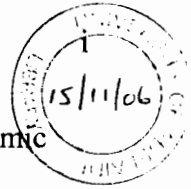


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"*I never used to read.*" Patterns of talk in regulative and instructional discourse: a systemic functional approach to analysing a literacy difficulty.

A Case Study with S.

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Abstract

This study explores the issues relating to literate practice for an individual who has a literacy difficulty. The process of negotiating meaning is articulated from the perspective of English as a second language. However, S (the participant in this study) was an ESL student for whom a more complex picture became evident when, at the completion of her formal schooling, she was diagnosed with severe dyslexia. This had implications for her development in literacy which were vital to becoming a qualified practitioner in her chosen career of hairdressing.

S participated in a mentor / tutor relationship to support her engagement with text. This was in direct response to her immediate need to access theoretical information which formed a coursework component of her workplace training program. The reading and understanding of text materials was necessary in order to complete the written assignments which were part of the course requirement.

The study makes an analysis of literate practice from a systemic functional perspective with particular reference to literacy difficulties. The engagement in talk about and talk around texts in relation to reading specific texts is explored as the means of negotiating meaning. The analysis of the transcripts from instructional dialogue and other interactions reveal characteristics and patterns of language behaviour which have implications for teaching practice in regard to accessing written texts.

It is evident that mediation is pivotal to the development of understanding. The features of the specific texts are pivotal in making meaningful connections and the features of conversation are the mediating practices of negotiating meaning. The abstract nature of written texts signal a necessity to identify and explicate the grammatical features which are realised in both verbal and written text constructions and are implicated in making meaning.

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