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The Strategic Use of Frames
in a Classroom Interaction

الاستخدام الإستراتيجي للإطار في
التفاعل الصفّي

Abstract:

This paper analyzes how frames and frame shifts are used in the interaction of one classroom speech event for pedagogic purposes. It particularly discusses how the teacher integrates the new concepts to the students' existing body of knowledge (knowledge schema) by using diverse types of frames in order to accomplish what Vygotsky (1962) refers to as "zone of proximal development." This process intends to enhance the students' knowledge by lifting them up to a higher cognitive level of functioning. The paper shows how third grade students confront no difficulty shifting from one frame to another. It also focuses on the dynamic nature of the relationship between the frames and the students' knowledge schema.

ملخص البحث :

يحلل هذا البحث كيفية استخدام الإطار والانتقال من إطار إلى آخر في الحدث الكلامي والتفاعلي في الصف الواحد/ المستوى الثالث الابتدائي لتحقيق أهداف تعليمية. ويناقش البحث على الأخص كيفية ربط المعلم المعلومات الجديدة بالبنية المعرفية لدى الطلاب باستخدام أنواع مختلفة من الأطر بغية تحقيق ما يسميه فيغوتسكي "حيز التطوير الممكن". حيث تُعنى هذا العملية بالزيادة المعرفية للطلاب وذلك لرفع مستواه الإدراكي الوظيفي إلى مرحلة أعلى من مستواه الحالي. ويبين البحث أن طلاب المرحلة الثالثة الابتدائية لا يعانون من أية مشكلة بالانتقال من إطار إلى آخر. ويركز البحث أيضا على التفاعل الديناميكي ما بين الإطار والبنية المعرفية لدى الطلاب.

The Strategic Use of Frames in a Classroom Interaction

1. Introduction

This paper discusses how frames are used in one classroom speech event for pedagogic purposes. It specifically examines how the teacher connects new concepts to the knowledge schema of the students by using different types of frames in order to achieve what Vygotsky ⁽¹⁾ refers to as "zone of proximal development." This process is meant to increase the student's knowledge by lifting him/her up to a higher cognitive level of functioning. The paper pays a special emphasis on the *dynamic* nature of the relationship between frames and knowledge schema of the students in a classroom setting. Sections two and three introduce the data and define the concept of frame respectively. Section four approaches the IRE speech acts from the perspective of the frame and claims that speech acts can be theoretically similar to frames. Sections five, six, seven, and eight identify and illustrate the multiple frames used in this lesson. Section nine and ten demonstrate frame shift and exemplify how the process of knowledge integration comes about. Section eleven discusses one example of mismatched expectations and section twelve concludes the paper.

2. The data of the study

The analysis in this paper is based on one classroom interaction. Miss Joanna teaches third grade students about the geographical concept of *Fall Line*. The lesson lasts about 55 minutes. It was taped on 12.4.2004 by the teacher herself and later transcribed by the researcher. For analytical purposes, the lesson can be divided sequentially into five segments as shown in table 1.

Table 1: *Segmental division of Joanna's lesson*

Segment No.	Time	Title (frame)
Segment 1	11 minutes	Initial review.
Segment 2	06 minutes	Explanation of Geographical concepts.
Segment 3	16 minutes	Group activity.

(1) Vygotsky, L.S. *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA:MIT Press, 1962.

Segment 4	16 minutes	Land forms.
Segment 5	06 minutes	Review of the lesson.

Total:	55 minutes.	

During the lesson, the students sit on the floor and the teacher sits on a chair in front of the blackboard. In the group activity period, the students form groups of three or four. Each group is assigned a table and the students sit on the chairs around it. Joanna moves around the tables, monitoring and helping the students in the activity of connecting lines on maps.

3. The concept of *frame*

Before explaining the concept of frame, it is essential to state that studies which apply this concept in a classroom setting from the perspective of interactional sociolinguistics are few and far between. This study is not intended to be all inclusive but, rather, is the beginning of linguistic investigation of the concept of frame in one classroom interaction from the interactional sociolinguistic perspective. Hence, it is qualitative rather than quantitative in nature.

The concept of frame in anthropology originates in the work of Bateson.⁽¹⁾ He observes that people engaged in a speech activity communicate meaningfully with each other by recognizing the 'frame' or the context of the interaction. He states that a frame:

Merely assists the mind in understanding the contained messages by reminding the thinker that these messages are mutually relevant and the messages outside the frame may be ignored (p.188).

A frame, then, provides context to the interaction and helps the participants to interpret and identify the communicated messages by identifying the speech activity. Furthermore, recognizing the frame of a speech activity forces the participants to be relevant, in the Gricean⁽²⁾ sense, to the chosen frame of communication in order to be considered cooperative.

(1) Bateson, Gregory. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. New York:Ballantine, 1972, 188.

(2) Grice, H. Paul. "Logic and Conversation." In Peter Cole and Jerry Morgan (Eds.), Syntax and Semantics vol 3. New York: Academic Press, 1975, 41-58.

In Sociology, Goffman,⁽¹⁾ as a symbolic interactionist, suggests that people need the frame to understand the context in face-to-face interactions and act differently in different settings. In classroom settings, Juzwik,⁽²⁾ for example, uses Goffman's concept of "narrative frame space" to reveal how one teacher uses multiple narrative frame spaces to present herself authoritatively without being authoritarian in the classroom interaction.

Achinstein and Barrett,⁽³⁾ however, identify three types of frames which beginning teachers and mentors display: (a) the managerial frame which suggests that the teacher acts as a manager in the classroom, (b) the human relations frame which views the teacher as a collaborator who cares for the class as a family, and (c) the political frame which exhibits the teacher as a facilitator in the democratic milieu of the classroom. Maloch⁽⁴⁾ examines a teacher's performance across lessons teaching reading and suggests that if teachers plan to make the most of classroom interaction, they should build with their students a shared frame of reference.

In interactional sociolinguistics, Tannen⁽⁵⁾ identifies frame to be similar to the frame of a picture and that messages can be understood because they are within specific frames. In this sense, her definition seems to be similar to Bateson's⁽⁶⁾ because both of them propose that

(1) Goffman, Erving. Frame Analysis: An essay on the organization of experience. New York: Harper, 1974.

(2) Juzwick, Mary M. "Performing Curriculum: Building ethos through narratives in pedagogical discourse." Teachers College Record, 108, No.4 (2006), 489-528.

(3) Achinstein, Betty and Adele Barrett. "(Re)Framing classroom contexts: How new teachers and mentors view diverse learners and challenges of practice." Teachers College Record, 106, No.4 (2004), 716-46.

(4) Maloch, Beth. "Becoming a 'WOW reader': Context and continuity in a second grade classroom." Journal of Classroom Interaction, 40, No. 1 (2005), 5-17.

(5) Tannen, Deborah. Conversational Style: Analyzing talk among friends. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1984.

(6) Bateson, Gregory. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

messages occur within frames. Tannen,⁽¹⁾ however, recognizes another aspect of frame "as a relational concept rather than a sequence of events; it refers to the dynamic relationship between people (p.142)." As such, people approach the frame of a present interaction in relation to their past experiences and knowledge. Tannen and Wallat⁽²⁾ refer to the existing body of a person's knowledge as "knowledge schema." The interactive nature of measuring a new concept against old experiences shows the dynamic relationship that exists between knowledge schema and frame, a point which further exemplifies the mutual relevance of messages within the frame as suggested by Bateson.⁽³⁾

A similar concept to 'frame' is the notion called 'schema theory' which originates in the work of Bartlett⁽⁴⁾ in cognitive psychology. Shuy⁽⁵⁾ observes that schema analysis refers to the "frame of reference" people have in a speech activity. In his analysis of a child sexual abuse interview, he suggests that children under the age of five or six sustain difficulty in shifting from the present "play" schema to past event schema. My analysis in this paper, however, shows below that third grade children in a classroom setting are able to shift from one frame to another with no apparent difficulty.

4. Frames and speech acts

One important aspect of Joanna's teaching style is characterized by "the three-part IRE sequence"⁽⁶⁾. The teacher initiates (I) a topic by calling on a student, the student gives a response (R), and the teacher evaluates (E) the student's response. In terms of speech

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- (1) Tannen, Deborah. "What's in a frame? Surface evidence for underlying expectations." In Roy Freedle (Ed.), *New Directions in Discourse Processing*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1979, 137-181.
 - (2) Tannen, Deborah and Cynthia Wallat. "Interactive frames and knowledge schemas in interaction: Examples from a medical examination/interview." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50, No. 2 (1987), 205-216.
 - (3) Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballantine, 1972.
 - (4) Bartlett, Frederic C. *Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932.
 - (5) Shuy, Roger. "Linguistic perspectives on the child sexual abuse interview." In Solomon M. Fulero and L. Olsen-Fulero (Eds.), *Advances in Law and Child Development*. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1995.
 - (6) Cazden, Courtney B. *Classroom Discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman, 1988, p.29.

act theory,⁽¹⁾ the teacher begins a topic by usually using the speech act of a question, the student provides a response by the speech act of assertion or negation of an assertion, and finally the teacher also evaluates the student's contribution by the speech act of assertion or negation of an assertion, depending on the situation. One can argue that these IRE speech acts can be viewed and understood in terms of frames as the examples in table 2 illustrate.

Table 2: *Example of initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) frames*

Initiation frame (I)	Response frame (R)	Evaluation frame (E)
Teacher: Some are closer to the equator than others, so consequently some are closer to what?	Student: The North Pole.	Teacher: Right, to the North Pole, or the South Pole.

It is obvious in table 2 that the student would not be able to give an answer unless he understands the message of the teacher to be within the frame of a question which elicits a response. If the student fails to recognize the question frame, the second part (response frame) of the question-answer adjacency pair will be missing and the interaction breaks down. Furthermore, as evidence for the student's understanding of the question frame, his response should be relevant to the propositional content of the question. Hence, the student's contribution falls within the frame of providing an answer to the initiated question, not for example a thought that has popped up in his/her mind in the middle of the class for no obvious reason. Indeed, the recognition of the question (initiation frame) as a question is necessary for the interaction to be considered cooperative and meaningful, a point which reflects the mutual relevancy of the messages in Batson's⁽²⁾ definition of a frame. Finally, the teacher's evaluation is also tied to the student's response and hence understood by the student to be within the frame of

(1) Searle, John R. *Speech Acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.

(2) Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballantine, 1972.

evaluating his and not any other student's response to be correct. If one were to accept the above argument, speech acts can be, at least theoretically, similar to frames.

5. Basic frames used in Joanna's teaching style

It is essential to identify initially the frame of the class to enable the students to select the necessary existing body of knowledge (knowledge schema) to be used in order to integrate the new incoming concepts introduced in the lesson. As such, the title of the lesson itself can be considered as the frame of the lesson, which is about the geographical concept of Fall Line. Within the larger frame of this lesson, Joanna introduces three basic frames: future, present, and past. In terms of frame of reference, these frames refer to the time of the discourse in the classroom. They are supposedly used to facilitate understanding the new information presented in the class. The examples in table 3 illustrate these frames.

Table 3: *Examples of future, present, and past frames*

Future frame	Present frame	Past frame
Now <u>we're going to</u> talk people need to grind today about land regions in Maryland.	We <u>call</u> that a cross-section. So <u>what's back here</u> in the Western part?	Why <u>did</u> flour close Why <u>didn't</u> supermarket?
they just go to the	This is the west and this is the east.	

The three examples in table 3 are all uttered by the teacher in the class. The example given to illustrate the future frame, is as expected, occurs at the beginning of segment one. Joanna uses the structure "be going to" to indicate that a prior plan is made with the intention of doing something in the future.⁽¹⁾ Hence, the discourse world is shifted to the future with the purpose of preparing the students' frame of reference for what is to be expected in the lesson.

The example about the present frame is located at the beginning of the second segment. Joanna holds a book in her hand and points to a

(1) Azar, Betty Schramper. Understanding and Using English Grammar. New York: Pearson Education Press, 1999.

“cross-section.” She also points to the west and to the east in the picture. The deictic use of the demonstrative pronouns “that” and “this” coupled with the use of the present tense, as indicated by the underlined words, suggests strongly that the frame of reference in the discourse is present.

Finally, the third example illustrates the past frame. The use of the past tense, as the underlined words show, shifts the students mentally to think back about what happened within the frame of the historical event to the discourse world of "grinding flour."

The relevance of distinguishing future, present and past frames in a classroom discourse works as follows: past frame is used by Joanna to review the previously taught geographical concepts. It serves to establish the schema knowledge of the students and get them ready for the new concepts to be discussed in the present frame. It also helps the teacher to know where the students are and enable her to assess their comprehension of old information. For example, most of the review in the first segment is carried out in the past frame. Announcing the forthcoming new information is accomplished by using the future frame, and introducing new Geographical concepts in the second segment is mainly achieved in the present frame. As discussed later, the shift among the past, future, and present frames are meant to enable the students to be ready by tapping on the knowledge schema (past frame), by announcing the new concepts (future frame), and finally by introducing these new ideas (present frame). Having identified the basic frames, I now turn to elaborate on how and why they are used in Joanna's lesson.

6. The future (or agenda) frame

In her teaching style, Joanna utilizes the future frame twice in her lesson. I refer to each of these two instances as the agenda frame. The agenda frame indicates a situation where the teacher announces the plan of the lesson; it provides the meta-message which frames the activity to be engaged in. As Shuy ⁽¹⁾ puts it, it is “knowing where we are and where we are about to go (p.124).”

As expected, the first agenda frame occurs at the beginning of

(1) Shuy, Roger. “Identifying dimensions of classroom language.” In J.L. Green and J.O. Harker (Eds.). *Multiple Perspective Analysis of Classroom Discourse*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1988, 115-134.

segment one. Joanna uses the imaginative frame (discussed later) and asks the students to imagine the world map. She switches their attention to the map of Maryland then to the things put on the map like towns and rivers. Having done that, she shifts to the agenda frame in example 1 in order to show what she is about to discuss in the lesson.

Example (1)

Joanna: Open your eyes.
Now we're going to talk today about land regions in Maryland. Mostly about a very special region called the Fall Line or the Fall Zone.
We're going to talk about what has that to do with nature and with man.

The first agenda frame starts with the underlined words ("Now we're going to talk about"). It is followed by specific details about the teacher's plan for the lesson. Her agenda is to talk about the "Fall Line" or the "Fall Zone" in Maryland.

Significant here is the sequence of topics from world map to the map of Maryland to towns and rivers and finally to the agenda of the lesson about the Fall Line. More significant, however, is the connection between the imaginative frame and the agenda frame. Joanna introduces the larger framework of the lesson in the imaginative frame and switches to the more specific topic about the Fall Line in the agenda frame. She is like a camera-person who shoots a scene and zooms the focus of the camera gradually to a more particular scene. The connection between the larger and the smaller scenes is relevant and evident. The larger scene provides context to the more specific new information to be presented in the lesson, hence the integration between the existing bodies of knowledge with the new concepts to be introduced.

Joanna introduces the second agenda frame at the onset of segment three to identify the task required in the group activity on maps as shown in example 2.

Example (2)

Joanna: So what we're going to do is two things:
 First you're going to go back to your tables and do some exercises with the maps, and locate the Fall Line locate cities, why cities happen to be there?

The location of the second agenda frame is logical and necessary for an activity which takes 16 minutes of classroom interaction. It orients the students to proceed as required in the group activity in order to achieve the best results. The group activity would be meaningless if not directed as the teacher did.

7. Frames within the present frame

As mentioned earlier, the present frame is distinguished from the past and future frames in terms of frame of reference in time and shift in the discourse vicinity. The present frame as used by Joanna contains other frames: imaginative, demonstration, and serious frames. I explain with examples each frame and its function as used in the lesson.

7.1 Imaginative frame

By imaginative frame, I point to the situation where the students are requested to imagine a certain event or thing. The teacher employs the imaginative frame twice in the first section of her lesson. The first one takes place at the beginning of segment one and the second one in the second half of the same segment.

Imaginative frames are typically realized by the use of imperative verbs such as, "Just imagine it" and "Picture in your mind," as indicated by the underlined words in examples 3 and 4 as follows:

Example (3)

Joanna: All of you close your eyes for a second.
Think about the world map that you've been looking at.
Just imagine it. Close your eyes, just imagine it.

Example (4)

Joanna: Picture in your mind when you're driving along that Eastern Shore. What's the land like?

Both of these imaginative frames are meant to move the students to an abstract discourse world, which does not exist in the classroom, with the purpose of retrieving from their knowledge schema instances of the "world map" and the "Eastern Shore." In both cases new topics are introduced. It is also interesting to notice that the students are requested to picture a scene from the past (past frame), but the request is made in the present frame as indicated by the use of imperatives. This shift from the present imaginative frame to the past

frame exhibits the dynamic connection among frames. It serves to integrate past knowledge with the new concepts to be introduced in the lesson and increases the students' knowledge meaningfully; it thus helps the students in the interpretation and comprehension of new information.

7.2 Demonstration frame

I use demonstration frame to refer to a situation where the teacher employs teaching-aid materials to explain a point in class. Joanna uses an overhead projector, a map, a book and the blackboard as teaching-aid materials in her lesson. In example 5, taken from the beginning of segment two, she explains on board the concept of the coastal plain.

Example (5)

Joanna: Remember when we read rain forest book...
 Suppose we're doing a cross-section
We call that a cross-section...
 The high parts are mountains the low parts are...
 Then as we move this way, the land begins to smooth out.
 It's still rolling hills...
 Then we come down and it flattens out.
 And we're near the ocean over here.
 And that's the coastal plain.

In the above example, Joanna makes use of a book and draws on the board to locate the coastal plain. In the first line, she shifts to a past frame when talking about the "rain forest book." In the meantime, she picks up the book and opens it to a cross-section figure. She, then, draws on the board a cross-section as she utters the underlined words in line three. The rest of the example is uttered while drawing on the board to illustrate the mountains, the hills and finally the coastal plain. Noteworthy in this example is that demonstrating what a cross-section is by means of both using a book and drawing on the board makes it meaningful for the students to recognize and understand the abstract geographical concepts of a cross-section and a coastal plain.

7.3 Serious frame

I use serious frame to demonstrate a situation where the teacher attempts to attract the students' attention. It usually occurs before a "play" frame (discussed below). Example 6 precedes a joke about the existence of automobiles two hundred years ago.

Example (6)

Joanna: Timmy! Mark! I am not going on until I have everybody's attention. Okay. when Mark said woods he was exactly right. There wasn't a lot here besides woods.

Joanna in the above example draws on the serious frame as an intermediary step between cracking a joke and going back to discussing the status of land in Maryland. There is no doubt that continuing the lesson while the students are still laughing would be futile. Using the serious frame in the first line ("I am not going on until I have everybody's attention") prepares the students to snap out of the joke frame to the more serious frame of the lesson. The occurrence of the discourse marker "okay"⁽¹⁾ is particularly interesting. It does not only fill in the silence, transition relevance place⁽²⁾, which might arise after the first sentence but it also marks the transition from the play frame to the discussion frame.

8. Frames within the past frame

As previously stated, past frames refer to the situation in which the discourse world shifts to the past time. Two types of past frames appear in Joanna's lesson: review frame and play frame. I illustrate these frames with examples and show their functions in this lesson.

8.1 Review frame

I employ review frame to denote a situation where the teacher reviews the material covered previously in the class. Joanna uses this frame twice in her lesson. The first one appears at the beginning of the lesson where she reviews some geographical concepts about regions as

(1) Schiffrin, Deborah. Discourse Markers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

(2) Sacks, Harvey; Emanuel Schegloff; and Gail Jefferson. "A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation." Language, 50 (1974), 696-735.

example 7 shows.

Example (7)

Teacher: What kind of regions have we talked about?
You all know those. Mike!

Mike: The rain forest?

Teacher: The rain forest. Josh!

Josh: The tundra.

Teacher: The tundra. Josh!

Josh: The deciduous forest.

Significant in example 7 is that the review frame comes about in a dialogic (IRE) frames. In the initiation frame, the teacher starts the dialogic interaction by asking a question in the first line and calls on a student, Mike, to provide a response. In the response frame, Mike gives the answer: "the rain forest." In the evaluation frame, the teacher repeats the student's response and calls on another student, Josh, to provide a further example. Notice that Mike provides his answer with a rising intonation, indicated by the question mark at the end of his response, which shows his uncertainty. By repeating Mike's response, the teacher acknowledges the student's contribution to be correct and hence the positive evaluation. This kind of dialogic IRA frames is recycled three times with the purpose of activating the students' knowledge schema pertaining to the geographical concepts covered in an earlier lesson. As such, the review frame establishes the background on which new concepts are built.

Joanna utilizes the review frame for the second time in segment 5 in order to go through the main points discussed in the lesson as example 8 demonstrates.

Example (8)

Elizabeth: We talked bout the Fall Line
and how, like, it starts up at the mountains
and how it runs along.

Teacher: I'm glad you said that. The Fall Line doesn't...
Remember when we drew that line on the map?

- The rivers start in the mountains.
- The Fall Line crosses all the rivers.
- It's an area or zone of rapids on all the rivers.
- I guess I wasn't clear about that.

This example shows how the teacher makes use of the review frame both to check the students' comprehension of the material covered in the lesson and to enable her to locate any ambiguous points which need further explanation. The student's contribution reveals that she does not fully grasp the concept of Fall Line. She seems to identify the river coming down from the mountains with the Fall Line. The teacher disambiguates, in the lines marked with arrows, that the Fall Line is an area "or zone of rapids on all the rivers." The need for such a clarification comes up in the review frame.

8.2 Play frame

I use the play frame to indicate a situation where the teacher cracks a joke or teases the students to make them relax and to create a congenial atmosphere in the class. It serves as a breathing space from the more stressful cognitive demand in classroom interactions. In example 9, the teacher talks about life two hundred years ago and asks the following question:

Example (9)

- Teacher: Why did people need to grind flour close by home?
Why didn't they just go to the supermarket?
- Students: (laughter) There were no supermarkets.

Interesting in this example is that the teacher achieves two goals by employing the play frame. First, she alleviates the tension created by constant focusing on the new geographical concepts presented in the lesson as marked by the students' laughter. Second, the joke itself is part of the teaching process. The students' laughter and choral response ("There were no supermarkets") indicate their awareness of the fact that there were no supermarkets in the past. This understanding teaches them why people needed mills close to their houses in the past.

8. Shifting frames

Shifting frames in the process of classroom interaction is theoretically possible in various ways. What is crucial, however, is not shifting frames per se, but the function a frame shift realizes in the process of developing the student's knowledge. We have seen in Joanna's style of teaching her ability to involve her students while intertwining diverse types of frames effortlessly. Example 1 above shows the following pattern of frame-shifting:

Present frame (imaginative frame) → Future frame (agenda frame, initiation of a new topic).

The teacher in this example starts by using the present frame, takes the students to an imaginative world (imaginative frame), and shifts them mentally forward to the future frame to announce the new topic to be discussed (agenda frame). This process of frame shifting creates a connection between what is already known to the students with what is to be introduced.

Example 5 above is an example which illustrates the following pattern of frame shifting:

Past frame → Present frame (demonstration frame)

The teacher begins the past frame with asking the students to remember what they previously read ("Remember when we read rain forest book"). Then, she moves to the present frame to demonstrate a cross-section in a book (demonstration frame) which in turn leads to the explanation of the coastal plain. Hence, frame shifting reflects the purposeful and dynamic relationship among the used frames themselves and with the knowledge schema.

In example 8 above which illustrates a review frame, one can see many shifts between the past and present frames as presented below.

Elizabeth: Past frame → Present frame
Teacher: Present frame → Past frame → Present frame → Past

frame

Remarkable in this example is the easy shift from present to past frames and vice-versa. Such a shift in the discourse world seems to be done with no apparent difficulty on the part of the students to comprehend what the teacher explains.

10. Integrating knowledge schema with new information

All along we have seen how the teacher of this particular classroom interaction incorporates knowledge schema with the new concepts presented in the lesson via using different frames. In this section, I analyze two more examples to demonstrate this dynamic aspect of interaction among frames.

Joanna takes advantage of the students' personal experiences to make abstract concepts concrete and meaningful. Example 10, which is located in the middle of segment one, illustrates this point. It shows a student's ability to link his past personal experience with the present.

Example (10)

Teacher: How many of you have been to Ocean City
or one of those beaches over there?

Student: Where I went is right up on the map.

Teacher: Where you went is right up on the map?

Student: I went to Bethany Beach over in Delaware.

Having asked the students to imagine the world map, the teacher begins the interaction by using a question frame in which she elicits responses from the students about their past personal experiences of visiting one of the beaches. The student makes the connection between his concrete past experience of visiting Bethany Beach (past frame) with the present picture of the map (present frame). His ability to recognize on the map the place to where he went proves not only his aptitude to shift from the past frame to the present one with ease but also such a shift enhances his understanding of abstract drawing of geographical concepts on the map. In fact, invoking a personal experience involves him with the material presented in the class and allows him to interact with them successfully. Such interaction in turn increases his knowledge and lifts up his cognitive level.

Another trait of Joanna's teaching style is her ability to employ the

evaluation frame to increase the students' knowledge. We have already discussed in table 2 one example which illustrates this point. Here is another one.

Example (11)

Teacher: When you're in a real mountainous area,
what are the rivers like?

Student: I think they go like this (gestures with hands).

Teacher: They're real curvy and twisty and windy
around the sharp parts of the mountains and so forth.

Prior to the interchange in example 11, the teacher continues to discuss the geography of how lands and mountains look like on the map. Then, in the first line she uses the present tense together with the word "real" to signal the shift from the past frame to the real concrete world in the present frame. She utilizes the initiation frame by asking, "What are the rivers like?" The student, being unable to verbalize the shape of the river, provides his answer while gesturing with his hands to communicate the required information (response frame). The teacher in the evaluation frame employs the appropriate words "curvy" and "twisty" which are needed to describe the shape of the river. She elaborates further by giving additional information about the river as being

"windy around the sharp parts of the mountains." In short, the teacher increases this student's knowledge by helping him verbalize the shape of the river and by providing a new piece of information about the rivers in the last line.

11. Mismatched expectations

No doubt Joanna is a successful teacher in the sense of incrementing and integrating the new concepts with the knowledge schema of her students. There is, however, one instance in which such expectation is violated.

In fact, as Tannen⁽¹⁾ observes, a frame also refers to the expectation of the participants about a certain event or activity. As such, an interaction can be said to be successful if the participants' expectations are matched. In Joanna's lesson, the expectations of the students and their teacher seem to match quite well as evidenced in the examples illustrating the different types of frames and frame-shiftings. However, there is one occasion in which the expectation of the teacher differs from that of a student as shown in the example 12, located in the middle of the first segment.

Example (12)

Teacher: When you drive there...what's the land like?

Student: Grassland.

Teacher: Well, we're not talking about vegetation, okay.

Student: Grassland.

Teacher: A lot of what you see is crops that man has planted.

You think of grassland probably because you see lots of crops.

The teacher in this example tries to elicit responses about the shape of the land in the Eastern Shore. Her expectation is specified in the question, "What's the land like?" She gets the response "grassland" from one of the students. Her evaluation starts with the discourse marker "well" which indicates that the given response is not what she expects as clarified by her statement, "We're not talking about vegetation, okay."

The key issue here is the mismatch that exists between the knowledge schema of the teacher and that of the student concerning the answer to the posed question. The teacher's aim is to make the students informed about the shape of the land in the Eastern Shore, whether mountainous or flat. The student's past experience which contributes in

(1) Tannen, Deborah. "What's in a frame? Surface evidence for underlying expectations." In Roy Freedle (Ed.), *New Directions in Discourse Processing*. Norwood, NJ:Ablex, 1979, 137-181.

formulating his knowledge schema exhibits that he is aware of the grass in that region. This mismatch of expectations or frames disturbs the flow of the interaction in the lesson as the student keeps on bringing up the issue of grassland twice. It in turn requires some effort on the part of the teacher to smooth the interaction by giving an explanation, "You think of grassland probably because you see lots of crops." Thus, the mismatch in expectations about a certain frame is due to the mismatch in knowledge schema of the participants in the interaction. One can still consider Joanna a successful teacher who irons the disturbance in the flow of the interaction smoothly.

12. The overall picture of the frames in Joanna's lesson

So far in this paper, I have identified different types of frames and illustrated each one of them with an example. These examples show the dynamic relationship of how different frames connect the past or old experiences (knowledge schema) with the new concepts. My analysis in general has shown that third grade students are able to shift among frames comfortably. However, to understand better the function of these different frames, one has to examine their sequence in the lesson as demonstrated in table 4.

Table 4: *Frame sequence in Joanna's lesson*

Frame sequence	Location	Segment
1. Imaginative frame	"All of you close your eyes"	1
2. Agenda frame	"We're going to talk today about"	1
3. Review frame	"What kind of regions have we talked about?"	1
4. Past frame	"How many of you have been to Ocean City...?"	1
5. Imaginative frame	"Picture in your mind"	1
6. Demonstration frame	"We call that a cross-section"	2
7. Agenda frame	"What we are going to do is two things"	3
8. Play frame	"Was Interstate 95 there?"	4
9. Serious frame	"I am not going on until I have everybody's attention."	4
10. Review frame	"What kinds of things have we been talking about today?"	5

What is relevant in table 4 is not the number or the type of frames used in this classroom interaction but the location of each frame within the general framework of the lesson frame. To sum up, the teacher uses the imaginative frame as an introduction to the lesson, the agenda frame to announce the topics to be discussed, the review frame to activate the students' knowledge schema and establish what they already know, the past and the imaginative frames to connect the students' past experiences to the concept of "coastal plain," the demonstration frame to explain the concept of the Fall Line, the agenda frame to describe the activities to be done in group work, the play frame to give the students a chance to relax and to check their awareness about the things which did not exist in Maryland two hundred years ago, the serious frame as a go-between step to continue explaining the concept of Fall Line, and finally the review frame to recapitulate the main points discussed in the lesson.

These frames seem to form a hierarchical structure especially if one considers the title of the lesson as the main frame in which each frame builds upon the previous one with the purpose of expanding the students' knowledge. The hierarchical structure of frames makes use of the students' knowledge schema by relating the new pieces of information with their past experiences. Such integration of knowledge exhibits a strong and dynamic relationship among the frames in Joanna's teaching style.

As a matter of fact, one can see how the topic of the lesson about the Fall Line is developed smoothly by employing and shifting among multiple kinds of frames in this classroom interaction. Obviously, one can identify other types of frames in different classroom interactions, but what actually matters is how frames are used to expand the students' knowledge and understanding of new concepts in a particular setting. Indeed, the very concept of frame, according to Goffman⁽¹⁾, indicates that "when the individual speaks, he avails himself of certain options and foregoes others (p.230)." Thus, choosing certain types of frames in a classroom activity, the teacher takes advantage of a number of frames while excluding others in order to achieve her pedagogic goals.

(1) Goffman, Erving. Forms of Talk. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

12. Conclusion

Four important points emerge from this paper. First, one can use and identify different types of frames in any classroom interaction. Second, one can also argue that the three-part IRE sequence of a lesson structure can be regarded from the perspective of frame analysis. These can be identified as initiation, response, and evaluation frames. Third, the analysis shows that frames do not emerge haphazardly and their use and sequences help achieve the goals of the teacher by integrating the new concepts with the knowledge schema of the students. Fourth, the analysis also shows that third grade students in Joanna's class are able to shift from one frame to another with no apparent difficulty, a point which contradicts Shuy's⁽¹⁾ argument.

The analysis presented here is by far inconclusive; however, it shows how frames can be viewed from a sociolinguistic perspective and used in a sociolinguistic analysis of an educational setting, a point which is not tackled before to the best knowledge of the researcher. Since classroom interactions are relatively similar, whether the subject taught is Geography or English (ESL), one can extend the findings of this paper to ESL classroom interactions. The floor is open for researchers to identify other varieties of frames and their functions in classroom interactions in general and ESL ones in particular, especially across lessons.

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(1) Shuy, Roger. "Linguistic perspectives on the child sexual abuse interview." In Solomon M. Fulero and L.Olsen-Fulero (Eds.), *Advances in Law and Child Development*. Greenwich, Conn.:JAI Press, 1995.