact be a second chance to fail, by actively preventing teachers and students from conceptualising literacy as multiple social practice.

For the most part, evaluations of the effectiveness of the Reading Recovery program have drawn on quantitative investigations of children's scores on reading and writing tests. At best, these tests assess children's ability to compose or comprehend the print conventions of text, thus providing little to enrich discussion about children's literacy. In contrast, we examine Reading Recovery as a social practice.

We begin with a short discussion of the program and our involvement in it, provide a detailed analysis of a Reading Recovery lesson based on Foucauldian notions of discipline, and consider the implications of the regulation and constraint that were identified by the analysis. Alternatives to the Reading Recovery program are deliberately not suggested. In presenting an analysis that adds a new perspective to the body of research available on Reading Recovery, we purposely want to avoid pitting one program against another. Our paper is founded on the assumption that there is not one program that should be used as an answer to perceived low levels of literacy, and we thus choose to not document what an alternative to Reading Recovery might look like.

We are very aware that our reading of the data, and of Reading Recovery more generally, is but one of many possibilities. Our analysis should be seen as adding to the debate which has raged around Reading Recovery and we do not portray our conclusions as a singular, definitive answer to the question of what the program is able to achieve. We set out to investigate the social practices involved in the use of Reading Recovery as an intervention, as a way of extending the large body of research which has already attempted to quantify the program's achievements.

One Intervention Program: Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is based on the belief that the development of an effective cognitive processing system will allow children who are experiencing difficulties in literacy learning to develop strategic control of reading and writing processes.

Reading Recovery operates as a systemic early literacy program, providing thirty minutes of daily individual instruction for the lowest literacy achievers in a Year 2 cohort, as determined by students' scores on Clay's (1993a) observation survey. Clay (1991) argues that the program will bring about 'subsequent independent literacy learning' (p.1) once students have a self-extending system, which she describes as 'a set of operations just adequate for reading a slightly more difficult text for the precise words and meaning of the author' (Clay, 1993b, p.39).

Set within a cognitive acquisition model of literacy, the underlying theory of the Reading Recovery program portrays reading and writing as processes that construct meaning within the cognitive space of individuals (Clay, 1991). This implies that reading, writing and their associated pedagogical and curriculum environments are neutral and transportable – an approach that helps to reinforce the view that literacy practices can be packaged as a set of standard skills that are attainable by all children merely through hard work – and that it is possible to reduce reading and writing to a simple process of cracking the code.

Our choice to focus on Reading Recovery as an example of early literacy intervention programs has been a deliberate one, as we, the authors of this paper, unwittingly found ourselves involved in the institution of Reading Recovery. We

trained – and for a short time worked – as tutors, training Reading Recovery teachers across a number of school districts. Therefore, we bring insiders’ knowledge to this paper. Whilst there seems to be lack of agreement about whether an insider’s standpoint has an advantage over that of an outsider (Naples & Sachs, 2000), we would argue that our experiences have enabled us to bring a rare perspective to our critique, as few of those who have worked within the institution are willing – or perhaps even able – to do.

The Study: Two interwoven narratives

In this paper, we weave our personal experiences of Reading Recovery into an analysis of a Reading Recovery lesson. Our analysis, therefore, investigates several layers of the program: teacher-child interactions as well as the experiences of teachers and tutors. In attempting a multilayered discussion, we have had to limit our in-depth examination of Reading Recovery to a single lesson, focusing on the interactions that occurred between one teacher and one student. The lesson focuses on Sam, who is in his second year of schooling at a small metropolitan school, and his Reading Recovery teacher. This lesson is being used as an instance of Reading Recovery teaching and learning and was chosen because we saw it as representing Reading Recovery as most Reading Recovery teachers and students encounter it on a daily basis. The lesson was selected from a relatively large pool of Reading Recovery lessons video recorded as part of a larger study investigating success and failure in literacy learning in the early years of school.

In telling the story of our personal experiences of Reading Recovery, we use autoethnography (e.g. see Bochner, 1997; Ellingson, 1998; Ellis, 1999, 2000; Ellis & Bochner, 2000, 1996), which has been described as 'an autobiographical genre of writing and research' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.739). Since autobiographical stories can connect 'the personal to the cultural' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.740) – through the inclusion of 'researchers' vulnerable selves, emotions, bodies and spirits' (Ellis, 1999, p.669) – the experiences of researchers are seen as valid topics of investigation. In using such an approach, we employ Tedlock's (2000) description of ethnography as 'the observation of participation', a perspective that enables us to experience and observe our own participation along with that of others.

Although it is difficult to define autoethnography and to show how it is different from the many other forms of qualitative research that use narrative, autobiographical or reflexive methods, Ellis and Bochner (2000) argue that autoethnography requires the researcher to 'become a vulnerable observer' (p.752). For Bochner (1997), the social practice of telling a story allows contact and conversation between the personal and academic selves, thus facilitating dialogue about important issues – without the concerns of theory and representation. However, in our case, our beliefs and our understandings about literacy theory underpinned our experiences and the insider approach that we have taken implicates a particular representation of ourselves and our lived experiences.

In narrating the complexities of our lived experiences, we acknowledge that our subjectivities and emotional responses play a vital role (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and we have drawn on feminist understandings that our beliefs, understandings and values are inextricably implicated in our research (Blair, 1995; Devault, 1990; Lather, 1992). Although we have chosen to use autoethnography, what we present as our narrative is

a metaphoric retelling of events and implications, thereby foregrounding the experiences that made us feel regulated and constrained.

Beginning Our Story: Crossing the border

Our experience of Reading Recovery was like crossing the border between two countries. In entering the new country, we were confronted by different beliefs, different laws and different ways of doing things and we were expected to become citizens and to forget about all that we had known previously. Our journey across that border was not an easy one, and indeed was never completed in the sense that was required by the law-makers of the new country. We regularly scuttled back across that border whenever we had the chance. Although we became expert at looking like citizens of the new world, of being, doing and speaking as required, we never handed over our passports and we found ways to strategically resist whenever possible.

This autoethnographic approach to the telling of our own stories is set beside a close analysis of a Reading Recovery lesson. In this way, we investigate the discourses of regulation evident within the institution of Reading Recovery and structure our analysis around three overlapping themes: regulation of bodies, regulation of time and regulation of knowledge.

We do not attempt to portray ourselves as victims who did not willingly apply for and accept these positions as Reading Recovery tutors. Within the system in which we worked, the role of tutor had status and offered employment in the literacy field, at a time when other advisory and off-class literacy jobs were disappearing. We had both

been involved in such positions previously and wished to remain so for personal and career considerations. However, when we accepted the Reading Recovery role, we were not privy to the disciplinary practices at the foundation of the institution. By the time we did realise how difficult that process would be, we felt committed to the school districts that had supported our appointments and were awaiting our return as trained tutors.

Getting a visa:

Our training as Reading Recovery tutors required a full year of training in the theory and practices of the program. Initially in applying for the job, we had to go through the procedures of writing an application, being short-listed and fronting for an interview. The process was competitive – 300 applicants for ten available positions. The interviewers told us that no prior knowledge about Reading Recovery would be assumed and that we would be taught everything we needed to know. What we weren't told was that we would have to forget all that we ever knew about literacy theory and that we would be expected to take on new beliefs without questioning their foundations. In hindsight, it seems ironic that we were chosen by a process that valued extensive knowledge about literacy as a broad concept, to enter an institution that appeared to disregard that notion.

Our role within Reading Recovery required us to give up many of the understandings and beliefs we had about literacy and to replace them with a new set of beliefs and values. Like Bonnie Barnes (1997), a teacher who reflected on and revealed publicly her uneasiness with her training as a Reading Recovery teacher, we were frustrated by the way we felt pressured to take on the beliefs of the institution of

Reading Recovery - to talk, to act and to look like a specific type of literacy educator. It seemed that the regimes of truth within this institution and their day-to-day actualisation as social practices were not available for critique within the world of Reading Recovery. Although this caused us much grief, it also allowed us to be strong in our resolve to construct ourselves as literacy educators rather than Reading Recovery educators.

As a result of our training and our experiences, we bring insiders' knowledge to an analysis of the construction of Reading Recovery. Our interweaving of the two narratives – that of a Reading Recovery lesson along with our own experiences – allows us to examine how the Reading Recovery program operates in relation to tutors, teachers and children. Such an approach provides opportunities to move beyond the usual research question of whether the program improves children's literacy levels. Instead of simply comparing the efficacy of Reading Recovery and other intervention programs (e.g. Pikulski, 1994; Ross, Smith, Casey, & Slavin, 1995; Smith, 1994), or comparing children's pre- and post-program literacy levels (e.g. Clay, 1993b; Rowe, 1997; Trethowan, Harvey, & Fraser, 1996), we attempt to deconstruct the way that the program works to train tutors, teachers and children into particular literate practices. We acknowledge that there is a body of research that identifies the program's success at providing children with the opportunity to develop literacy strategies (e.g. Clay, 1993b; Pikulski, 1994; Pinnell, Lyons, De Ford, Bryk, & Seltzer, 1994). However we wish to problematise the fact that there has been little attempt to critically analyse the program's conceptualisation of literacy.

We argue that the instruction provided by Reading Recovery lessons could train students to be literate in such a particular way that it constrains demonstrations of other literate practices. In this way, instead of preparing students for their futures as literate individuals, the program may well fail to prepare students for other literate events, perhaps even for the classroom literacy events with which they are expected to engage on a daily basis. Our contention is that the program is also constraining for teachers and tutors.

An Approach to Analysis: Power, discipline and surveillance

Our analysis calls on notions of power founded in a Foucauldian perspective. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) links the advent of disciplining power with the institutionalisation of practices in society. He uses Bentham's Panopticon as the metaphorical representation of the disciplining force of overlaying exclusion with segmentation and control. Within the notion of panopticism, visibility is the trap, and the practices of individualisation, measurement and supervision are allowed to occur through surveillance which is at least 'permanent in its effects even if it is discontinuous in its action' (Foucault, 1977, p.201). The power relations within this disciplinary project are in fact such that the execution of power becomes essentially unnecessary. It is more vital that individual know they can be observed than that they actually be observed. Power is both visible and unverifiable to those being disciplined – the mechanism for their surveillance is at all times visible, but whether they are at any point actually being observed is unverifiable.

The unverifiable nature of this power removes its exercise from the possession of an individual, and distributes it instead across a collection of observers and observed, distributed and segmented in particular ways. The Panopticon, Foucault (1977) informs us, produces homogenous effects of power. The individual who becomes conscious of his or her own visible surveillance arrogates responsibility for the exercise of power thus becoming both enforcer and the enforced upon.

The notion of panopticism is then about:

a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organisation, of disposition of centres and channels of power, of definition of the instruments and modes of intervention of power,

(Foucault, 1977, p.205)

and it is thus a useful notion to overlay on to an investigation of discipline and power within an institution like Reading Recovery.

Foucault's concept of disciplinary power allows for a shift in the analysis of macro structures to the micro structures of how power is visible through its existence in actions at the level of the body (Gore, 1998, p.233). By making power visible in this way, we attempt to move beyond a negative construction of power towards an investigation of how power relations, across sites within the institution of Reading Recovery, function at the micro level of social practice.

Based on a close reading of Foucault, Gore (1998) identifies specific practices involved in the functioning of power relations as they are enacted within modern disciplinary power. These include:

- **surveillance** defined as the supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, avoiding being watched,
- **normalisation** defined as invoking, requiring, setting or conforming to a standard, defining the normal,
- **exclusion** defined as tracing the limits that will define difference, boundary, zone, defining the pathological
- **distribution** defined as dividing into parts, arranging and ranking bodies in space,
- **classification** defined as differentiating individuals and/or groups from one another,
- **individualisation** defined as giving individual character to or specifying the individual,
- **totalisation** defined as giving collective character to, specifying a collectivity or a will to conform,
- **regulation** defined as controlling by rule, subject to restrictions, adapting to requirements, invoking rules including through sanction, reward or punishment.

(Gore 1995, p.103)

Gore also discusses the regulation of **space**, **time** and **knowledge** within the mechanisms of schooling. We have categorised Gore's first eight coding categories as relating to the regulation of body, and see this and the regulation of time and knowledge as important categories for an investigation of the institution of Reading Recovery.

In this paper we choose to look closely at the role played by language, particularly interaction. Such an approach was used by Wright (2000) in her analysis of a physical education lesson. By focusing on linguistic realisations of Gore's categories, Wright was able to show how students were constructed according to dominant discourses and how particular 'ways of thinking about the body and moving the body' (p.169) were accepted as normal whilst others remained hidden.

Discourses of Regulation

Reading Recovery teachers are trained through a regime of regular professional development sessions, visits and critique by tutors and peers. This training involves inculcation into the program's theories, values and beliefs, and teachers are expected to demonstrate their enculturation through their talk and behaviours, through the appropriation of words and phrases from Clay's work, and through regular discussion of Reading Recovery texts with peers, tutors and trainers.

The written law: The guidebook. The place of reverence: The circle.

The major normalising practice of Reading Recovery is the use of Reading Recovery: A guidebook for teachers in training (Clay, 1993b) and all Reading Recovery personnel, whether trainers, tutors or teachers, use this text. At teacher and tutor training sessions, colleague visits and conferences, the guidebook is mandatory reading and the place to look for answers to questions and to determine whether teaching decisions have been made according to Clay's theory. Knowledge is

regulated by the use of this single text. It is also part of the way in which Reading Recovery personnel are constructed as a collective who have a common knowledge and a common tool to enhance this knowledge. The bible-like entity of this text was brought home to us as we sat in an audience of approximately 500 Reading Recovery personnel at an international conference, and watched all others in the auditorium turn to pages of the text at the request of the keynote speaker. As we sat and refused to become involved, the keynote speaker resembled a preacher, the conference participants a large congregation, and the book on their laps one of great reverence.

At all levels, Reading Recovery training sessions are conducted with participants sitting in a circle configuration, except when they observe two half-hour lessons from behind a one-way screen. 'The circle' – the place where the majority of discussion and learning about the program takes place – plays a particular role within the institution of Reading Recovery. Participants sit on chairs but are not allowed a desk to balance the texts and writing material that must always be at the ready. This circle of chairs allows participants to be visible at all times and makes it impossible to resist the training processes without overt and active opposition.

Regulation of body

Schooling has been described as a set of practices specifically designed to train the body and to shape it in particular normalising ways (Wright, 2000). The body and how it becomes visible are central to many areas of schooling. How teacher talk is implicated in this regulation has been the subject of work in physical education lessons by Wright (2000). She believes that physical education, as a site specifically

focussed on the body, provides a rewarding space to account for the place of teachers' talk and the practices it expects in the construction and constitution of body.

We believe that Reading Recovery is also such a site. We choose to investigate the power relations evident, through talk and action, that:

may have a hold over other's bodies, not so that they may do what one wishes but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines.

(Foucault, 1977, p.138)

Reading Recovery is a particular site within schooling because it is one of the few sites where a teacher and an individual student are found working together and alone. The teacher has only one student to instruct, sits in close proximity to that student, and is therefore able to direct the student's body in different ways from those generally possible in a regular classroom. This allows opportunities for detailed attention to the regulation of the student's body.

The teacher-directed approach of Reading Recovery lessons also indicates the potential for regulation within each lesson. Teacher directedness is visible in the large number of directives, informatives and questions issued by the teacher in the lesson transcript, thus allowing her to obligate the only other participant present to produce a similarly large number of responses. The teacher's control not only stems from the frequency of these issues, but also from the fact that she already knows the answers to her questions and sets appropriate standards for the student's responses. These initiate-reply-evaluate (IRE) sequences are well documented in the literature as

characteristic of instructional settings (Atkinson, 1981; McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

Through these talk sequences, and through physical movement, the Reading Recovery teacher in the lesson being investigated is able to determine when and where the student will move, what he will do and how he will do it. Not that we suggest that the student is powerless in this context, as we choose to construct the child as a competent actor within the resources available to him in the context in which he finds himself (Danby & Baker, 1998; Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, 1998; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Prout & James, 1997). Just as part of our analysis will suggest that while the teacher is involved in making choices about how she will act, these choices are regulated by discourses of regulation evident within the institution of Reading Recovery.

It is possible to find discourses of regulation of body throughout the transcript and the social practices of the lesson procedures. These discourses become visible in both the actions and language choices of the teacher. The teacher can be seen to watch the student closely as he reacts to her commands and indeed she often sits with her body turned towards him and with her arm around his chair. Her surveillance is particularly obvious through the lesson, as she records her observations and interpretations of the student's responses on to standard lesson record formats.

Linguistically, these discourses are evident throughout the complete lesson. However, we will limit our analysis to a short section of the lesson, which comes after the teacher has interrupted Sam's reading of the new book from the previous day's lesson. She returns to sections of the book and describes her interpretations of what Sam did and said while reading, as shown in the transcript that follows.

- 85 T: okay and when we kept going didn't we and the kids in room?
- 86 S: six
- 87 T: six gave him an? a a[pple
- 88 S: [apple
- 89 T: and the teachers in the staff room? s[aid? you need some?
- 90 S: [said you need some (1) ex[ercise
- 91 T: [exercise
and whata they say to him here?
- 92 S: jump Griffin jump
- 93 T: yeah (2) I wonder what we would what you would do if you were down
running with Mrs Jinova and you saw a cat running with you (.5) would
you wonder what he was doing there?
- 94 S: er
- 95 T: look at him with all the kids doing the exercises maybe we could bring
some (1) cats to school I like the way here (teacher turns pages of book
back) you said you need some yogurt and then you looked at it and you
thought mmm hang on (1) something's not right? What did you change it
to
- 96 S: it was a didn't start with U
- 97 T: no:o=
- 98 S: Y
- 99 T: =yogurt starts with y doesn't it and that starts with?
- 100 S: ori:ng
- 101 T: and also you would've run out of? (1) words cause if you need some yogurt? what
wouldya've done with that word
- 102: S: a:h made it in another word
- 103: T: (laughs) no cause you can't make another word can you (1) unless you said yogurt
juice would that make sense? no and I like the way you started saying oh you poor
cat said the chil:dr:en in room two but that doesn't look quite right does it? if it was
children what would it start with

- 104 S: (1) C H
- 105: T: y:es and this one is?
- 106 S: K I D S
- 107 T: what's it spell
- 108 S:kids
- 109 T: yes you changed that. and you realised you started to say? oh you poor cat
 said the ch and then you looked you must have looked at it and thought
 oh hang on that's not right did you do that? nyer you changed it to
 children good boy well I don't know about you but my cat wouldn't be
 able to do that exercise (1) come over here and have a look we made
 member you were talking about you went to the bike track
- 110 S: yeah

The social practice of surveillance is apparent throughout the lesson interaction in the repeated commands to 'see' or 'have a look at' what will happen as in turn 109. These words are used as commands to move the lesson on, to move the student to the next section of required reading or writing, to discipline the student's gaze and to influence or control what the teacher and student's collective experience of the book or activity will be. Surveillance is also evident in the practice demonstrated in this section of the lesson as the teacher returns to sections of the book already read by the student. In turns 95, 103 and 109 the teacher demonstrates the surveillance that has occurred by relaying to Sam what he said and did. Because she often refers to her notes, it is clear that this student is not only being closely watched but that the observations are being recorded for later reference.

As the teacher tells Sam that she 'likes the way' he has said certain things or read particular sections (e.g. turns 95 and 103), she is classifying what it means to be a reader and writer, thereby normalising these complex social practices into skills that

can be performed in specific ways. Sam is being directed to believe that reading is a set of skills that can be mastered by following the rules. In turn 103 the teacher clearly sets out a rule when she ignores Sam's suggestion that he would 'ma(k)e it another word', to solve the problem of having too many words on a page and instead says 'no cause you can't make another word can you'. Her laughter at this turn reinforces the notion that this is a rule and that it would be comical to suggest otherwise. She also praises Sam on several occasions for recognising that he had performed actions that could not be "normal" in the process of reading and correcting this behaviour. This occurs in turn 109 when Sam is told he is a good boy for thinking 'hang on that's not right' and in turn 95 when he is told that the teacher likes the way he thought 'hang on, something's not right' and proceeded to change his response.

By normalising these practices of reading and writing, the teacher is also involved in pathologising all other ways of reading and writing. Sam is told that the words he chooses to say when reading must look right (as in turns 103 and 109), and more occasionally that they must make sense (turn 103), and that he must be thinking about this as he reads. It is evident that it is considered normal to engage in this type of thinking and questioning during reading. This fits well with the theory behind the program which suggests that learning to read is about learning to problem-solve and to use strategies. While this may well be part of reading text for beginning readers, it is neither the only or all encompassing skill or set of practices available to them. The teacher often chooses to not hear Sam's responses or, more particularly, his initiations that do not conform to the way of reading advocated within this interaction format. For example, in turn 32 below Sam attempts to display his competence as a reader by explaining his knowledge of the details in one of the pictures. This is a practice that

he is encouraged to do as part of introductory reading within class reading lessons, but within the context of Reading Recovery lessons his attempts are ignored.

32 S: it's a grid iron ball ((pointing to the picture on the page))

33 T: oh and what did Mum say

34 S: *poor Tom said mum so mum went snip snip snip sew sew sew she shortened the trousers and put them back. on the. bed*

As discussed above, the particular context of the Reading Recovery lesson allows for students' bodies to be distributed in ways that might not be available to teachers in other contexts. The close proximity of teacher to child allows bodies to be physically moved for instance and for facial expressions and bodily movements to be readily used and recognised as communication. The student leaves his own classroom, desk and materials to visit this Reading Recovery room for lessons, so the materials and resources used are generally under the control of the teacher. She moves books in and out of the instruction space, offers writing materials, magnetic letters and other resources to the student for use and determines when and in what sequence activities will be begun and completed. This control of resources affects the teacher's ability to regulate the distribution of Sam. There is also evidence of this regulation of distribution in the linguistic choices of the teacher who regularly uses terms like 'come over here' or 'look at this' as in turn 109.

While there is evidence throughout the lesson of both a focus on individualisation through the use of 'you' and totalisation or the creation of a collective identity through the use of 'we', there are also several interesting linguistic choices made by the teacher that combine these two social practices. In turn 93, for instance, the teacher begins to

specify a collective, but without pausing continues the turn by singling out Sam's supposed behaviour as individual.

93 T: yeah (2) I wonder what we would what you would do if you were down
 running with Mrs Jinova and you saw a cat running with you (.5) would
 you wonder what he was doing there?

This change from discussing what 'we' would do or think to what Sam as an individual ('you') would do or think also occurs in turn 109 when the teacher switches from discussing what 'we' made to what 'you' (Sam) were talking about. This might be explained by the fact that, within the doctrine of Reading Recovery, teachers are encouraged to construct children as 'independent', and yet our analysis would suggest that they are also encouraged to control so much of what is occurring within the lesson. The teacher is balancing control of Sam's actions and encouraging him to become independent, and this balancing is reflected in her confusion between whether it is Sam or Sam and herself 'doing' the reading.

It would seem, then, that the teacher is involved in regulating the body of Sam through various social practices and this is evident in linguistic choice and general lesson procedure. We wish to suggest, though, that the teacher is also having her behaviour regulated by the very discourses of regulation that we discussed earlier. As we investigate more closely the teacher's part in the surveillance of Sam and his body, we begin to understand that the teacher's choices are actually displays of what would be considered teaching competence within Reading Recovery. The guidebook (Clay, 1993b) used in training refers to how the teacher 'must be a careful observer', helping to explain the close surveillance she directs toward Sam (Clay, 1993b, p.48). Clay also emphasises the importance of the 'observing process' (p.3) to effective teaching:

To be able to detect how different the path has to be for some children we will have to observe a little more closely than we have in the past what the five-to six-year-old is doing and what he is capable of . . .

and

If there is no magical moment at which a child is “ready”. So what we can look for in the first year that indicates progress or lack of it? I look for movement or change in the child's behaviour. My criterion for progress during the first year of school would be that he moves from those responses he can give when he comes to school toward some other goals that I see as appropriate for him. I am looking for *movement in appropriate directions* and only careful monitoring will assure me that the child is not practising inappropriate behaviours.

(Clay, 1993b, p.3)

Clay (1993b) also instructs teachers to control what the child is surveying because 'it is necessary to be alert at all times to what the children are directing their attention to' (p.24). In fact, teachers are called to be alert to many and various student actions and talk through out the book.

It is also possible to find direct reference to the action of returning to material after it has been read to ensure the child has a clear understanding of the surveillance that is part of this lesson and is made conscious of his/her own behaviours. One example of this from the guidebook (Clay, 1993b) is:

So after the reading the teacher could turn back to the page involved and say things like:

I liked the way you solved that puzzle on this page...

Look at this word. You said...

Let's take a look at what you said...

(Clay, 1993b, p.38)

Using Foucault's notions of disciplining through surveillance, it is possible to explain how this teacher has become disciplined into particular ways of being and doing literacy instruction. The teacher was trained in 'circles' to say these words; was required to read the guidebook until able to demonstrate her knowledge by locating short passages or phrases at her tutor's command, and knows herself to be the recipient of very visible surveillance, which is not at all times verifiable and thus assumed to be continuous in its patterns.

Into a militarised zone:

During our training year we felt that we were constantly under surveillance. To us, some of the surveillance techniques, whether they were directed at individuals or at the group as a collective, seemed quite sinister. For example, we were told that "there wasn't a day that went by when somebody out in the field didn't ring to report something", implying that we were always being watched, regardless of whether the trainers were with us or not. Our surveillance was made visible - although it was very often unverifiable - and we were trained to become the enforcers of our own

discipline. When our trainers came to watch our teaching or tutoring, they took notes and kept copies for our files. Although we recognised that this was a fairly usual thing to do as part of training, we were suspicious.

Our fear of being under constant surveillance surfaced in what now seem like silly ways. For instance we would say things to tutors whilst on visits to the field, and then enjoy the fact that that information later became the basis of a training session for us - making it clear that tutors were reporting back to our trainers. Being able to verify this surveillance seemed important at the time. What now seem to be ridiculous and exaggerated responses were not based on unfounded fears. In Reading Recovery, children are watched and listened to from behind a one-way screen without their knowledge. Why not us? It seemed to us that Reading Recovery was very much about people watching and listening to others – often covertly and very often with an unspecified purpose.

Regulation of time

There are several indications that the issue of time is important in this particular lesson. Temporal phrases such as 'off you go', 'keep going' and 'let's go' reoccur throughout the interaction and are used to keep the lesson moving towards its end point. The teacher regularly checks her watch and seems concerned when Sam moves slowly or spends time working something out. There are also references to running out of time, as in the following extract:

135 T: yep you've done that? so what are you going to do what were you gunna

do what were you gonna say today you told me you were gonna say
 something else about it and we didn't have time did we cause you wrote
 such a lo:ng sentence but we said oh? we'll do the second sentence today
 what was it

We maintain, then, that the teacher controls the rights to pace the interaction, and this raises the question of why she is so preoccupied with time. It has been argued that concern with time can be a result of systemic constraints on an institution (Silverman & Gubrium, 1994) and, in the case of Reading Recovery, there are two intertextual influences that might affect time and pace. One is a philosophical obsession with accelerative learning. Clay (1992) states that the program is 'close to the edge of cost effectiveness' (p.74) and must move children quickly in order to justify its existence. The other is an economic and political constraint that is enacted by administrative personnel concerned with keeping the purse strings of education accountable.

The texts used in training Reading Recovery teachers make many references to keeping an intense pace during lessons. In describing the program as 'a second chance to learn', Clay (1992) hazards against teachers wasting time. Under the heading, *An economy of learning time*, she states:

If children are to catch up with their classmates no time can be wasted. The teacher must guard against trivial pursuits and she must make judgements every lesson about what will accelerate the child's learning.

(Clay, 1992, p.75)

Further, the text specifically used for training Reading Recovery teachers (1993b) makes continued reference to lesson timing and pace. One example is:

The principles of an intensive program allow the close supervision of the shifts in the child's responding. Short lessons held often are important for success.

This allows the learning to be carried over from one day to the next.

(Clay, 1993b, p.9)

The local enactment of this call for short, intensive lessons can be seen in schools, where Reading Recovery teachers and children work to timers. Similarly, classroom teachers are under pressure to remember to send the next Reading Recovery student early, so that they will be ready for lesson change over, and students sit reading to the call of:

19 T: quick off you go

This philosophical call for intensive, fast paced lessons is supported by the systemic constraints impacting on teachers' work at a local level. Teachers' 25 hours of duty over a fortnight are segmented into as little as fifteen minute time slots, to justify the system's time allocation for teachers to teach four children individually on a daily basis. Teachers are allowed exactly twenty hours over ten days to conduct four 30 minute lessons daily. No time is assigned for changeover between children or for any lesson to run longer than the prescribed 30 minutes. This top-down surveillance of teachers' use of time starts at the systemic centre of the education

authority and moves through district personnel, to school principals and ultimately to Reading Recovery teachers.

The intertextual nature of the construction of temporal importance across basic theory explanations and systemic requirement texts helps to explain why the teacher seems obsessed with fast-pacing the lesson. She is required to teach four half-hour lessons to four individual children, with not a spare minute, then moves on to teach a class for the rest of her working day. However, somehow, she must save-up minutes when she finds herself able so that she can be released for a fortnightly professional development session. At these sessions, she is required to read and discuss texts that encourage her to accelerate her students and to guard against wasting time on trivial pursuits. She is made to feel that leisure and reflection time within the lesson is a sign of non-effective teaching.

The irony of this situation is that, while Sam is granted time to work at words in order to develop 'independence' (Clay, 1993b, p.43) and problem-solving abilities, the time constraints placed on the teacher's work lead to the construction of the interaction in such a way that the teacher maintains complete control of the pace of the lesson.

Regulation of knowledge

Knowledge is carefully regulated by many of the social practices of Reading Recovery. Again this is evident in the linguistic choices of Sam's teacher during the lesson, especially when she tells Sam what he has thought:

95 T: look at him with all the kids doing the exercises maybe we could bring some (1) cats to school I like the way here (teacher turns pages of book back) you said you need some yogurt and then you looked at it and you thought mmm hang on (1) something's not right? What did you change it to

Such practice is not uncommon in Reading Recovery lessons. Similarly, teachers often instruct children to 'remember' particular responses or skills. In setting out to teach children how to use a particular set of cognitive processing strategies, teachers draw on a limited set of questions and statements which are drawn directly from their guidebook (Clay, 1993b). Teachers are encouraged to use the questions and statements as they have been written and this was evident in the lesson, especially when the teacher commented on Sam's reading, as in the following turns:

19 T: I love the way you said that

29 T: I like the way you said that night

39. T: I like the way you said and put them back on the bed as if to say oh not again . . .

Sections of these phrases, like so many of those used by the teacher during the lesson, can be found printed in italics in the guidebook. Throughout the lesson, the teacher regulates the knowledge that is read, written and spoken about.

Further in Reading Recovery lessons, children are able to read only texts that have been selected by their teacher. Although each child is offered a selection of texts for the familiar reading section of the lesson, the teacher has always previously selected the books to be offered. Although Reading Recovery teachers would argue that texts

are selected with a particular child in mind, an underlying assumption of the program is that low achievers in reading should move through a finely graded or levelled set of texts with the gradient of difficulty being decided upon by the teacher.

Even though the books selected by the teacher may be of any type, as long as they fit the program's levelling requirements – and many teachers and tutors are attempting to include a variety of text types – storybooks are still over represented in most Reading Recovery sets. Research (e.g. Heath, 1982, 1983) has shown that such practice tends to advantage children who have had previous experience with that type of literature and those children are often not the ones who belong to the most at-risk groups. Such practices may disadvantage those children whose home reading practices do not include storybooks or reading practices similar to those validated by Reading Recovery.

Facing new rules and regulations:

One of the frustrations of our year of tutor training was that we were given the material that we were expected to read. We were neither expected nor encouraged to use the university library, with our course based around 'set' readings. In fact, we understood that 'other' readings were not welcome and the sheer quantity of reading supplied to us made reading other material almost impossible.

First and foremost, our reading diet consisted of three books by Clay (1991, 1993a, 1993b). Later we were given additional articles written by Clay and/or her supporters, along with articles that underpinned the cognitive approach of Clay's work. One measure of our enculturation into Reading Recovery was the extent to which we could locate information in the guidebook (Clay, 1993b). We had to

practise finding information and repeating Clay's words from the text, thereby demonstrating our skills.

When we brought along articles that critiqued and criticised Reading Recovery (e.g. Barnes, 1997; Dudley-Marling & Murphy, 1997; Tancock, 1997), we were quickly given articles that countered those arguments and discussion about perceived 'flaws' in Clay's work was quickly silenced. On one occasion, the trainers 'read' a published critique as praise of the program. On another, one of us was told, after bringing in a critique of the program, that we should stop 'causing trouble' because the word would get out and ripples would run through the Reading Recovery world causing difficulties for everyone and the program.

Teachers' reading is similarly regulated. As a tutor, one of us was visited by a trainer and told that she was not serving her training teachers well by allowing them to read additional material and that the guidebook was enough for them to read and learn from within the training year.

Within the lesson being investigated here there is also evidence that the teacher is regulating what will be acceptable writing material. The following section of the lesson occurs during the 'genuine conversation' before writing (Clay, 1993b, p.29):

119 T: tracking good boy and off you go over here (7) and there you go (1) and we were talking about? (1) here (3) read what you did on that one

120 S: oh you (1) oh the on the weekend I went to the (3) uh

121 T: that's right remember you went with there's that word we used wasn't it I went to the?

122 S: race tracks and came

- 123 T: and I [came
- 124 S: [and I came [third
- 125 T: [third (1) yes you did (5) okay and you were gonna tell me
something more about that today weren't you (2) what were you gonna tell me (3)
- 126 S: mm
- 127 T: member we were talking about (1) um who you were talking about it at the board as
well (1) who came who was in your race re[member that?
- 128 S: [Russell and Simon
- 129 T: yeah Russell ans Simon and and how did where did they come
- 130 S: um they came fro:m (2) um (3)
- 131 T: so what was the sentence remember we were talking about what you did at the race
track (3) what were you gonna say remember when you were talking about it
yesterday can you remember that?
- 132 S: u:m yep
- 133 T: what did you want to say
- 134 S: on the I said on the weekend I went to the race tracks and I came third
- 135 T: yep you've done tha:t? so what are you gonna do what were you gonna say today you
told me you were gonna say something else about it we didn't get time did we cause
you wrote such a lo:ng sentence but we said oh? we'll do the second sentence today
what was it
- 136 S: my uncles ca:me (1) second and fourth
- 137 T: wow that's right (2) off you go (2) were they in the same race as you?
- 138 S: yep
- 139 T: wow
- 140 S: I I bate Lincoln
- 141 T: okay what are we going to start our sentence with?

This short section of the lesson is indicative of the lesson as a whole in relation to the regulation of knowledge. There is a pattern of high intensity interrogation of Sam's memory, rather than of any text to be read or written. The teacher begins by

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telling Sam about what he wrote yesterday, then questions him until he has remembered what she believes he said in the previous lesson. Once this response is finally received in turn 136, the teacher moves the lesson on, again ignoring Sam's attempt to initiate a topic in turn 140. Instead, she initiates her own question and this positions Sam, again, as responder to the teacher's questions.

Surviving in hostile territory:

As time progressed, it became more and more difficult for us to accept the theoretical position that we were expected to take up. We began to feel that we were in survival mode. However, we were helped in our endeavours by a bevy of friends, some of whom had crossed the border with us and others who knew that this was one country that would never be on their travel itinerary. Friends who were academics listened with empathy, but never really understood why we had crossed the border in the first place. Yet it was our discussions with them that helped to keep what we thought was some normality in our lives and made us decide that we could never become citizens in this new country. On many occasions, we considered the possibility of defection. However, at the same time, we recognised that we had willingly – if unknowingly - agreed to do the training and that we had a responsibility to the districts that were expecting us to return fully trained.

Strangely enough, it was an assessment task set by our trainers that finally allowed us to head out into the field with more confidence that we could do the job required. The task was a critique of an aspect of Reading Recovery. "Of course," said one of the trainers, "it will be a positive critique." For us, that seemed like the final straw. Yet we had been offered the challenge to address some of the issues that had been

bothering us for so long and we proceeded with as much professionalism as we could muster.

Our critiques tackled some of the theoretical elements of Reading Recovery that had never fitted with our beliefs. We carried out the task in an academic manner, drawing on a part of the literacy field that our training had never acknowledged. In doing that assessment task, we were able to place our views within the much larger literacy field, identifying how the Reading Recovery program in fact works well in assisting children to break the code of reading and writing. Thus we could conceptualise the program as serving a necessary, but not sufficient, role in literacy education (Freebody & Luke, 1990).

We agonised over every word. We knew that we would soon have to begin training Reading Recovery teachers ourselves. What had become our public dissonance was going to make this a difficult task in many ways. So we began the task with a somewhat naïve belief that this was our chance to let the field know what the basis for our resistance had been – that if we could present our views in a measured, academic fashion, both we and the law makers could move beyond the emotional responses that had come to characterise our relationships, and instead come to value each other's academic positions. The feedback we received only reinforced the gap between these theoretical positions. We were told that what we had attempted to do was admirable and yet not possible – how could one compare two such disparate things as literacy acquisition and broader social notions of literacy practice?

It was on reading these comments that we realised finally that it was actually our theoretical positions that were disparate with those of Reading Recovery. We knew that we would need to live for a time as transient workers in this foreign country - in order to fulfil our responsibilities - but the enculturation process had failed, and we

knew that without that success, citizenship was not an option. We set out to our districts and worked hard to give our teachers what they would need to survive within the world of Reading Recovery once we left them, but also aimed to prove that the training of Reading Recovery teachers could occur in a context of critical thought, valuing of differences of opinion and respect for others. Still we wonder whether we achieved this, and worry about so many aspects of our involvement with teachers and children during that period.

Moving On – Towards a new ending

What we have attempted to present in this paper is a multilayered analysis of one intervention program. Our finding that many of the regulatory processes in child-teacher interactions are just as evident in the training processes used with teachers and tutors awakens us to the fact that it is the institution of Reading Recovery which regulates the bodies, time and knowledges of participants. In this way, our critique has aimed to investigate the social practices, in many cases disciplinary and regulatory, of such an institution. This moves the gaze of our own surveillance from being involved in disciplining students, teachers and tutors, to an attempt to regulate the social practices of an institution.

Our choice to interweave our own narratives with an analysis of a child-teacher interaction has opened us to an uncomfortable sense of vulnerability. We have been caught between the desire to present an interesting story that provides a perspective not available to many and the disturbing realisation that we may be betraying those acquaintances and even friends from another world that we inhabited as insiders for

such a short time. We are aware that our reading is but one of many possibilities and that our own beliefs, knowledges and experiences are implicated in this reading. This was an underlying consideration in our choice of autoethnography as a means to tell our story. We do not believe that we have attempted to hide ourselves in this research, but have instead taken the somewhat unnerving step to make ourselves very visible.

Internationally and within Australia it seems to be an important time to take the opportunity to debate our own conceptions of literacy and those at the foundation of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment within schools. So whilst the contemporary literacy context in many western nations at least, seems in so many ways to be valuing basic early literacy training, we are concerned about the risk of constraining whole groups of children to the acquisition of normalised and narrow literacy practices, as identified by our discussion of Reading Recovery. However, we acknowledge that programs such as Reading Recovery will work for some children on some occasions – and indeed, for many children who have never 'cracked the code' of reading and writing in the regular classroom, this program is often the only answer available to them within our education systems.

Nevertheless, there is a false sense that 'the literacy problem' will be solved by ensuring that all students have basic, functional literacy by the end of Year 3. In fact, this false promise allows the understandings of literacy as social practice, as a rich and complex set of social practices, to be ignored. Systems working towards the 'basic literacy by the end of Year 3' objective seem to be calling on intervention programs such as Reading Recovery to be answers to the perceived failure of some children to move along the literacy developmental continuum at what is accepted as an appropriate pace. Those making these decisions would suggest that such programs

help students achieve basic literacy, and that this allows a broader more contemporary conception of literacy to be constructed in classroom literacy events.

However, we would argue that narrowing and normalising the practices necessary for today's literate student may in fact marginalise students from particular social groups – firstly, by not providing access to a broader range of literate practices, and secondly, through discourses of regulation, which actually constrain the development of competencies in literacy as social practice by enabling narrow responses to becoming literate.

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