DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 887 CS 506 924

AUTHOR	Palmerton, Patricia R.
TITLE	Talking, Writing, Learning.
PUB DATE	Nov 89
NOTE	15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (75th, San Francisco, CA, November 18-21, 1989).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Cognitive Development; Communication Research; *Learning Processes; Speech Communication; *Teacher Role; Teaching Methods; Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	Childrens Writing; Language across the Curriculum; Learning across the Curriculum; Reading Fluency; Representational Thinking

ABSTRACT

The theoretical literature which has had an impact upon the teaching of composition and which has evolved into the language across the curriculum approach to education, focuses upon the interaction of language and learning. By teaching about speaking and writing, educators are potentially teaching students how to learn. Language functions to represent the experiences of the learner. Language is not only representational; it is also instrumental in cognitive development. Teachers of speaking and writing must understand the process of discovery (expression) as well as the mechanics of the transaction that is communication. Students must be helped to understand the variables that influence the communicative choices they make, which in turn affect the discovery process as well as the end product. In struggling with the problems associated with teaching individuals to become more competent communicators, whether in writing or speaking, educators would do well to focus attention equally on the interaction of communication and learning. (Thirty-nine endnotes are included.) (SG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316887

Talking, Writing, Learning

By

Patricia R. Palmerton

Dcpartment of Theatre & Communication Arts
Hamline University
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

Presented at the

Speech Communication Association Convention
San Francisco, CA
November 1989

CS506924

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Patricia R. Palmerton
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SCA 1989
by Patricia R. Palmerton

Talking, Writing, Learning

The relationship of speaking and writing has been discussed for centuries. Cicero believed that writing was essential for the development of good oratory, arguing that the qualities that bring "applause and admiration to good orators" can only by attained after "long and great practice in writing."[1] Cicero also emphasized that knowledge is necessary for good oratory, for without knowledge "oratory becomes an empty and almost puerile flow of words."[2]

Several issues pertain to the interrelationship between speaking and writing. First, writing and speaking processes support each other. In teaching, we utilize this complementary relationship when we try to encourage class discussion or when we require that papers be written before a class discussion takes place. Second, communication serving both informal and formal functions occur in both written and oral form. Furthermore, each form has value for the other. Talk is a valuable asset when working through an idea about which one wants to write. In a literate society, we depend upon writing to help in the development of oral verbal products. Third, formal products like speeches and compositions have a great deal in common, and the processes by which they are produced have many similarities. Because of these commonalities I believe those of us teaching about these processes have much we can learn from each other. At the same time, I believe we must recognize that while oral and written discourses have many similarities they remain different forms serving different functions and having different consequences. Assuming that the similarities outweigh the differences is unfair to the student who is attempting to master very different structures aimed at achieving different purposes. Finally, knowledge is the basis for informed talk and informed writing. At the same time, talking and writing facilitate the development of that knowledge.

In this paper I would like to bring attention to two areas of knowledge that I think are valuable for teachers of speech and of composition. First, I will discuss the theoretical literature which has had impact upon the teaching of composition, and which has evolved into the Language Across the Curriculum approach to education. This body of work focuses upon the interaction of language and learning. Second, I will point out some omissions in this literature, specifically the failure to acknowledge and account for the interactive processes that are inevitably engaged when language is used orally.

Language and Learning

An idea I'd like to introduce here is that by teaching about speaking and writing we are potentially teaching students how to learn. In the educational context, we are not just teaching verbal facility; we are teaching students how to think, how to think about specific subject matter, how to discover what they think, and then how to transmit their thought to others. At a basic level, we know this. We know that students learn about the topics of their speeches. It is so fundamental that we

ERIC

tend to take it for granted. It is important to surface this consequence, however, because it has implications for how we go about teaching speech, just as it has had consequence for how writing is being taught at many institutions. I'd like to take a brief theoretical excursion, and attend to the proposition that language use interacts with learning. While the literature discussed is put in the context of Language Across the Curriculum or Writing Across the Curriculum, I am convinced it has relevance for the ways in which we teach about oral verbal interaction generally.

In academic literature regarding LAC and WAC, it is consistently argued that the focus of these programs should be on learning: how language activities in the classroom, both written and spoken. contribute to the process of learning.[3] Language, it is argued, functions to represent the experiences of the learner. By actively using language forms learners modify and reform their interpretive frameworks, "using new ideas to work on and revise their existing preconceptions about how the world is."[4] Language is seen as not only representational but as instrumental in cognitive development.

There is substantial theoretical support for this position. The architects of the LAC approach to education based much of their initial investigations upon the theoretical proposition of a wide range of scholars from several disciplines: psychologists such as L.S. Vygotsky, A.R. Luria, and Jerome Bruner; anthropologists and linguists like Dell Hymes, John Searle, and Ramon Jakobson; and philosophers like Ernst Cassirer and Suzanne Langer.[5] The essential argument is representational: language use shapes the knowledge we have about our experiences with the world. How we use language to capture our experience codifies that experience for us in specific ways. Since all of our experience cannot be captured symbolically our language forces us to choose which pieces of experience will be represented. These symbolic attempts to capture the essence of world experience become the knowledge we have about those experiences.[6]

Facility in language use has several consequences. It has been argued that experience with verbal interaction is related to literacy, with the facility in language that is engendered by verbal interaction contributing to the development of "analytic competence," the ability to use language to think.[7] Jerome Bruner argues that language is an "instrument of thought", providing not only the tools by which to represent experience but the system by which one thinks about that experience. "The linguistic *system* and not the external reality is what determines the mental operations and their order," according to Bruner (italics in original).[8] How a learner uses language thus influences the development of "analytic competence," for the way in which one uses the linguistic system determines one's thought processes. The individual must therefore be involved in the language activities as an encoder, not simply as a listener.

Furthermore, research on patterns of language use with children in varying stages of development supports the idea that language reflects the cognitive level of the child and that language use affects the development of cognitive abilities.[9] Verbal interaction with others has been shown to expand the development of cognitive abilities. Vygotsky found that children moved beyond their initial cognitive developmental level when engaged in language interaction with others who function at a higher level of development.[10] He postulated that there is a "zone of proximal development" to explain these changes in cognitive development, and he suggested that it is the symbolic exchanges in the interaction that make the cognitive shifts possible. Vygotsky's notion of zone of proximal development emphasizes the importance of exposure to symbolic exchanges with individuals at differing levels of development in order to reach a higher level of development which is within one's developmental potential. It is not a matter of using language in isolation. *Social* symbolic interaction is imperative.11

Douglas Barnes, discussing studies of group talk in the learning context, also notes the importance of exploratory talk by the learner.[12] This is talk which is at times tentative, which is uncensored, which ranges across the emotional spectrum of disappointment to excitement. Thoughts are not fully formed. They change, mid-stream. Disgressions are pursued, then dropped, then reemerge at unpredictable times often from unpredictable discussants. Discussants search their way to answers. Discovery occurs through this stumbling seemingly inarticulate expression. In both Vygotsky's and Barnes' work, communicative interaction is shown to be critical in helping shape the experiences encountered by the learner, in helping the learner reveal to self about self, and in helping the learner create. By being an active participant in the constituting of the knowledge taking shape the learner extends the character of his or her experience.

According to this perspective, the process of learning is extraordinarily influenced by the way in which a learner uses language interactively, which is influenced by that individual's linguistic capabilities, which is in turn influenced by the learner's exposure to and participation in language interaction. This theoretical position is generally consistent with current work in rhetorical theory and is extended by the theoretical perspectives which view language as functioning in a formative or constitutive way. Certainly learning is a process of making meaning. It has long been recognized that personal context and history play a role in constructing meaning. I.A. Richards, in work early in this century, posited that we interpret new stimuli by reference to past experience with those stimuli and the contexts within which we encounter them. We create meaning for words in part through a process of sorting through our categories of contexts. It is a personal process.[13] If applied to the learning situation Richards' ideas suggest that one way in which that learner creates personal meaning is through the ways in which language recalls the learner's contexts of experience, creating relevance for that learner.

The rhetoric as epistemic literature is also clearly relevant to questions of education and the role of language processes in learning.[14] Learning is not simply a process of making meaning of experiences, nor of accurately representing all that is there to be represented. Since we cannot talk about every aspect of what is to be learned, we must choose. Choice of focus, and the language choices we make to talk about our focus make the process a rhetorical one. It is a process which clearly performs knowledge-making functions, but the knowledge is a focused knowledge. It is not knowledge about every possible thing. It is knowledge shaped by intention and intentionality, necessarily restricted because of the necessity to deemphasize some stimuli while attending to other stimuli.[15] As audiences (and as students) we actively participate in the myriad of meanings that flow around us. As R.L. Scott describes, "[W]e take bits and pieces from the events flowing around us to make up the mosaics which are our meanings." Scott goes on to note that the mosaics of meaning are superimposed on other mosaics, accounting for the changing patterns of meaning we experience.[16]

The view of language as *formative* or *constitutive* heightens the importance of understanding the role of language in education. If, as Heidegger states, the spoken word does not represent or designate but "unconceals, lets-lie-before, reveals, or uncovers the interlocutors' world," learning is fully dependent upon the ability of the learner to participate in the verbalizing associated with the learning. The spoken *interaction* results in the constituting of the world where the words of the interactants mutually create the symbolic world.[17] Philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamar argues:

> Language is not one of the means by which consciousness is mediated with the world. . . . Language is by no means simply an instrument, a tool. For it is in the nature of the tool that we master its use, which is to say we take it in hand and lay it aside when it

> has done its service. That is not the same as when we take the words of a language, lying ready in the mouth, and with their use let them sink back into the general store of words over which we dispose. Such an analogy is false. . . . Rather, in all our knowledge of ourselves and in all knowledge of the world, we are always already encompassed by the language that is our own. Learning to speak does not mean learning to use a preexistent tool for designating a world already somehow familiar to us; it means acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with the world itself and how it confronts us.[18]

Language use in the classroom is therefore far more than a matter of students learning accurate representation or accurate transmission of information. Learners cannot avoid the influence of language. It is an integral part of their being, and therefore of the learning process. Language *constitutes* world between people who interact with one another linguistically.[19] In the context of learning, the role of verbal interaction, both written and oral are central, and ought to be a focus of concern. When we teach about language use, whether oral or written, we are teaching about far more than how to use a tool.

Empirical studies also support the theoretical position that there is a relationship between student language involvement and learning. Research attempting to determine the relationship between teaching methods and learning outcomes suggests that students in classrooms where there is student participation learn more than students who are in classrooms which do not encourage participation. While the nature of the relationship between oral verbal involvement and learning is not clear, researchers advance several possible explanations.[20] For example, student satisfaction is reportedly higher in classes which involve students, as is student motivation. Learning outcomes may therefore be associated with higher levels of motivation engendered by participation.[21] Alternatively, students supposedly learn how to question by seeing it modeled by a teacher who asks questions in the course of class discussion. Higher achievement may be related to the increased abilities of students to ask questions, an ability nurtured by teacher-led class discussion.[22] Despite these results and speculations as to the nature of the interaction effects, this literature is vague about the specific communication forms that contribute to learning outcomes.

It is clear that there is support for the perspective that language use and learning are interrelated, both theoretically and empirically. It is also evident that the communicative experiences in the learning context involve far more than the presentation of formal products. Likewise, the ideas discussed here highlight the importance of informal language use in the development of formal language products. As teachers of speaking and writing, we would do well to recognize the importance of the informal linguistic expression throughout the process of creating more formal products. We also should recognize that in teaching about language we are potentially teaching about learning processes generally.

Using the Expressive to Facilitate the Transactional

The work of James Britton provides more insight into the informal/formal elements of the processes fundamental to the composition of more formal products. In an attempt to understand how writers write, Britton and his colleagues studied the processes by which students actually attempted to

ERIC

put their thoughts into written form. This research has changed the ways in which writing is taught in many institutions, providing a theoretical rationale for focusing attention upon the *process* of writing instead of the written *product*. If one recognizes the interaction between language and learning, the *process* of articulation becomes a critical concern.

According to Britton, language functions in different ways. Much as we talk about different language functions in the interpersonal or rhetorical context (e.g., phatic communication, instrumental, consummatory, regulative, and so forth) Britton and his colleagues discuss language functions in the learning process.[23] Britton, et.al., break language functions into three categories: *expressive*, *transactional*, and *poetic*. As Britton notes, any utterance serves many functions. These categories are attempts to codify an utterance (verbal or written) by the function it primarily serves. I'll discuss the transactional function first, then the expressive. I will leave the poetic for some other more adventuresome person.

According to Britton, the transactional mode is highly participative. The intent is communicative. This document is an example of the transactional use of language. Whenever we require a student to give a speech or to write a paper, we are requiring them to function in the transactional mode. Most language artifacts at the post-secondary level are transactional. The intent is that the producer transmit some sort of message to a listener/reader. We tend to assume students can and will function well in the transactional mode. And we are disappointed when they don't do so to our satisfaction. We grade students based upon their ability to perform this function, and we use their ability in the transactional mode as a measure of their content learning.

The transactional function is that which has been priveleged in most educational processes. Britton, et.al, however, discussed the importance of the expressive function of language. The expressive use of language is that which primarily serves the individual who is doing the speaking or writing, but not in terms of getting a message across to others. It is *self*-focused and less participatory.

> We would describe it as an utterance that "stays close to the speaker" and hence is fully comprehensible only to one who knows the speaker and shares his context. It is a verbalization of the speaker's immediate preoccupations and his mood of the moment. . . . [I]t is utterance at its most relaxed and intimate, as free as possible from outside demands, whether those of task or audience.[24]

According to these theorists the expressive, i.e., utterances which reflect what an individual thinks regardless of demands of the situation or audience or task, is a critical part of the process by which an individual conceptualizes. Furthermore, using the expressive mode is a way for an individual to access what s/he thinks.

If indeed we create meaning in part by placing stimuli in context (by placing those stimuli in relationship to past experiences we've had with similar stimuli) then the expressive use of language serves to provide the freedom to explore and to create connections with idiosyncratic internal cognitive schema. The learner must discover these connections for herself or himself. The teacher cannot recall all those individual contexts. It is up to the learner to do so. Furthermore, the expressive is a mode which helps students discover what they know and which helps them internalize that knowledge in preparation for creating a more formal product which is intended to communicate

to others. Through the expressive they may be better able to discern what they actually have to say when given the task of saying it. If personal context and history are important in constructing meaning, and if we interpret new stimuli in part by reference to past experience and contexts, then meaning, for the learner, is shaped through the language, communicative process, and the way in which this process recalls *and creates* for the learner the contexts of experience that create relevance. Explicit use of the expressive mode is one way to facilitate this process.

It would be tempting to make neat categories of Britton's language functions: the expressive=discovery, the transactional=communication. However, that would be deceptive. All of us have experienced the discovery of ideas while trying to write a paper, i.e., functioning in the transactional mode. On the other hand, many of us have written primarily expressive documents which are intended to be communicative as well; letters to good friends or lovers come to mind. Despite the fact that these categories are not discrete there is something here for us in considering the ways we teach about speaking and writing. Both modes of language use have forms which are primarily transactional and which are primarily expressive. Yet consider some of the blinders we wear. In speech, we tend not to recognize or encourage the expressive in the process of creating more formal transactional products. There is little recognition of the conceptualizing and learning taking place while attempting to articulate ideas. Our public speaking texts assume the transactional mode, and offer prescriptions for the shape of final products with little attention to the processes by which students discover what they think and how they formulate their knowledge--i.e., how they *actually* compose. In writing, speech is assumed to be expressive with little recognition of the demands of the speech situation upon the speaker. While in composition classes, much use is being made of peer groups to facilitate the process of discovery, there is very little attention given to the extent to which the speech situation influences the discovery process. The assumption is that speakers will know how to function as speakers; the assumption seems to be that the interactive dynamics of the group are unrelated to the nature of the communication or the abilities of group members to orally function in the expressive group discussion.

It is clear that the ways in which we teach public speaking deserve examination in light of the work described here. It is also the case that this work could use a healthy dose of perspective about the communicative interaction.

Language and Learning or Communication and Learning?

Our understanding of the language-learning interaction is advanced discussions of language functions based upon Britton's work. At the same time, there are problemmatic assumptions about the abilities of students to engage in these language activities. Approaches to learning which depend upon student oral verbal interaction must additionally take into account the interactive character of the communicative event. Communication in the classroom is more than a matter of an individual using language in isolation, it is a matter of individuals engaged in a communicative *interaction*. This is a fundamental distinction between writing and speaking that we must not blur.

The failure to recognize the demands upon speakers related to the *social* implications of their communication creates fundamental problems when trying to understand how the expressive may work in the process of learning. For example, Britton, et al state that the expressive function is the function performed by speech. According to these authors the expressive is the mode that we use when we "relate to each other in speech." It is through the expressive that "in times of family or

ERIC

national crises, we talk with our own people and attempt to work our way toward some kind of resolution."[25] The assumption about speech here is troubling: that speech is free from outside demands of task or audience. The identification of the expressive with speech fails to recognize the extraordinary demands which are placed upon participants in oral interaction.

Certainly oral communication is not the most intimate nor the least demanding form of language use.[26] Speaking is not like writing, but the difference is not that speech is more intimate. Oral interaction not only exposes one to the impersonal authority of the professor, but to one's peers who are in many ways more formidable and intimidating. Personal vulnerability is heightened because of the nature of the audience. This is true whether a student is making a formal presentation or whether that student is simply speaking up in a class discussion. To orally participate is more than a public display of one's knowledge and one's analytic ability. It is also a public commitment to one's values, beliefs, and attitudes. Students who choose to make their thinking public also expose themselves to the sanctions of their peers in ways we, as instructors outside of the social circle of our students, are simply unaware. The potential consequences of one's decision to produce or not produce a communication orally are far more than a grade, content learning, or cognitive development. They involve social relationships which are equally if not more important than the content learning for many students.

The misconception that oral communication is free of outside demands is compounded by these researchers' predominant focus on *language* in contrast to *communication*. Cues of meaning tend to be discussed as existent solely in the oral verbal *language* artifact. The meaning cues occurring through interactive processes tend to be ignored unless encoded linguistically.[27] This bias has been augmented by continuing work in *Language* Across the Curriculum. For example, the Language Across the Curriculum and the Writing Across the Curriculum literature do not provide insight into the oral *communication* components of the learning process, including those factors which influence the choices learners and teachers makes about their oral verbal participation.

The qualitative character of the communicative interactions matters. Normative patterns of conversation that students bring with them into the classroom influence the learning process. For example, David Olson analyzed locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary elements in classroom talk in elementary schools, comparing them to differences in demands of ordinary talk by these children. Among other results, he found that directives and assertions served different social functions within the classroom than outside it, and that the normative patterns in one context influenced response patterns in the other. It makes perfect sense, yet in literature arguing for more oral verbal involvement of students the assumption seems to be that language users will be adept at adapting across situations, will understand the differences in function and response, and that learning of content is somehow separate from these oral communicative interaction patterns.

Studies of student learning styles at the elementary and secondary levels have documented that learning is enhanced when classroom structure is consistent with the normative communication patterns in the culture.[28] For example, in cultures where the communication norms are largely participatory, an approach toward learning which utilizes group oral verbal interaction would be highly consistent, if the kind of interaction is consistent with the meanings that the patterns of interaction hold within the dominant culture.[29] Interaction which does not conform to the cultural norms, however, did not result in differences in learning outcomes. Simply participation in some sort of general sense is not the answer. The qualities and characteristics of the participation placed in conjunction with the individuals involved are what matter.

The literature which argues for increased verbal interaction in the classroom, whether writing classrooms or otherwise, is disturbingly devoid of evidence that practioners of this educational method recognize demands upon oral interaction from interactants which influence the communicative choices of learners which in turn influence the learning process.[30] Empirical research examining classroom interaction also suffers from the failure to attend to interactive issues enacted through the oral communicative choices. Social status, power, dominance issues, normative constraints, comparison of self-abilities with others' abilities are not overtly recognized or addressed . Characteristics of the interaction, including the nonverbal, interruptions, paralinguistics, and topic shifts (often related to control) are not described at all except in a minimal amount of research detailing the sociolinguistic qualities of classroom communication.[31] The influence upon communication patterns of gender differences, the social power related to those differences, and tensions related to sexual attraction and interests are also not addressed. In all age groups there are the social developmental concerns of the age group in addition to the cognitive developmental issues. The qualitative character of the communication changes with developmental stage, yet the qualitative character of the communication is not addressed in any but the broadest terms. All of these factors have substantial consequences for oral verbal usage, and consequently for learning.

One might think that literature dealing with class discussion would be of help. This literature, however, tends to approach the problem of discussion either as a problem of cognitive processing or as a problem with agenda. For example, learning groups are admonished to follow various prescriptive agenda systems (e.g., decision-making patterns)[32] but the research supporting the proposition that the actual learning process conforms to these prescriptions is woefully inadequate. Alternatively, class discussion tends to be portrayed as a problem of asking the right questions to stimulate critical thinking. Various taxonomies are offered detailing levels of thinking or levels abstraction, and many studies have been published attempting to show the relationship between levels of questions asked by teachers and levels of answers given by students.[33] Texts and teaching aids suggest taking students through hierarchies of questions so that they learn to analyze issues in increasingly complex ways.[34] Despite these recommendations, research on actual classroom interaction shows that higher order questions do not lead to higher order answers. Questions have even been shown to inhibit participation as much as engender it.[35]

It is not surprising that the research on questioning in the classroom is equivocal, nor is it surprising that there are no clear patterns emerging in the research investigating the relationship between teacher questions and learning outcomes.[36] Again, the specific *communication* variables (as differentiated from *language* variables) have not been the issue in this research. The "questioning" research has primarily viewed the question-answer activity as an exercise in representation--questions by the teacher are attempts to elicit responses which engender representations at different levels of abstraction.[37] These investigations tend to be teacher focused: attempting to discern what *teachers* do as opposed to what *learners* do. Control for learning is assumed to be with the teacher. Even in our own field, where the interaction of communication and instruction has been examined in a variety of ways, except for studies on communication apprehension the tendency has been to focus on teacher communication behaviors, not those of the learners.[38] There is little research which considers questioning from the standpoint of learners' questions and the constitutive function of the questioning process.

Composition instructors who use group work, individuals in other disciplines who use peer groups as a vehicle for idea discovery, educators who argue for increasing student involvement in the classroom under the auspices of "active learning" or Language Across the Curriculum all need to acknowledge the interactive components and consequences to students of oral verbal participation.

Aspects of the communicative interaction that need to be considered in this endeavor include the demands of the communicative act upon the speaker. In addition, any interaction between language and learning at the content level will be influenced by the communicative functions which occur at the relationship level: the influence, for example, of power or dominance on who talks, and this in turn privileging one learning approach over others. The ramifications *outside* the classroom influence what is said *in* the classroom. The result is that the ideas available for use by the learners are limited, and learning of content is affected.

Given an educational philosophy which shifts control dramatically toward the learner, the neglect of variables which influence the learner's choice to exercise that control is troublesome. The failure to recognize communicative interaction variables means a failure to recognize critical factors which may indeed influence learning outcomes overall, as well as the development of communicative and analytic competence.

Learning is a formative activity. Through articulating what they have learned, students create, internalize and give their knowledge shape. As teachers of speaking and writing, we are necessarily concerned with the interaction of communication with learning. If our focus in writing and speaking classes is solely on those communicative functions which are primarily attempts to influence others in a formal way then we are failing to utilize the formative function of symbolizing in the context of learning. If we ignore the complex web of consequences for learners when they are engaged in oral interaction, we will fail to provide them with the help they need to successfully engage in this style of learning.

Conclusion

The fundamental role of written and oral communication in cognitive structuring and the development of thinking has strong theoretical support. Symbolic structuring is critical to knowledge formation. Writing and speech are means by which symbolic frameworks are created, and are thus integrally related to the learning process. Teaching about language use, whether teaching about oral verbal interaction or about writing should be built upon the foundation that communication interacts with learning.[39]

At the same time, communication for learning is not antithetical to a concern over "doing it better." It is a complementary concern. Students are not necessarily prepared nor do they know how to participate orally. Students do not automatically know how to go through the process of writing. To expect students to become involved in communicative activity without preparation is unfair at best. As teachers of speaking and writing, we must help our students understand the process of discovery as well as the mechanics of production. Furthermore, we must help our students understand the variables that influence the communicative choices they make, which in turn influence the discovery process as well as the end product. We should be utilizing these ideas and approaches in teaching public speaking, in teaching composition, and in the ways we shape both Writing and Speaking Across the Curriculum programs.

Those of us who have committed ourselves to the academy have placed ourselves in an environment which puts a premium on learning. As speech, communication, and writing professionals we should recognize that in teaching about speaking and writing, we are teaching about the processes of learning. Learning is a communicative phenomenon. It is interactive and it is

dependent upon the learner's facility with abstract symbolic processes. As we struggle with the problems associated with teaching individuals to become more competent communicators, whether writers or speakers, we would do well to focus our attention equally on the communication-learning interaction.

NOTES

1 Cicero, De Oratore, Book 1, XXXiii, Cicero on Oratory and Orators, trans. J.S. Watson, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1878; rpt. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970) 42-43.

2 Cicero, De Oratore, Book 1, VI, 21.

3 See James Britton, et al, The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) (1975; London: Macmillan Education, 1979). Also see Douglas Barnes, "Language Across the Curriculum: The Teacher as Reflective Professional." The English Quarterly (Toronto) Fall (1980): 9-20; and Mike, Torbe, "Where Have We Come From? Where Do We Go?" The English Quarterly (Toronto) Fall (1980): 26-34.

4 Barnes, 1980, p. 12-13. For further examples see: J.S. Bruner, "Language as an Instrument of Thought," Problems of Language and Learning, ed. Alan Davies (London: Heinemann, 1975) 61-88; Anne Haas Dyson and Celia Genishi, "Research Currents Children's Language for Learning." Language Arts 60 (1983): 751-757; Bryant Fillion, "Let Me See You Learn." Language Arts 60 (1983): 702-710; M.A.K. Halliday, "Talking One's Way In." Problems of Language and Learning, ed. Alan Davies (London: Heinemann, 1975) 8-33.

5 See Britton, et al.

6 See, for example, Britton, et al.

7 David Corson, Oral Language Across the Curriculum (Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, Ltd., 1988): 6-19. "Analytic competence" is a term used by Jerome Bruner to describe the ability to engage in formal operational reasoning.

8 Bruner, 80.

9 Britton, et al; Dysan & Genishi.

10 L.S. Vygotsky, Mind in Society, ed. Michael Cole, Vera John-Steiner, Sylvia Scribner, Ellen Souberman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 84-91.

11 Note that the cognitive aspects of this interaction are Vygotsky's focus. The social character of the interaction as it influences the learning process are unclear, an issue I address below.

12 Douglas Barnes, From Communication to Curriculum (1975; NY: Penguin Books, 1984).

13 I.A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

14 Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," Central States Speech Journal 18 (1967): 9-17; and Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic: Ten Years Later," Central States Speech Journal 28 (1976): 258-266.

15 The issue is exemplified in the controversies over questions such as the teaching of creationism vs evolution, new math vs basics, or the history of central Africa vs the history of western Europe.

ERIC

16 Robert L. Scott, "Can a New Rhetoric Be Epistemic?" The Jensen Lectures: Contemporary Communication Studies, ed. J.I. Sisco, (Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida Press. 1983) 1-23.

17 John Stewart, "Speech and the Human Being: A Complement to Semiotics," Quarterly Journal of Speech 72 (1986): 63-64.

18 Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Man and language," in Philosophical Hermeneutics, ed. and trans. David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977) 62-3.

19 Stewart, 65.

20 Richard S. Lysakowski and Herbert J. Walberg, "Instructional Effects of Cues, Participation, and Corrective Feedback: A Quantitative Synthesis," American Educational Research Journal 19 (1982): 559-578. I should note that there are prescriptions for interaction based upon research in interpersonal communication in a few teaching methods texts. A good example is Pamela J. Cooper, Speech Communication for the Classroom Teacher, 3rd ed., (Scottsdale, AZ: Gorsuch Scarisbrick, 1988). There are also suggestions based upon individual teacher experiences in their own classrooms. See, for example, Patricia W. Barnes-McConnell, "Leading Discussions," On College Teaching, (Ohmer Milton & Associates Ed., San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978) 62-100.

21 For example, Robert O'Brien and Thaia Jones, "Listen to teach, Talk to learn," Orbit (Toronto) (June 1980): 23-24. Frances W. Sauers, "Menage a Trois: Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric," College Teaching 35 (1987): 23-25. See also Lysakowski & Walberg.

22 See for example, Samuel A. Perez, "Improving Learning through Student Questioning," The Clearing House 60 (Oct. 1986): 63-65. Cooper notes the difficulty in teaching about question asking, citing the dearth of coverage in speech-communication methods texts which typically range "from complete neglect to one or two pages." Cooper, 127.

23 See Britton, et.al., for the original discussion of these categories and the research upon which they were based. Also James Britton, Prospect & Retrospect: Selected Essays of James Britton, Pt. II, ed. Gordon M. Pradl (Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1982) 71-145.

24 Britton, et al, 82.

25 Britton, et al, 82.

26 Dell Hymes' discussion of the functions of speech details some of these demands, not the least of which is the need for speakers to recognize and conform to the prevailing functional type predominant in the communicative interaction. See Dell Hymes, "The Ethnography of Speaking," Readings in the Sociology of Language, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (The Hague: Mouton, 1968) 119-124.

27 Halliday; Bruner.

28 Cathie Jordan, Kathryn Hu-Pei Au, and Ann K. Joesting, "Patterns of Classroom Interaction with Pacific Islands Children: The Importance of Cultural Differences," Comparative Research in Bilingual Education: Asian-Pacific American Perspectives, ed. M. Clarke and J. Handscombe (NY: Teachers College Press, 1983) 216-242.

29 See, for example, Lynn A. Vogt, Cathie Jordan, and Roland G. Tharp, "Explaining School Failure, Producing School Success: Two Cases," Anthropology and Education Quarterly 18 (Dec. 1987): 276-286; Robert W. Rhodes, "Holistic Teaching/Learning for Native American Students," Journal of American Indian Education (Jan. 1988): 21-29; Arthur J. More, "Native Indian Learning Styles: A Review for Researchers and Teachers," Journal of American Indian Education (Oct. 1987): 17-29.

30 British researchers Douglas Barnes and Mike Torbe have done the most work in this area. Torbe, for example, in The Climate for Learning begins to identify group processes that seem to occur in learning interactions. Yet both authors tend to focus primarily upon the ideational interaction rather than looking at the relationship between the evolution of content and the social constraints of the verbal interaction. Barnes, 1975; Michael Torbe and Peter Medway, The Climate for Learning (Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1981).

31 David Olson's sociolinguistic approach is very valuable and should be mentioned here. By emphasizing the social force of illocutionary acts he bases much of his analysis on speech act theory and a rules approach to understanding classroom interaction.

32 For example, William Fawcett Hill, Learning Through Discussion, 2nd ed., (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977).

33 J. Howard Johnston, Glenn C. Marke, and A. Haley-Oliphant, "About Questioning in the Classroom," Middle School Journal 18 (1987): 29-33.

34 See, for example, Ronald T. Hyman, "Questioning in the College Classroom," Idea Paper #8, Center for Faculty Evaluationand Development, Division of Continuing Education (Manhattan, KS: Kansas State University, August 1982).

35 Johnston, et al.

36 Gordon E. Samson, Bernadette Strykowski, Thomas Weinstein and Herbert J. Walberg, "The effects of Teacher Questioning Levels on Student Achievement: A Quantitative Synthesis," Journal of Educational Research 80 (May/June 1987): 290-295.

37 Johnston, et.al.

38 See Ann Q. Staton-Spicer and Donald H. Wulff, "Research in Communication and Instruction: Categorization and Synthesis," Communication Education 33 (1984): 377-391.

39 See James Britton et al; Barnes, 1975; Britton, 1982.