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CHAPTER 9

**BRINGING WRITERS' VOICES TO WRITING RESEARCH:
TALK AROUND TEXTS**

Theresa Lillis, The Open University, UK.

Abstract

This chapter explores how a key methodology developed by Roz Ivanič, “talk around texts”, constitutes a fundamental contribution to writing research in three ways; firstly by disrupting conventional researcher-researched positioning; secondly by keeping writers centre stage even whilst using text-linguistics; and thirdly by opening up opportunities for re-examining textual practices, by questioning what should (and could) be valued in formal institutions of learning. I locate this methodology within the particular values Ivanič espouses, as evidenced by both her pedagogic and her academic-theoretical work and illustrate how my own research has been influenced by this work in specific research decisions that I have made and in generating further questions that I am still struggling to address.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on a key methodology developed by Roz Ivanič, “talk around texts”, and explores how this approach has made a fundamental contribution to the field of writing research, namely by bringing writers’ voices to the centre of any attempt to explore what’s involved and at stake in academic writing. The chapter begins by briefly illustrating “talk around texts” and then locates this methodology within the particular values Ivanič espouses, as evidenced by both her pedagogic and her academic-theoretical work. As is discussed in this chapter, each dimension – the pedagogic and the academic- have contributed significantly to the development of the other; the pedagogic engages with a specific pedagogic tradition, the traditions of critical pedagogy (Freire 1985) and critical language awareness (Clark et al. 1991), and the

academic-theoretical engages with a specific approach to literacy, that of literacy as social practice (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič 2000). Drawing on connections between both dimensions, Ivanič's development of "talk around texts" has impacted on writing research in significant ways, three of which are discussed in this chapter and each of which I discuss under the following headings;

disrupting researcher-researched positioning - by allowing research participants to contribute to the direction of research and thus the naming of the phenomenon or "problem" being explored;

placing writers centre stage whilst using text-linguistics - by paying careful attention to writers' perspectives whilst at the same time bringing to bear the tools of linguistic-discourse analysis;

opening up opportunities for re-examining textual practices - by questioning what should (and could) be valued in formal institutions of learning.

Alongside the main chapter sections, I illustrate how my own research has been influenced by Roz's work in specific decisions that I have made and in generating further questions that I am still struggling to address. I also offer some brief reflections not just on what Roz has contributed through her written publications, but on the quiet (usually invisible) but powerful ways in which her generosity as a scholar has supported and encouraged many scholars who have felt (or feel) at the margins of the academy, including myself.

I remember my first visit to see Roz as my "academic advisor". The doors in Lancaster's department corridor were decorated with famous names from the fields of applied linguistics, critical discourse analysis, New Literacy studies...there were also, countless posters on the walls advertising interesting seminars and lectures- flaunting (it felt like) the discussions that outsiders would not take part in. Roz didn't take these for granted. She welcomed me into her high status institution with its wealth of symbolic academic capital displayed for all to see, even though I was only there for an afternoon, borrowing from the wealth. Having a cup of tea with her was an invitation to share. She asked me my opinion about current texts I was reading and talked of

her interests and her concerns about some ideas in recent works. I felt invited to offer my own ideas; treated like an adult with a past, a present not a “student” who had only reached so far. I think that many academics think they (we) are welcoming and open - particularly to those ill at ease, uncomfortable in what is such a privileged and such a middle class marked space (certainly in the UK) - but actually very few are...Roz is one of those few.¹

What is talk around texts?

The method of talk around text is core to much of Ivanič's research work, particularly her research on writing in higher education (see in particular Ivanič 1998; but also in her recent work in further education (see for example Ivanič and Satchwell 2007). As a method, what does it essentially involve? Talk between the researcher and the writer-participant about a text that the writer is writing or has written. Such talk may focus on a text type, text, or section/feature of a text: the specific focus at any one moment in time may be something as small as a specific use of a full stop, to patterns of vocabulary or grammar, such as the use of particular pronouns across a text, to a specific convention emblematic of academic discourse, such as the use of citations. Two further basic points should be noted: (1) The texts around which such talk is based are “real” texts, that is writing that is part of a learning/study activity in which writers are engaging - an essay in a politics course, for example, not a task set up for research purposes; (2) Talk is not a one-off interaction between researcher and writer but is embedded in a “longer conversation” (Maybin 1994) relating to people's life and literacy histories.

As a specific “method”, at this broad level, talk around texts seems straightforward enough and probably a seemingly obvious approach to adopt in exploring what's involved in academic writing. Here's an extract from such talk between Roz and Rachel, a student on a social work course at the time of Ivanič's study; they are discussing one particular extract from an essay (Ivanič 1998: 154):

Rachel: --- so some of the story's descriptive and some of it's just describing.

Roz: I don't know what you mean.

Rachel: Sometimes I'm just telling a story and in my storytelling I'm describing things and then other things it's not like the story plot, it's just, like, I'm describing---

Roz: For example?

Rachel: Like this bit here "On our last visit Ms A admitted to me that she had been better off without her cohab"... I am describing what she said.

I will discuss below how this seemingly simple methodological move of inviting participants for their views on the texts represents a radical move in academic writing research. Here it is worth noting how such a move constitutes a response to public discourses on student writing. Public discourse on the state of students' writing in higher education is typically framed in deficit terms - students' can't write – and "writing" is usually reduced to specific ideological framings of text, however vague, such as "spelling" and "grammar" (see discussions in Lillis and Turner 2001; Haggis 2003; Lea 2004). The "problem" is taken as "given" rather than raised as an issue to be explored and the perspectives of writers themselves, or the processes or practices in which texts are embedded, are usually ignored. Ivanič in contrast focuses on these perspectives and practices, drawing on her expertise as teacher and academic to explore them.

The central place given to seeking out writer perspectives in Ivanič's work reflects and enacts a particular ideological stance towards language, pedagogy, research processes and knowledge making which she merges from what I see as two specific and strongly interrelated interests and commitments in her working life: broadly speaking, the pedagogic and the academic-theoretical. Whilst recognising that these are not completely discrete domains, it is Roz's commitment to both which I think has helped her to forge a research methodology which stays rooted in people's real life concerns

Locating Ivanič's talk around texts within a critical ideology of pedagogy and academic research

Pedagogy: collaborative research and critical language awareness

Ivanič's pedagogic interests pre-date her involvement in academia as scholar and researcher. As a teacher in adult basic education (ABE) she was centrally concerned with the relationship between language and participation in formal institutions of education, a concern that is always evident in her work as a researcher. Talking about how she came to be involved in language and literacy research, Roz said:

I felt there were an enormous number of things about language which I needed to understand in order to improve my teaching. It was through listening to students and realising that their explanations, for why they were doing things the way they were, were often based on aspects of language which I would never have predicted, that I felt the complexities of language much more thoroughly. (Interview 2001)²

The impact of her pedagogic experience on her research approach is evident in her book *Writing and identity* where, in referring to the research on which her book is based, she says:

In my view, by turning tuition into research we were putting into practice two fundamental principles of Adult Basic Education: maintaining symmetry if not equality among adults, and empowering both learners and tutors' (1998: 110)

This valuing of participant researchers as collaborators, and the fundamental interconnectedness between research and teaching, where teaching itself is construed as an ongoing research activity (in the sense of the need forever to be exploring with learners what is going on and what is at stake) is a core value and highly influential in academic writing research in the UK, and internationally (see for examples in UK, Gardener 1992 ; for South Africa Thesen and Van Pletzen 2006; for US Lu 1994). A particularly important contribution to raising the profile of language use in general - rather than in writing in particular - was made

by Ivanič with colleagues from the Lancaster research group in their work on *critical language awareness*. Building on critical pedagogy (Freire 1972) the group's writing on critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1992, 1995), their writings on critical language awareness challenged the dominant transmission model of formal education, and raised questions about any top down (researcher-analyst led) model of research - arguing instead for collaborative problem-posing approach. In Freire's work, learning is viewed as the process of becoming critically engaged with socio-political reality, with specific emphasis on developing ways in which the less powerful in society can become "speaking subjects": language is viewed as central to this emancipation as it is through taking control over "naming the world" that people can occupy an agentive subject position rather than being a (subject) object in a world named by others (Freire 1972: chapter 3). The Critical Language Awareness (CLA) work takes up this view and, building on Fairclough's work in critical language study (CLS) and critical discourse analysis (CDA), takes up the position that discourse analysis should not be only about describing language practices, but should also have an explanatory goal, to seek to explain how it is that certain forms are privileged above others in specific contexts and why. "The explanatory objective of CLS is to show the connection between discourse and its structural determinants and effects" (Clark et al. 1991: 42). A key contribution Ivanič makes in exploring such a connection in writing research, is to place language users, and more specifically in her work, writers, at the centre of such explanatory objectives as I discuss below.

Academic research: New Literacy Studies and ethnography

The attention to learner perspectives that Ivanič draws from core values as a pedagogue and her work with colleagues on CLA is strongly consonant with what can be described as the academic or scholarly dimension to her working life, which is enthused by a combination of academic approaches, notably ethnography and linguistics. I focus on the linguistic-discourse dimension below but here want to emphasise the strong connection between fundamental values in her pedagogic work in ABE and her academic or scholarly interest in ethnography. A core ethnographic principle is that participants' views be treated as authentic and significant (see Hammersley 2006 for discussion of interviews in

ethnography) and that research needs to be empirically grounded in, and theoretically infused by, participants' lives. At a theoretical level, this ethnographic approach to the study of student academic writing reflects Roz's collaboration with colleagues in New Literacy Studies including Street's contrasting notions of autonomous and ideological positions on literacy which have proved to be a particularly powerful heuristic for opening up a critical exploration of the specific literacy demands and practices in context, including those associated with academia (see Lea and Street 1998). Rather than the dominant position on literacy as autonomous - whereby literacy is viewed as a single and universal phenomenon with assumed cognitive as well as economic benefits - Ivanič draws on Street's view of what he calls an *ideological* model of literacy. Here the focus is on acknowledging the socioculturally embedded nature of literacy practices and the associated power differentials in any literacy related activity (Street 1984, 2004, 2005). This "academic" ethnographic framing of literacy connects strongly with Ivanič's pedagogic values outlined above and indeed gives strong academic credibility to the long standing tradition from practitioner oriented research to taking seriously students' perspectives (see Gardener 1992). In Ivanič's focus on writing, this involved seeking out writers' perspectives, including challenging the "taken for granted" conventions that they are expected to write within (see Benson et al. 1993; Ivanič and Simpson 1992; Ivanič, Aitchison and Weldon 1996; Ivanič 1998).

Disrupting researcher-researched positioning

The value placed by Ivanič on students participants' perspectives amounts to what I am referring to here as one of her key contributions to writing research - that of disrupting conventional researcher-researched positioning. Writers' perspectives are typically backgrounded in academic research on writing (and academic research more generally) in a number of ways: firstly, the dominant tradition in academic research is to - even whilst seeking them out - restrict the significance of the perspectives of participants in research to the status of "informants", rather than collaborators who are participating in the exploration of the "problem" or phenomenon; secondly, in academic writing research where linguistic tools are brought to bear, it is often the linguistic or textualist focus (see Horner 1999 for textualism) as determined by the

researcher that remains the central object of focus. In this dominant model of academic research the researcher might elicit participants' perspectives but continues to hold on to her/his position of "interpreter of the world" (Reynolds quoted in Lather 1991: 59).

Ivanič's values from Adult Basic Education, her work in CLA and the emphasis on *emic* (insider) perspectives in ethnographic approaches that frame the New Literacy Studies, challenge any notion that writers' views and perspectives are simply "background" information, or subordinate to the main object - the text. Rather they are central to what the "object" of research is "However interesting and complex the writing process may appear in theory, the observations by writers themselves are even more interesting and reveal even greater complexity." (Ivanič 1998: 115)

Creating spaces where writers can talk about their texts is difficult given that (1) no talking space is ever neutral and, (2) of specific relevance to writing research, talking spaces are shaped by powerful institutional constraints in both teaching and research contexts. There is an obvious unequal power relationship with the teacher or researcher conventionally controlling the talking space; most obviously in a teaching context, the teacher is usually the assessor too, so s/he has to actively work at creating opportunities for dialogue; in the research context, unless the researcher seeks out ways of foregrounding participants' perspectives, the research agenda and analysis remain firmly controlled by the researcher. Talk around texts as a methodology developed by Ivanič has the specific goal of explicitly seeking out writers' perspectives through ongoing discussions over time, and is set within a commitment on the part of the researcher to learn about the writer's interests and desires within the context of their life histories in order to make greater sense of any specific acts of writing.

The use of "talk around text" has been crucial in my own research over the past ten years in two research projects, with student-writers and with professional academic writers. I have been - and continue to be - surprised and excited by writers' responses to what are simple and often quite unsuspecting questions (unsuspecting because although I often think I am asking the most relevant questions, it often turns out that in fact I am actually groping towards meaningful questions). I am also struck by the fact that once a research dialogue has been opened up, writers offer up some of the most interesting and complex comments without any request or prompt from the researcher.

Extract 1: comment by student-writer

See, when I say I think of myself as English [when writing academic essays] what I mean is that I'm trying to imagine how an English person would be writing---to make myself think as if I'm an English person writing this out. (Lillis 2001: 89)

Extract 2: comment by professional academic writer

Saying something from [Central Europe] which is new is not good, not allowed. Of course it's absolutely their perspective to see [Central Europe] as, I don't know, a tribe trying to do something scientific. (Lillis and Curry 2006)

*Both above comments were made by writers in the context of “talk around” specific texts, illustrating the value of the method for opening up discussion about wide ranging contextual - as well as text specific - issues. But whilst I continue to use this methodology, I have also worried that such talk is treated (by analysts) too often as if it were **transparent** and thus analysed quite differently from the ways in which written texts are analysed (in the same research studies). Written texts are pulled apart and theorised for their meanings, yet what people **say** about texts is often treated as straightforwardly transparent. So one question for me is - Can we as academic writing researchers justify our treatment of spoken and written “texts” in such different ways? I think that to a certain extent we can; accepting what people say as meaningful to them is a fundamental principle of both critical pedagogy and ethnographic research. However, accepting what people say as authentic and meaningful does not mean that we should treat them as either transparent or fixed. In grappling for meaningful ways of conceptualising the talk around texts, in recent times I have found it useful to conceptualise talk around texts as always involving three key aspects outlined in Figure 9.1.*

Whilst the first aspect in Figure 9.1 is important (most obviously there is some information that writers share which is referential - details of age, schooling, languages used, qualifications achieved etc.) the other two aspects mentioned in Figure 9.1 are also always in play. Thus in Extract 1 above, the writer is not only telling a “realist tale” about herself (category 1) (van Maanen 1988) but is indexing (category 2) whole sets of meanings about academia and what is valued in academia - notably here, being English monolingual, monocultural. Similarly, the writer in Extract 2 is signalling the power differential between academics writing out of non-Anglophone

1 Transparent/Referential

Insider accounts/perspective on texts (part of a text), practices including information about the writer - for example, about the person - age, languages spoken, number of papers published, number of assignments written etc.

2 Discourse/indexical

As indexing specific discourses about self, writing, academia, etc..

3 Performative/relational

Researcher and researched performing research, identity, power, specific practices at specific moment/place in time

Figure 9.1 Three aspects of talk around academic texts

centre contexts. Furthermore, all talk around texts needs to be considered for its performative/relational dimension (category 3 in Figure 9.1) at a number of levels: most obviously, the kinds of things that are shared between researcher and participants depend very much on the immediate situation/identities/status of both and how these are perceived by the other. These immediate situations are in turn shaped by broader sociohistorical shifts:

Some things can only be said at certain moments, under certain conditions. Likewise, and as a correlate of this, some things can only be researched at certain moments and under certain conditions. (Blommaert 2005: 65)

The conversations with the student-writers took place at a time when the problematics of participating in university study were both high on their agenda - as critical moments in their lives, as well as on the public (politics and media) agenda of widening access to higher education in the UK. Likewise, conversations with multilingual scholars were (are) taking place at time when there is marked and increasing pressure internationally on social sciences scholars to publish in English (as well as paralleling changes in the political climate in some countries where there are increased opportunities to engage with Anglophone scholars). The research moments connected strongly with significant sociohistorical moments for individuals, thus making the research possible³. So currently I'm trying to work an awareness of all three aspects to talk around texts...

Placing writers centre stage whilst using text-linguistics

Whilst placing the subjects of research – writers - centre stage, Ivanič never argues for giving up her specialist analyst role as a linguist and brings an explicit text-linguistic interest to bear in her writing research. Indeed, her “talk around texts” builds on work by Odell, Goswami and Herrington (1983) and the notion of the *discourse based interview* - which as the label indicates involves explicit attention to discourse features. However there are significant differences between the “talk around text” that Ivanič practices and key aspects of the discourse based interview. The discourse based interview by Odell et al. involves the researcher identifying specific features of a text about which s/he wants to elicit the writer’s views and was developed as a way of gaining access to the “tacit knowledge” people bring to professional writing. Their approach involved collecting samples of writing from individuals and looking for variations between texts in an attempt to identify alternatives within each writer’s repertoire. They looked, for example, at the range of ways in which people referred to clients in their writing, by identifying the phrases they used to sign their names and the phrasing of requests and commands (: 233). Having identified the range of alternatives, they presented these to writers and asked why they might prefer to choose one of the phrases. Their aim was thus to focus the writers’ attention on the way in which they used specific linguistic features in order to encourage them to articulate the reason for such use and thus allow the researcher to gain access to this implicit or “tacit” knowledge. The researchers selected the areas for discussion on the grounds that the writers themselves wouldn’t be able to identify points where such knowledge was particularly significant because such knowledge was considered to be largely implicit (: 229).

Ivanič draws on this tool of the discourse based interview in three specific ways. Firstly, and most obviously, she adopts the notion of having **text** focused discussions (in contrast to - and in her work, in addition to - the broader and more wide ranging interviews about writing or literacy practices used in literacy studies). Secondly, she takes up the specific practice of presenting alternative linguistic-rhetorical features - a powerful tool for generating discussion with writers - for example in noting that writers used quotation marks or “scare quotes” around some words and phrases and not others and then asking writers about their

reasons for different uses (see Ivanič 1998: 195). And, thirdly, she explicitly focuses on a range of linguistic features, as illustrated in her analysis of a section of Rachel's writing in social work course (already referred to above on page x): she focuses on types of verbal processes, use of pronouns, use of determiners, formulaic expressions, nominalisations, grammatical subjects, modality, choice of lexis. An example of the linguistic commentary of Rachel's' text is as follows, from Ivanič (1998):

There are two long nominal groups (135)

The next sentence contains the first action with a human actor as main clause (136)

The clause structure is typically academic---Yet many of the clauses and embedded clauses have human participants engaged in physical and verbal processes (137)

Of course, as an applied linguist – and someone who loves linguistics - it is not surprising that Roz would focus on the linguistic features of texts. This is after all what linguists do and there is a strong tradition of linguistic approaches to academic writing (see for examples of overviews Bazerman and Prior 2004; Hewings 2001). However, there are important differences between Roz's approach and text-linguistic orientations to writing. Firstly, she dismisses an approach which is text-linguistic only including the (quite common) practice of “counting features across texts” which she views as “unsatisfactory”, particularly given her interest in identity and subject positioning (see Ivanič 1998: 118ff). Secondly, she allows, indeed, actively encourages writer-participants to identify aspects of the text that are worthy of analysis, rather than pre-determining these from her perspective of linguist-analyst. Consider the way in which, in contrast to Odell et al described above, she allows writers to choose what should be focused on and recognises the importance of this for her own linguistic analysis:

In the discourse-based interviews my co-researchers had identified parts of their writing which were particularly interesting or troublesome for them --- Often they identified discourse types which I may not have noticed alone. --- I used what they had said

as a lead into texts, helping me to know what else to turn my linguist's eyes on. (Ivanič 1998: 119)

Thirdly, she makes clear the limitations of text-linguistic analysis, and indeed of the analyst, in establishing the functions of text. For example, she points to the importance of emic, that is, insider knowledge (external to the analyst) for the identification of genres;

It is --- interesting that as a linguist I could see it [section of essay] had particular generic characteristics, but in order to identify its genre I had either to be an insider to the particular social work community in which Rachel worked, or to ask her. This shows that thorough discourse analysis is impossible without contacting participants for contextual detail. (Ivanič 1998:140)

Thus whilst Ivanič uses linguistic analysis for exploring the nature of specific texts, her goal is definitely to reach beyond what linguistic analysis per se can offer. Attention to linguistic categories enable Roz as analyst to ground “discourses” in actual features, and as importantly, in writer's lives. In this way, she puts not only linguistics, but the linguist as analyst in her/his place: this is a very important place from her perspective, but this “expert” analysis is always seen as something to work *with* writer-participants, not *on* them and directly reflects a critical language awareness ideology. Critical language awareness involves building from “existing language capabilities and experience” (Clark et al. 1991: 47) which include spoken, written, multimodal resources and a range of technologies (from pencil, to PC, to text messaging) and recognises that the ways in which these are used are dependent on the sociohistorical contexts of writers' lives. Through talk around text, researchers can explore what some of these resources are, how the writer wants to use these and the extent to which they connect or differ from the resources and practices that are valued in formal education; in the case of academic writing, this usually means practices in higher education and academia more widely. In Ivanič's more recent work on writing in further education, this concern with exploring and identifying resources and semiotic practices is taken even further by seeking empirically to explore explicit possibilities and opportunities for “boundary crossing” (see Ivanič and Satchwell 2007).

Furthermore, just as Ivanič puts linguistics in its (albeit important from her point of view) place, she also avoids any easy readings of local or specific data through the lens of macro theorisations of the workings of discourse. Again, her work in critical language awareness is crucial here. CLA adopts an approach to language study which is premised on the assumption that language practices must be problematised rather than taken as givens: conventions underlying practices are not neutral but are sociohistorically shaped involving complex configurations of subjectivity(ies), power, access and identity(ies). There is a recognition that there is no one-to-one fit between wordings and ideology/discourse/subject positioning (Fairclough 1995: 231), and that the task of deciding precisely how wordings, conventions and practices are socially shaped is an empirical question which cannot be answered either through text analysis alone, or through the privileged lens of the researcher-analyst. Ivanič engages directly with the “felicitous ambiguity” in the notion of “subject/ivity” (Fairclough 1989) by ensuring that the “subject” remains centre stage whilst at the same time seeking to explicate the nature of specific discourse(s) in detail.

Consider Ivanič’s linguistic-discoursal analysis alongside her critical interpretation of such an analysis in Figure 9.2 below. In the two columns, I have juxtaposed extracts I have taken from an article by Ivanič on writing in further education (Ivanič 2006). In the extracts in the columns, she is exploring the writing of Logan -, = a student on a course in hospitality (Food and Drink Service) - in relation to issues of identity. Several moves are reflected in these extracts from Ivanič’s work which, in a very concrete way, illustrate why she attaches so much importance to researching writing (and indeed reflects “why writing matters”). In column 1, she provides an analysis of key linguistic features and a labelling and interpretation of the discourses that such features constitute; in column 2, she provides a critical/interpretative analysis of the relationship between such discourses and the lived desires and experiences of the writer-participant. Here then is a sensitive balancing act between the specialist or expert categories (both micro and macro) of the researcher/analyst and the everyday words feelings/perspectives /actions of participants. Ivanič sets at the centre of her work the aim of seeking and eking out emic, “local” personal and individual histories around texts, whilst always holding in play an awareness of what theoretical notions may have to offer in illuminating participants

perspectives, researcher critique and interpretation, and pedagogic implications (see Ivanič and Satchwell 2007 for discussion of the relation between all three).

Column 1	Column 2
<i>Text Linguistic-discourse analysis by Ivanič on written text</i>	<i>Critical Interpretation of subject positioning by Ivanič based on understandings of the writer alongside the text</i>
<p>Several features of the linguistic text carry the 'make people happy' discourse of food and drink service: the high proportion of personal pronouns 'we', 'you', 'everybody' and 'everyone'; the proliferation of politeness markers 'we would like to' (three times) and 'please'; the lexis in the semantic field of pleasure and enjoyment: 'hope' and 'very enjoyable', and the use of the speech act 'thank' (twice). Associated with this is the use of the handwriting font for the phrase 'Speciality Evenings', suggesting a 'personal touch', carrying a friendly, cosy, informal discourse of personal relationships. Together these discursal resources position Logan as someone keen to serve customers: to 'make people happy'.</p>	<p>And doesn't the deployment of the romantic love discourse of personal relationships inflate [this] commodification and further exploit people and trick them into emptying their pockets? To this I would answer 'yes, but no ...'. Yes, Logan is being colonised by these discourses and contributing to their continued circulation, and hence participating in these social processes, and it would be politically preferable for him and all the students on the courses to develop a critical awareness of the nature and consequences of these belief systems. But, on the other hand, I suggest that it is not entirely sinister that Logan is constructing his identity through participation in these discourses. Logan is a young man who was disaffected by the whole education system and didn't have any future when he left school. I suggest that his finding something to identify with, something which is consonant with his sense of himself who likes to 'make people happy', is a key factor in learning for him, as I discuss further in the section on 'identification' below.</p>

Figure 9.2: Ivanič's analysis alongside her critical interpretation

A key issue I have been grappling with is the relationship between different kinds of languages of description; what do certain languages enable the researcher to see and what do they mask? How does the researcher connect emic perspectives and languages of description with etic, in particular here, "expert" languages of description (such as those developed in linguistics)? In terms of the specific "expert" languages of description from linguistics, I think Rož's work illustrates their limitations when used without

writer or emic perspectives, but I also think that perhaps Roz is more convinced of the analytic power of available text linguistic categories than I am, although I do use them to a certain extent as illustrated in the following example:

We can map out the features which Tara intuitively recognises as -“academic”. It has two long sentences which are lexically dense whilst of low grammatical intricacy---the participants in the first clause are abstract - “restriction”, “nature” - and the verb processes are relational-is. (Lillis 2001: 125)

And having such an “expert”, rational discourse to hand is certainly essential in moving away from the highly emotionally charged deficit discourse used about student writing or indeed professional academic writing, (for further examples, see Lillis and Curry 2006). But I wonder whether the rational discourse of linguistic analysis can sometimes mask other processes in play. Consider the extract from an article submitted to an academic journal, written by a professional multilingual scholar. Then consider the extract from the reviewer’s comments made about it (Figure 9. 3) If we

<i>Extract from paper</i>	<i>Reviewer comment</i>
<i>This paper is situated at the cross-roads of the idea that international surveys serve valuable, although specific, comparison purposes, with the belief that these surveys can gain from incorporating questions based on previous detailed analyses of particular realities.</i>	<i>There are formulations that, in my view, are a little bit over the top and too pretentious (for instance “This paper is situated at the cross-roads of the idea...with the belief...”; “Theory that has a theoretical and empirical tradition... “social transformations of our times.”---) Maybe it is not the language, but it is just too Latin for a North-West European.(My emphasis)</i>

Figure 9.3 Extract from a journal article alongside the reviewer’s comments

*read the written text extract (in the left hand column) only through the rationalist linguistic discourse conventionally applied to academic texts, we would miss the highly emotive ways in which the (gatekeeping) reader is orienting to the text. This is in large part due to the fact that linguistic analysis alone treats texts in a flat, or one dimensional way. It doesn’t tell us anything about what is more or less salient in specific contexts of their use - by writers or readers. So I think I would want to be cautious about claims about the power of linguistic approaches which focus on texts to make visible what **counts** to both writers and readers of texts in specific contexts.*

The same concern relates to macro notions of discourse - and I would want to aim to adopt the critical reflexivity in using any such notions of discourse, evident in Ivanič's comments on Logan above. Here, the cycling between emic and etic, external and internal languages of description is crucial in reaching a nuanced understanding of how people manage to position themselves in relation to powerful discourses and subjectivities. Kell usefully reminds us of Hymes' criticism of emic/etic being used as dichotomy and that Pike - original coiner of these terms - talks in terms of three moments (see discussion in Kell 2006):

Etic 1 - a frame of reference with which an analyst or observer approaches data

Emic 1 - the discovery of valid relations internal to what is being studied

Etic 2 - a reconsideration of the initial frame of reference in light of new results

And of course this representation of three moves is an abstraction in that research always involves cyclical multiplies of these three "moves". I think Roz's work has to a certain extent made these moves visible in writing research and more importantly has directed us towards the need for more questioning of such relations - particularly on the relationship between "everyday" languages of description drawn from writers' emic perspectives and "expert" etic languages of description drawn from linguistics.

Opening up opportunities for re-examining textual practices

And, briefly, there is one further important contribution I would like to stress that Ivanič has made both through her methodology and her scholarly writing - and that is the opening up discussion about which textual practices should be valued within academia and why. Once writers are invited to express their views on the academic conventions they are expected to write within, alternative possibilities come to the fore. Consider just one example from Ivanič (1998: 319) where we are presented with an extract from a Communication Studies essay by Valerie and Ivanič's summary of Valerie's perspective on this text (Figure 9.4)

Here the writer values the use of metaphor in her meaning making in academia. Whilst the assessor-reader doesn't share this value, the talk around text methodology that Ivanič develops makes visible this alternative interest. By taking writers' desires for writing seriously, Roz

Extracts from writing by Valerie	Ivanic's summary of Valerie's perspective
Manchester's proletariat may have suffered in the mould described by Engels but they lacked the capacity to wear a revolutionary mantle. If the city is a stage for dramatic performance, with backcloth, lighting equipment and the semblance of a plot, then Engels had marshalled a number of characters who did not know their lines.	Valerie said that using the metaphorical expression <i>wear a revolutionary mantle</i> was part of her identity, and she was disappointed by her tutor's advice to write the more literal <i>realise a revolution</i> in the exam.

Figure 9.4: Extract from an essay alongside Ivanic's summary

has engaged in the important project of reconsidering textual practices in academia, a process which still has some considerable way to go (see Schroeder et al. 2002; see also the chapter in this volume by Pitt and Hamilton). In some of her own published writings she has taken the opportunity to work in genres other than essayist text, as in for example her use of drawings and cartoons in her published academic work (see Biff cartoon used in Ivanic 1998) and dialogic exchanges as academic text, in Candlin and Hyland (2000) as indicated in the extract between Ivanic and Weldon.

Extracts from Ivanic and Weldon 2000.

ROZ: It seemed to me that, in order to study writing as self-representation, I needed three types of data. First, I needed to understand as much as possible about the writer herself – you, in this case, Sue – where you were coming from in all its meanings: what values, beliefs, practices and previous experiences of written discourses and genres you were bringing to writing – the shaping of your identity a writer. These understandings developed from visiting you at home and from our more informal conversations – both when we met and over the telephone.

SUE: Yes, it's interesting to reflect back on the unravelling of my autobiography and to realise how much of one's life history is embedded in each written text. But as you know, the final print-out bore no resemblance to the first set of scribbled notes, and I considered an essay to be a finished artefact only if it kicked over the traces of 'cut and paste', or loose ends spliced together.

ROZ: That brings me to the second type of data. I needed to focus on one particular piece of writing you had done in order to find actual examples of linguistic decisions you had made which I could associate with particular views of knowledge and views of the world, and with particular social purposes, social roles and relations,. In this respect I was drawing from the methodology associated with Critical Discourse Analysis: studying text in order to identify traces of discourses and genres (as described in Fairclough, 1992a).

In my research with student-writers using talk around texts it became clear that writers wanted to breach the conventions they could write within. Whilst they - for the most part - valued the use of evidence based argument, and the kind of literal/referential rhetoric that Valerie's tutor preferred, they also expressed the desire to make meaning through logic AND emotion, argument AND poetry, impersonal AND personal constructions of text. This has led me to take seriously the textual practice of juxtaposition so that in my teaching student-writers are encouraged to use essayist conventions and texts, alongside/interspersed by a range of other types of commentary - such as an emotional reflection, critical "asides" on the main argument, the expression of doubts or uncertainties about something they might be presenting as quite straightforward in the main body of the text.

Conclusion

My "visits" to see Roz were twice a year and were absolutely special to me - (which is often the perspective of PhD students) but more importantly she made them seem as if they were special to her too. She knew I was hungry for any ideas that I could connect with what I was doing and she shared generously. I remember her offering specific books and papers... "here's a copy of a paper that Norman is currently working on -

if there's anything in there you want to quote, let me know and we'll ask him how to cite this"; "I think you'll like this (Gardener) it's just been re published"...

Roz Ivanič's development of talk around text methodology has put writers at the centre of writing research. The methodology reflects and enacts a commitment to collaborating with others and in particular a deep respect for students, particularly those who in different ways are on the margins of the academy; Roz knows writers have important stories to tell and she developed a way of bringing such stories to the centre of academic writing research, whilst at the same time continuing to bring outsider 'expert' knowledge drawn from linguistics to the fore. Furthermore, in her own publications, Roz Ivanič has enacted her collaborative research goals, by co-authoring with colleagues and, more unusually in academia, with co-researcher/research-participants. Such sharing – with research participants and colleagues - in academia is something to treasure and to emulate.

Notes

¹Roz was an 'academic advisor' to me in my doctoral research. This meant that she was officially a member of the supervisory team, although she was located in a different institution, and in practical terms meant that we met up two or three times each year for an intense afternoon of discussion and questioning.

² This is an extract from an interview Roz Ivanič did for an Open University Masters course, *Language and Literacy in a changing world*.

³ For fuller discussion of the issues raised here, see Lillis 2008.

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