'Well I don't feel that': Schemas, worlds and authentic reading in the classroom

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Abstract

This article explores reading in the English classroom through a cognitive linguistic lens. In particular, we consider how students' ability to engage with a text, which we term authentic reading, can be facilitated or restricted. We draw on two case studies featuring Year 7 students working with the novel *Holes* (Sachar 2000), and the short story 'The man who shouted Teresa' (Calvino 1996) respectively, and argue for the benefits of using cognitive linguistics as a tool for teachers and researchers to 'think with' when considering reading in the classroom.

Keywords

Introduction

There is no 'typical' reading experience. We read in all manner of places, for all manner of reasons, and in all manner of ways. Neither are our reading experiences all the same; books are different, circumstances change and we are different readers from one text to the next (Stockwell 2013). However, in this article we argue that there are certain features that can make a reading experience *authentic*, and advocate the value of promoting what we term *authentic reading* in the English classroom. We explore this through two case studies that draw on our observations of literature teaching with two Year 7 groups. In doing so, we adopt two cognitive linguistic frameworks, narrative schemas (Mason 2014a), and text world theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) to

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explain classroom practice, and suggest that these would provide fruitful analytical tools for teachers to think about reading practices in their classrooms.

Reading and authenticity

In this article we adopt a cognitive linguistic approach which we feel complements existing work in the field of *reader response theory* (Rosenblatt 1938; Hall 2009). This defines reading as an interaction between text and reader. In this sense, reading is always a subjective experience; although the text remains static, readers inevitably differ in the range of resources they bring to the reading experience in the form of their own background knowledge and reading competence. We can view this interaction as a two-stage process where initial experiences and impressions then evolve into something more critical and coherent. This process of revision is intuitively familiar to readers and was recently described by Stephen King at a recent talk at Lowell University:

> *Any good book, you should be able to read it twice. The first time, what I want from you is your total attention, and I want you to be engaged. I don't want you to be analysing, thinking about the language, um, I don't want you to see me at all. I don't want to be part of that equation. But if you come back to it again, I would like to think that there would be something else, as well.*
>   King 2012.

Stockwell (2002) aptly captures this distinction which he terms the difference between 'interpretation' and 'reading':

> interpretation *[is] a holistic understanding of the literary work that begins [. . .] even before we begin to read the actual text. [. . . It] is what all readers do when encountering literature, when the experience is ongoing and as yet unexpressed. As soon as readers become aware of what they are doing, this more analytical stage of recognition can be differentiated as* reading.   Stockwell 2002: 31

In this article we champion the importance of what we term authentic reading in the classroom. By this we mean a reading that is born out of an individual's own process of unmediated interpretation. That is, for a student to engage in authentic reading, they must have space to interpret the text, to experience it for themselves. If interpretation is imposed on a student, the resultant reading is likely not to be authentic, but *manufactured*.

Manufactured readings are learnt, not made; they occur when readers are denied the space to engage in their own process of interpretation. In this article we explore, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, the ways by which English teaching can support students in turning their interpretations into rich, critical but also authentic readings. Research has shown that teachers and students are very much aware of the impact studying can have on 'reading for

pleasure' (Nash 2007; Nightingale 2011). They describe this difference in a variety of ways, but it generally manifests in a sense of 'something getting lost' in the context of overpowering assessment and accountability regimes (Maybin 2013; Turvey and Lloyd 2014). In the simplest possible definition, an authentic reading can be described as the opportunity to avoid this 'loss'.

This conceptualisation of English coheres with the desires of the majority of practitioners, who believe that the study of literature should engage students deeply on a personal level, encouraging them to develop a strong sense of emotional investment in their reading (Goodwyn 2012). However, both historically and in the current climate, it has been argued that the UK assessment system has stifled creativity and delegitimised certain kinds of student response and teaching practices (Dymoke 2001; Ofsted 2012). Equally, increased teacher accountability and the high-stakes nature of the profession can encourage a 'teach to the exam' mentality that teachers feel compelled to adopt (Au 2007). In these conditions, manufactured *readings* can fare just as well, if not better, than authentic ones since teachers have undoubtedly more control over what is perceived to be the correct way of responding to literature (Mason 2014b). Although this type of practice can seem like a safer option, the danger is that students can end up being taught *about* books, rather than *how* to read them.

A rationale for reading

There are of course some important questions that teachers and policy makers should consider about the processes and practices of reading per se. These include: 'Why do young people read literature?' 'In what situations and contexts do they read literature?' 'What kinds of strategies do they use when encountering and responding to literary texts?''How do they make meaningful connections between literary texts they are reading, their previous reading experiences, and their own lives?'

Cliff Hodges (2010) interviews young readers who reveal that they see reading as an imaginative leap, carrying them away to alternative and sometimes fantastical fictional worlds, and as a type of simulation on which their everyday concerns can be run. Her interviews also highlight the *emotional investment* that young people put into reading (see also Dungworth et al. 2004; Cremin 2007). In this way, reading becomes shaped and defined as the fundamental human drive to make sense of the world by drawing on connections between reading and one's own experiences, memories, and other texts that have been encountered (Smith 2005).

This personal and emotional investment places reading and interpretation as intricately tied to both individual-personal and wider social group concerns, and the types of schematic knowledge that young readers hold, draw on and use when reading. The importance of background knowledge and resources to students' educational success is well documented (Daw 1996; Clark and

Rumbold 2006; Clark 2011). However, much top-down policy-making over the last twenty years has downplayed the influence and importance of personal and literary experiences and other domains of knowledge on students' responses to literature. The recent Ofsted publication *Moving English Forward* (Ofsted 2012) criticised the lack of curriculum time dedicated to reading literature and the emphasis on extracts rather than whole texts. It also highlighted the lack of coherent whole-school structures and practices for promoting reading for pleasure (see also Dean 2003: 19, 67–70). In spite of this, it is difficult to see that the climate is changing.

And yet the reasons for studying literature that are offered by young people provide an opportunity for teachers to consider how best, in designing classroom tasks, to use information about motivation, emotional investment and the kinds of background knowledge and resources that students bring with them. In doing so they can both encourage and facilitate the kinds of rich and meaningful reading practices that are often unnecessarily lost in the study context.

An applied cognitive linguistics

A relatively recent and revolutionary turn in literary studies, following that in the humanities more generally, has been in the use of models from cognitive science and linguistics to inform the study of texts and reading practices, most notably in the form of a *cognitive poetics* (Stockwell 2002). Cognitively-informed approaches to reading have moved from theoretical notions of idealised readers to empirical studies (Miall 2006). They have explored the psychological projection and empathetic responses that readers undertake (Whiteley 2011) and have also emphasised the interpersonal and social dimensions of reading and interpretative responses through the study of reading groups and book clubs (Peplow 2011). As a result, researchers in these fields are now able to explain in more rigorous and less impressionistic terms the ways in which readers' fictional worlds are negotiated, constructed, and maintained (Werth 1999), the ways in which readers identify with characters and events through a process of simulation (Oatley 1994), and even the kinds of emotional investment that readers feel compelled to make when engaging with literature (Stockwell 2009). These approaches offer the opportunity to reconfigure through a 'cognitive lens' some of the reasons that young people gave for wanting to read which we previously discussed. We therefore argue for the value of an *applied cognitive linguistics* as a way for teachers to think about the sorts of attitudes, knowledge and resources (personal, general and textual) that students bring to the reading experience. In doing so, we promote something like a cognitive version of *grammatics* (Halliday 2002: 386) to emphasise the ways in which teachers can use cognitive linguistic models to understand how their students read, and the resources they are drawing on to make meaning (see Giovanelli 2014: 36–7, for further discussion of Halliday's term in the context of applying cognitive linguistics in the classroom).

The case studies

The remainder of this article comprises two case studies. In both we view classroom practice through a cognitive linguistic lens, and argue for the value of teachers using an applied cognitive linguistics to inform their planning for reading activities. Both case studies involve experienced English teachers (more than ten years' service) teaching mixed-ability Year 7 classes at different co-educational 11–18 comprehensive schools in the Midlands region of the UK.

Case study 1: Figure-ground, narrative schemas and Louis Sachar's *Holes*

In this first case study we refer to two basic concepts from cognitive linguistics:

1   Figure/ground relationships and the notion of *attentional focus*.
2   Schema theory, in particular the idea of *narrative schemas*.

The concept of figure and ground is a long established trope in visual psychology (see Ungerer and Schmid 1996: 156–204). Simply put, human beings cannot focus on everything in their visual range at once. As such, at any given point, the object in our primary focus forms the *figure* of our attention; everything else falls into the *ground* (Stockwell 2002: 13). Certain attributes and factors can attract our attention, making an object more likely to become *figured*, such as brightness, newness, movement and so on (Stockwell 2009: 25). However our attention can also be directed and manipulated: we can choose what we focus on. If our attention shifts from a figure to something in the ground, that new object of our focus becomes the new figure of our attention. The same is true with reading. As we read, characters and objects move in and out of our attentional focus. If certain aspects are not figured or are figured but then neglected, they *decay* from our attentional field (Stockwell 2009: 21–2).

Schemas are essentially bundles of knowledge stored in memory (for a comprehensive overview see Stockwell 2002: 75-89). A narrative schema (Mason 2014a) is thus best described as an individual's version of a text. When we think about a book or a film, we do not have reference to the thing itself but to our narrative schema for that story, which contains all the various information we have built up from reading and hearing about it. Schemas are not fixed: as we discover new information about a narrative we *accrete* our schema with that information. If we forget it, it decays from the schema.

Narrative schemas are not only accreted during the reading experience but can also include *any* information we attach to that narrative. This might include things such as how and where it was first encountered, events, situations and memories associated with the text, and any comments others may have said or written about it. Since narrative schemas are unique to the individual, themes, characters and events which particularly resonate with one reader might be of no interest to another. Figure-ground relationships are therefore key in deter-

mining what accretes and what is passed over, what is stored and what decays. It logically follows that the most and richest accretion occurs during the actual act of reading the text. Thus, in cognitive linguistic terms, when Stephen King talks about 'something more' being available upon a second reading, he is identifying the difference between a first-time interpretation where knowledge about the narrative is being accrued as the reader progresses through the text and re-reading, when a richly accreted narrative schema is already in a reader's mental possession.

The burden of knowledge

The classroom, then, is a reading environment where students without rich narrative schemas for a text are led through it by a teacher with a highly accreted narrative schema at their disposal: re-readers guide first-time readers. There is then the potential for lesson tasks and teacher discourse to interfere with students' authentic engagement with the text. This can manifest itself in teachers deciding which elements of a lesson's reading is going to form the basis of the task(s), which learning objectives are going to be addressed and how meeting them is going to be achieved. The teacher, being mindful of what the tasks are, targets the lesson around these points. If this focus is relayed to the students *before* the reading takes place then it can effectively narrow the scope of study and thereby privilege and legitimise only those responses to a text that coincide with the pre-stated aims. In these cases, we argue that the teacher is *pre-figuring* the students' attention. In such lessons, what is relevant to the lesson tasks and objectives forms the *figure*; other potential avenues of interest remain in the *ground*, along with anything students may have wanted to discuss or explore further which does not cohere with the predetermined lesson plan. In these instances, opportunities to capitalise on and interrelate students' reading with the knowledge and experience they bring to the classroom – not only authentic but critically useful student engagement with the text – are unnecessarily grounded because they do not cohere with a pre-planned and pre-figured emphasis.

We exemplify the above with reference to activities set up with a Year 7 class reading Louis Sachar's novel *Holes* (2000), taken from a 200,000 word corpus of classroom recordings. The class consisted of 29 students. Five of these students had read *Holes* previously; they were additionally formed into a reading group of sorts. Interesting comparisons can be made between these re-readers' initial authentic reading experiences and their classmates', and their own, subsequent encounter with the novel in a study context. In particular, it is possible to identify how common classroom practices can actually disrupt students' ability to form their own interpretations, leaving teachers in danger of unknowingly manufacturing student readings.

The villain of the piece

Holes is a Young Adult novel set at Camp Green Lake, a labour camp for male juvenile offenders. Every day each boy must dig a 5×5×5 foot hole in the

Texan desert because, the camp staff claim, "if you take a bad boy and make him dig a hole every day in the hot sun, it will turn him into a good boy" (Sachar 2000: 5). In reality, the Warden of the camp is looking for buried treasure. The novel follows Stanley Yelnats, wrongly convicted of stealing a pair of trainers, and his exploits at the camp. It is structured into 50 short chapters. Our discussion focuses on lesson 7 of 20 in this scheme of work, the theme of which was 'villains'.

The lesson we discuss centred on the character of the Warden of Camp Green Lake. Certain aspects of the text were prefigured from the moment the students entered the class via the lesson objectives displayed on the PowerPoint:

- To **identify** characteristics of a villain
- To **explore** how the Warden is portrayed as a villain through the use of language

The class began with a general discussion about villains followed by a small-group task where students had to devise a 'recipe for a villain'. The students read chapters 19 and 20, but only chapter 20 concerned the Warden. The effect of this was that chapter 19 was essentially lost in the ground of the lesson. Since the lesson plan was not originally designed to include chapter 19, it was quickly read through *in order to get to* chapter 20 and then not mentioned again. This meant that chapter 20 was naturally emphasised as a comparative figure, as the section of reading relevant to the lesson. The teacher, Mrs K, as an almost inevitable consequence of the lesson plan, opened discussions by pre-figuring the Warden and defining her as a villain:

> *So you often see the villain or the bad guy in films and novels, and obviously* Holes *has got a very recognisable villain, or you might think villains, it's your choice. And then today we're going to look at a chapter where we find out more about the Warden, because of course the Warden is the main villain.*

To Mrs K, who has a comprehensive narrative schema from which she is able to take an overview of the whole character, it is 'obvious' the Warden is a villain, but the students had at this point read only as far as chapter 18. Except for any prior knowledge of the novel they may have brought to the classroom, the students only had the potential to accrete their schemas with information and reading from the lessons *so far*. That is, from chapters 1 to 18. Thus, whether the students had established the Warden as villainous or not, this conceptualisation of the character had now been pre-figured for the students for the rest of their reading of *Holes*. This is particularly interesting when contrasted with the five student re-readers who later revealed they did not actually think the Warden was a villain at all. (Numbers represent pause-lengths in seconds.):

Researcher	*So, [the Warden]'s like, so she's like the villain, so in the class we've said that she's a vill-, you're making a face there Carl, do you not agree?*
Carl	*(3) N-, (4) Just carry on, just carry on.*
Researcher	*No, no, no, is it as simple as that? Is she just, is she just a villain? Is she just a baddie?*
Carl	*I don't (2) uh, well I don't feel that because-,*
James	*Yeah, I suppose it's her parents and grandparents, she's just carrying on because it's all she's known.*
Carl	*Yeah, she's been taught to, to dig the holes and it's what she knows how to do.*
Frank	*She doesn't know anything different.*

These students had narrative schemas accreted from a reading of the whole text and therefore, unlike their peers, they could reflect on the full arc of the Warden's character. The revelation that the Warden was herself forced to dig holes looking for the treasure comes in chapter 45: this facet to the character is not available by chapter 20. The exercises in this lesson necessarily pre-figured the Warden as a villain. This meant that, for students such as Carl, their own readings of the novel were contradicted. This made them reluctant to discuss their own readings because these did not tally with what they perceived to be the authorised reading of the text.

The information students were able to utilise when analysing characters and events, and their degree of freedom to do so, was directly related to how critical they were able to be. The re-reader students were able to make much more astute and insightful observations because they had more nuanced versions of the character in their narrative schemas with which to work. The students in the lesson accepted that the Warden was a villain because at that point in the novel all the information they had about her supported that analysis.

Case study 2: text world theory and Italo Calvino's 'The man who shouted Teresa'

In the second case study, we demonstrate how a teacher used a cognitive linguistic model as an explicit part of her planning to support the teaching of Italo Calvino's short story 'The man who shouted Teresa' from the posthumously published collection *Numbers in the Dark* (1996). Written in 1943 when Calvino was about to join the Italian resistance movement, the story's un-named narrator persuades people to join him in shouting 'Teresa' towards the top of a residential block even after he reveals that no such person exists. Given its time and place of composition, the story can be read as a political fable about the power of group mentality and dangers of fascism; Calvino himself considered it as one of several *raccontini* (very short stories) that explored political oppression (Calvino 1996).

The teacher explained that the absurdist nature of the story meant that it had previously proved popular with students taking an introductory unit on creative writing, and that students were attracted by the opportunity to solve the 'mystery' of who the man and 'Teresa' might be. In addition, its form as a fable offered an opportunity for students to explore how they would use their own knowledge and experience to interpret a literary text. The teacher in this instance set up the reading activity to allow the students to initially engage with the story on their own terms, and made use of the cognitive discourse grammar *text world theory* to support her planning, and to encourage her students to reflect on what they brought to the reading experience.

Text world theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) is a dynamic model of discourse processing that explains how writers and readers build rich mental configurations of fictional and non-fictional content. In text world theory terms, a writer and reader share a *discourse world*, which consists of their physical surroundings, their individual and culturally dependent ideologies, memories and desires, and any shared and personal knowledge they hold. They use these contextual factors in conjunction with textual elements to construct rich mental representations called *text worlds* that have both *world-building elements* (aspects of time, place and characters) and *function-advancing propositions* (processes and events that drive the narrative and modify the contents of the original world).

For example, when in the discourse world a reader encounters the words 'I stepped off the pavement', she will construct a text world that is located in the past (the use of the past tense sets up the world's temporal parameters), contains a character in the form of the narrating voice with whom the reader is asked to identify through the use of the first person pronoun 'I', and has some sense of place ('pavement' would in the vast majority of cases lead to readers imagining that this was taking place in a built-up area). In this last example, 'pavement' acts as a cue for activating various degrees of background *encyclopaedic knowledge* that a reader would draw on to 'flesh out' this mental representation. Clearly, since experience varies from reader to reader, one individual's text world might differ from another's. However, as experiences are culturally-bound, we can expect conceptualisations to be reasonably similar, for example, for readers in the UK. Importantly, only background knowledge activated by the text is used in the construction of text worlds, so here only frames of knowledge relating to pavements and roads are likely to be activated. Together, these provide a way of explaining how broadly similar yet subtly idiosyncratic conceptualisations and interpretations of the same line of text are possible.

Text world theory has been largely used as an analytical tool within the field of cognitive poetics (see Giovanelli 2013, for an overview of work), and to a lesser extent within educational contexts (de Obregón et al. 2009; Giovanelli 2010). In what follows, we aim to show how it can also provide a beneficial tool for the teacher to think and plan with.

In this case study, we also draw on the notion of *meta-reading* (Horning 2011). Horning suggests that expert readers are *meta-readers* who can synthesise a range of skills as they read, and bring together different levels of advanced awareness. These include:

- *meta-textual*: awareness of how texts are organised and structured,
- *meta-contextual*: awareness of authorship, genre, period and intertextuality, and
- *meta-linguistic*: awareness of the role of individual words and the patterns in which they appear.

For the benefit of the reader, the first three paragraphs of 'The man who shouted Teresa' are reprinted below.

> *I stepped off the pavement, walked backwards a few paces looking up, and, from the middle of the street, brought my hands to my mouth to make a megaphone, and shouted toward the top stories of the block: "Teresa!"*
>
> *My shadow took fright at the moon and huddled at my feet.*
>
> *Someone walked by. Again I shouted: "Teresa!" The man came up to me and said: "If you do not shout louder she will not hear you. Let's both try. So: count to three, on three we shout together." And he said: "One, two, three." And we both yelled, "Tere-eeesaaa!"*
>   Calvino 1996:1

The teaching of this text followed four stages.
   Stage 1: reading of the story
   Stage 2: initial response
   Stage 3: reflection on the process of reading and personal response
   Stage 4: building in appropriate context

The teacher began by asking students to read the story in its entirety and answer a series of initial questions.

- Who might be narrating this story? What do we know about him?
- Where might this story be taking place?
- Who are the other characters in the story? Why are they there?
- What is the narrator's attitude towards the events that he tells?
- What is this story about? What do you think is the author's message?

The students were not given any information that would have pre-figured their reading, such as details about the author, context or period of composition. Instead, in stage 2 they were asked to think about how they might construct mental images of what they had read. In this instance, they sketched a quick

Figure 1: Angela's visual response to 'The man who shouted Teresa'
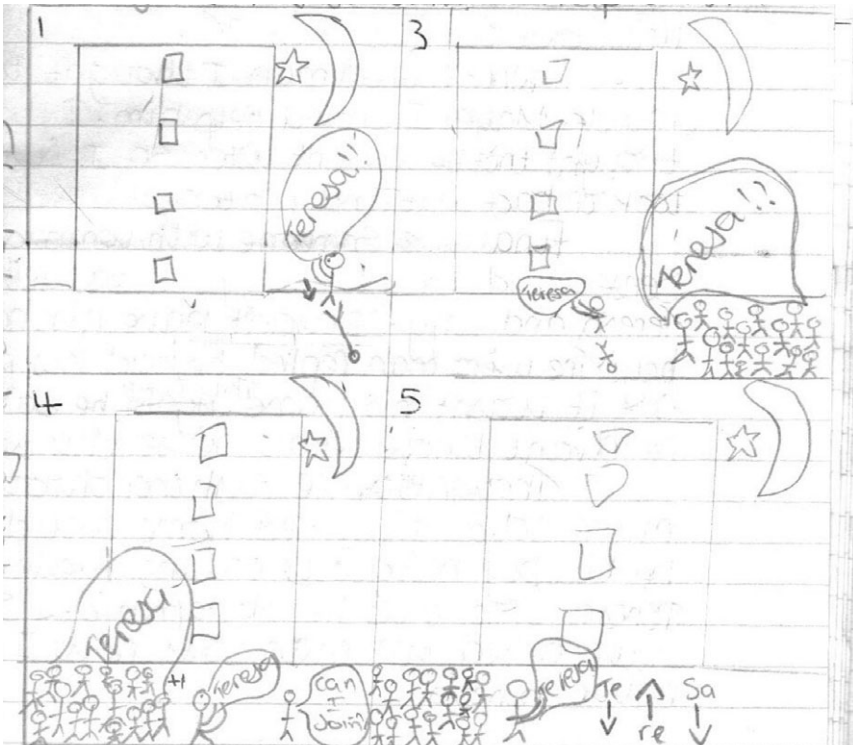
series of visual frames of the story's opening paragraphs. This allowed them to define ideas they might have from reading in a more concrete form (see Matthews 2003, and Hope 2008 for how drawing can be used as a powerful tool in making implicit knowledge explicit). The response of one student, Angela, is shown in Figure 1.

At stage 3, students were asked to draw on their initial responses and their drawing to think about how they had used encyclopaedic knowledge to construct rich text worlds. In order to do this, they explicitly focused on what the teacher called 'trigger words' from the first paragraph: 'pavement', 'street', 'block', and 'Teresa'. In text world theory terms, these are essential world-building elements that set up the spatial parameters of the fictional world. In conjunction with their drawings, which provided explicit detail for them to look at, the students showed their meta-linguistic awareness by exploring their ideas. Angela continued her discussion of the text by thinking about her own world construction:

> *It's a street in London, a city by the Thames, with lots of big*
> *places, maybe a café and theatre as well. Teresa could be Mother*
> *Teresa that someone is trying to find.*   Angela

In this instance, Angela clearly drew on her knowledge of an urban landscape (interestingly she assumed by default it was London even though she was from the West Midlands), and constructed her version of the story using this encyclopaedic knowledge. She reflected on how, for her, 'Teresa' triggered a specific domain of knowledge about Mother Teresa, and explained how she used this to frame her mental representation of the events detailed in the first paragraph, and then consequently for the rest of the story, as shown in her second comment:

> *The character is a religious man who is trying to find Mother Teresa and doesn't know that she is dead.*   Angela

In contrast, some students were able to draw more extensively on their wider reading. The opportunity to get students to think up-front about specific triggers and encyclopaedic knowledge allowed them to demonstrate meta-contextual awareness related to aspects of intertextuality and connected readings, and certain generic conventions and assumptions. Some of the more developed and different responses to the teacher's later questions included:

- *'It's a story about a schizophrenic'* (Dan)
- *'the main character is an amnesiac and a murderer who's going to kill everyone'* (Rob)
- *'It's a sci-fi story with the characters all in a time loop'* (Ed)
- *'he's a ghost who keeps coming back and it's all a horrible dream'* (Lucy)

All of these offered ways for the teacher to explore how the students' own world construction, and consequently their response to the short story, could be so radically different. Crucially, the students drew on their own knowledge and interests and used what they had previously read and could make meaningful connections with to mentally construct a coherent narrative with which they could engage as a reader. Unlike the students in our first case study, this allowed for an authentic experience for them to engage with the text in their own terms, and to encourage them to reflect on their interpretations meta-textually, meta-linguistically and meta-contextually as part of the process to more fully develop their readings. For the teacher, it provided an opportunity to use a cognitive linguistic model to help her think about what students were bringing to the reading process, and how and why they might be making connections, investing emotions, and constructing rich fictional worlds. This informed her subsequent questioning of and designing of tasks for the students, and – in the context of the unit's focus on creative writing – enabled the students to judge what was important to signal to their readers in their own writing, and as well as to think about the kinds of knowledge that their readers might use in their own construction of a fictional world.

Interestingly, at stage 4, when the teacher did reveal biographical and contextual detail to the students, they were able to see how readers might easily assimilate

this contextual information into a reading that foregrounded the Second World War and critiqued fascism; that is, they demonstrated an understanding of the nature of *allegory*. Consequently, they were also able to debate the merits of literary readings that privileged the context of production over that of reception, and think about the validity of their own responses that had not been constrained by being pre-figured. This was a striking example of meta-reading in practice.

Conclusion

In this article we have demonstrated the value of allowing for more opportunities for what we have termed *authentic reading* in the classroom. In doing so, we also hope to have shown how an applied cognitive linguistics can both support an understanding of students' reading processes and provide a tool for teachers to 'think with' when planning activities. We have argued that this can enable insights into the strategies students use when reading, an awareness of what can potentially 'get lost' in the classroom, and an indication of where and how it can be regained. The case studies we have discussed demonstrate the importance of both *what* teachers say and *when* they say it when setting up learning tasks. If an opportunity for authentic reading precedes a figured one, we have found that students seem happy to integrate this knowledge, enriching but not overriding their own personal response. If their attention is pre-figured, however, this accretes students' narrative schemas before they ever encounter the text themselves. For example, it would have been difficult for the students reading the Calvino story to generate individual responses if before reading its allegorical nature had been pre-figured for them.

We believe this article raises some important points for the teacher designing and implementing reading activities in the classroom. We suggest that there is a strong argument for ensuring that task design explicitly draws and allows students to reflect on the types of knowledge that they bring to create rich, meaningful, and often inter-connected readings, and to legitimise personal and alternative ways of interpreting texts. We would stress the importance of being mindful to the benefits in allowing open student-led discussion at both the beginning and ending of reading to create space for personal engagement and allow ideas to be articulated and explored. In contrast, pre-figured targeted discussion creates the impression that personal response is welcome only if relevant to the 'authorised' focus of the lesson; it is little more than tolerating authenticity in narrow, sanctioned spaces.

More generally, we would also argue that this article should form part of a continuing enquiry into the value of an applied cognitive linguistics for the classroom teacher. Since this article demonstrates the potential power of basic cognitive linguistic concepts to illuminate the reading process, we would encourage further work in education to mirror the 'cognitive turn' currently taking place in the humanities. We believe such work would have much to offer in foregrounding the value of meta-processes concerned with how interpretations develop in the classroom, and how readings are created.

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