Paraphrastic Academic Writing: Entry Point for First Generation Advanced Bilingual College Students

Andrés Ramírez

Abstract The implementation of Reading to Learn (R2L) methodology for first generation college freshmen who are bilingual learners is reviewed. The paper details how this integrated genre-based approach informed by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) supported students in an advanced English as a Second Language (ESL) course to develop linguistic awareness and writing competencies in genres highly valued in college courses. The paper also addresses the programmatic needs and rights of advanced bilinguals, a vastly understudied and underrepresented population in US colleges and universities.

1   Introduction

Linguistically diverse students are the fastest growing subgroup in the K-12 public school population in the United States; they may also turn out to be the highest growing subgroup in higher education (Padolsky 2004). Their transition to college, however, and if and how they are supported by secondary school and other factors, is an under-researched area in the field of second language learning (Oropeza et al. 2010). Specifically, first generation students enrolled in high school or slightly older students who finished their education abroad and are still learning English have not been the focus of sustained initiatives (Kanno and Harklau 2012). For many of these students, university and college admission policies present an unsurpassable barrier even when educators and others describe these students as capable, highly literate,

A. Ramírez (✉)
Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL, USA
e-mail: ramirezj@fau.edu

mature and academically talented multilingual learners with high potential to succeed in college.

To support this student population, Project ExCEL (Excellence in College for English Learners) was established in the fall semester of 2013 at Rhode Island College, a mid-size urban liberal arts college in the heart of Providence, Rhode Island. Its aim was to build and maintain a social architecture of intellectual excellence and inclusion for talented advanced bilingual students who otherwise might not have been eligible for regular college admission. Project ExCEL was especially necessary because many academically talented students lacked the requisite mainstream college English preparatory courses for admission.

In close partnership with high school counselors in the area, Project ExCEL began operation with a cohort of 7 accomplished bilinguals with established success in academic subjects. The faculty of the Project provided the students with culturally and linguistically responsive advising and academic support to ensure that they would be able to continue on their path to excellence in college. The ethnicities of the cohort were representative of high school and general demographics of the city. Five were Latins@s (Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Colombia), one was from Haiti, and one was from Cape Verde. The Haitian and the Cape Verdean students had a working knowledge of Spanish as a result of sustained contact with Spanish, having graduated from a predominantly Hispanic high school. This kind of linguistic affinity with students made it possible to have recurrent instances of bilingual interactions (see Khote, chapter "Translanguaging in Systemic Functional Linguistics: A Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy for Writing in Secondary Schools", this volume) or what Brisk and Ossa Parra (Chapter, "Mainstream Classrooms as Engaging Spaces for Emergent Bilinguals: SFL Theory, Catalyst for Change", this volume) call translanguaging practices that not only supported but valued student's linguistic repertoires. Three of the students had graduated from the college's English as a Second Language (ESL) program and had finished high school in their native countries. The other four students had just graduated from local high schools, where they had studied for no more than 3 years after relocating from another country. The instructor of the course is also the author of this chapter, Andrés Ramírez. The focus of the course was on an integrated approach to reading and writing (Freire 1998), which was implemented through genre-based reading comprehension instruction and essay development informed by the Reading to Learn (henceforth R2L) pedagogy as outlined by Rose and Martin (2012) in their book *Learning to Write, Reading to Learn*.

This chapter describes how students responded to a critical SFL-informed instruction of a highly necessary genre for college success, the Text Response genre (detailed below). The next section discusses the concept of academic genre as a mediator of student's academic success; and is followed by an exploration of the relevant theoretical foundations of Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL) in relation to the R2L approach.

2   Genre as Mediator Between "Reading the World and Reading the Word"

In addition to the common pressures and challenges that other non-traditional students face when entering college (NCES 2002), language minority students are called to engage in the highly demanding task of acquiring what for some may be completely new content in a language they are still in the process of learning. Such a situation is illustrated in the following excerpt in which one ExCEL student describes her experiences of writing her very first writing assignment in college in the fall of 2013. The assignment was to summarize the life of Frederick Douglas, a historical figure whom she had never encountered in school literature before.

> My first assignment was a summary. "Learning to read and ride [*sic*]" by Frederick Douglas; this lecture [*meaning reading*] cost me so much effort to understand. This is written with uncommon words. After a long time reading and asking to a different class instructor the definition of those "big words," I finally understood the essence of that chapter of Douglas's life. Very motivated I wrote the summary, with the idea that it would be the best summary of all this class, and also that this summary would meet the expectation of the professor; I gave it to her, feeling satisfied. One week later I received my paper back. How it surprised me: I got the lowest grade of all class. The feedback said: "your ideas are unclear," "you have many spelling errors," "your summary do [*sic*] not make sense," and "the conclusion is unconcluded." It was my worst experience writing.

As illustrated in the student's comments above, she had to grapple not only with a semantic overload in the text (e.g. *the big words*) and her lack of knowledge of key American historical figures; but she also needed to understand that the assignment prompt was asking her to interpret the reading instead of just summarizing it. The student's problem came not only from her own misunderstanding but the fact that instructors interchangeably would call this type of Text Response genre *a reading reflection*, *summary*, *reading response*, and the even looser term: *essay*. A second related problem was that neither the instructors nor the students understood the unique and complex language demands of a text response: indeed, students reported that when their classmates were trying to clarify the expectations of the written assignment, the word 'summary' was widely used by their instructors. Added to these problems was the fact that many teachers, understandably, assumed that their students had already developed foundational understanding of language and literacy skills and therefore overlooked the need to explicitly teach highly used college genres such as text response.

Although it is understandable that instructors would expect college students to be able to produce high quality texts, it is not acceptable that they expect freshmen students, regardless of their first language, to write one kind of genre (text responses) when they in fact are eliciting a different one (summary). Succeeding in college presupposes critical competence in the genres that may realize such success. As Freire (1998) points out, "without reading and writing it is impossible to study, seek to know, to learn the subjectivity of objects, to critically recognize an object's reason for being" (p. 24). An SFL perspective on genre pedagogies in the ExCEL Project supported course participants to engage in critical ways with the readings.

2.1   From Systemic-Functional Linguistics to Reading to Learn Pedagogy

As previous chapters have demonstrated, SFL has been emerging in recent years as a powerful alternative to traditional grammar teaching in US mainstream and ESL classrooms (de Oliveira and Iddings 2014). Researchers who work in SFL not only hold the view that language is a social construct, but also maintain that language itself is structured because of what it seeks to accomplish. Within SFL education circles, the concept of genre has carried with it a foundational instructional sequence called the **Teaching-Learning Cycle** (TLC), originally proposed by Rothery (e.g., 1996), and illustrated in previous chapters. The TLC is designed to guide students to write successfully, using models of target genres. Instructional sequences such as the TLC have been termed 'curriculum genres' (Christie 1997), while the written texts they are designed to teach, such as text responses, are known as 'knowledge genres' (Rose 2015; Rose and Martin 2012).The development of Reading to Learn (R2L) pedagogy has extended and refined the curriculum genres available to teachers, using an analysis of learning tasks known as 'scaffolding learning cycles'. R2L extends the concept of embedded literacy from genre pedagogy to integrate the teaching of reading and writing across the curriculum in all levels of school and beyond (Rose and Martin 2012, p. 133). It offers teachers a set of curriculum genres designed so that all students in a class a) engage with academic texts that are well beyond their independent reading capacities, b) interrogate passages of text with detailed comprehension c) recognize language choice patterns in the text and appropriate these language resources into their own writing, and d) create texts with effective organization and language patterns to achieve their purposes" (Rose in press). The process seeks to support students' deep understanding of new readings by starting at the macro level of the text. The beginning of instruction supports discussion of the broader strata of social context and genre while the next phase supports students through instruction on the genre stages, micro analysis of the sentence structure, and thematic patterns developed in texts.

At its core, the R2L approach (and this is true about genre-based pedagogy as well) distinguishes everyday or commonsense knowledge from educational or uncommonsense knowledge (Bernstein 2000). As such, R2L approaches teaching as involving a repeated pattern of recontextualization (Bernstein 2000); that is, a process of 'unpacking' knowledge into context-dependent and simplified meanings to then repack this knowledge back into the relatively abstract and condensed knowledge students must demonstrate in educational assessments and other academic situations. Such discursive movement up and down the semantic continua is colloquially referred to as "elevator talk" by educational linguists associated with SFL and is technically defined as "cumulative modality" by Legitimation Code Theory[1] (LCT) (Maton 2011).

---

[1] LCT began as a framework to explore knowledge and education. Based primarily on theories of Bernstein and Bourdieu, it integrates insights across sociology, SFL, literature and other disciplines.

2.2 *R2L Pedagogical Sequences*

The scaffolding reading program set forth by R2L, and implemented in our project ExCEL, simplifies the process of reading through three interrelated scaffolding learning cycles that are strongly informed by Halliday's (1978) and Martin's (1992) models of language in social contexts. The approach also is informed by genre and register theory, and by observations of parent-child interactions around reading in the home (Martin and Rose 2005). The first cycle in this macro-micro sequence, "Preparing for Reading", provides students with an understanding of the key elements in a text before starting to read. To understand a text, the first step for students is to recognize its genre and field (what the text is about), and to have enough experience to interpret the field as it unfolds through the text. This is done by giving students a brief step-by-step summary of what happens in the text, in terms they can all understand. This technique involves more than 'what the text is about', but is an overview of how the field unfolds through the structuring of the genre and the lexico-grammatical resources.

In terms of second language development, the importance of this deconstruction stage in R2L pedagogy is amplified for bilingual learners as it supports cross-linguistic connections (not readily available to monolingual students), thereby encouraging students to engage in translanguaging practices as discussed by Brisk and Ossa Para and Khote in previous chapters. One important principle arising from research in systemic typology, indeed, is that languages differ more at lower ranks (i.e., word rank) and tend to be more congruent at higher ranks (i.e., clauses, genre) as reported in Caffarel et al. (2004, p. 8). Because the students in ExCEL had demonstrated competence as advanced text producers and consumers in their first language, cross-linguistic meaning potential for these bilinguals was amplified at the higher rank levels of genre and register.

In R2L pedagogies, text analysis at a global level focuses on the structures and meanings of whole texts (the discourse-semantics strata in Martin 2000). The purposeful and thorough preview of the text gives students a map of how the text will unfold, which enables them to follow without struggling to understand. It then serves as the basis for interpreting the details of the text and developing a familiarity with the sequence of genre phases. This preview of the genre can reduce the semiotic load for all students, including those who are still developing English. In the case of emergent to advanced bilingual students, much of this pre-existing knowledge is encoded in their native language, making it important to pay special attention to developing rich, linguistically-responsive pedagogical sequences that are likely to motivate the transfer of concepts originally acquired in the first language.

The strategies in the second part of the pedagogical cycle, called *Detailed Reading,* guide students to focus on the pattern of language and structural choices in the text and to borrow these patterns for their own writing of similar genres. The linguistic patterns in the source reading, in other words, support students in learning how to write the sequences of the focus genre. Student borrowing and re-design of the source text is often first executed in paraphrastic form, meaning that the writer

adopts the organization of an entire text, or portions of it, or even individual para-graphs and sentences, as a pattern to express their own thoughts and ideas. When rewriting, students are encouraged to explicitly appropriate language resources of accomplished authors for their own writing (see Harman 2013 for SFL focus on intertextual writing with students).

The final stage in the R2L cycle, *Sentence Making* consists of intensive strategies to support students in noticing and playing with sentence structure through word group manipulation, letter-sound correspondence, spelling and other micro-linguistic features of focal curriculum texts. This sentence-level manipulation pro-vides students with an understanding of how lexico-grammatical patterns function in the curriculum texts to realize specialized meanings in a disciplinary discourse. This 'top-down' teaching sequence is described as a curriculum macro-genre (Rose 2015, Rose in press, Rose and Martin 2012). It starts with the overall field of a text, then previews the phases in which the field unfolds through the text, and may be followed with paragraph-by-paragraph reading. It then focuses on patterns of mean-ing within and between sentences, and then on individual words and the syllables, letter patterns and sounds that express them. Each step in the sequence provides a meaningful context for the next. Rose and Martin (2012) provide a succinct expla-nation of the sequence of literacy activities:

> *Preparing for Reading* first focuses on the context (field and genre), then previews the phases in which the text unfolds, and may be followed with paragraph-by-paragraph read-ing. In *Detailed Reading* each sentence is prepared and read, and each word group is identi-fied. *Sentence Making* and *Spelling* then extend the focus down to individual words and the syllables, letter patterns and sounds that express them. (p. 214)

R2L pedagogies require teachers and students to engage intensely with the focal texts and with each other, a process which has been described as "guidance through interaction in the context of shared experience" (Rose and Martin 2012, p. 58). To deconstruct and construct disciplinary texts in the instructional sequences of R2L, teachers need to be well prepared and willing to teach and facilitate student under-standing in intense and highly systematic ways. Indeed, the teacher needs to be versed in the disciplinary subject and its language demands and to serve as an author-itative guide for the students so that students are made aware of key language and structural choices through explicit instruction; and to gradually release responsibility over to the students as they are apprenticed into repacking knowledge into the decon-textualized and condensed semiotic discourse expected in high academic settings.

3   Reading-to-Learn Approach in the College ESL Class

Informed by Halliday's (1978) construct of register and context of situation and Martin's (2000) development of genre, members of the Sydney School of Genre, which includes the designers of the R2L methodology, have promoted a genre-based pedagogy since the 1980's. Such SFL instruction is informed by a social

justice vision that promotes a visibly explicit pedagogy (Bernstein 2000). Its aim is to make the specialized nature of academic genres and registers of power accessible to all, and particularly to linguistic minorities underrepresented in academic circles. Research in K-12 contexts, however, has pointed out a lack of linguistics training among pre-service and in-service teachers (Gebhard and Harman 2011). Similarly, higher education faculty need support in gaining language awareness that they can use in their coursework to support not only linguistically diverse students but mainstream students as well.

The focus of the next section illustrates how text analysis guided students to become aware of the difference between the so-called *summaries* they were to write and teachers expectations. Additionally, it shows how they began to appropriate such tools in their own writing as responsibility was released from the teacher and passed on to students. The genre-based R2L pedagogical progression was instrumental in providing students with a solid foundation of academic text structure and development that increased their ability as writers of specific college-related genres.

3.1   Summaries as Scaffolds for Text Responses

One of the most important characteristics of purposeful genre-based instruction is its cumulative nature (Maton 2011). This, too, is highlighted in the Project ExCEL approach, as classroom instruction about summaries also provided students with skills for writings text responses genres, as these include summaries of text elements. The goal of the teaching sequence, or curriculum macro-genre, was for all students to write effective text responses. The activities first guided students to read source texts and write summaries, and then use this experience as a platform for writing more difficult text responses.

Unlike summaries, which recapitulate what a text says, a text response demands much more from writers, focusing on how and what the author wrote in the text. Three main types of text response in academic contexts are reviews, which describe and evaluate a text, interpretations, which evaluate and interpret the messages or themes of a text, and challenges, which deconstruct the messages of a text and challenge them (Martin and Rose 2008; Rose and Martin 2012; Rothery 1996).

The fact that summaries demand less from writers than text responses does not mean that summaries are not important. Quite the contrary, as was the case for the multilingual students in this study, mastery of basic genres significantly contributes to their heightened control of more complex genres. As a consequence, the course was structured around a progression of complementary genres or genre families (Martin and Rose 2008) so that the most basic genre studied would serve as the foundation or scaffold for a more demanding genre. Just as narrative genres include description and explanatory genres as part of obligatory rhetorical moves, text responses require a good command of summaries in order to describe the text.

Because students in this classroom already had a good understanding of how to control the language of summaries so as to avoid an overtly evaluative stance, they

could be apprenticed into using this essential skill when composing text responses. Their familiarity with writing summaries was enhanced through principled genre-based talk that first highlighted the rhetorical structure of summaries and second called their attention to their choice of reporting verbs and how, even when they might have revealed an evaluative stance, they did so in a way that was more objective and congruent with the expectations of academic writing.

In the first step in the sequence, a model summary was prepared and read with students. As this was a short text, the whole text was then studied closely using Detailed Reading, followed by a discussion of its rhetorical structuring (see Brisk and Ossa, chapter "Chapter, Mainstream Classrooms as Engaging Spaces for Emergent Bilinguals: SFL Theory, Catalyst for Change", this volume- for examples at the elementary level of how the whole text and not isolated sentences was the unit of instruction). Table 1 shows this structuring. The summary follows the stages of the original text "Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street" (Hacker 2011). The genre is an exposition, in which the writer presents a position (Thesis), argues for it (Arguments) and restates the position (Restatement).

Detailed Reading focused particularly on reporting verbs which, in this case, minimize the expression of the writer's personal attitude toward the presentation of the matter in question. This can be seen through the choice of verbs such as argue, explain, assert, and conclude, in italics above. Table 2 below details the talk of the teacher about the model summary text during the *Detailed Reading*. The middle column represents the sequence of sub steps as outlined in Rose and Martin (2012). The discussion is designed to engage and affirm every student, by asking them in turn to identify wordings in the text. It consists of a series of 'scaffolded learning cycles' in which the teacher guides students to identify wordings in each sentence, and elaborates by discussing their meanings. Each cycle is marked by horizontal lines.

In Detailed Reading, the teacher ensures that all students are continually successful and affirmed. One student is asked to say the identified wording, but all students do each task successfully. The experience of success and affirmation prepares stu-

Table 1 Model summary with rhetorical stages

Thesis	In her essay "Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street," Betsy Taylor argues that chain stores harm communities by taking the life out of downtown shopping districts.
Argument	**Argument 1**
	Explaining that a community's "soul" is more important than low prices or consumer convenience, she argues that small businesses are better than stores like Wal-Mart, target, and Home Depot because they emphasize personal interactions and don't place demands on a community's resources.
	Argument 2
	Taylor asserts that big-box stores are successful because "we've become a nation of hyper-consumers," although the convenience of shopping in these stores comes at the expense of benefits to the community.
Restatement	She concludes by suggesting that it's not "anti-American" to oppose big-box stores because the damage they inflict on downtown shopping districts extends to America itself.

Table 2 Reconstructed classroom interaction during the Detailed Reading stage

Teacher	Prepare	The first sentence identifies the text to be summarized, the author of the text, and what the author is arguing in the text. *In her essay "Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street," Betsy Taylor argues that chain stores harm communities by taking the life out of downtown shopping districts.*
	Focus	Can you see the essay's title? Diana?
Student	Identify	*Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street*
	Affirm	Yes
Teacher	Direct	Let's highlight *Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street*
	Elaborate	Does anyone know what *Main Street* means?
Student	Propose	Where the stores are?
Teacher	Affirm	That's right
	Elaborate	Small towns have a main street where all the stores are.
Teacher	Focus	Who is the author of the article? Edgardo?
Student	Identify	Betsy Taylor
Teacher	Affirm	Yes.
	Direct	Let's highlight *Betsy Taylor*
Teacher	Focus	Ok. So what is the author of the summary saying about what Betsy Taylor is doing? [Pointing to a student who raised her hand]
Student	Identify	*Argues*
Teacher	Direct	Let's highlight *argues*
	Elaborate	The word *argues* tells us that there is more than one opinion about the topic. It tells us that Betsy Taylor is just presenting her own opinion.
Teacher	Focus	So what is Betsy Taylor arguing according to the author of the summary? Eliana?
Student	Identify	*Chain stores harm communities*
	Affirm	Exactly right.
Teacher	Direct	Let's highlight *chain stores harm communities*
Teacher	Focus	And how do chain stores harm communities?
Student	Identify	*Taking the life out of downtown shopping districts*
	Affirm	Yes.
Teacher	Direct	Highlight the whole lot, *taking the life out of downtown shopping districts*
	Elaborate	*Downtown shopping districts* are the same as *Main Street*. The life is taken out of them when the small stores close down.

dents for elaborating moves, that extend understanding. These may involve the teacher explaining new concepts, or asking the students for their own knowledge. In this lesson, *Detailed Reading* continued until all of the model text had been discussed, analyzed, and understood. The activity focused students on particular choices and cohesive devices as the text progressed, directed them to highlight specific key words or groups of words, and was elaborated as necessary. Once the text was analyzed exhaustively in this fashion, a series of parallel activities that extended over a period of more than 2 weeks of instruction (a total of 5 two hour sessions) followed. Students were assigned to also read short selections from Atwan's (2013)

America Now, a book used for class discussions of the culture and mores of the United States.

Following these readings, the next curriculum genre was Joint Construction. Joint Construction is prepared by deconstructing the rhetorical structure of model texts, and then using the same structure to jointly construct a new text. The teacher and the students collaboratively deconstructed the rhetorical structure of the *America Now* (Atwan 2013) texts, and jointly wrote summaries based on the linguistic patterns in the Big Box Stores summary. Special focus was placed on expanding the choice of the reporting verbs to indicate neutral polarity so that an objective tone could be maintained.

Following Joint Constructions, each student was asked to write a summary individually. The individual summaries were all available to be viewed by members of the class so that they could contrast the language choices at each stage of their summary with those of their classmates and that of the model summary. As a wrap up, the class co-constructed the following list of things they had learned:

Their guidelines for writing a summary were the following:

- In the first sentence, mention the title of the text, the name of the author, and the author's thesis or the visual's central point.
- Maintain a neutral tone; be objective.
- Use the third-person point of view and the present tense: "Taylor argues.. .."
- Keep your focus on the text. Don't state the author's ideas as if they were your own.
- Put all or most of your summary in your own words; if you borrow a phrase or a sentence from the text, put it in quotation marks and give the page number in parentheses.
- Limit yourself to presenting the text's key points.
- Be concise; make every word count.

The genre-based principle of 'guidance through interaction in the context of a shared experience' culminated during the closing stage of this curriculum macro genre, through discussion of the student-produced sets of linguistic choices for each of the summary stages in a collaborative writing. Once the students had discussed the range of language choices that inform each stage of a summary, they individually summarized one of four articles included in a section of the *America Now* series on technology and education. Analysis of the student summaries showed that most of them appropriated discourse patterns from the mentor texts that we had read and analyzed at length. The principled rewriting supported them in using language resources that had been configured by accomplished authors in their summaries. Once the students understood and appropriated the linguistic features to realize the stages of the summary genre, we began to study the genre of text responses.

3.2 *Scaffolding Text* Response Genres

Once the work on the summary genre was solidified, the task became one of focusing more strongly on the evaluative language that is highly important in text responses. When analyzing summaries, we had already begun discussing the discourse semantics of appraisal and especially how evaluation was realized through a scale of language resources (e.g. modal verbs and charged or neutral lexis) (Martin and White 2005). The concept of lexical choices representing attitude was later expanded when writing text responses, which call for evaluative stances realized through stronger or weaker force of lexes and across the semantic continua of positive or negative polarity.

The familiar topic of the 'Big Box Stores' was once again used. At this stage, the entire original texts were read together. Students could now focus on the nuances and challenges of identifying and appropriating patterns of evaluative language without the added distraction of having to also gain knowledge of the topic or field of the text. This not only reduced the semiotic load for students, but also provided a familiar ground for them and freed instructional time that could be devoted exclusively to highlighting linguistic devices that demonstrate attitude toward a topic while maintaining an academic tone. At this stage, the concept of how to represent attitudes along a semantic scale was reviewed through discussion of the neutral verbs in summaries and further illuminated by revisiting the mentor summary model texts that displayed strong positive or negative polarity.

A model text response was designed and used to scaffold understanding of the genre sequences and evaluative stance in text responses, adapted from a writer's reference book (Hacker and Sommers 2011) and reproduced in Table 3. This genre is known as a critical response. According to Martin and Rose (2008), the staging of this genre begins with a text Evaluation, followed by a text Deconstruction, and finishes with a Challenge. The Evaluation suggests the possibility of challenge, the Deconstruction reveals how the message is constructed, and finally the Challenge denaturalizes the message. These stages and phases are labelled to the right in Table 3. Messages and challenges are underlined in the text. Each challenge is signaled by a thematic clause, marked in bold.

A modified version of the text above without the side annotations was distributed to students, and the same text was also displayed on a projector. Students were prepared for reading by explicit explanation of the challenge genre and by reaching the conclusion that made clear that the author's evaluation of the text was not favorable. While reading, students were asked to identify the linguistic choices that showed the author's negative attitude toward the text. Adapting Moore and Schleppegrell's (2014) "Attitude line", a horizontal line was drawn on the board under the title "Evaluation Line" (a reproduction of the format is displayed in Fig. 1). The line was labeled on the left side with the word "negative," the center with the word "neutral," and the right with the word "positive." As an example, some of the neutral reporting verbs used during the summary's genre instruction, such as argue, mention, and use,

Table 3 Model text interpretation

		Stages and phases
1	Rethinking Big-Box Stores In her essay "Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street," Betsy Taylor focuses not on the economic effects of large chain stores but on the effects these stores have on the "soul" of America.	
	She argues that stores like Home Depot, Target, and Wal-Mart are bad for America because they draw	Evaluation text statement
5	people out of downtown shopping districts and cause them to focus exclusively on consumption. <u>In contrast,</u>	preview messages
	she believes that small businesses are good for America because they provide personal attention, foster community interaction, and make each city unique.	
10	**But Taylor's argument is ultimately unconvincing** because it is based on nostalgia—on idealized images of a quaint Main Street—rather than on the roles that businesses play in consumers' lives and communities.	preview challenges
15	By ignoring the more complex, economically driven relationships between large chain stores and their communities, Taylor incorrectly assumes that simply getting rid of big-box stores would have a positive	
	effect on America's communities.Taylor's use of colorful language reveals that she has a nostalgic view of American society and does not understand economic	Deconstruction topic
20	realities. In her first paragraph, Taylor refers to a big-box store as a "25-acre slab of concrete with a 100,000 square foot box of stuff" that "lands on a town," evoking images of a monolithic monster crushing the	message 1
	American way of life. **But her assessment**	challenge
25	**oversimplifies a complex issue.** Taylor does not consider that many downtown business districts failed long before chain stores moved in, when factories and mills closed and workers lost their jobs. In cities with struggling economies, big-box stores can actually	
30	provide much-needed jobs. Similarly, while Taylor blames big-box stores for harming local economies by asking for tax breaks, free roads, and other perks, she doesn't acknowledge that these stores also enter into economic partnerships with the surrounding	message 2
35	communities by offering financial benefits to schools and hospitals. Taylor's assumption that shopping in small businesses is always better for the customer also seems driven by nostalgia for an old-fashioned Main Street rather than by the facts. **While she may be right**	challenge
40	that many small businesses offer personal service and are responsive to customer complaints, she does not consider that many customers appreciate the service at big-box stores. Just as customer service is better at some small businesses than at others, it is impossible to	

45   generalize about service at all big-box stores.
      For example, customers depend on the lenient return
      policies and the wide variety of products at stores like
      Target   and   Home   Depot.
      Taylor blames big-box stores for encouraging   message 3
50   American "hyper-consumerism," but she oversimplifies
      by equating big-box stores with bad values and small
      businesses with good values. Like her other points, this   challenge
      claim ignores the economic and social realities of
      American society today. Big-box stores do not force
55   Americans to buy more. By offering lower prices in a   Challenge
      convenient setting, however, they allow consumers to   review
      save time and purchase goods they might not be able to   challenges
      afford from small businesses. The existence of more
      small businesses would not change what most
60   Americans can afford, nor would it reduce their desire
      to   buy   affordable   merchandise.
      Taylor may be right that some big-box stores have a
      negative impact on communities and that small   denaturalizing
      businesses offer certain advantages. But she ignores the
65   economic conditions that support big-box stores as well
      as the fact that Main Street was in decline before the
      big-box store arrived. Getting rid of big-box stores will
      not bring back a simpler America populated by   conclusion
      thriving, unique Main Streets; in reality, Main Street
70   will not survive if consumers cannot afford to shop
      there.

Negative   Neutral   Positive
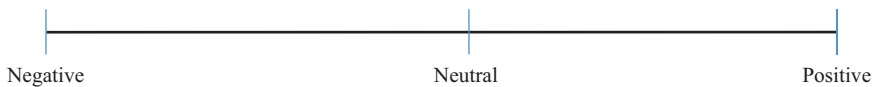
Fig. 1 Evaluation line

were placed next to the "neutral" part of the line. Students offered other appropriate examples such as acknowledge and explain.

Students were directed to draw the same line in their notebooks and highlight the linguistic choices that demonstrated the author's attitude toward the text. As the text response was critical of the original text, students generated lines that were considerably skewed toward the negative side. The student-produced attitude lines were clear and unequivocal visual indicators that they understood how specific lexical choices showed evaluative stance. At this point, the class proceeded with a read aloud of the text.

Students were directed to stop the read aloud any time they found a word or group of words that was part of their own evaluation line. Once their contribution was acknowledged and accepted by the whole group, the contributing student would come to the board to add the word or group of words to the original evaluation line and the rest of students were directed to add or modify it on their own list. Without

exception, all students contributed to the board's evaluation line and participated avidly in the discussion.

As students were guided to read the text again out loud and discuss linguistic choices which showed negative polarity, they also began to identify obvious negative polarity choices in the text such as "ignore" (lines 11, 40, and 49), "does not consider" (lines 25 and 32), and "blames" (lines 24 and 37). They also pointed out longer stretches of sentence patterns that embedded more complex ways of expressing negative polarity that had not been initially captured in their individual evaluative lines. Students identified sentences starting with the conjunction "But" as indicative of negative polarity (sentences in lines 8, 38 and 48). They also identified interrupted constructions such as "focuses not on…. but on…" (lines 1–2), "based on…rather than on…" (lines 9–10) and "seems driven by…. rather than" (lines 29–30). The students also pointed out lexical choices that would be located on the cline of low to high intensity in the appraisal theory scale of appreciation such as "idealized" (line 9) and "unconvincing" (line 8), and that this latter adjective was moved even farther into negative polarity by the intensifying adverb "ultimately" (line 9) that precedes it.

Our fine-tuned level of principled talk around texts was later complemented with a look at the text as a whole which focused on the way the author built her claims. The same model text interpretation reproduced above was once again distributed but this time with the generic stages highlighted in the margins (*evaluation, synopsis, reaffirmation*). The rhetorical stages and different themes noted in the margin supported students in gaining awareness of the rhetorical stages of a text interpretation, and also how the messages are expressed and then reaffirmed. The annotation also provided further evidence of the purposeful orchestration of language devices that accomplished authors used to express evaluation, attitude and emotion. Students were prompted to look at the patterns of polarity of the text as a whole through an exercise that called them to highlight verbs with different polarities in different colors (alternatively they could circle, underline, or enclose in parentheses). The directions also asked students to look for appraisal patterns within and across each of the rhetorical stages. This exercise was demanding and, after much hesitation, one student mentioned that the first part of the text seemed to be written in a neutral voice.

After asking the whole class about what linguistic choices would back up this assertion, another student questioned the first speaker's assessment, given the fact that although the author starts with the verb "focus" (line 1) which oftentimes is associated with neutral reporting. The text is indeed stating that the original author did not focus on what was important (economic effects, line 2) and instead focused on other less important issues (the "soul" of America, line 3). The first student agreed with this assessment but in addition offered the verbs "argue" (line 3) and "believe" (line 6) as evidence to bolster her initial point. She then paused for a moment and noted that the verb "believe" denoted an attitude on the part of the author, but she could not express why. Another student interjected at this time and said that the choice of "believe" meant the author was stating an opinion, rather than a fact. Such dynamic discussion led students to see and acknowledge the importance of assessing the language in text responses.

Students were then asked to extend their incipient understanding of the evaluation realized in subtle and explicit language choices. They were asked to a) look for opinion-like language as opposed to more factual language and b) assign the opinion-like or factual language to each of the two authors -the primary author of the text and the author of the text response). In addition to assigning more opinion-like language to the primary author, students noted that the author of the text response used much more neutral polarity at the beginning of her response (*Evaluation stage*), negative polarity toward the middle (*Deconstruction stage*) and positive polarity at the end *(Challenge stage)*. In other words, as the writing progressed, the author shifted the focus from simply disarming the original arguments into advancing her own counterarguments by using, among other instruments, positive polarity.

Following this deconstruction of a model text response, the class jointly constructed a response to the text "*Tuning in to Dropping Out*" (Taborrok 2013), before being asked write a text response on their own. This article was part of a section in the course textbook (Atwan 2013) exploring the question, "Does College Still Matter?" Two of these articles presented a favorable view on attaining a college degree while the other two questioned its worthiness. This topic was chosen because, as freshmen in college, students certainly already believed that obtaining a college degree is a worthy endeavor. This particular article was chosen because students would have strong opinions and stakes to counter the arguments in the article. For this reason, students were called to co-construct a text interpretation that would run counter to the main arguments in this article.

As already described, challenge responses demand not only a good grasp of the main arguments of the article but also demand a critical stance toward these arguments in writing. To facilitate this process, the first paragraph of the challenge to "Big Box Stores Are Bad for Main Street" was read in detail, focusing on the author's stance toward the arguments of the text. Once again, as with the discussion utilized the attitude line to highlight the way the author made use of specific verbs to subtly express her reservations about the main arguments of the original article as well as the words and expressions that signaled the logical progression of the argument. After this Detailed Reading, the first individual assignment for this section was to write a new paragraph following the same language patterns, but changing the text to *Tuning in to Dropping Out*. This activity is known as Rewriting in in the R2L methodology, focusing on appropriating language resources from Detailed Reading passages.

After copying and distributing the student-produced paragraphs in class, the instructor facilitated a discussion focused on which ideas in the Tuning into Dropping Out article were weaker and thus susceptible to argument. The overall strategy was to highlight how analysis could reveal Tabarrok's arguments as less objective, and instead based on his own biases, feelings, and opinions. Discussion led to the idea that, since the author was a professor of economics and therefore an authority in this field, it was difficult (if not impossible) to dispute him on economic grounds. One of the students shared that, in order to gather ways to compromise Tabarrok's argument, she had accessed the same article online and read comments

from other readers who provided criticisms to his points. She used these comments to suggest that his point of subsidizing only STEM careers and not humanities on the basis of pragmatism was discriminatory against humanities. As ideas were discussed and acknowledged, students were encouraged to pick up the marker and write on the board while other students aided them in thinking of key points that could be used to counteract Tabarrok's points. A sample of these many points are included below:

- Subsidizing only STEM careers could be read as discriminatory against humanities (arts, literature etc.).
- Humans above all are social beings and need interaction and social skills as a basis for innovation.
- In the era of globalization we need not only the skills in STEM but we need skills to communicate with others in their language. This requires highly skilled STEM bilingual professionals.

During this discussion, students once again took a highly active role as they wrote their ideas on the board. The individual texts produced by students formed a rich learner's corpus that was then made available to all. This collection provided a complex but useful resource that students relied on and creatively scrutinized to jointly construct another response to Tabarrok's. This text is reproduced as Table 4 below.

At the level of stages and phrases, we can see that the text contains the expected elements of a challenge response, including previews of the messages and challenges in the Evaluation, messages and challenges in the Deconstruction, and a concluding Challenge stage. Language patterns also emulate those of the mentor text. Some examples are the clauses that signal challenges "However, Tabarrok's argument is ultimately unsustainable", "Tabarrok's use of sweeping generalizations", "But Tabarrok's assessment oversimplifies a complex issue". Also recognizable are paraphrastic lexical patterns in the choice of verbs that appropriately show negative polarity as the text progresses. Some examples are "argues" line 2, "believes" line 5, "assumes" line 13, "oversimplifies," and "does not consider" line 22. After completion of this jointly constructed challenge response, students were asked to complete an individual challenge response over the next two classes, basing their work on the jointly constructed text 4, and the original "Big Box" challenge response, text 3. Analysis of these completed individual texts highlight how the carefully crafted R2L cycle supported students in developing awareness of the audience and appropriate linguistic choices for this academic genre.

4 Full Release of Responsibility

During the same week in which students were producing the text above, they also had to take a mid-term exam prepared by the instructor of the course. This exam called them to demonstrate their ability to produce high quality texts on their own

Table 4 Co-constructed paraphrastic text response

In his article "Tuning in to dropping out," Alex Tabarrok, associate professor of economics at George Mason University, argues that graduates in the <u>humanities</u> (arts, psychology, journalism, sociology, dance, and English) <u>should not be subsidized</u> in their studies at all because they are <u>less likely to create the kinds of innovations that drive economic growth</u>. In contrast, he believes that <u>subsidizing students in fields with potentially large spillovers</u>, such as microbiology, chemical engineering, and computer science will have an <u>irrefutable positive impact on the economy</u>.	Evaluation
	Preview messages
However, Tabarrok's argument is ultimately unsustainable because it is based on a narrow perspective on economic growth – One that focuses exclusively on <u>increasing subsidies for students on stem</u> (science, technology, engineering, math) – Rather than on decidedly supporting the proper funding of all students in higher education. By <u>ignoring the large and damaging budget cuts to public higher education</u> (where the great majority of students get their degrees in the US) have underwent during the last decades, Tabarrok <u>incorrectly assumes that the problem lies within institutions of higher education themselves</u>.	Deconstruction
	Message 1
	Challenge
Tabarrok's use of sweeping generalizations about college reveals that he has a constricted view of humanity in general and economic growth in particular. In the introduction to his article and without citing any source, Tabarrok has no problem in claiming that despite our "obsessive focus on a college degree…more than half of all humanities graduates end up in jobs that don't require college degrees, and those <u>graduates don't get a big income boost from having gone to college</u>," evoking images of a wave of college graduates that instead of contributing to the economy are sucking it dry with the subsidies they receive.	Message 2
But Tabarrok's assessment oversimplifies a complex issue. He does not consider the <u>crucial historic contribution of the humanities</u> and of polymaths - persons whose expertise spans a significant number of different subject areas - to the development of modern civilization nor he consider the high importance of a highly educated population (in any major) to any nation. Indeed, without the contribution of classic and renaissance thinkers in the humanities, most notably philosophy, STEM careers would not be as developed as they are today. One just has to look briefly to the lives and contributions to the humanities and the sciences of polymaths such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Galileo Galilei, Nicolaus Copernicus, Francis Bacon or Michael Servetus to understand why these geniuses lived by ideal that people should embrace all knowledge and develop their capacities as fully as possible.	Challenge
Like his other points, Tabarrok chooses to ignore the large economic contribution to the economic health of towns and cities and instead blames humanities for harming local economies by asking for subsidies and other perks. Tabarrok claims that "our obsessive focus on college schooling has blinded us to basic truths." Indeed, his obsession with narrowing down to STEM careers without regard to the foundation of it all, the humanities, has him walking stubbornly through life like a horse on blinders.	Challenge

within a restricted time period. This two-hour individual mid-term exam asked them to read and summarize the 1500+ word Op-Ed entitled: "Social Media: Friend or Foe" (Smith 2013). This Op-Ed was chosen because it handled the same content area that students had been required to read and discuss in class. The sample student summary is reproduced as Table 5, exactly as it was written for the midterm exam. However, it is analyzed in Table 5 to show how the student has appropriated the text structuring and language features from the texts that were read and written in the teaching sequence. Reporting verbs are underlined and other appraisals are in italics.

As was the case with the co-constructed text response, the independent summary follows the rhetorical stages of the model summaries in the teaching sequence. This is also evident in the sentence structure (i.e., reporting verb + noun or noun phrase; or reporting verb + clause). Perhaps more importantly because of what it means for cumulative instruction, the paraphrastic texture of the summary above is revealed in the student's independent choice of reporting verbs (in bold) that appropriately express neutral attitude along a continuum of a high to low intensity, along with the rich variety of appraisals in italics. Indeed, this student text provides further testimony that instructional backing supports student borrowing and eventual appropriation of these linguistic resources.

Table 5 Independent text under exam conditions

In the article "Op-Ed: Social media: friend or foe?" Kyle Smith, a digital Journalist expertise in Travel, Government, Religion, Social media and Personal finance, <u>argues</u> how social networking *can be a tool for enhancing or hindering* our daily communication with other people.	Thesis
Smith <u>mentions</u> that *due to the ease and accessibility* of social networking services (SNSs), social networking is *quickly becoming the most common activity* for today's children and teens and that people make *such an extensive use* of social media to communicate to each other that *sometimes they forget those who are closest* physically.	Arguments argument1
He <u>acknowledges</u> that SNSs *help people communicate easily* across distance as they make communicating easier, *but we pay the high price of limiting our interactions* to the virtual world.	
Smith <u>points out</u> that there is *evidence to suggest* that SNSs are *not suitable for sustaining intimate relationships*, and furthermore that the *amount of time* spent communicating via SNSs within an intimate interpersonal relationship *does not correlate with the quality* of the relationship.	Argument2
Smith uses this line of thought to <u>suggest</u> that SNSs have *little constructive purpose* within intimate relationships other than its use of networking to connect the two users, prior to becoming intimate.	
Kyle Smith concludes by <u>saying</u> that *it is important not to overgeneralize with broad statements* relating to communication modalities and their *perceived characteristics or usefulness.*	Restatement

5   Conclusion

In this study, the principled talk around text exchanges that are typical of R2L peda-gogies were applied effectively in a population (college ESL students) and context (USA) that have not been a prominent focus in R2L research and practice. R2L has mostly been used in lower and upper primary and secondary settings outside of the United States (Rose 2015). As shown in this chapter, R2L techniques provided effective initial support for students facing new or familiar genres. The discussions, text structure awareness, and paraphrastic appropriation activities illustrated in this chapter proved to be essential scaffolds for the well-written co-constructed and independent texts produced by students in the ESL class. Through the SFL-informed approach to teaching reading and writing in Project ExCel, we were able to support our talented advanced bilingual students in transitioning successfully and seam-lessly to other college courses.

References

Atwan, R. (2013). *America now: Short readings from recent periodicals*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press.

Bernstein, B. (2000). *Pedagogy, symbolic control, and identity: Theory, research, critique* (Revised ed.). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Caffarel, A., Matthiessen, C., & Martin, J. (2004). Language typology: A functional perspective. In *Amsterdam*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Christie, F. (1997). Curriculum macrogenres as forms of initiation in a culture. In J. R. Martin & F. Christie (Eds.), *Genre and institutions: Social processes in the workplace and school* (pp. 134–160). London/ Washington, DC: Cassell.

de Oliveira, L., & Iddings, J. (2014). *Genre pedagogy across the curriculum theory and applica-tion in U.S. classrooms and contexts*. Sheffield: Equinox.

Freire, P. (1998). *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Gebhard, M., & Harman, R. (2011). Reconsidering genre theory in K-12 schools: A response to school reform in the United States. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 20*(1), 45–55.

Hacker, D. (2011). *Sample paper analyzing a text* (Sanchez). http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writ-ersref6e/lmcontent/ch07/PDF/Hacker-Sanchez-MLA-Ana-Txt.pdf. Accessed 16 May 2015.

Hacker, D., & Sommers, N. (2011). *A writer's reference* (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as a social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.

Harman, R. (2013). Literary intertextuality in genre-based pedagogies: Building lexical cohesion in fifth-grade L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*, 125–140.

Kanno, Y., & Harklau, L. (2012). *Linguistic minority students go to college: Preparation, access, persistence*. New York: Routledge.

Martin, J.v R. (1992). *English text: System and structure*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Martin, J. R. (2000). Design and practice: Enacting functional linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 20*, 116–126.

Martin, J. R. (2016). One of three traditions: Genre, functional linguistics and the Sydney school. In N. Artemeva (Ed.), *Trends and tradition in genre studies* (pp. 31–79). Ottawa: Inkwell.

Martin, J., & Rose, D. (2005). Designing literacy pedagogy: Scaffolding asymmetries. In J. Webster (Ed.), *Continuing discourse on language* (pp. 251–280). London: Continuum.

Martin, J., & Rose, D. (2008). *Genre relations: Mapping culture*. London: Equinox.

Martin, J., & White, P. (2005). *The language of evaluation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Maton, K. (2011). Theories and things: The semantics of disciplinarity. In F. Christie & K. Maton (Eds.), *Disciplinarity functional linguistics and sociological perspectives* (pp. 62–84). London/New York: Continuum.

Moore, J., & Schlepegrell, M. (2014). Using a functional linguistics metalanguage to support academic language development in the English language arts. *Linguistics and Education, 26*, 92–105.

Oropeza, M., Varghese, M., & Kanno, Y. (2010). Linguistic minority students in higher education: Using, resisting, and negotiating multiple labels. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 43*, 216–231.

Padolsky, D. (2004). *How many school-aged English language learners (ELLs) are there in the U.S.? National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition*. http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/expert/faq/01leps.htm. Accessed 11 Nov 2015

Rose, D. (2015). New developments in genre-based literacy pedagogy. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (2nd ed., pp. 227–242). New York: Guilford.

Rose, D. (in press). Languages of Schooling: Embedding literacy learning with genre-based pedagogy. In: Languages of schooling: Explorations into disciplinary literacies. *Special issue of European Journal of Applied Linguistics*.

Rose, D. (in press). Building a pedagogic metalanguage I: Curriculum genres. In J. R. Martin (Ed.), Appliable linguistics and academic discourse. Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

Rose, D. (in press). Building a pedagogic metalanguage II: Knowledge genres. In J. R. Martin (Ed.), Appliable linguistics and academic discourse. Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

Rose, D., & Martin, J. (2012). *Learning to write, reading to learn: Genre, knowledge and pedagogy in the Sydney school*. Equinox: Sheffield U.K.

Rothery, J. (1996). Making changes: Developing an educational linguistics. In *Literacy in society* (pp. 86–123). London: Longman.

Smith, K. (2013). Op-Ed: Social media: Friend or foe? *Digital Journal*. http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/352150#ixzz2g74TbR2O. Accessed 18 Apr 2014

Tabarrok, A. (2013). Tuning in to dropping out. In R. Atwan (Ed.), *America now*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2002). *The Condition of Education 2002, NCES 2002–025*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Andrés Ramírez is an assistant professor in the Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry Department at Florida Atlantic University. He teaches courses in TESOL, Bilingual Education and Applied Linguistics. His scholarly work explores the linguistic, cultural, and economic conditions constraining and enabling the academic literacy achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the United States. He anchors his academic work on post structural materialism and critical discourse studies. His current scholarship focuses on the intersection between bilingual language development theory and practice and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).