An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics

2nd Edition

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To my teachers and my students

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Foreword to the Second Edition

As with the first edition, this second edition of *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics* offers an overview of systemic theory and some demonstration of how systemic techniques can be applied in the analysis of texts. Written for students who may have little or no formal knowledge of linguistics, it covers most of the major concepts in systemic linguistics (*semiotic system, genre, register, text, cohesion, grammatical metaphor* . . .). Taking Michael Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* as its base, the book presents a functional grammatical description of the simultaneous metafunctional organization of the clause (its MOOD, TRANSITIVITY, THEME and CLAUSE COMPLEX systems) and introduces the basic techniques for analysing cohesive patterns in text (reference, lexical cohesion and conjunction).

In the ten years since the first edition, much has happened to systemic linguistics and to me. Since 1994, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) has moved from 'marginal' to 'mainstream' as an approach to language, at least in Australia. Systemic linguists now hold senior positions at universities in countries around the world, and SFL informs many postgraduate applied linguistics and TESOL programmes in English-language countries.

The past ten years have seen a corresponding outburst of publishing in SFL, from workbooks in the grammar and discourse, such as Martin *et al.* 1997, to major theoretical works, such as Halliday and Matthiessen 1999, and the progressive publication of Halliday's collected works edited by Jonathan Webster (Halliday and Webster 2002a, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b). Much fleshing out of systemic ideas has been published in journal articles and edited collections, and SFL contributions have also been published in many interdisciplinary collections about language.

These changes mean that a student new to SFL now has a wide range of resources to draw on to learn about the theory and its analytical methodologies. A new role for my book is to steer readers towards these other sources whenever possible.

Changes in my own institutional context have also affected how I approach this second edition. For the past dozen years I have held a position not in a Linguistics department but in an English (Literature) department, where I teach students who are majoring in literature, mother-tongue education or media and communication. Exposure to this context has broadened my own experience of texts and forced me to reflect on how systemic linguistics can be made accessible to students who have no prior linguistic training but want ways of talking about how texts work. As I hope I demonstrate in this second edition, I remain

convinced that SFL is one of the most powerful ways of saying 'sensible and useful things about any text, spoken or written, in modern English' (Halliday 1994: xv).

Summary of changes in the second edition

Michael Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (*IFG*), first published in 1985 with a second edition in 1994, is the motivating text for this book. The third edition of *IFG*, substantially revised and extended, appeared as Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, just as this book was in production. Where possible, references have been updated to this third edition. Occasionally I have referenced earlier editions of *IFG*, as I am attached to the directness of some of Halliday's earlier explanations. The core grammatical chapters on Mood, Transitivity and Theme remain largely as they were in the first edition, but the book now includes one new chapter on the clause complex, positioned directly after Transitivity. All other chapters have been updated with recent references, and some have had new text examples substituted or added.

I have made only one theoretical modification to the first edition: in the 1994 edition I used Martin's (1992a) label of 'discourse-semantics' to refer to the stratum of language above grammar, and I devoted one chapter to Martin's methodology for the analysis of cohesive patterns as discourse-semantic systems. In this edition I have returned to Halliday's model, with the top linguistic stratum called **semantics**, and the cohesive analyses interpreted as non-structural grammatical systems (as in Halliday and Hasan 1976, Halliday 1994). For most students new to SFL, this change will be of no practical import at all. However, it has allowed me to devote one chapter to the fundamental question of *What is (a) text?* and to bring the sections on cohesion in line with Halliday 1994 (itself based on Halliday and Hasan 1976). Readers who wish to go further in theory and description are pointed towards Martin and Rose 2003.

In addition, the contents of some chapters have been substantially revised and chapter order adjusted, as follows:

Chapter 1 'An overview of systemic functional linguistics' has been updated, but is still organized around the three Crying Baby texts.

Chapter 2 'What is (a) text?' contains many new texts (all authentic), both fictional and non-fictional.

Chapter 3 'Genre' contains many new texts as well as some familiar ones.

Chapter 4 'Register' has only a new introductory section.

Chapters 5–8 and 10 on principles of grammatical analysis, systems, Mood, Transitivity and Theme remain largely unchanged.

Chapter 9 is a completely new chapter on 'The Clause Complex'. Positioned straight after its companion on the experiential system of Transitivity, the clause complex chapter presents the SFL understanding of the second, logico-semantic component of ideational meaning.

Chapter 11 discusses the complete analyses of the Crying Baby texts, now incorporating clause complex analyses. The analyses are in the Appendix.

I am indebted to Michael Halliday, whose way of thinking and talking about language captivated me from my first day as an undergraduate student at Sydney University. Special thanks also to Jim Martin and Clare Painter, first my teachers and more recently my colleagues, for encouragement over the years; and to my literature colleagues at the School of English at UNSW, who have helped me to broaden my awareness of texts and ways of talking about them.

Thanks also to the patient, loyal systemic linguistics community which has always welcomed me to conferences, despite my meagre and infrequent contributions. Thankfully, no one ever closed the door on me, and I realize now that the door never will be closed because SFL will forever inform how I think about language and life.

Suzanne Eggins
March 2004, UNSW, Sydney

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Chapter 1

An overview of systemic functional linguistics

Aim of this book: explaining text	**1**
A functional-semantic approach to language	**3**
How do people use language?	**4**
How is language structured for use?	**11**
Summary of systemic functional linguistics (SFL)	**20**

Aim of this book: explaining text

The aim of this book is to introduce you to the principles and techniques of the systemic functional approach to language, in order that you may begin to analyse and explain how meanings are made in everyday linguistic interactions.

In our ordinary, everyday lives we are constantly using language. We chat to family members, organize children for school, read the paper, speak at meetings, serve customers, follow instructions in a booklet, make appointments, surf the internet, call in a plumber, unburden ourselves to therapists, record our day's thoughts and activities in a journal, chat to our pets, send and read a few emails, sing along to CDs, read aloud to our children, write submissions. All of these are activities which involve language. Only for rare moments, perhaps when totally absorbed in a physical activity, does language drop out of our minds. In contemporary life, we are constantly required to react to and produce bits of language that make sense. In other words, we are required to negotiate *texts*.

The late twentieth century saw theorists from many approaches focus on texts and ask fundamental questions, such as: just how do texts work on us? How do we work to produce them? How can texts apparently mean different things to different readers? How do texts and culture interact? Answers have been suggested from disciplines such as literary theory (where the focus has been on the written texts highly valued, or 'canonized', by a culture) and cultural studies (where the interest has shifted to the written, visual and filmic texts of popular culture). Behind both perspectives lies a vast body of 'critical theory', proposed explanations about how we read texts, what texts are telling us, and how texts are (or should be) valued by the culture.

While the critical understanding of text is a fundamental goal we share with other text analysts, the approach taken in this book has different origins, orientations and methodologies. The systemic functional analysis presented here has been developed on the foundation of work by the social semiotic linguist Michael Halliday, whose extensive writings since the 1960s are currently being edited and re-issued in a ten-volume set of *Collected Works* (see Halliday and Webster 2002a, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b). Through the work of Halliday and his associates, systemic functional linguistics (often abbreviated to SFL) is

increasingly recognized as a very useful descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic, meaning-making resource.

One of Michael Halliday's major contributions to linguistic analysis is his development of a detailed functional grammar of modern English (Halliday 1994[1]), showing how simultaneous strands of meanings (the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions) are expressed in clause structures. Halliday's (meta)functional grammar is now accessible not only through Halliday's own substantial text (Halliday 1994 and now further extended in Halliday and Matthiessen 2004) but also through the many books which introduce and explore the grammar of the metafunctions and the relation of language to context (e.g. Halliday and Hasan 1985, Bloor and Bloor 1995, Thompson 2004, Martin *et al.* 1997, Halliday and Matthiessen 1999, Butt *et al.* 2001, Droga and Humphrey 2003, Martin and Rose 2003).

Michaël Halliday prefaces the 1994 edition of his functional grammar with an open-ended list of 21 possible applications of SFL (Halliday 1994: xxix–xxx). These include theoretical concerns ('to understand the nature and functions of language'), historical ones ('to understand how languages evolve through time'), developmental ones ('to understand how a child develops language, and how language may have evolved in the human species'), and educational ones ('to help people learn their mother tongue . . . foreign languages', etc.). Underlying all these very varied applications is a common focus on the analysis of authentic products of social interaction (**texts**), considered in relation to the cultural and social context in which they are negotiated. Consequently, the most generalizable application of SFL, and the one which will provide the framework for this book, is 'to understand the quality of texts: why a text means what it does, and why it is valued as it is' (Halliday 1994: xxix).

Although Halliday's functional grammar deals in detail with the structural organization of English clauses, phrases and sentences, Halliday's interest has always been with the meanings of language in use in the textual processes of social life, or 'the sociosemantics of text'. As Halliday says of his functional grammar:

> The aim has been to construct a grammar for purposes of text analysis: one that would make it possible to say sensible and useful things about any text, spoken or written, in modern English. (Halliday 1994: xv)

Recent years have seen SFL used to say 'sensible and useful things' about texts in fields such as language education (Christie 1999, 2002, Christie and Martin 1997, Unsworth 2000), child language development (Painter 1998), computational linguistics (Teich 1999), media discourse (Iedema *et al.* 1994, White 2002), casual conversation (Eggins and Slade 1997), history (Martin and Wodak 2003) and administrative language (Iedema 2003), to name just a few. SFL has also been applied to interpret the 'grammar' of other semiotic modes, such as visuals (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996, 2001), art (O'Toole 1994) and sound (van Leeuwen 1999, Martinec 2000).

The field of SFL is now a substantial international one, as can be seen by the number and range of publications and conferences in SFL around the world. An excellent systemic linguistics website, maintained by Dr Mick O'Donnell, can be found at **http:www/wagsoft/com/Systemics/**. The website provides information about systemic discussion groups (the international email list sysfling has over 500 subscribers), recent publications in SFL, bibliographies, theses, conferences and journals such as *Functions of Language* which publish work in SFL.

While individual scholars naturally have different research emphases or application contexts, common to all systemic linguists is an interest in *language as social semiotic* (Halliday 1978) – how people use language with each other in accomplishing everyday social life. This interest leads systemic linguists to advance four main theoretical claims about language:

1. that language use is functional
2. that its function is to make meanings
3. that these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged
4. that the process of using language is a *semiotic* process, a process of making meanings by choosing.

These four points, that language use is functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic, can be summarized by describing the systemic approach as a *functional-semantic* approach to language. The purpose of this chapter is to outline and illustrate what this means.

A functional-semantic approach to language

The systemic approach to language is functional in two main respects:

1. because it asks functional questions about language: systemicists ask **how do people use language?**
2. because it interprets the linguistic system functionally: systemicists ask **how is language structured for use?**

Answering the first question involves a focus on authentic, everyday social interaction. This analysis of **texts** leads systemicists to suggest that people negotiate texts in order to make meanings with each other. In other words, the general function of language is a semantic one.

Reinterpreting the functional questions semantically, then, systemicists ask:

1. Can we differentiate between types of meanings in language?, i.e. **how many different sorts of meanings do we use language to make?**
2. How are texts (and the other linguistic units which make them up, such as sentences or clauses) structured so that meanings can be made?, i.e. **how is language organized to make meanings?**

As will become clear from subsequent discussion, Halliday (e.g. 1985b/1989, 1994) has argued that language is structured to make three main kinds of meanings simultaneously. This semantic complexity, which allows **ideational, interpersonal** and **textual** meanings to be fused together in linguistic units, is possible because language is a semiotic system, a conventionalized coding system, organized as sets of choices. The distinctive feature of semiotic systems is that each choice in the system acquires its meanings against the background of the other choices which could have been made. This semiotic interpretation of the system of language allows us to consider the appropriacy or inappropriacy of different linguistic choices in relation to their contexts of use, and to view language as a resource which we use by choosing to make meanings in contexts.

Each of these rather abstract points will now be illustrated in turn with concrete language examples.

How do people use language?

As soon as we ask functional questions such as 'how do people use language?' (i.e. 'what do people *do* with language?'), we realize we have to look at real examples of language in use. Intuition does not provide a sufficiently reliable source of data for doing functional linguistics. Thus, systemicists are interested in the authentic speech and writing of people interacting in naturally-occurring social contexts. We are interested, for example, in language events such as Text 1.1 below[2]:

Text 1.1: Crying Baby (1)

(1)A baby who won't stop crying can drive anyone to despair. (2i)You feed him, (2ii)you change him, (2iii)you nurse him, (2iv)you try to settle him, (2v)but the minute you put him down (2vi)he starts to howl. (3)Why?

(4)The most common reason baby cries is hunger. (5i)Even if he was just recently fed (5ii)he might still be adapting to the pattern of sucking until his tummy is full and feeling satisfied until it empties again. (6i)When he was in the womb (6ii)nourishment came automatically and constantly. (7i)Offer food first; (7ii)if he turns away from the nipple or teat (7iii)you can assume (7iv)it's something else. (8i)It happens that babies go through grumpy, miserable stages (8ii)when they just want (8iii)to tell everyone (8iv)how unhappy they feel. (9i)Perhaps his digestion feels uncomfortable (9ii)or his limbs are twitching.

(10i)If you can't find any specific source of discomfort such as a wet nappy or strong light in his eyes, (10ii)he could just be having a grizzle. (11)Perhaps he's just lonely. (12i)During the day, a baby sling helps you to deal with your chores (12ii)and keep baby happy. (13i)At night (13ii)when you want (13iii)to sleep (13iv)you will need to take action (13v)to relax and settle him. (14i)Rocking helps, (14ii)but if your baby is in the mood to cry (14iii)you will probably find (14iv)he'll start up again (14v)when you put him back in the cot. (15i)Wrapping baby up snugly helps to make him feel secure (15ii)and stops him from jerking about (15iii)which can unsettle him. (16i)Outside stimulation is cut down (16ii)and he will lose tension. (17i)Gentle noise might soothe him off to sleep – a radio played softly, a recording of a heartbeat, traffic noise – (17ii)even the noise of the washing machine is effective!

(18i)Some parents use dummies – (18ii)it's up to you – (18iii)and you might find (18iv)your baby settles (18v)sucking a dummy. (19i)'Sucky' babies might be able to find their thumbs and fists (19ii)to have a good suck. (20i)Remember (20ii)that babies get bored (20iii)so when he is having a real grizzle (20iv)this could be the reason. (21)Is his cot an interesting place to be? (22)Coloured posters and mobiles give him something to watch. (23i)You could maybe tire him out (23ii)by taking him for a walk . . . or a ride in the car – (23iii)not always practical in the middle of the night. (24i)A change of scene and some fresh air will often work wonders – (24ii)even a walk around the garden may be enough. (25i)As baby gets older (25ii)he will be more able to communicate his feelings (25iii)and you will be better at judging the problem. (26i)Although you might be at your wit's end, (26ii)remember (26iii)that crying is communication with you, his parents. (27)And you are the most important people in your baby's life.

This text, whose source will be disclosed shortly, serves to illustrate a basic premise of systemic linguistics: that language use is purposeful behaviour. The writer of this excerpt did not just produce this text to kill time, or to display her linguistic abilities. She wrote the

text because she wanted to use language to achieve a purpose: she had goals that she was using language to achieve. We could gloss the overall purpose of Text 1.1 as being to 'educate parents', although it will be suggested in a moment that this overall purpose implicates a number of distinct goals.

In having a purpose, this instance of language use is typical, not exceptional: people do not 'just talk' or 'just write'. Any use of language is motivated by a purpose, whether that purpose be a clear, pragmatic one (such as needing to write a letter in order to apply for a job), or a less tangible, but equally important, interpersonal one (such as 'needing' to have a chat with friends after a long day at work).

Text 1.1 also illustrates a second consequence of asking functional questions about language: that we have to look at more than isolated sentences. If I had presented you with only one sentence from the text, chosen at random, for example *A change of scene and some fresh air will often work wonders – even a walk around the garden may be enough*, it would have been very difficult for you to determine the motivation for the writing. Similarly, from the writer's point of view, it would have been almost impossible for her to achieve the desired goals through a single sentence: perhaps *Babies cry for many different reasons and there are ways you can try to stop them* would be a start – but no more than a start. If the writer is to educate us to cope with babies' crying, then she needs to spend time (and language) explaining the variety of possible causes, and reviewing the possible solutions. In other words, to achieve successfully the overall purpose of educating parents, the writer must meet the implicated goals of explaining a problematic phenomenon (why it is that babies cry a lot) and suggesting possible solutions parents could try.

It is not just explaining why babies cry that takes time. Very few (if any) of our communicative goals can be achieved through single sentences. Even the simple goal of getting you to carry out an action that I want done will typically involve at least two communicative 'moves'. For example, the brief command *Close the door!* is inherently structured to elicit a response. That response may be verbal (e.g. *Why?* or *Shut it yourself*), or perhaps non-verbal (e.g. the closing of the door). In either case, if we are to understand what language is achieving in the situation, we need to describe the communicative behaviour as involving not just one sentence, but at least two: both the command and the response.

Typically, of course, getting something done using language will involve many more than two moves. As Text 1.1 shows, in order to explain why babies cry and what we can do about it, the writer has presented a discussion running to 27 sentences. She has in other words produced what systemic linguists call a **text**.

The term **text** (which will be explained in detail in Chapter Two) refers to a complete linguistic interaction (spoken or written), preferably from beginning to end. Comparing authentic texts, particularly those which have something in common, points us towards interesting dimensions of language use. Consider, for example, Text 1.2:

Text 1.2: Crying Baby (2)

(1)The compelling sound of an infant's cry makes it an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a caregiver. (2i)However, cries are discomforting (2ii)and may be alarming to parents, (2iii)many of whom find (2iv)it very difficult to listen to their infant's crying for even short periods of time. (3)Many reasons for crying are obvious, like hunger and discomfort due to heat, cold, illness, and lying position. (4i)These reasons, however, account for a relatively small percentage of infant crying (4ii)and are usually recognised quickly (4iii)and alleviated.

(5i)In the absence of a discernible reason for the behaviour, crying often stops (5ii)when the infant is held. (6i)In most infants, there are frequent episodes of crying with no apparent cause, (6ii)and holding or other soothing techniques seem ineffective. (7)Infants cry and fuss for a mean of 1¾ hr/day at age 2 wk, 2¾ hr/day at age 6 wk, and 1 hr/day at 12 wk.

(8i)Counselling about normal crying may relieve guilt (8ii)and diminish concerns, (8iii)but for some the distress caused by the crying cannot be suppressed by logical reasoning. (9i)For these parents, respite from exposure to the crying may be necessary (9ii)to allow them to cope appropriately with their own distress. (10i)Without relief, fatigue and tension may result in inappropriate parental responses (10ii)such as leaving the infant in the house alone (10iii)or abusing the infant.

As you read this text through, you will no doubt have realized that in some ways it is very like Text 1.1, and yet in other ways it is very different. The two texts share a focus on crying babies and what can be done about them, and yet each approaches the topic in ways that indicate that they are intended for different audiences, and would be found in different places. In comparing those two texts with Text 1.3, once again about crying babies, you might try to suggest the likely sources of each text, and consider what aspects of the texts are providing you with clues.

Text 1.3: Crying Baby (3)

(the symbol == indicates overlap; . . . indicates pause; words in capitals show emphasis)

S (1)Did your kids used to cry a lot? (2)When they were little?

C (3)Yea

S (4)Well == what did you do?

C (5)== still do

S (6)Yea? [laughs]

C (7)Oh pretty tedious at times yea. (8)There were all sorts of techniques == Leonard Cohen

S (9)== Like what [laughs] (10)Yea I used to use . . . (11)What's that American guy that did 'Georgia on your mind'?

C (12)Oh yea

S (13)== Jim – James Taylor

C (14)== James Taylor

S (15)Yea yea.
(16)He was pretty good.

C (17)Yea. (18i)No Leonard Cohen's good (18ii)cause it's just so monotonous

S [laughs]

C (19)And there's only four chords. (20i)And ah we used to have holidays (20ii)when we only had one kid on a houseboat. (21)And that was fantastic just the rocking motion of the houseboat

S (22)Mmm

C (23)Mmm

S (24)Were there ever times . . . (25i)Like I remember times (25ii)when I couldn't work out (25iii)what the hell it was. (26)There just didn't seem to be anything == you could do

C (27)== No reason or . . . (28)Yea

S (29)Yea every night between six and ten!

C $_{(30)}$Yea yea. $_{(31i)}$Luckily I didn't have that with the second baby $_{(31ii)}$but the first one was that typical colicky sort of stuff from about five o'clock.

S $_{(32)}$Hmm

C $_{(33i)}$I remember $_{(33ii)}$one day going for a um walk along the harbour $_{(33iii)}$one of those you know harbour routes that had been opened up. $_{(34i)}$And um he started kicking up from about five o'clock $_{(34ii)}$and we were getting panic stricken. $_{(35i)}$I had him in one of those um front strap things you know sling things $_{(35ii)}$ah cause that use to work wonders from time to time $_{(35iii)}$but it wasn't working this time. $_{(36i)}$And as we sat on the foreshore of this Vaucluse area $_{(36ii)}$these two women came down $_{(36iii)}$and they'd both been working as um governesses or something like that – $_{(36iv)}$very, very classy ladies. $_{(37i)}$And they said $_{(37ii)}$'Oh what's wrong with baby? $_{(38)}$He's got colic?' $_{(39i)}$You know, they really wanted $_{(39ii)}$to take over.

S $_{(40)}$Yea

C $_{(41)}$And so I just handed the baby to them.

S [laughs]

C $_{(42i)}$And LUCKILY he kept on crying – $_{(42ii)}$they couldn't stop him.

S [laughs]

C $_{(43)}$So I was really delighted. $_{(44)}$They handed back this hideous little red wreck of a thing

S & C [laughter]

In reading through these three texts, you have almost certainly been able to suggest the likely sources. You might now like to compare your suggestions with the actual source of each text, given at the end of this chapter[3]. You will probably be surprised at how accurately you were able to guess at the sources of the texts. How did you do it? How did you know where each text might be found?

Since you only had the words on the page to guide you, you must have worked out a great deal about the sources of each text from the way language is being used. You probably noted features like the following:

> Text 1.1: sounds 'chatty' because it is using everyday vocabulary (*baby, howl, grumpy, miserable, unhappy, twitching*, etc.) and is addressed to 'you'; but it isn't conversation because there's no interaction;
> Text 1.2: uses 'formal' or 'heavy' vocabulary (e.g. *compelling, prolonged dependence, discernible, suppressed, parental responses*, etc.) and sounds more 'academic' than Text 1.1; it's unlikely to be speech (no interaction);
> Text 1.3: seems to be a casual dialogue because the speakers take turns, use everyday vocabulary, even slang (e.g. *kids, guy, good, holidays, sort of stuff, hideous red wreck*, etc.), and seem to interrupt each other, etc.

What you have just done in an informal way is to deduce the context of language use from the linguistic patterns in a text. The fact that we can do this, that simply by reading or hearing a text we can figure out so much about its source, clearly suggests that in some way ***context is in text***: text carries with it, as a part of it, aspects of the context in which it was produced and, presumably, within which it would be considered appropriate. This example points to an issue which is of particular interest to systemic linguists: the relationship between language and context.

Language and context

Our ability to **deduce** context from text is one way in which language and context are interrelated. Our equally highly developed ability to **predict** language from context provides further evidence of the language/context relationship.

For example, if I were to ask you to predict both the overall structure and some of the specific words and sentences you would find in a recipe for scrambling eggs, you would have very little difficulty. If I asked you to write down the recipe text in a form publishable in a popular magazine or cookbook, you could almost certainly write the entire text with confidence that you were doing so in an appropriate way.

You would not, for example, give your recipe a title such as *Mowing Lawns*, nor would I find words such as *telephone, picture, jeans, swim* in your text, since such items would be quite blatantly inappropriate given that the topic of a recipe is food and its preparation. You would also be unlikely to find yourself writing sentences such as *If it is possible, you are strongly advised to take six eggs* or *Perhaps you should maybe mix the eggs and milk for about two minutes or so.* Such sentences express a degree of tentativity inappropriate to the role of 'recipe writer'. Nor would you find yourself writing *Hi guys! Cop this for a recipe!*, since the relationship between the writer and reader of the recipe is generally more formal than those greetings suggest. Finally, you are unlikely to have written *Take six of these. Break them, and put them in there. Then add this*, since there are a number of words which your reader, distant from you in time and space, would be unable to interpret. In our ability to predict accurately what language will be appropriate in a specific context, we are seeing an extension of our intuitive understanding that language use is sensitive to context.

Final evidence which emphasizes the close link between context and language is that it is often simply not possible to tell how people are using language if you do not take into account the context of use. One example of this was given above, when it was pointed out that presented with just one sentence chosen at random from Text 1.1 you would have found it difficult to state confidently just what the writer of that text was doing. Considered in its textual context (as a part of a complete linguistic event), that sentence clearly did have a function (to propose a possible solution). Taken out of context, its purpose is obscured, with at least part of its meaning lost or unavailable.

A similar point can be made with conversational examples. Consider the following sentence:

> I suggest we attack the reds.

Taken out of context, this sentence is ambiguous in a number of respects. You might think, firstly, about what *reds* refers to. It could mean:

- playing a game: time to move out the red soldiers
- choosing from a box of sweets: take the ones with red wrappers

Without further contextual information, it is not possible to determine which meaning is being made. Technically, we can say that the sentence is **ideationally** ambiguous: we cannot be sure which dimensions of reality are being referred to.

The sentence is also ambiguous in other ways. Think, for example, about the meaning of the verb *suggest*. Just which meaning does *suggest* have?

- if your boss *suggests* something to you it usually means *Do this!* It is not a suggestion at all because you cannot refuse it.
- if a subordinate *suggests*, it is usually a plea
- if your friend *suggests*, it may be a real suggestion. You can refuse.

The pronoun *we* is similarly ambiguous. Does it mean *we* (as it would among friends) or *you* (as it might when a superior is talking to a subordinate)?

Taken out of context, then, the sentence is not only ideationally ambiguous, but also **interpersonally** ambiguous: we cannot be sure just what the relationship between the two interactants is.

Given some contextual information, such as the response made by the addressee (*Yea, I brought some French reds*), it becomes possible to understand what aspect of reality is being talked about (wine), and what the relationship between the interactants is (friends). In this case, the initiating sentence can be glossed as meaning 'let's both of us start drinking the red wines'.

Our ability to deduce context from text, to predict when and how language use will vary, and the ambiguity of language removed from its context, provide evidence that in asking functional questions about language we must focus not just on language, but on **language use in context**. Describing the impact of context on text has involved systemicists in exploring both what dimensions, and in what ways, context influences language. As we will see in Chapters Three and Four, systemicists have attempted to describe:

1. exactly what dimensions of context have an impact on language use. Since clearly not every aspect of context makes a difference to language use (e.g. the hair colour of the interactants is usually irrelevant), just what bits of the context do get 'into' the text?
2. which aspects of language use appear to be effected by particular dimensions of the context. For example, if we contrast texts in which the interactants are friends with texts where the interactants are strangers, can we specify where in the language they use this contextual difference will be expressed?

Questions such as these are explored within systemics through genre and register theory, which we will review in detail in Chapters Three and Four. As you will see there, systemicists divide context into a number of levels, with the most frequently discussed being those of **register** and **genre**.

Context: register, genre and ideology in SFL

Register theory describes the impact of dimensions of the immediate context of situation of a language event on the way language is used. SFL identifies three key dimensions of the situations as having significant and predictable impacts on language use. These three dimensions, the register variables of **mode** (amount of feedback and role of language), **tenor** (role relations of power and solidarity) and **field** (topic or focus of the activity), are used to explain our intuitive understanding that we will not use language in the same way to write as to speak (mode variation), to talk to our boss as to talk to our lover (tenor variation) and to talk about linguistics as to talk about jogging (field variation).

The concept of **genre** is used to describe the impact of the context of culture on language, by exploring the staged, step-by-step structure cultures institutionalize as ways of achieving goals. While we can sometimes achieve our goals by just a short linguistic

exchange (for example, asking the time generally requires just two moves, a question and an answer: *A: What time is it? B: Five past six*), most linguistic interactions require many more moves than this. In fact, even this simple exchange is very frequently extended through politeness over a number of moves:

A: Sorry to bother you.
I was just wondering whether you knew the time?
B: Yea.
Just a sec.
It's um five past six but I'm generally a bit fast.
A: Oh OK.
Thanks a lot.
B: No problem.

Most often when we use language to do things we have to do them in a number of stages. For example, as we can see from the humorous narrative in Text 1.3, telling a story involves going through (linguistically) a number of steps. You have to set the scene (time, place, participants); develop the actions; relate the dramatic event; give the happy ending; express a judgement on the outcome; and wrap the story up.

When we describe the staged, structured way in which people go about achieving goals using language we are describing **genre**. It is to genre theory that we turn in order to explain the organization of Texts 1.1 and 1.2 as Explanation texts, with the steps of Statement of Problematic Behaviour, Explanation of Possible Causes, Suggested Alleviating Actions, and Statement of Outlook. Genre is the subject of Chapter Three.

A higher level of context to which increasing attention is being given within systemic linguistics is the level of **ideology**[4]. Whatever genre we are involved in, and whatever the register of the situation, our use of language will also be influenced by our ideological positions: the values we hold (consciously or unconsciously), the perspectives acquired through our particular path through the culture. For example, Texts 1.1 and 1.2 above illustrate the ideological claims:

- that we should write for parents in a very different way than we write for trainee medical personnel;
- that it is important for the medical text to foresee the possible negative outcomes of behaviour (parents will injure the baby), while the magazine article foresees the positive outcomes (things will get better).

In addition, while Text 1.1 embodies the claim that babies are motivated human actors (they are always crying for a reason, even if that reason is simply grumpiness or boredom), Text 1.2 suggests that babies cry because that is what babies do (i.e. that crying is frequently inexplicable and unmotivated, but conforms to statistical estimates!). It is easy to see that the ideology of Text 1.1 is more conducive to empowering parents to cope than is the ideology of Text 1.2, which in fact encourages the discounting of the behaviour as meaningful. However, since Text 1.1 also makes the parents responsible for their baby's behaviour, while Text 1.2 leaves it with the baby, it is likely that Text 1.1 will lead to frustrated parents, while Text 1.2 will lead to frustrated babies.

The identification of ideology in such apparently innocuous texts as the Crying Baby ones should alert us to the fact that just as no text can be 'free' of context (register or genre),

so no text is free of ideology. In other words, to use language at all is to use it to encode particular positions and values. However, for reasons which are themselves ideological, most language users have not been educated to identify ideology in text, but rather to read texts as natural, inevitable representations of reality.

The implication of identifying ideology in text is that as readers of texts we need to develop skills to be able to make explicit the ideological positions encoded, perhaps in order to resist or challenge them. This means we need a way of talking about how language is not just representing but actively constructing our view of the world. This *semiotic* approach to language is explored more fully below. As ideology makes a very diffuse contribution to text, and is best approached once descriptive skills are mastered, we will return to it in Chapter Eleven.

How is language structured for use?

It was pointed out above that SFL does not only ask functional questions about how people are using language, but it also interprets the linguistic system itself from a functional-semantic perspective. Departing from the descriptions systemicists have made of how language is used in authentic texts, in this more abstract sense of functional, systemicists ask **how is language structured for use?**

In order to understand how systemicists answer this question, let us return to the statement made earlier: that the fundamental purpose that language has evolved to serve is to enable us to make meanings with each other. In other words, language users do not interact in order to exchange sounds with each other, nor even to exchange words or sentences. People interact in order to make meanings: to make sense of the world and of each other. The overall purpose of language, then, can be described as a semantic one, and each text we participate in is a record of the meanings that have been made in a particular context.

The choice of the word **meanings** rather than 'meaning' in the last sentence is a significant one, for systemic analysis seeks to demonstrate that linguistic texts are typically making not just one, but a number of meanings simultaneously.

Consider how you would answer the question 'What does Text 1.1 mean?' An immediate, and obvious, response would be that the meaning Text 1.1 is making is that babies cry, that there are a number of reasons for this, and that in some cases we can do things which will help to stop babies crying.

It is certainly the case that the text is making this kind of 'real world' or **ideational** meaning. In fact, if we fail to understand the ideational meaning the text is making (for example, we interpret it as a text about building fences, or we think it means that babies should be beaten when they cry), then we are likely to encounter serious problems in social life.

However, at the same time that it is making this strand of ideational meaning, the text is also making some other equally important meanings.

The text is, for example, making **interpersonal** meaning. There is a strand of meaning running throughout the text which expresses the writer's role relationship with the reader, and the writer's attitude towards the subject matter. The writer clearly wants to establish a friendly rapport with the reader, to be seen more as a 'fellow sufferer' offering useful advice based on her lived experience as a lover and carer of babies. This meaning of positive supportive solidarity is clearly separable from the meaning about the causes and solutions of babies crying, because in Text 1.2 we find similar ideational meaning being made (causes

and solutions of babies crying), but the role taken by that writer is more one of a distant, unfeeling specialist who gives the impression of never having been moved to any emotion by the sight or sound of a baby.

Finally, while expressing both ideational and interpersonal meaning, a text also makes what we describe as **textual** meaning. Textual meaning refers to the way the text is organized as a piece of writing or speech. Text 1.1 has been organized as a message about two people: the baby (expressed as a male individual by the pronoun *he*) and the parents (expressed by the pronoun *you*). It is these pronouns which dominate first position in the sentences and clauses of the text. This organization of the text around people contrasts with the organization of Text 1.2, where the abstract noun of *reasons* is the focus for many of the sentences.

This example demonstrates that a text can be seen to be expressing more than one meaning at a time. In fact, this book will explore Halliday's claim that a text can make these different meanings because units of language (texts, sentences, clauses, etc.) are simultaneously making *three* kinds of meanings. These three types of meaning are expressed through language because these are the strands of meaning we need to make in order to make sense of each other and the world.

As the above discussion of Text 1.1 indicated, **ideational meanings** are meanings about how we represent experience in language. Whatever use we put language to, we are always talking about something or someone doing something. Take a familiar sentence:

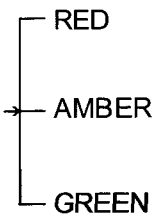
I suggest we attack the reds.

This sentence makes meanings about bottles of wine and what we should do with them. It makes meanings that focus on the actions we, as human agents, should carry out, and the entities our actions will affect (the reds). Had the speaker said instead *I suggest the reds are very good* a very different reality would have been represented through language: a reality where one entity (*reds*) is ascribed with some quality (*good*) through a process merely of 'being'.

Simultaneously, we use language to make **interpersonal meanings**: meanings about our role relationships with other people and our attitudes to each other. Whatever use we put language to we are always expressing an attitude and taking up a role. To take our sentence example, *I suggest we attack the reds* makes a meaning of friendly suggestion, non-coercive, open to negotiation; the kind of meaning we might make with friends, whose opinions we are interested in and whose behaviour we do not seek to dominate. Compare it to *We have to attack the reds* or *Attack the reds* or *I wonder whether it might not be possible to attack the reds perhaps?*, each of which constructs a very different relationship between the interactants.

Finally, in any linguistic event we are always making **textual** meanings: meanings about how what we're saying hangs together and relates to what was said before and to the context around us. Whatever use we put language to we are always organizing our information. For example, the sentence *I suggest we attack the reds* takes as its point of departure the speaker's intention (only to suggest, not to impose) and the interactants (*we*). It is a possible answer to *What should we do now?* Compare it to *The reds should be attacked now, I'd suggest*, which would be more likely as an answer to *Which should we drink next?*, since it takes as its point of departure *the reds* rather than *we*.

At both a macro (text) and micro (sentence) level, then, it is possible to identify these three different types of meanings being made – and, most significantly, being made simultaneously. This leads us to ask: how? How can language accomplish this semantic complexity? Answering this question takes us into an exploration of language as a semiotic system.



System 1.1 Traffic lights

Meaning as choice: semiotic systems

A classic demonstration of a simple semiotic system is that of traffic lights[5]. We can represent the set of traffic lights found at many urban Western intersections as follows in System 1.1.

This diagram represents the traffic lights as a system. A system (as we will see in detail in Chapter Seven) has the following basic attributes:

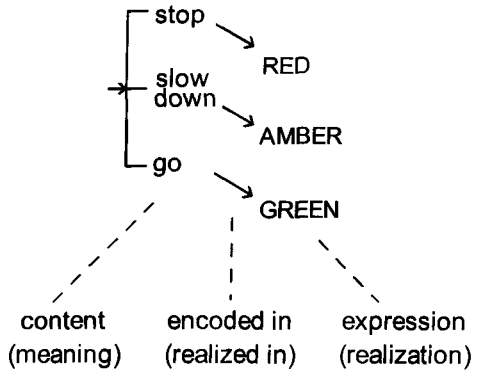
1. it consists of a finite set of **choices** or oppositions: this system contains only three choices since the traffic lights can only be either red or green or amber;
2. the choices in the system are **discrete**: when you drive up to the intersection, the lights can only be one colour at a time;
3. it is the **oppositions**, not the **substances**, in the system that are important: it does not matter exactly what shades of red or green or amber we use (deep red/light red, light green/dark green). All that matters is that red is not green – that each of the three coloured lights is different from the others.

However, although the diagram presented above is a system (in that it captures choice), it is not yet a *semiotic* system. To construct the semiotic system, we need to observe that each coloured light triggers different behaviours in the drivers who arrive at the intersection. When the light is red, drivers stop, when the light is green, they go, and when the light is amber, they prepare to stop.

In fact, as we well know, it is this ability to regulate drivers' behaviours that is what traffic lights are really all about. They are not provided merely to beautify the urban environment, but to act as signs which stand for a way to behave. A red light does not just mean 'here is a red light'; it means 'stop now'. In other words, the coloured lights are operating as part of a **sign system**, whereby the colour of the light is encoding, or expressing, which action from a set of possible 'behaviours at traffic lights' should be performed.

This semiotic dimension of the traffic lights can be captured by expanding our diagram to show the relationship between the behaviours and the lights, as in System 1.2.

This diagram has introduced some technical labels for the components of our semiotic system. You will see that we use the terms **content** and **expression** to refer to the two dimensions which together constitute a sign: meaning (content) and realization (expression). With the traffic lights, the content of the signs is the behaviour they are designed to trigger, while the expression is the particular coloured light. Ferdinand de Saussure (1959/1966), the Swiss linguist who was instrumental in formulating the theory of semiotic systems, used the terms *signifié* (signified) and *signifiant* (signifier) to label the content/expression sides of the sign.



System 1.2 Semiotic system of traffic lights

System 1.2 also indicates that the relationship between the content and its expression is described as one of **realization** or **encoding**. This realization relationship is indicated by the downwards pointing arrow. Thus, the meaning STOP is realized by/encoded in the coloured light RED. Similarly, the coloured light GREEN realizes or encodes the meaning of GO. Thus, signs in a semiotic system are a fusion or pairing of a content (meaning) and an expression (realization or encoding of that meaning).

The traffic light system also illustrates the fact that semiotic systems are established by social convention. As Saussure pointed out, the fusion between the two sides of the sign is arbitrary. There is no natural link between the content STOP and the expression RED LIGHT in a traffic light system: we could just as easily train our drivers to GO when the light was RED and STOP when it was AMBER. Semiotic systems, then, are arbitrary social conventions by which it is conventionally agreed that a particular meaning will be realized by a particular representation.

In summary, then, a semiotic system can be defined as a finite collection of discrete signs. We have a sign when a meaning (content) is arbitrarily realized through a realization (expression).

Considering the traffic light system can also help to explain the function of semiotic systems. The function of sign systems like the traffic lights is to make meanings. Sign systems create meanings by ordering the world in two ways:

1. they order **content**: of all the possible behaviours that we could enact at intersections, the system sets up only three as being meaningful (i.e. going, stopping, slowing down);
2. they order **expression**: of all the possible coloured lights we could have at intersections, the system sets up only three as being meaningful (i.e. red, green, amber).

To describe a simple semiotic system such as the traffic lights, we need just a two-level model, as shown in Figure 1.1.

Two-level semiotic systems such as the traffic lights, with the conventional pairing of a representation with a meaning, are surprisingly common in social life. One obvious example is that of clothing (or, to use the label more indicative of its semiotic function, *fashion*). Originally, back in the cave for example, clothing would have been adopted for very practical reasons: to keep people warm, to protect vulnerable parts of the body. And the choice

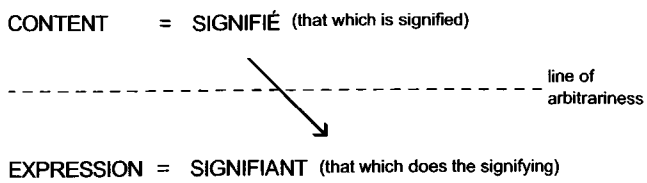


Figure 1.1 Content and expression in a two-level semiotic system

of materials out of which clothes could be made would have been largely determined by practicalities: what was to hand, what could be caught and skinned.

But very rapidly clothing went beyond its survival value and acquired a semiotic value in our culture. For example, some clothing has acquired meaning as 'male' or 'female' (e.g. trousers vs skirts); 'at home' vs 'going out' (e.g. jeans vs suits); 'dependents' vs 'independents' (e.g. schools and institutions that make their adherents wear uniforms vs situations offering choice in clothes). And of course think of the changing semiotics of denim jeans, once the working wear of the outdoor cowboy, now the uniform of a casual western lifestyle.

Sometimes it is a particular combination of items of clothing that carries meaning, such as a suit with a white shirt, silk tie and shiny patent leather shoes. At other times, individual items of clothing can carry very significant social meaning: for example, the doctor's white coat, which signifies the wearer as professional, expert, careful, trustworthy.

What we see with clothing is that what began as a 'natural' system has been developed by convention (in other words, by the unconscious agreement and enactment of us all) into a very potent semiotic system. If you ever doubt its potency, just think about the strong social expectations (which you most probably share) about how one should dress to go for a job interview – if one wants to get the job.

The clothing example may suggest to you other ways in which we live in a semiotic world. For example, the cars people drive, the layout of the houses they live in, the magazines they buy, the cigarettes they smoke: wherever people have the possibility of choice, there we find the potential for semiotic systems, as the choices we make are invested with meaning.

Language as a semiotic system

By far the most sophisticated and elaborate of all our semiotic systems is the system of language. What gives language its privileged status is that other semiotic systems can generally be translated into language. While we can use language to talk about the semiotic systems of clothing or cars, we cannot use clothing or cars to make *all* the meanings language makes.

We will see in a moment that language achieves this special status because it is a more complex semiotic system than the two-level kind we found in the traffic lights. However, just like the traffic lights, language can be described as a semiotic system because it involves sets of meaningful choices or oppositions.

Imagine that I am talking to a friend about the recent exploits of my five-year-old progeny. I want to say, for example, something along the lines of *When I got home from work yesterday, I could not believe what my* [progeny] *had done!* While the word [progeny] does capture the genealogical relationship between us, it is unlikely that I would use that word

in a conversational context. Instead, I would find myself having to choose from among a set of possible words, including perhaps:

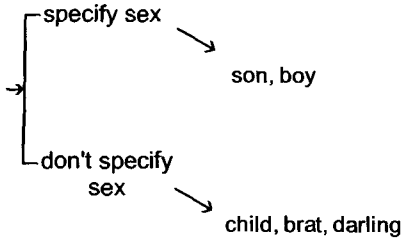
kid, child, brat, darling, son, boy . . .

My choice of one word or another from this list involves me in a meaning-making process, where I must choose which dimensions of contrast I wish to encode. One of the choices I face is whether to specify the progeny's sex or not: words such as *son* and *boy* specify sex, while *child, brat, darling* do not. Underlying the list of words, then, is a dimension of (ideational) contrast that can be systematized as in System 1.3.

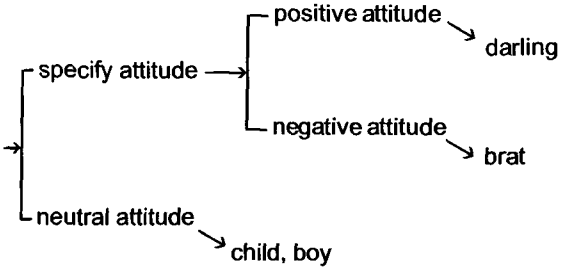
Here then is one semiotic system in which my list of words is implicated. However, a further meaningful dimension of contrast among these words is that of attitudinal content. Some of the words make meanings about my attitude towards the child: either a negative attitude (*brat*) or a positive attitude (*darling*). Other words are neutral for attitude (*child*). This set of (interpersonal) semiotic oppositions can be diagrammed as in System 1.4.

These examples indicate that whichever word I choose from this list (and there are others we could add, for example *progeny, offspring, infant*), the meaning of each word comes in part from the fact that that word stands in opposition to the other words in the list. My choice, for example, of *brat* is made against the background of the fact that I could have chosen *child*: my conversational audience recognizes this, and thereby interprets my choice as encoding negative attitude (since I could have chosen to encode neutral attitude).

This example also indicates that we can describe the lexical items in a language (the vocabulary) as semiotic systems. Identifying systems of **lexical choice** involves recognizing that words encode meaningful oppositions, and that the process of choosing a lexical item is a semiotic process.



System 1.3 Lexical choice, specifying sex



System 1.4 Lexical choice, specifying attitude

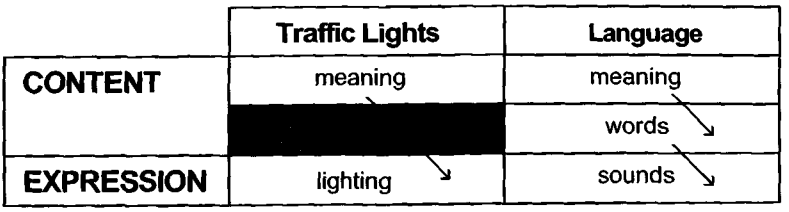


Figure 1.2 Content and expression in traffic lights and language

Just as with the traffic light system, so with the lexical systems we find that the relationship between a human infant of unspecified sex and the sound sequence k-i-d is an arbitrary one. This arbitrariness of the content/expression pair is easily demonstrated by noting that other languages will use different sounds to refer to their human infants.

And, like the traffic lights, we see that with linguistic signs it is the oppositions and not the substance that are important. Just as it was not important whether our traffic light was dark red, light red, or even pink, so it does not matter exactly how I pronounce the 'k' or 'i' or 'd' in *kid* so long as the sounds cannot be confused with other sound configurations, such as *kit* or *did* or *cot* which express different contents (i.e. which make different meanings).

However, there is a critical difference between language as a semiotic system and a simple semiotic system such as the traffic lights. For with our lexical system, we can break down our lexical items into component sounds. Thus, the word *kid* is itself realized by a combination of the sounds k-i-d. Note that with the traffic lights we could not break down the coloured lights into any smaller components. The coloured lights directly realized the contents of our sign system. However, with language, the realization of the meaning 'progeny no sex specified' is mediated through a word, itself realizing a sequence of sounds.

In language, then, we do not just have meanings realized by words, for the words themselves are realized by sounds. This means that to describe language we need three levels or strata, illustrated in Figure 1.2.

The function of language as a semiotic system

Not only do linguistic systems look quite similar to other kinds of semiotic systems, but they also function to do the same thing. Like the traffic lights, linguistic systems are also systems for making meanings. And, like the traffic lights, linguistic systems make meanings by ordering the world for us in two ways.

Firstly, they order content: of all the ways of talking about human offspring, our simple lexical systems above show us that English speakers organize this conceptual domain by recognizing sex of child and parental attitude as (two of the) relevant dimensions of contrast. That these dimensions are considered relevant is established not by nature but by convention. The system of choice which opposes *brat, child* and *darling* both recognizes and validates the right of parents to express attitudes about their offspring. We do not have in English lexical items which contrast offspring in terms of offspring's attitude towards parents (e.g. we do not have words for 'a child who loves his parents' vs 'a child who can't stand his parents' vs 'a child who is ambivalent about his parents'). Although such a contrast is linguistically perfectly feasible (we just need to think of three words to use), it is not culturally feasible, because it is not judged appropriate for the powerless (i.e. children) to express attitudes about the powerful (i.e. parents).

The system thus orders the conceptual world according to culturally established conventions about which dimensions of reality are meaningful. Since most of the lexical systems we use exist prior to us, we are often not conscious of the conventions on which they depend. As we tend to see language as a natural, naming device, it becomes very difficult for us to think about dimensions of reality other than those which are encoded for us in our linguistic systems. However, semiotic theory demonstrates that the world is not out there as some absolute, determined reality simply to be labelled (and therefore talked about) in only one possible way. Reality is constructed through the oppositions encoded in the semiotic systems of the language we use. It follows from this relativistic interpretation that not all languages will order experience in the same way. For example, not all languages will differentiate lexical items for children in terms of sex or parental attitude.

The second way in which linguistic signs order the world for us is by ordering **expression**. Thus, of all the possible sounds we are physiologically capable of producing, English recognizes only about thirty or so as being meaningfully distinct. For example, the difference between pronouncing the *k* in *kid* with little or no release of air (unaspirated) or pronouncing it with a rush of air (aspirated) is not a meaningful difference in English (we will hear the two versions as meaning the same thing). However, the difference between *kid* (where the final sound is produced by vibrating the vocal chords and so is *voiced*) and *kit* (where the final sound is produced without vibration of the vocal chords and so is *voiceless*) is a significant difference to English speakers, since it serves to differentiate between two different meanings. The fact that languages divide up the spectrum of possible sounds or expressions differently is brought home to you when you try to learn a foreign language. You will find that the inventory of meaningful sounds will be different for each language.

Grammatical systems in language

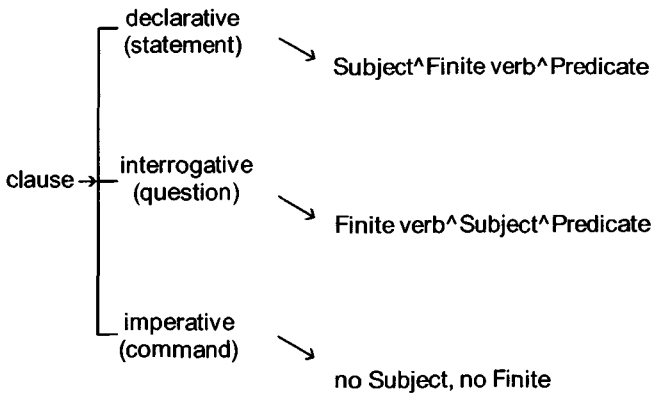
Systems of lexical choice are not the only kind of systems we find in language. We also have systems of **grammatical choice**. See, for example, System 1.5.

This system says that whenever I produce a clause it must be only one of these three:

- a declarative: The baby is crying.
- an interrogative: Is the baby crying?
- an imperative: Cry!

Note how the oppositions, or choices, in this kind of system are realized. Each choice is realized by a particular sequencing of a number of grammatical elements, here the elements of **Subject**, **Finite** and **Predicator**. The system says that the choice 'declarative', for example, is realized by the sequence of elements: **Subject** followed by **Finite** verb. For example, *The baby* (Subject) *is* (Finite verb) *crying* (Predicator), whereas the choice 'interrogative' has the elements of Subject and Finite in the opposite order: *Is the baby crying?* The imperative is realized by the omission of the Subject and Finite elements, leaving only the Predicator: *Cry!*

In a grammatical system, then, each choice gets realized not as particular words (I could change all the words to *my dog, was barking* and still have the oppositions), but in the order and arrangement of the grammatical roles the words are playing. That is, these choices are realized by **structures**. What linguists mean by **structure** will be explored more fully in Chapter Five. For now we need only note that the choice from a grammatical system is



System 1.5 Grammatical choice

	Folk Names	Technical Terms
CONTENT	meanings	(discourse-)semantics
	wordings (words and structures)	lexico-grammar
EXPRESSION	sounds/letters	phonology/graphology

Figure 1.3 Levels or strata of language

expressed through the presence and ordering of particular grammatical elements. And of course these structures will eventually get realized as words, and then finally as sounds.

In order to incorporate these types of linguistic systems, our model of language as a semiotic system now looks like Figure 1.3.

This diagram presents the systemic model of the levels or strata of language, using on the left the 'folk' or non-technical terms, and on the right the technical terms that we will use from now on.

The diagram can be read as saying that in language, meanings are realized as wordings, which are in turn realized by sounds (or letters). Technically: **semantics** gets realized through the **lexico-grammar**, which in turn gets realized through the **phonology** or **graphology**.

When we compare this model of language with our traffic lights, we see that language is a different kind of semiotic system **because it has three levels**, not just two. That is, language has two meaning-making levels, an upper level of content known as **semantics** (or discourse-semantics for some systemicists), and an intermediate level of content known as **lexico-grammar**.

Because systemic linguistics is concerned principally with *how* language makes meanings, this book explores only the content level of the lexico-grammar – the level responsible for turning 'meanings' into 'wordings'.

Implications of a tri-stratal semiotic model of language

Having sketched out a model of language as semiotic system, it is now possible to link this back to our earlier question: how does language manage to make three kinds of meanings simultaneously?

Comparing the traffic lights and language, you will see that what makes language different is that it possesses an intermediate encoding level of lexico-grammar. In Chapters Five to Nine we will explore how the structure of the English clause involves the choice of elements which 'map onto' each other to achieve semantic complexity.

Introducing you to Halliday's descriptions of the multifunctionality of clause constituents is an important aim of this book, since as we have seen in the Crying Baby examples, the text itself reflects this simultaneous expression of different types of meanings. The three strands of meanings that run through any text get 'into' the text largely through the clauses which make it up. Thus, as Halliday points out, grammatical description is essential to text analysis:

> it is sometimes assumed that (discourse analysis, or 'text linguistics') can be carried on without grammar – or even that it is somehow an alternative to grammar. But this is an illusion. A discourse analysis that is not based on grammar is not an analysis at all, but simply a running commentary on a text. (Halliday 1994: xvi)

The notion of the semiotic system also gives a powerful way of interpreting language behaviour as choice. If language is a semiotic system, then the process of language use is a process of making meanings by choosing. In making a choice from a linguistic system, what someone writes or says gets its meaning by being interpreted against the background of what could have been meant (said or written) in that context but was not. Through this distinction we relate what people did write or did say on any particular occasion (their **actual** linguistic choices) to what they could have written or could have said (their **potential** linguistic choices).

We can illustrate this by returning to our linguistic systems outlined above. We look at the linguistic choices speakers did make (e.g. statement rather than command, *brat* rather than *child*, or saying *I suggest we attack the reds* rather than *The reds should be attacked next, I suppose*). And we ask: what is the function of that choice? Why didn't the speakers make the other choice?

In a functional-semantic approach, then, we are concerned to describe two dimensions of language use. Firstly, what are the possible choices people can make? In doing this we describe the linguistic system. Secondly, what is the function of the choice they did make? In doing this we describe how language is used in different social contexts, to achieve various cultural goals. It enables us to talk about linguistic choices not as 'right' or 'wrong', as in the traditional prescriptive approach to language. Instead, we talk about choices as 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate' to a particular context.

Summary of systemic functional linguistics (SFL)

This chapter set out to give an overview of SFL, introducing many of the terms and concepts which will be developed in detail in subsequent chapters. In summary, SFL has been described as a functional-semantic approach to language which explores both how people

use language in different contexts, and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system.

As a linguistic approach to meaning in texts, systemic linguistics has (or has had) common ground with text grammarians and discourse analysts from a range of perspectives (e.g. Biber 1986, Brown and Gilman 1960, Brown and Levinson 1978, Chafe 1980, Labov and Fanshel 1977, Mann and Thompson 1986, van Dijk 1977). There have also been points of connection with research in areas such as sociolinguistics (e.g. Labov 1972a, 1972b, Labov and Waletzky 1967, Schiffren 1987) and the ethnography of speaking (e.g. Gumperz 1982a, 1982b, Hymes 1964/1972, Tannen 1980, 1989, 1991), exploring ways in which social and cultural context impact on language use.

As a semiotic approach, it has common ground with semiotic theoreticians and those, following Fairclough (1989, 1992), working in what has become known as the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. For a comprehensive overview of critical discourse analysis, see Toolan's four-volume collection *Critical Discourse Analysis* (Toolan 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d).

However, what is distinctive to systemic linguistics is that it seeks to develop both a theory about language as social process *and* an analytical methodology which permits the detailed and systematic description of language patterns.

This book introduces you to both dimensions of the approach. Thus, we will explore the systemic model of language (what language is, how it works, its relation with context) and we will also acquire a set of techniques for analysing different aspects of the language system (e.g. analyses of transitivity, mood, theme, the clause complex). Learning these techniques requires the introduction of technical terms.

Discussion of how language works in this chapter has been limited because I have had to avoid using too many technical linguistic terms. Thus, for example, while we have noted some obvious differences between Texts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, it has not been possible to explore fully the contrasts between those texts since to do so we need to talk about patterns such as nominalization, choices of process type, mood and modality of the clauses, Theme/Rheme structure, reference chains, etc.

While this book will introduce you to the techniques and technical terms necessary for talking about basic lexico-grammatical dimensions of whatever texts are of interest to you, these techniques are more comprehensively described in Halliday and Matthiessen 1999, 2004, Martin *et al.* 1997, Martin 1992a, and Martin and Rose 2003, and it is suggested that you follow up this book by referring to those sources to develop your descriptive skills.

In the following chapter, we begin this technical exploration of language by asking just what a text is. With some understanding of the text's pivotal nature as the meeting point of contextual and linguistic expression, we then move out to explore levels of context and their encoding in language. In Chapter Three we look at techniques of generic description, and in Chapter Four, register. Chapters Five to Ten then develop the description of the lexico-grammar, covering the grammatical systems of mood, transitivity, theme and the clause complex, with a brief interlude in Chapter Seven to reconsider systems. Finally, in Chapter Eleven, equipped with a shared technical vocabulary and a shared perspective on language, we will consider how to go about systemic text analysis. A comprehensive discussion of the Crying Baby texts introduced in this chapter will be used to demonstrate ways in which the combination of theoretical model and practical analyses provides a powerful means of talking about how people use language to make meanings.

Notes

1. Halliday's influential *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* was first published in 1985, with an updated 2nd edition published in 1994 and a 3rd edition, substantially revised by C.M.I.M. Matthiessen, published in 2004. Wherever possible, references are to the 3rd edition.
2. Throughout the texts in this book, subscript numbers are used to show sentences (ordinary numbers) and clauses (roman numerals).
3. Sources: Text 1.1 is taken from a popular parenting magazine, *My Baby*, 1991 edition, p. 24 (unauthored article). Text 1.2 is taken from an introductory textbook for medical/nursing students, R. Behrman, and R. Kliegman (1990) *Essentials of Pediatrics*, W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, p. 32. I am indebted to Yvette Slimovits at Sydney University for drawing these two texts to my attention. Text 1.3 is taken from a recording of a casual conversation between two female speakers, Carol, aged 38, and Sue, aged 32 (author's data).
4. For useful approaches to ideology in language, see the work of Critical Discourse Analysis, including Fairclough 1989, 1992, Fowler *et al.* 1979, Kress and Hodge 1979, 1988, Toolan 2002a.
5. I claim no originality for the use of the traffic light example. Like others (including Martin 1984, Allerton 1979, Kress and Hodge 1988, to name only a few), I have found the simplicity and familiarity of the traffic lights useful in introducing the notion of the semiotic system.

Chapter 2

What is (a) text?

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Introduction

As stated in Chapter One, this book aims to provide you with concepts and analytical tools to explore how meanings are made in the texts that interest you. A useful first step in this exploration is to clarify just what our basic unit is. Accordingly, this chapter asks: What is (a) text? How do we know when we've got one? And what does the nature of text tell us about the organization of language as a text-forming resource?

As we progress through the examples in this chapter, we will see that to understand what a text is we must recognize that a text's **texture** derives not only from linguistic patterns of **cohesion**, but also from the text's **coherence** with its social and cultural context, which will lead us naturally into the following two chapters on genre and register. The examples will also show, however, that textness is best regarded as a continuum, with certain pieces of language displaying a high level of texture and others problematizing particular dimensions, either intentionally (for strategic purposes), or accidentally (perhaps due to lack of language expertise).

What is (a) text?

Right from page one of this book I've claimed that systemic linguistics concerns itself with the analysis of text. The term 'text' has been glossed as 'authentic products of social interaction', and I have assumed that we can unproblematically identify what a text is. But it's now time to take that assumption apart and ask just what a text is. How do we know when a piece of language is a **text** and when one is not (a **non-text**)?

In their pioneering analysis of spoken and written English, Halliday and Hasan (1976: 1) offer the following definition of text: 'The word TEXT is used in linguistics to refer to

any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole'. In describing how a text forms a unified whole, Halliday and Hasan introduce the concept of **texture** (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 2, Hasan 1985b: Chapter Five). Texture is the property that distinguishes text from non-text. Texture is what holds the clauses of a text together to give them unity.

Texture, Halliday and Hasan suggest, involves the interaction of two components: **coherence**, or the text's relationship to its extra-textual context (the social and cultural context of its occurrence), and **cohesion**, the way the elements within a text bind it together as 'a unified whole'. The result of the interaction of these two dimensions is a piece of language which is using linguistic resources in a meaningful way within a situational and cultural context.

Note that Halliday and Hasan refer to both spoken and written language as **text**. Some linguistic approaches differentiate between 'text' as written language and 'discourse' as spoken language, but in SFL **text** is a technical term for any unified piece of language that has the properties of texture. The term **discourse** is used in systemics to refer either (untechnically) to 'spoken text' or (more technically, following Martin 1992a, Martin and Rose 2003) to the level of meaning above the lexico-grammar, the level concerned with relations of meaning across a text.

Text as a semantic unit

To understand how Halliday and Hasan come to their definition of text, we can begin with an obvious point: not all uses of language constitute text. Consider Example 2.1.

U P X G
W E L I
A C F M
T R Z B
D J Q N
O K S H

Example 2.1

Although Example 2.1 is a language example regularly used in the culture (it is in fact an eye chart), we cannot read it 'as text', for the most obvious reason that the sounds or letters do not in sequence combine to give us words of the English language. What we have is no more than a sequencing of phonemes, sound units at the lowest level of the language system. But the phonemes represented by the letters are not functioning as units of meaning – they do not constitute words. Instead of letters, pictures could be substituted, though in a highly literate culture it is obvious why letters are used. Without those minimum units of meaning, words, the passage cannot be read as sequenced language constituents functioning together to communicate meaning.

The occurrence of letters arranged in words, however, is not sufficient to constitute text either, as the page from a handwriting textbook for primary school children shown in Example 2.2 demonstrates.

mean mad adder made because

Example 2.2 handwriting[1]

Although this page presents students with linguistic units (in this case, words) which individually convey (some) meaning, the words do not 'hang together'. The principle motivating the juxtaposition of the words is not a semantic one: the words are put together because the writer wants students to practise particular fine motor skills.

The following example, though at first disorienting, shows an important move towards textness:

Text 2.1: poem by e. e. cummings[2]

r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r
who
a)s w(e loo)k
upnowgath
PPEGORHRASS
eringint(o-
aThe):l
eA
!p:
S a
(r
rIvInG .gRrEaPsPhOs)
to
rea(be)rran(com)gi(e)ngly
,grasshopper;

This poem by the American poet e. e. cummings shows that we usually expect text to be presented to us in discrete words in sequence. But, as the Russian formalist Shklovsky suggested, like all art, literary art functions to *disrupt* our expectations:

> Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects *'unfamiliar'*, to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfullness of an object; the object is not important.* (Shklovsky 1992: 18–19)

Thus, Shklovsky suggests, the purpose of art is to 'make strange' or **defamiliarize** our expectations. Cummings has defamiliarized this text so that it doesn't (initially, at least) offer us recognizable words. Unlike Example 2.1, however, this language can be re-constituted as text: the letters can gradually be unscrambled to give us recognizable English words. And unlike Example 2.2, the words are made 'meaningful' because the text uses them within (minimal) lexico-grammatical structures, also retrievable from the text.

By the term 'lexico-grammatical structures' you'll remember that we refer to the sequenced arrangement of constituents of the intermediate stratum of language, the stratum of 'words and structures'. As we will see in detail in Chapter Five, at the lexico-grammatical stratum there are several different units which carry patterns. The pivotal unit of lexico-grammatical structure, the unit at the highest 'rank', is the **clause**, with the upper boundary of grammatical relations the **clause complex** or sentence: only elements occurring within the same sentence can be grammatically related. The smallest unit which can

Table 2.1 The units of the lexico-grammatical rank scale

	Units of lexico-grammar
highest rank (largest unit)	clause, clause complex
	phrase, group
	word
lowest rank (smallest unit)	morpheme

enter into grammatical relations, the lowest 'rank' in the grammatical hierarchy, is the **morpheme**, as it is the smallest unit of meaning in language. Between the clause and the morpheme we have the units of **phrases** or **groups** and **words**, giving us the 'rank scale' of lexico-grammatical units seen in Table 2.1.

Lexico-grammatical analysis involves identifying the elements we find at each rank and describing the sequences and combinations in which they can occur to give us clauses accepted as 'possible' as well as 'usual' to users of the code of English. It is against this understanding of the potential of English grammar and its typical, unmarked usage that we can explain why e. e. cummings's poem both makes sense but is also a defamiliarized, or **marked**, use of the code.

When we try to unscramble Text 2.1, we find there are several possibilities – another characteristic of art is its preference for ambiguities and ambivalences, rather than single, straightforward meaning. One version we might come up with is:

> The Grasshopper
> A grasshopper who as we look up now gathering into leaps, arriving to rearrangingly become
> Grasshopper

Although this is not a standard vernacular sentence, there is enough lexico-grammar in cummings's poem for us to understand who is doing what. Unscrambled phoneme sequences give us recognizable words of English. Key grammatical constituents, such as the subject pronoun *who*, and the *-ing* morphemes on the verbs, signal that it is the grasshopper who is doing and becoming, simultaneous with our mental activity of watching it. While e. e. cummings troubles the orthographic structure of the poem, putting spaces and punctuation marks in odd places, he makes sure to leave us enough lexico-grammar to be able to make 'sense' out of what at first appears to be non-sense.

In cummings's case, the defamiliarization of English is a strategic move: he purposefully muddles things up in order to achieve a particular effect on readers. Among the effects achieved by the 'scrambling' in 'Grasshopper' we could list:

1. that it makes us slow down: as Shklovsky suggests, art defamiliarizes by slowing down our perception, de-automating the reading process so that we ***really take in*** what we're reading;
2. at the same time, the scrambling gives us a verbal approximation of what the grasshopper is doing physically (leaping), thus one semiotic code (language) is being used to try to evoke another (action);
3. as a result of (1) and (2), we may become aware of the conventions of poems and language, and may reflect on what there is to be gained by playing with language, stretching its conventional boundaries, to renew our experience of living and making meanings.

Grammar and the meanings of text

These first examples allow us to suggest that text depends on the 'meaningful' use of the codes of the two lower strata of language: the phonological and the lexico-grammatical codes. To make sense, a text has to either follow the codes or at least allow us to retrieve the code beneath surface challenges.

The following text, an excerpt from Roald Dahl's children's novel, *The BFG*, shows another form of challenge writers can offer us in text:

Text 2.2: excerpt from *The BFG*[3]

(1i)The BFG was still holding the awesome snozzcumber in his right hand, (1ii)and now he put one end into his mouth (1iii)and bit off a huge hunk of it. (2i)He started crunching it up (2ii)and the noise he made was like the crunching of lumps of ice.

(3i)'It's filthing!' (3ii)he spluttered, (3iii)speaking with his mouth full (3iv)and spraying large pieces of snozzcumber like bullets in Sophie's direction. (4i)Sophie hopped around on the table-top, (4ii)ducking out of the way.

(5i)'It's disgusterous!' (5ii)the BFG gurgled. (6)'It's sickable! (7)It's rotsome! (8)It's maggotwise! (9)Try it yourself, this foulsome snozzcumber!'

(10i)'No, thank you,' (10ii)Sophie said, (10iii)backing away.

(11i)'It's all you're going to be guzzling around here from now on (11ii)so you might as well get used to it,' (11iii)said the BFG. (12i)'Go on, you snipsy little winkle, (12ii)have a go!'

(13)Sophie took a small nibble. (14i)'Ugggggggh!' (14ii)she spluttered. (15)'Oh no! (16)Oh gosh! (17)Oh help!' (18)She spat it out quickly. (19i)'It tastes of frogskins!' (19ii)she gasped. (20)'And rotten fish!'

(21i)'Worse than that!' (21ii)cried the BFG, (21iii)roaring with laughter. (22)'To me it is tasting of clockcoaches and slimewanglers!'

(23i)'Do we really have to eat it?' (23ii)Sophie said.

(24i)'You do (24ii)unless you is wanting to become so thin you will be disappearing into a thick ear.'

(25i)'Into *thin air*,' (25ii)Sophie said. (26)'A thick ear is something quite different.'

(27)Once again that sad winsome look came into the BFG's eyes. (28i)'Words,' (28ii)he said (28iii)'is oh such a twitch-tickling problem to me all my life. (29i)So you must simply try to be patient (29ii)and stop squibbling. (30i)As I am telling you before, (30ii)I know (30iii)exactly what words I am wanting to say, (30iv)but somehow or other they is always getting squiff-squiddled around.'

(31i)'That happens to everyone,' (31ii)Sophie said.

(32i)'Not like it happens to me,' (32ii)the BFG said. (33)'I is speaking the most terrible wigglish.'

(34i)'I think you speak beautifully,' (34ii)Sophie said.

(35i)'You do?' (35ii)cried the BFG, (35iii)suddenly brightening. (36)'You really do?'

(37i)'Simply beautifully,' (37ii)Sophie repeated.

(38i)'Well, that is the nicest present anybody is ever giving me in my whole life!' (38ii)cried the BFG. (39)'Are you sure you is not twiddling my leg?'

(40i)'Of course not,' (40ii)Sophie said. (41)'I just love the way you talk.'

(42i)'How wondercrump!' (42ii)cried the BFG, (42iii)still beaming. (43)'How whoopsey-splunkers! (44)How absolutely squiffling! (45)I is all of a stutter.'

The many children and adults who have chuckled their way through this book have little difficulty with the text, despite the BFG's frequent use of unusual vocabulary items (*snozzcumber, rotsome, slimewanglers, twitch-tickling, squibbling, squiff-squiddled, wigglish, whoospey-splunkers* . . .). These words make just enough sense to us because:

1. they conform to possible phonological combinations of English;
2. they exploit the phonaesthetic qualities of English sound combinations: sound symbolism and sound analogy make it possible for us to 'feel' what the words mean, even if we're not sure exactly what a *slimewangler* is, or what it's like to be *squiff-squiddled*;
3. they are incorporated into the grammar of English, through the attachment of conventional English morphemes of tense and word class. Thus the endings *-some* and *-ish* allow us to interpret *rotsome* and *wigglish* as adjectives; the *-ing* ending turns *squiffling* into a present participle; and *-ers* must make *slimewanglers* a plural noun indicating actors/agents. The morphemic structure is then reinforced by the incorporation of the words into clause structure: *It's* of *It's rotsome* sets up the kind of clause where the word after the *it's* we interpret as describing what *it* is. The placement of *twitch-tickling* before a word we know well means we read *twitch-tickling* as describing a type or kind of *problem.* We read *squiff-squiddled* as a verb of action, because we know the structure *x is always getting . . . -ed around.*

Thus, defamiliarization of words presents little problem, given that grammatical and phonological resources of the language are functioning conventionally. In much the same way Lewis Carroll's famous poem 'Jabberwocky' makes at least some sense.

And 'sense' is what we're always looking for in language. If text is a 'unified whole', it is a whole unified in terms of meanings, not in terms of form. As Halliday and Hasan (1976: 2) put it: 'A text is best regarded as a SEMANTIC unit: a unit not of form but of meaning'. More accurately, in systemic terms a text is a unit of meanings, a unit which expresses, simultaneously, ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. Examples like 'Grasshopper' and *The BFG* show us how important the grammatical level is if we are to be able to interpret these simultaneous meanings. In the cummings text, we can recover enough of these meanings by rearranging the orthography. In the Dahl example, some slight fuzziness in some of the ideational meanings in the text is far outweighed by the stacking up of retrievable ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings through the overwhelmingly conventional grammatical choices in the passage (and the book).

A piece of language that is more challenging for our pursuit of meanings is surely this one:

Text 2.3: excerpt from 'Stalin's Genius' by Bruce Andrews[4]

(1i) Stalin's genius consisted of not french-kissing: (1ii) sometimes I want to be in crud. (2i) Your spats of visibility – (2ii) o, crow fluke, genitally organized spuds, what can true work? (3i) Birth is skewed, anon., *capital*; (3ii) *lose* that disembowelment; (3iii) you must change it (3iv) by eating it yourself: (3v) don't pick your noses, (3vi) secrecy thrives on abuse. (4i) No, I don't mean the missile crisis, (4ii) cat goes backward (4iii) to suit international organization: (4iv) middle class families want the belly (4v) choose

(4vi) to obey authority – (4vii) waddle into arson (4viii) anything can be converted, (4ix) the accessories get you wet.

Since Text 2.3 has been widely published and its author is regarded as a writer of merit (if also of difficulty), we must assume that at least for some readers it constitutes (part of) a text. Yet most English speakers will find it a distinctly problematic piece of language. Although it uses mostly familiar English words, and has some recognizable grammatical structures, many readers complain that they 'can't make much sense' of it.

Our problem with it is that we cannot see the four sequent clauses as hanging together. As Halliday and Hasan suggest, text is more than just sentences in sequence:

> If a speaker of English hears or reads a passage of the language which is more than one sentence in length, he can normally decide without difficulty whether it forms a unified whole or is just a collection of unrelated sentences. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 1)

When we say we have trouble seeing how the clauses hang together in Text 2.3, we are reacting to two dimensions of the paragraph. Firstly, its contextual properties: what we call its **coherence**. And secondly, its internal properties: what we call its **cohesion**.

Coherence refers to the way a group of clauses or sentences relate to the context (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 23). In fact, two types of coherence are involved in texture: **registerial** coherence and **generic** coherence. We will cover these in more detail in Chapters Three and Four, but the basic idea is that text usually exhibits contextual unity of these two types:

1. **registerial coherence**: a text has registerial coherence when we can identify one situation in which all the clauses of the text could occur. Technically, as we'll see in later chapters, this occurs when we can specify for the entire collection of clauses the domain the text is focusing on (its field), what roles the writer or interactants are playing (its tenor), and how closely language is tied to the experience it's commenting on (its mode).
2. **generic coherence**: a text has generic coherence when we can recognize the text as an example of a particular genre. Technically, generic coherence occurs when we can identify a unified purpose motivating the language (for example, it tells a story or accomplishes a transaction), usually expressed through a predictable generic or schematic structure, as we'll see in Chapter Three.

Text 2.3 appears to lack both these types of contextual coherence. Firstly, it lacks situational coherence, for we cannot think of one situation in which all these sentences could occur. There is no coherence of field (we jump from talking about *Stalin* to *sex* to *disembowelment* to *cats* and *fashion*), nor of mode (some clauses are obviously written language, others are apparently conversational dialogue), nor of tenor (we cannot determine what role the writer/sayer of this paragraph is playing).

Secondly, there is no immediately identifiable generic coherence. Ask yourself: just what is this text doing? What is it trying to achieve? What is its cultural purpose? I'd be surprised if you came up with a clear answer.

The lack of contextual coherence is reflected in, and is a reflection of, its accompanying lack of internal organization, its lack of **cohesion**. The term **cohesion** refers to the way we relate or tie together bits of our discourse. As Halliday and Hasan explain:

> Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense

> that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 4: their emphasis)

The key notion behind cohesion, then, is that there is a **semantic tie** between an item at one point in a text and an item at another point. The presence of the tie makes at least one of the items dependent upon the other for its interpretation. For example, in the Dahl excerpt, Text 2.2, the BFG exclaims *'It's filthing!'*. The pronoun *it* is dependent for its meaning on the preceding noun *the awesome snozzcumber*. We have absolutely no problem establishing this semantic dependency and correctly decoding the meaning (or **referent**) of *it*. Compare this with the situation in Text 2.3: clauses 3iii and 3iv each contain the pronoun *it*, but can we be sure just what *it* refers to?

It is this absence of semantic ties between elements in Text 2.3 that prevents it from hanging together internally as a piece of language, and which makes it difficult for us to make much sense of it. And yet I'm prepared to bet that you will struggle very hard to find meaning there, which leads us to an important insight into how we respond to language.

Sense in sequence: the sequential implicativeness of text

A basic property of text is illustrated by the following conversational excerpt between two speakers:

> A: What time is it, love?
> B: Julie left her car at the station today.

Given these two turns at talk, presented one after the other, you will find yourself working hard to make sense of the little exchange they apparently represent. You will try very hard to find a way of interpreting B's turn as somehow an answer to A's question, even though there is no obvious link between them *apart from their appearance in sequence.* Perhaps you will decide that B has left his watch in Julie's car and so cannot tell A the time; or perhaps both interactants are waiting for someone called Julie who is usually home by this time but B can explain why she's late . . ., etc. You have no doubt constructed your own interpretation which allows you to 'understand' B's utterance. It is unlikely that you looked at the example and simply said 'It doesn't make sense'.

From this example we can appreciate a point made some years ago by a group of conversation analysts (e.g. Schegloff and Sacks 1973/74, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, Schegloff 1981). When these analysts looked at everyday conversations, they noticed that 'no empirically occurring utterance ever occurs outside, or external to, some specific sequence. Whatever is said will be said in some sequential context' (Atkinson and Heritage 1984: 6). They developed this observation into the notion of **sequential implicativeness** (Schegloff and Sacks 1973/74: 296). Sequential implicativeness arises from the fact that language is inexorably tied to linear sequence, so that one part of a text (a sentence or a turn at talk) must follow another part of the text (the next sentence or turn at talk). The outcome of this is that each part of the text creates the context within which the next bit of the text is interpreted. And, as your own efforts with the example above will have demonstrated to you, speakers or readers will go to enormous lengths to construct relationships between what is said/written *now* and what was said/written a moment ago.

In the example above it is difficult (but certainly not impossible) to construct the links that would allow B's utterance to make sense coming as it does after A's question. There are no clues to the links provided in the speaker's talk. B could have been more helpful by saying:

> B: I know Julie's late, but we shouldn't get worried because she left her car at the station today and caught the train, instead of driving in to work.

But because of the context of situation shared by the interactants, it was not necessary to spell out the links explicitly. However, if most texts are to make sense to readers or listeners, the links between the parts have to be more easily recoverable. Making the links between the parts of a text recoverable is what the resources of cohesion enable language users to do, which is why we now need to look at cohesion in more detail.

Analysing cohesive resources

Following Halliday and Hasan, I'm suggesting that the texture of texts involves both the text's relation to its external context (which we will explore in Chapters Three and Four), and the text's internal cohesion. Texts like Text 2.3 which trouble either or both of these dimensions of texture are problematic for readers to make sense of, though we have a well-trained semantic orientation which leads us to try to find meaning in any sequence of language.

To see cohesive resources at work in their full power, let's look now at a famous (very) short story by American writer Kate Chopin.

Text 2.4: The Story of an Hour[5]

(1i)Knowing (1ii)that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, (1iii)great care was taken (1iv)to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

(2)It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. (3)Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her.

(4i)It was he who had been in the newspaper office (4ii)when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, (4iii)with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of 'killed.' (5i)He had only taken the time (5ii)to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, (5iii)and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend (5iv)in bearing the sad message.

(6)She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. (7)She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. (8i)When the storm of grief had spent itself (8ii)she went away to her room alone. (9)She would have no one follow her.

(10)There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. (11i)Into this she sank, (11ii)pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul.

(12)She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. (13)The delicious breath of rain was in the air. (14)In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. (15i)The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, (15ii)and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

(16)There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

(17i)She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, (17ii)except when a sob came up into her throat (17iii)and shook her, (17iv)as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

(18i)She was young, with a fair, calm face, (18ii)whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. (19i)But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, (19ii)whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. (20i)It was not a glance of reflection, (20ii)but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

(21i)There was something coming to her (21ii)and she was waiting for it, fearfully. (22)What was it? (23i)She did not know; (23ii)it was too subtle and elusive to name. (24i)But she felt it, (24ii)creeping out of the sky, (24iii)reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.

(25)Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. (26i)She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, (26ii)and she was striving to beat it back with her will – (26iii)as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been.

(27i)When she abandoned herself (27ii)a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. (28i)She said it over and over under her breath: (28ii)'free, free, free!' (29)The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. (30)They stayed keen and bright. (31i)Her pulses beat fast, (31ii)and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

(32i)She did not stop to ask (32ii)if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. (33)A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial.

(34i)She knew (34ii)that she would weep again (34iii)when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; (34iv)the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. (35)But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. (36)And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

(37i)There would be no one to live for during those coming years; (37ii)she would live for herself. (38i)There would be no powerful will bending hers (38ii)in that blind persistence with which men and women believe (38iii)they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. (39i)A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime (39ii)as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

(40)And yet she had loved him – sometimes. (41)Often she had not. (42)What did it matter! (43i)What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in face of this possession of self-assertion (43ii)which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

(44)'Free! (45i)Body and soul free!' (45ii)she kept whispering.

(46i)Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, (46ii)imploring for admission. (47)'Louise, open the door! (48i)I beg, open the door – (48ii)you will make yourself ill. (49)What are you doing Louise? (50)For heaven's sake open the door.'

(51)'Go away. (52)I am not making myself ill.' (53)No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

(54)Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. (55)Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. (56i)She breathed a quick prayer (56ii)that life might be long. (57i)It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder (57ii)that life might be long.

(58i)She arose at length (58ii)and opened the door to her sister's importunities. (59i)There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, (59ii)and she carried herself unwittingly

like a goddess of Victory. (60i)She clasped her sister's waist, (60ii)and together they descended the stairs. (61)Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom.

(62)Some one was opening the front door with a latchkey. (63i)It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, (63ii)composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. (64i)He had been far from the scene of accident, (64ii)and did not even know (64iii)there had been one. (65)He stood amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.

(66)But Richards was too late.

(67i)When the doctors came (67ii)they said (67iii)she had died of heart disease – of joy that kills.

Most readers find Text 2.4 a powerful and effective piece of language. Where we struggled with Text 2.3, we become absorbed and perhaps even moved by Text 2.4. We certainly have no trouble making sense of it. One reason is because in Text 2.4 Chopin has exploited with great craft the resources of the three main types of cohesion in written language: **reference, conjunction and lexical cohesion.** I'll now take you through how you can analyse these cohesive patterns in texts like Text 2.4. For more detail on these cohesive patterns, see Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: Chapter 9).

Reference

The cohesive resource of reference refers to how the writer/speaker introduces participants and then keeps track of them once they are in the text. Participants are the people, places and things that get talked about in the text. The participants in the following sentence are underlined:

(1i)Knowing (1ii)that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, (1iii)great care was taken (1iv)to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

Whenever a participant is mentioned in a text, the writer/speaker must signal to the reader/listener whether the identity of the participant is already known or not. That is, participants in a text may be either **presented** to us (introduced as 'new' to the text) or **presumed** (encoded in such a way that we need to retrieve their identity from somewhere). Contrast the following:

(1i)Knowing (1ii)that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble,
(10)There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair.
(14)In the street below a peddler was crying his wares.

All these examples involve **presenting** reference: we are not expected to know anything about Mrs. Mallard, or a heart trouble or which armchair, or peddler, as all these participants are being introduced to us for the first time. Contrast those examples with:

(11i)Into this she sank,

Here we have two **presuming** reference items: it is presumed that we know, or can establish, the thing and the person the *this* and the *she* refer to.

Only presuming participants create cohesion in a text, since ties of dependency are constructed between the presuming item and what it refers to (its referent). The commonest presuming reference items are:

1. the definite article: *the*
   (6) She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same
2. demonstrative pronouns: *that, these, those . . .*
   (11i) Into this she sank,
3. pronouns: *he, she, it, they . . .*; *mine, his, hers, theirs . . .*
   (11i) Into this she sank,

When the writer uses a presuming reference item, the reader needs to retrieve the identity of that item in order to follow the text. That is, if the writer has used the pronoun *she*, for example, the reader must be able to track down just who the *she* refers to. If presuming referents are not retrievable (i.e. if the reader cannot figure out who *she* refers to, or there are a number of possible candidates), the interaction will run into problems. For example, note the ambiguity in the following opening sentence from a story we'll be looking at in a minute:

I watched as my companion was attacked by the polar bear.

There are three presuming reference items in this sentence, none of which we can clearly decode because there is no prior text to tell us who the *I* is who has a companion, nor which polar bear we're talking about (let alone what it's doing there!).

The identity of a presuming reference item may be retrievable from a number of different contexts:

1. from the general context of culture: for example, when we talk about *how hot the sun is today* we know which sun we are talking about: the sun we share as members of this particular world. We call retrieval from the shared context of culture **homophoric** reference.
2. from the immediate context of situation: for example, if I ask you to *Put it down next to her*, and we're in the same place at the same time, you will be able to decode the *it* as referring to whatever object I am pointing to, and the *her* as the female in the room. When we retrieve from shared immediate context this is called **exophoric** reference.
3. from elsewhere within the text itself: frequently the identity of the participant has been given at an earlier point in the text. For example:
   (6) She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same
   Here we decode the identity of the presuming reference to *she* by referring back to *Mrs. Mallard*, and to *the story* by making the link back to the previous paragraph's mention of *the railroad disaster . . . with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of 'killed'.*

When the identity of a referent item is retrieved from within the text, we are dealing with **endophoric** reference. It is endophoric reference which creates cohesion, since endophoric ties create the internal texture of the text, while homophoric and exophoric reference contribute to the text's (situational) coherence.

Endophoric reference can be of three main kinds:

1. **anaphoric reference**: this occurs when the referent has appeared at an earlier point in the text. In the example given earlier (*She did not hear the story . . .*), both retrievals are anaphoric. Here is another anaphoric example:

> (27i)When she abandoned herself (27ii)a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. (28i)She said it over and over under her breath: (28ii)'free, free, free!'

We retrieve the identity of the pronoun *it* by referring back to the presenting referent in the previous sentence: *a little whispered word.*

Typically, anaphoric reference is to a participant mentioned nearby (one or two sentences previously), but sometimes it may refer back to an item mentioned many pages, minutes or even hours ago. When we read in sentence 64:

> (64i)He had been far from the scene of accident, (64ii)and did not even know (64iii)there had been one.

we have no trouble working out *which* scene of accident: we link this presuming referent back to the mention of the *railroad disaster* in sentence 4.

2. **cataphoric reference**: this occurs when the referent has not yet appeared, but will be provided subsequently. For example, imagine Chopin had begun her story:

> The news came as a terrible shock to them all, but most of all to Mrs. Mallard. It seemed her husband Brently had been killed in a railroad disaster. His friend, Richards, carried the sad tidings to Mrs. Mallard and her sister Josephine.

Here we begin with the presuming references to *the news* and *them all*, but it is only in the second sentence that we learn just what that news was, and only in the third that we can establish the referent for *them all.*

3. **esphoric reference**: this occurs when the referent occurs in the phrase immediately following the presuming referent item (within the same nominal group/noun phrase, not in a separate clause). For example:

> (8i)When the storm of grief had spent itself

– here we learn *which* storm from the immediately following prepositional phrase *of grief*;

> (12)She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life.

– we learn immediately *which* open square from the following phrase *before her house*, and the tops *of what* from the phrase *of trees*;

> (15i)The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, (15ii)and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

– here we see that an esphoric referent may be quite extensive. Which notes did she hear? The prepositional phrase tells us: *of a distant song which some one was singing.*

One further type of endophoric reference which can operate anaphorically, cataphorically or esphorically is **comparative** reference. With comparative reference, the identity of the presumed item is retrieved not because it has already been mentioned or will be mentioned in the text, but because an item with which it is being compared has been mentioned. For example:

> (6)She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same

We interpret the comparative referent *the same* to refer back to *the story*, which itself anaphorically refers back to the whole of the preceding paragraph, where we have heard *the story* of Brently Mallard's death. This example shows us both comparative reference and also what we call **whole text referencing**. In **whole text referencing** the referent is more than a simple participant. It may be a sequence of actions or events mentioned previously; it may even be 'the whole text up to this point'. When a writer notes *This therefore proves that . . .*, the presuming *this* may refer to everything that the writer has been arguing to that point.

One special kind of reference is known as **bridging** reference. This is when a presuming reference item refers back to an early item from which it can be inferentially derived. For example:

(10) There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair.

There has been no previous mention of a window, yet we have no trouble bridging from the earlier reference to *her room* to work out that *the open window* refers to the window of her room. Similarly, in

(15i) The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly,
(15ii) and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

The reference item *the* signals that we know *which* eaves. In fact, no previous mention of eaves has been made, but we can 'bridge' from our assumption that she is in a room of a house to interpret *the eaves of her house*. And in the following example

(67i) When the doctors came (67ii) they said (67iii) she had died of heart disease – of joy that kills.

we can bridge from earlier mention of her heart disease to figure out that *the doctors* are the ones treating her for her condition.

A common type of reference in narrative text is **possessive** reference. This is used throughout Text 2.4. Here's one of the simpler examples:

(8ii) she went away to her room alone

We decode *her* in the possessive nominal group *her room* anaphorically to refer to *Mrs. Mallard*. In fact, *her house* is mentioned in a later sentence (sentence 12), so this could also be interpreted as cataphoric reference.

Possessive nominal groups may have even more participants, as this next example shows:

(3) Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her.

The possessive pronoun *her* refers anaphorically to Mrs Mallard; *husband's* refers anaphorically to Brently Mallard.

There is one type of reference, known as **locational** reference, which involves not the identification of a participant in a text (a person or thing), but the identification of a location in time or space. In written text, locational referents such as *here, there, then, above, below* are usually retrieved endophorically, from surrounding text. For example, Chopin might have written:

She went away to her room alone. There she stayed for many hours.

There is a locational reference back to *her room*.

But in conversation, locational referents are frequently retrieved exophorically:

Here are some bikkies.
(retrieved exophorically: here where we are)
These days it costs a fortune.
(retrieved exophorically: these days that we live in now)

For more on categories of reference, see Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 549–61), Martin (1992a: 93–158) and Martin and Rose (2003), where reference is treated under the category of **identification**.

Tabulating reference chains

A convenient way to capture the reference patterns in a text is simply to trace through mentions of the text's participants. This will give you a picture of how texture is created as **reference chains** develop across a text. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) and Martin and Rose (2003) each suggest different ways of doing this. The main principle is the same: you identify presuming referents in a text, and then seek to link all mentions of that participant. You can do either a comprehensive analysis of reference, tracing *all* presuming referents, or you can concentrate on the major participants only, depending on the purposes of your analysis.

You can prepare a simple linear display of reference chains by simply listing all linked reference items alongside their sentence numbers throughout a text. If the identity of a presumed reference item is stated in the text (for example, it is introduced through a presenting reference), then simply include it in your list at the appropriate sentence number. If the identity of the presumed referent is never explicitly stated (i.e. it is not lexicalized in the text), then you may wish to write it in at the start of that reference chain [in parentheses]. Presenting reference items only need to be noted if they are referred back to by a presuming reference item at some point in the text. With possessive nominal groups containing presuming referents, list the group under each of the participants it refers to. You can use abbreviations to indicate from where the identity of the referent is retrieved (anaphorically, esphorically, bridging, exophoric, etc.). In the Appendix you can find reference chains for the three Crying Baby texts from Chapter One. Those analyses are discussed in Chapter Eleven. Here are 8 of the main reference chains in Text 2.4, followed by a brief discussion of what they show us about 'The Story of an Hour'.

Chain 1: Mrs Mallard

(1) Mrs Mallard – her – her husband's death – (2) her sister – (3) her husband's friend – her – (6) she – (7) she – her sister's arms – (8) she – (9) she – her – (11) she – her body – her soul – (12) she – her house – (15) her – (16) her window – (17) she – her head – her throat – her – (18) she – (19) her eyes – (21) her – she – (23) she – (24) she – her – (25) her bosom – (26) she – her – she – her will – her two white slender hands – (27) she – herself – her lips – (28) she – her breath – (29) her eyes – (31) her pulses – her body – (32) she – her – (33) her – (34) she – she – she – her – (35) she – her – (36) she – her arms – (37) she – herself – (38) hers – (39) she – (40) she – (41) she – (43) she – her being – (45) she – (47) Louise –

Key to reference analysis
Numbers refer to sentences (see Text 2.4, p. 31)
Ties are anaphoric unless indicated by:
C: cataphoric S: esphoric P: comparative L: locational B: bridging H: homophoric
X: exophoric

(48) you – yourself – (49) you – Louise – (52) I – (53) she – (54) her fancy – her – (55) her own – (56) she – (57) she – (58) she – her sister's importunities – (59) her eyes – she – (60) she – her sister's waist – they – (61) them – (67) she

Chain 2: Brently Mallard
(1) husband's death – (3) husband's friend – (4) Brently Mallard's name – (34) (B) the kind tender hands – (B) the face – (40) him – (62) some one – (63) Brently Mallard – his grip sack and umbrella – (64) he – (65) he – him – his wife

Chain 3: her sister, Josephine
(2) her sister Josephine – (7) her sister's arms – (46) Josephine – her lips – (48) I – (58) her sister's importunities – (60) her sister's waist – they – (61) them – (65) Josephine's piercing cry

Chain 4: Richards
(3) her husband's friend Richards – (4) he – (5) he – himself – (61) Richards – (65) Richards' quick motion – (66) Richards

Chain 5: the news
(1) the news (S) of her husband's death – (4) (B) the railroad disaster – the list of 'killed' – (5) its truth – the sad message – (6) the story – the same (P) – its significance

Chain 6: 'something'
(21) something – it – (22) it – (23) it – (24) it – (26) this thing that was approaching to possess her – it – (27) (C) a little whispered word – (28) it – (32) it – (S) a monstrous joy – (33) the suggestion – (39) that brief moment of illumination – (43) this possession of self-assertion (S) which she recognized as the strongest impulse (S) of her being

Chain 7: the room/house
(8) her room – (10) (B) the open window – (12) (B) her house – (14) (L) the street below – (15) (B) the eaves – (16) her window – (46) (B) the closed door – (B) the keyhole – (47) the door – (48) the door – (50) the door – (53) that open window – (58) the door – (60) (B) the stairs – (61) (B) the bottom – (62) the front door

Chain 8: Mrs Mallard's eyes
(1) Mrs Mallard – (19) (B) her eyes - whose gaze – (20) it – (29) the vacant stare – her eyes – (30) they – (59) her eyes

This listing does not show *all* the presuming references in Text 2.4. There are many short chains that link just two or three participants to each other, but it's the longer, sustained chains that contribute most to creating cohesion in the text. What, then, can *reference chains tell us about the text?*

Firstly, reference chains show us who are the major human participants in a text, and their relative importance. It perhaps comes as no surprise to see just how dominant Mrs Mallard is as a participant in 'The Story of an Hour': there are 87 references to her, spanning

the entire text. None of the other human participants even come close. Of the other three human participants, both Richards and Josephine feature only at the edges of the text, appearing as participants only as they intrude peripherally upon Mrs Mallard's life. More strikingly, Brently Mallard textually enacts his death and life: as her husband goes out of her life, he also goes out of her text, only to return to the text (and her life) at the very end. Despite his lengthy textual absence, his return enacts exactly the lack of freedom Mrs Mallard had been so joyous to escape: once he's back in the text, her reference chain dies.

But while this is very much a story about just one participant, Mrs Mallard, the text is less about what she *does* as a participant and more about what she *has*. Note that the Mrs Mallard reference chain contains a surprising number of possessive references: 42 of the 87, in fact. This again is a textual realization of the thematic concern of the story, as we see Mrs Mallard come into possession, achieving *self*-possession, only to have it snatched away again at the end.

And what does Chopin construe self-possession to mean? Judging by the reference chains, it means above all possession of one's own body. Most of the possessive references are to Mrs Mallard's body parts: her hands, her lips, her being, etc. Even though Mrs Mallard may whisper *'Free! Body and soul free!'*, the text suggests that for Chopin it is a woman's physical freedom that matters most, or is most difficult to obtain.

There are so many references to Mrs Mallard's eyes that I've shown this as a separate chain. We'll see in a moment how it resonates with other lexical relations in the text. Here we can just note how these references to her eyes and gaze help to realize the metaphorical significance of *self-realization* in the story.

Aside from the human participants, the most extensive chains concern 'the news' and the elusive 'something' that is coming towards Mrs Mallard. The news chain is dense early on in the story, but this fizzles out once it has done its work of providing the catalyst for Mrs Mallard's movement towards her epiphany. The 'something' chain then takes over. Just what *is* the identity of the 'something'? All seems to point towards the referentially complex phrase *this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being*, but the referents in this chain are often as 'subtle and elusive' as is the something itself.

An extensive chain to do with place is realized, with 16 references (mostly through bridging) to Mrs Mallard's house, room and parts of the room. These references of course anchor the story in its setting, but they do more: notice how frequently open or closed windows and doors are referred to. Again, this chain contributes thematically, setting up the contrast between the closed and claustrophobic nature of Mrs Mallard's life (she is stuck within her marriage, within her house, within her room, behind a closed door) before her liberation (the realization of which comes to her through her open window).

If we consider now where most items are retrieved from we see that Text 2.4 is typical of written, fictional text: most referents are retrieved endophorically, from within the text itself, and most anaphorically. In this way the text creates its own fictional context, constructing itself as a largely context-independent use of language. This makes it possible for the text to 'travel' so successfully across time and space: though 'The Story of an Hour' was written in North America in the 1920s, we can read and understand the story now, wherever in the world we are. Pragmatic, non-fictional texts depend much more on the extra-textual context for exophoric and homophoric retrieval, as we'll see in texts analysed later in this book.

The combination of reference ties that span the length of the whole text, the consistent focus on a relatively small number of participants, the density of ties, and their endophoric retrieval together add up to create a highly cohesive, self-contained text. The reference chains are also cohesive in that they contribute to the thematic and metaphorical meanings

the text is making. The patterns of reference chains help to realize Chopin's suggestion that conventional marriage deprives women of self-possession of their own bodies.

Kate Chopin makes it look easy, but constructing well-textured narratives can be a challenge for most young writers. Consider Text 2.5 below, a short story written by a 12-year-old Australian boy and submitted to a national creative writing competition.

Text 2.5: Fatal Alaska[6]
(spelling and punctuation as in original)

I watched as my companion was attacked by the polar bear. Then he fell to the ground and didn't move. I knew he was dead. My other companion was still in the plane, looking like it was he who had been attacked. I tried to ignore the body but two hours later could stand it no longer. I made a whole in the ice and left it for whatever actic creature was hungry.

My journey to Alaska consisted of two reason, finding the two men who set off from Canada to study penguins and to give the two Canadian mountys some experience in Alaska.

My name is Samual Jacobson, I am a 17 year old Canadian piolot who was assigned to this mission. At first I was proud to do it, then nervous and now I'm terrified. The snow storm last week is said to have covered their plane in ice and snow. I am told they were proffsianals.

I had to get my live companion to refrain from losing his mind. I could not afford to lose another friend or I might lose my own mind. It took a great deal of shaking to bring my friend to his senses, then I urged him to get moving, which he reluctantly did. We moved for several hours getting colder by the minute, and less confident.

Just when I feared we would have to turn back, I saw a light, that looked like a fire. I don't think my partner saw it so I steered him towards it. We saw then what it was, a fire, recently lit, in the middle of a cave.

We ventured into the cave and saw nothing inside but a rack with bones and body parts in it, a billy with meat in it and blood! Then a shadowy figure loomed at the entrance of the cave.

I stared at my partner, who once again had not noticed the happenings around him. I froze, I know its stupid but as the figure advanced, I just froze. My heart was a straight six motor for that ten or so seconds, and it was revving its guts out. Then, when the figure stepped into the flickering light of the fire I felt relief, as I recognized him from the photo of the explorers as Captain John, the leader of the expidition, and the brains.

I knew the bones and body parts and meat were not animal, they were his crew! Just then he pulled a hatchet from his coat and ran at me. That confirmed to me that he had canaballised on his men. I ducked sending him over my back and into the fire, he set alight. I watched as he frantically jumped up, ran outside and rolled in the snow, all the time holding his hatchet. He got up, furious and I knew he wouldn't miss again . . .

TO BE CONTINUED . . ..

This young writer is struggling with many narrative skills, of which referential cohesion is one – we'll return to another in the next chapter. Note how the writer creates confusion for the reader by the excessive use of presuming reference in the first paragraphs (presuming referents underlined):

I watched as my companion was attacked by the polar bear.
– we don't yet know who the I is, or which polar bear

Then he fell to the ground and didn't move.
– the companion or the polar bear? We make the conventional cultural assumption, but it's always possible we're wrong.

I knew he was dead. My other companion was still in the plane, looking like it was he who had been attacked.
– comparative reference now tells us that the 'I' has two companions, but we don't know who any of them are yet, nor how it is they're in a plane, wherever.

I tried to ignore the body but two hours later could stand it no longer. I made a whole in the ice and left it for whatever actic creature was hungry.
– *the body* bridges back to the dead companion, and when we get *the ice* we can link this homophorically with *the polar bear* and subsequently the *actic*. But why are we there? And who are we?

My journey to Alaska consisted of two reason, finding the two men who set off from Canada to study penguins and to give the two Canadian mountys some experience in Alaska.
– through esphoric reference we learn we're in *Alaska* (not quite the *actic*, after all), but we're still confused because we don't yet know who *the two men who set off from Canada to study penguins* are (we need some presenting reference, such as their names), or who *the two Canadian mountys* are. Could they be the two companions mentioned in the first paragraph? Perhaps, but we can't be sure.

It's only in the third paragraph that the *I* discloses his identity, along with some very necessary information about *this mission*, but not all ambiguities are cleared up.

While this young writer is struggling with reference, professional writers can sometimes deliberately problematize referential cohesion. Consider Text 2.6, a well-known poem by John Ashbery. Notice what you stumble over as you try to 'make sense' of the poem.

Text 2.6: The Grapevine[7]

(1)Of who we and all they are
You all now know. (2)But you know
After they began to find us out we grew
Before they died thinking us the causes
Of their acts. (3)Now we'll not know
The truth of some still at the piano, though
They often date from us, causing
These changes we think we are. (4)We don't care
Though, so tall up there
In young air. (5)But things get darker as we move
To ask them: Whom must we get to know
To die, so you live and we know?

Ashbery presents us here with what looks at first sight like a very conventional poem: the poetic style of the heading (article and noun), three four-line stanzas, poetic format (not

complete lines), the use of poetic conventions such as running on, rhyme, the suggestion of metaphor, and the absence of narrative devices such as temporal sequence, characterization, dramatic event. The use of all these **genre** conventions triggers socialized reading practice and we set out to read the text *as a poem*, which means we're likely to work very hard at our reading. We expect poetry to be hard, its meanings to be ambiguous and many, its message(s) to be profound, moral and usually humanistic but also elusive. We'll probably read the text many times. And yet, try as you might, can you make much sense of this poem?

One problem with the text is that it's organized around the three presuming reference items *we, they, you*. But who do these pronouns refer to? There is no prior textual context from which we can retrieve the identity of the referents endophorically; nor can we retrieve them exophorically. Since we can never really know who the *you, they* or *we* refers to, the meanings of this text remain indeterminate. We can come up with quite a few possible interpretations of the poem, for all of which we'll have to suggest what those pronouns refer to. But we can never fully resolve the uncertainties, particularly of identity.

Lexical cohesion

Indeterminate reference is not the only problem you might have with Ashbery's poem. Not only are we in some doubt as to just *who* it's about, we're also confused about just *what* it's about. The title sets up multiple expectations: the word *grapevine* could be referring to the plant, in which case we wouldn't be surprised to find words like *wine, leaves, stalk, grow*, etc. Or it could be referring to *gossip, talk, stories*, etc. What it doesn't prepare us for, though, is the word *piano* right in the middle of the poem. Whatever slender lexical ties we were establishing to make meaning are likely to be shattered at that point, as we ask: just what is this poem about? Ashbery is frustrating our conventional expectations of lexical cohesion in text.

The cohesive resource of lexical relations refers to how the writer/speaker uses lexical items (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and event sequences (chains of clauses and sentences) to relate the text consistently to its area of focus or its **field**. Lexical cohesion analysis derives from observing that there are certain expectancy relations between words. For example, if you read the word *mouse* in a text, you will not be surprised to come across the words *cheese, white, squeak, tail, rodent* or even *computer* in nearby text, while you would be much more surprised to come across the words *thunderstorm, shovel, bark* or *ironing board.* Lexical relations analysis is a way of systematically describing how words in a text relate to each other, how they cluster to build up lexical sets or lexical strings. Lexical cohesion is an important dimension of cohesion. When that cohesion is troubled, as it is in 'The Grapevine', and also in Text 2.3 'Stalin's Genius', so is our ability to take meaning from a piece of language.

Lexical cohesion operates between units which encode lexical content. These are what we call the *open-class* items of nouns, main verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Grammatical words, or *closed-class* items, such as prepositions, pronouns, articles and auxiliary verbs do not encode lexical content, and so do not contribute to lexical cohesion (though, of course, they contribute to the grammatical relations in a text).

There are two main kinds of lexical relations that we can recognize between words:

1. **taxonomic** lexical relations: where one lexical item relates to another through either class/sub-class (*rodent–mouse*) or part/whole (*tail–mouse*) relations. Although most frequently these relations link lexical items which refer to people, places,

things and qualities, and so are expressed in nominal groups, taxonomic relations can also link processes (verbs) (*eat–nibble*).

2. **expectancy** relations: where there is a predictable relation between a process (verb) and either the doer of that process, or the one effected by it (e.g. *mouse–squeak, nibble–cheese*). These relations link nominal elements with verbal elements.

Words which are taxonomically related may be related through either **classification** or **composition.**

1. **Classification**: this is the relationship between a superordinate term and its members, or hyponyms. Classification is the *x is a type of y* relationship. The main kinds of classification relations are:

a) **co-hyponomy**: when two (or more) lexical items used in a text are both subordinate members of a superordinate class:
influenza:pneumonia (both terms are members of the superordinate class *illnesses*)

b) **class/sub-class**: when two (or more) lexical items used in a text are related through sub-classification:
illness:pneumonia (here the relationship is superordinate term to hyponym)

c) contrast: when two (or more) lexical items encode a contrast relationship or antonmy:
clear:blurry; wet:dry; joy:despair

d) similarity: when two (or more) lexical items express similar meanings. There are two main sub-types:

i) **synonymy**: when two words essentially restate each other:
message:report; news:intelligence

ii) **repetition**: when a lexical item is repeated:
death:death

The second main type of taxonomic relation is that of **composition**:

2. **Composition** is the part/whole relationship between lexical items which are meronyms or co-meronyms. There are two possible types:

a) **meronymy**: when two lexical items are related as whole to part (or vice versa):
body:heart

b) **co-meronymy**: when two lexical items are related by both being parts of a common whole:
heart:lungs

The second main type of lexical relations, **expectancy relations**, may operate between a nominal element and a verbal element. The relation may operate between an action and the typical (expected) 'doer' of that action:

doctor/diagnose
baby/cry
sparrows/twitter

or the relation may operate between an action/process and the typical (expected) participant effected by that action:

whisper/word

Table 2.2 Simple and complex realizations of lexical content (adapted from Martin 1992a: 293)

MEANING EXPRESSED	SIMPLE REALIZATION (1 lexical item)	COMPLEX REALIZATION (2+ lexical items)
person	baby	human infant
action	embrace	have a cuddle
quality	desperate	at your wits' end
circumstance	sometimes	from time to time

break/news
play/piano

The predictability relationship between an event/process and the typical location in which it takes place may also be described as an expectancy relation:

work/office

Expectancy can also be used to capture the relationship between the individual lexical items and the composite, predictable, nominal group they form:

heart/disease
child/care

So far all the examples given have involved single words. However, as Martin (1992a: 293) points out, sometimes two or more lexical items may be functioning to express one piece of lexical content. Some examples are given in Table 2.2.

Complex lexical items operating to encode one meaning can be treated as a single item for the purposes of lexical cohesion analysis.

We can capture the lexical cohesion in a text by listing all related lexical items, showing how they form lexical strings that add texture to text. A lexical string is a list of all the lexical items that occur sequentially in a text that can be related to an immediately prior word (if possible) or to a head word either taxonomically or through an expectancy relation. It often helps here to decide on the 'head word' for a string, and then bring together sequentially related lexical items. Sometimes you'll find that a lexical item can be linked in to more than one string. In that case, it's best to display the word in more than one string because the word is contributing texture through both semantic associations.

An analysis of lexical cohesion in the three Crying Baby texts appears in the Appendix and is discussed in Chapter Eleven. Here is a list of 11 major lexical strings in Text 2.4.

Key
Numbers refer to sentence numbers (see Text 2.4, p. 31)
Ties between items are classification unless otherwise indicated with:
C: composition
x: expectancy

String 1: death and life

(1) afflicted with x heart trouble – x death – (4) disaster – x killed – (12) life – (34) death – dead – (37) live – live – (48) x ill – (52) ill – (53) life – (56) life – (57) life – (64) accident – (67) died – x heart disease – x kills

String 2: news
(1) break – x news (2) sentences – hints – (4) x newspaper – intelligence – list – (5) truth – telegram – bearing x message – (6) story – significance – (27) (C) word – (28) x said – (32) ask – (33) dismiss x suggestion – (39) illumination – (45) x whispering – (56) prayer – (58) importunities

String 3: open/closed
(1) break – (2) broken – veiled – revealed – concealing – (10) open – (12) open – (18) repression – (19) dull x stare – x eyes – x gaze – (20) reflection – (26) recognize – (29) x vacant stare – look – eyes – (30) keen x bright – (33) clear x perception – (34) saw – looked – fixed – (35) saw – (36) opened – spread out – (38) blind – (39) looked – illumination – (46) admission – (47) open – (48) open – (50) open – (53) open – (58) opened – (62) opening – (65) screen x view

String 4: body
(1) heart – (6) x paralyzed – (11) physical exhaustion – body – (C) soul – (17) (C) head – (C) throat – (18) (C) face – (C) lines – (19) (C) eyes – (25) (C) bosom – (26) (C) hands – (27) (C) lips – (29) (C) eyes – (31) (C) pulses x beat fast – x coursing x blood – (C) body – (34) (C) hands – (C) face – (36) spread out x arms – (43) (C) being – (45) (C) body – (C) soul – (46) (C) lips – (59) (C) eyes – (60) (C) waist – (67) (C) heart

String 5: house
(8) room – (10) (C) window – (12) square – (C) house – (14) street – (15) eaves – (16) (C) window – (46) (C) door – (C) keyhole – (47) (C) door – (48) door – (50) door – (53) window – (58) door – (60) stairs – (62) front door – (C) latchkey

String 6: power, will, possession
(1) care – (5) careful – tender – (7) wild – abandonment – (8) storm – (17) x thrown back – (18) repression – strength – (21) fearfully – (23) subtle – elusive – (24) x creeping – reaching toward – (26) possess – beat back – x will – powerless – (27) abandoned – escaped – (29) x terror – (32) x monstrous – (33) exalted – trivial – (34) kind – tender – (35) bitter – (38) powerful will x bending – persistence – right – x impose – will – (39) kind – cruel x intention – crime – (43) mystery – possession – self-assertion – strongest impulse – (54) fancy – running x riot – (55) own – (59) triumph – (59) Victory

String 7: joy
(32) joy – (34) (C) love – (36) x welcome – (40) loved – (43) (C) impulse – (44) x free – (45) free – (53) elixir of life – (67) joy

String 8: time
(5) time – (12) (C) spring – (35) (C) moment – (C) years – (37) years – (39) (C) moment – (40) (C) sometimes – (41) (C) often – (54) (C) days – (55) spring days, summer days, all sorts of days – (56) x long – (57) (C) yesterday – long – (66) late

String 9: natural scenery
(12) trees x aquiver – new spring life – (13) rain – (15) sparrows x twittering – (16) blue sky – (C) clouds – (19) (C) blue sky – (24) (C) sounds – (C) scents – (C) color

String 10: cry
(5) sad – (7) x wept – x wild abandonment – (8) storm of grief – (14) crying – (17) sob x shook – cried – sob – (34) weep – (65) piercing x cry

String 11: extreme behaviour
(7) wild abandonment – (18) calm – (19) dull – (25) tumultuously – (26) x striving – (46) imploring – (48) beg – (50) x heaven – (54) running riot – (56) prayer – (58) importunities – (59) x feverish – goddess – (63) composedly

Again, remember that this is not an exhaustive analysis of *all* lexical cohesion in this text – there are other short strings not listed here. But these strings add depth to patterns we first detected through our reference analysis. Through the dense lexical relations in the text we see more clearly how Chopin weaves thematic meanings throughout the text.

There are, first of all, the strings that we perhaps 'expect' to find, given our surface reading of the story. For example, the string of life and death provides the background which gives the story its existence, but it is a comparatively short string. There is the string of 'news', but notice how this string is not just confined to the first couple of paragraphs of the story but in fact continues throughout the text, suggesting the surprising connection between the news of Mr Mallard's death and Mrs Mallard's own *illumination*. There is also the string of words to do with the setting, and the only surprise here might be just how limited the setting is. The furthest we go from home is to the square in the street. Again, the claustrophobia of Mrs Mallard's physical life is encoded linguistically. Contrast comes with the string of 'natural scenery', where it's the world *outside* Mrs Mallard's house, a world that awakens her awareness of her freedom, offering all that is positive – and that is momentarily within her reach.

But more surprising might be some of the strings which are not easy to notice from casual readings of the story. The open/closed string is strongly metaphoric, as we move from the *veiled* and *concealing* life Mrs Mallard lives at the beginning towards the openness of her freedom. All those *open windows* are cohesively linked to Mrs Mallard's *illumination*, until at the end the story returns to concealment, as Richards tries to *screen* Mrs Mallard again.

The dense string of 'body' words reinforces the pattern we first noticed in reference analysis: that Chopin is much concerned with a woman's control of her body as an essential component of her *self-possession.*

Alongside the short, positive string expressing the 'joy' this self-possession might bring is the much denser, more disturbing string expressing 'power, will, possession'. Through this string the story associates many negative, almost violent meanings with the criminal imposition of a husband's will within marriage.

This string is reinforced by another I have recognized, that of 'extreme behaviour', where we see the inscription of the powerful emotions at work in the story. One specific form of extreme behaviour, crying, constitutes a string on its own, with these negative emotions and responses far outweighing the number of positive lexis, giving the story its rather bleak tone despite the moment of self-realization.

Again, we see from cohesion analysis how Chopin builds up a dense web of lexical links throughout the text, not only binding the separate sentences and paragraphs together into a tight semantic unit but also leading us towards the meanings the story is making beneath (or rather through) its surface events.

We can also see now part of why Text 2.3 above, 'Stalin's Genius', is so difficult to read *as text*: it lacks lexical cohesion. Most of the lexical items in Text 2.3 do <u>not</u> enter into relations of predictability with other lexical items. Perhaps the only cohesively related items are *disembowelment – abuse* (class member to superordinate); *visibility – secrecy* (antonymy); and the two expectancy relations: *pick (your) nose* and *obey authority*. But these few examples demonstrate in fact how difficult it is to juxtapose language items and <u>not</u> have readers struggle to find cohesive links between them! There is thus no stable

ideational domain developed through the text, no one area of experience being represented as sentence follows sentence.

Similarly, we've seen how Ashbery's poem 'The Grapevine' throws all our lexical expectations out in line 6 when we encounter the word 'piano'. And yet, I suspect you find the Ashbery text more meaningful, or at least easier to deal with, than 'Stalin's Genius' . Why? One reason is the poem's adherence to generic conventions, giving us at least some orientation to its meaning (more on this in Chapter Three). But another reason is Ashbery's use of a second type of cohesive device: that of conjunction.

Conjunctive cohesion

The cohesive pattern of conjunction, or conjunctive relations, refers to how the writer creates and expresses logical relationships between the parts of a text. For example, if you come across the sentence $_{(19)}$*But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky*, you can only fully interpret the meaning of the sentence if you read it as standing in a contrastive logical relation with a previous sentence, such as $_{(18)}$*She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength.* In this example, the logical connection between the two sentences is signalled explicitly through the conjunction *but.*

Conjunctive cohesion adds to the texture of text, helping to create that semantic unity that characterizes unproblematic text. Following Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 538–49), we will recognize three main types of conjunctive relations: **elaboration, extension** and **enhancement**. When we reach Chapter Nine, you'll see that these three types of meaning are part of the logico-semantic system of the English clause. We'll see there that meanings of elaboration, extension and enhancement allow us to create semantically meaningful structural links between clauses as we chain clauses together to form **clause complexes**. But in our current discussion of conjunctive cohesion, we're looking at what Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) sees as the non-structural use of these logico-semantic categories: at how these meanings create conjunctive links between **sentences**, not between clauses. This distinction between structural (i.e. grammatical) and non-structural (i.e. cohesive) relations will become clearer later on. For now, here's a brief description of each of the meaning categories, with examples of conjunctions used to express each.

1. **Elaboration** is a relationship of restatement or clarification, by which one sentence is (presented as) a re-saying or representation of a previous sentence. Common conjunctions used to express this relation listed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 541) include *in other words, that is (to say), I mean (to say), for example, for instance, thus, to illustrate, to be more precise, actually, as a matter of fact, in fact.*

> Mrs Mallard had heart trouble. In fact, it was her heart that killed her.
> Chopin's story is carefully crafted. For example, Chopin's opening sentence conveys an enormous amount of information about characters and events.

2. **Extension** is a relationship of either addition (one sentence adds to the meanings made in another) or variation (one sentence changes the meanings of another, by contrast or by qualification). Typical conjunctions listed by Halliday and Matthiessen include *and, also, moreover, in addition, nor, but, yet, on the other hand, however, on the contrary, instead, apart from that, except for that, alternatively.*

(39i)A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime (39ii)as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination. (40)And yet she had loved him – sometimes.
– and yet expresses both addition (and) as well as variation (yet)

3. **Enhancement** refers to ways by which one sentence can develop on the meanings of another, in terms of dimensions such as time, comparison, cause, condition or concession. Common **temporal** conjunctions include *then, next, afterwards, just then, at the same time, before that, soon, after a while, meanwhile, all that time, until then, up to that point, now.*

Mrs Mallard sat alone in her room for some time. After a while, she joined her sister and they went downstairs.
Mrs Mallard sat alone in her room. Meanwhile, her sister and Richards worried about how she was taking the news.

Comparative conjunctions include likewise, similarly, in a different way.

Her sister Louise told her the news carefully. Similarly, Richards was cautious and constrained in what he said.

Causal conjunctions include *so, then, therefore, consequently, hence, because of that, for, in consequence, as a result, on account of this, for that reason, for that purpose, with this in view.*

She realized she now was free. For that reason, she felt suddenly filled with joy.

Concessive relations are expressed by *but, yet, still, though, despite this, however, even so, all the same, nevertheless.*

(34i)She knew (34ii)that she would weep again (34iii)when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; (34iv)the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. (35)But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely.
– but links sentence 35 through a relationship of concession to sentence 34 (although she was sad, nevertheless she could see the positives)

(1)The compelling sound of an infant's cry makes it an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a caregiver. (2)However, cries are discomforting and may be alarming to parents, many of whom find it very difficult to listen to their infant's crying for even short periods of time.
– however is a more formal way to express a concessive relationship between sentences

As well as indicating different logical meanings, a less obvious dimension to conjunctive relations is that they may refer to **external** (real world) logical relations or to the writer's **internal** (rhetorical) organization of the events in his/her text. Compare the following examples:

Mrs Mallard was very affected by her husband's death. First she cried in her sister's arms. Next, she sat alone in her room. Finally, she joined her sister to walk downstairs.

– temporal enhancing conjunctions, linking real world events. This is **external** conjunction.

Mrs Mallard was very affected by her husband's death. First, it meant liberation from marriage. Next, it gave her financial independence. Finally, it allowed her to pursue her own interests.

– rhetorical elaborating conjunctions, itemizing the steps in an argument or exposition. This is **internal** conjunction.

In the first example, the three underlined conjunctions refer to the unfolding of the events in real time, to the external temporal sequencing of Mrs Mallard's actions. In the second example, however, the same three underlined conjunctions function very differently. The sentences are no longer related by temporal sequence (Mrs Mallard did not first become liberated from marriage and *then* get financial independence). Instead, the conjunctions here refer to the speaker's rhetorical organization of the information: *first* is 'first in the sequence of what I'm telling you', *next* is 'next in what I'm telling you', and *finally* is 'the last thing I'm going to tell you'. When conjunctions are used to relate sentences in this rhetorical way, we describe the relation as one of **internal** conjunction. The most common types of internal conjunctive relation are elaboration (in fact all elaborating conjunctions can be regarded as internal, since restatement by definition involves a rhetorical organization of information) and temporal (the *firstly, secondly, finally* type exemplified above). (For a more complete discussion of the internal/external contrast, see Halliday and Hasan 1976: 240–1, Martin 1992a: 207–30, Martin and Rose 2003: 120–27.)

Most conjunctive relations operate between two adjacent sentences. In this next example, the *But* links sentence 19 back to sentence 18:

(18i) She was young, with a fair, calm face, (18ii) whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. (19i) But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, (19ii) whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky.

However, the domain of a conjunctive tie can also stretch further, with a conjunction linking one sentence back to an earlier paragraph, a pattern more common in formal written texts such as expositions and arguments.

Finally, although in all the examples given so far the logical relation has been expressed through a conjunctive word or expression, not all conjunctive relations are in fact expressed **explicitly**. Conjunctive relations can also be expressed **implicitly**, through the simple juxtaposition of sentences. For example:

(6) She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. (7) She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms.

Here although there is no conjunction linking the two sentences, we can only make sense of the occurrence of sentence 7 in relation to 6 if we read in an extending relation (of contrast) between them. We could make this relation explicit by inserting the conjunction *Instead* at the start of sentence 7.

But Kate Chopin did *not* insert the conjunction *instead*, just as she did not repeatedly make explicit the temporal sequence of events with the conjunction *then*. Halliday warns

us to be 'cautious' in reading in too much implicit conjunction when we're analysing a text:

> the presence or absence of explicit conjunction is one of the principal variables in English discourse, both as between registers and as between texts in the same register; this variation is obscured if we assume conjunction where it is not expressed. It is important therefore to note those instances where conjunction is being recognized that is implicit; and to characterize the text also without it, to see how much we still feel is being left unaccounted for. (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 549)

We can capture conjunctive cohesion in a text by listing sentences which are related to each other by conjunction, linked by a symbol that describes the type of link. The following symbols are widely used for logico-semantic relations in SFL:

= elaboration
+ extension
x enhancement

Here's an analysis of conjunction in Text 2.4, taking Halliday's caution about not reading in too many implicit conjunctive relations. (For sentence numbers, see page 31.)
1 = (more precisely) 2–5
6 + (instead) 7
18 x but 19
23 x but 24
24 x now 25 x (because) 26
32 x (because) 33
34 x but 35 + and 36
36 = (in other words) 37–39
37–39 + and yet 40 x (although) 41
53 = (more precisely) 54–57
56 x (yet) 57
65 x but 66
Compared to the other types of cohesion we've looked at there is relatively little conjunctive cohesion in Text 2.4: only 7 explicit conjunctive links, and another 8 implicit ones. The relative sparsity of conjunction can be explained by a number of factors, including the overarching generic structure of 'narrative' which carries with it certain logical implications. For example, because we recognize that we're reading a short story, we assume we're dealing with problematic events unfolding in a temporal sequence which will at some point go against our expectations. While Chopin does not need to make explicit much of the temporal logic of the text, she does build in more of the concessive, counter-expectancy relations through the enhancing *buts*. She needs to do this because 'The Story of an Hour' repeatedly confronts us with what we don't expect. We don't expect the grieving widow to be filled with joy as she realizes her freedom. We don't expect her to admit that she very often did not love her husband. And of course we don't expect her to die on his return. Just as this is a story primarily about going against cultural conventions, so the text itself is structured to help us follow Mrs Mallard's various surprises.

The text also uses elaborating relations, suggesting that Chopin is careful to make sure we fully grasp the counter-expectancies. In particular, the story gives us two key clarifications of the nature of Mrs Mallard's realization: in 37–39 and again in 54–57 we learn in

detail just why Mrs Mallard would be so joyous to escape the *powerful will* of her husband, and what freedom will mean to her. In this way we cannot fail to empathize with Mrs Mallard, and in so doing perhaps accept Chopin's point that *a kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime.*

The structure of the text as a narrative will be considered more in Chapter Three, but we can see here how conjunction cohesion contributes to the successful staging of the narrative in ways that point us toward the story's thematic meanings.

Texts which accidentally or deliberately muddle conjunctive cohesion are usually difficult to interpret. With 'Stalin's Genius', Text 2.3, it is almost impossible to interpret conjunctive relations. There are no explicit conjunctions used in the first four sentences of the text, and it is very difficult to read in any implicit ones. It's thus difficult to construct logical relations between sentences with any confidence.

But with Ashbery's poem 'The Grapevine', we do have some markers of conjunctive cohesion. The cohesive links seem to be:

1 + 2 but (contrast)
2 x 3 now (temporal)
3 x 4 though (concessive)
4 x 5 but (concessive)

The logical relations here are those of an argument: this *but* that *however* something else *despite* that. We recognize the underlying textual strategy here, though it may not help us a great deal. There is just enough conjunctive cohesion in the text to give a sense of a logical structure, even if we can't quite figure out just what is being logically related to what!

Cohesion in spoken texts

So far we've looked at texture, and more specifically cohesion, in *written* texts. But texture is also what differentiates randomly juxtaposed spoken utterances from spoken text, sometimes called *discourse*. In describing the texture of spoken texts, we first of all describe the patterns of lexical relations, conjunction and reference, since all those patterns are drawn on dynamically to create texture in speech as in writing. However, texture in spoken interaction also comes from the patterns of **conversational structure**. Conversational structure describes how interactants negotiate the exchange of meanings in dialogue, and includes patterns of speech functions, exchange structure and ellipsis. Procedures for analysing conversational structure cannot be presented in detail here, but see Eggins and Slade (1997) and Eggins (2000). However, we will be analysing grammatical patterns in spoken language texts through this book.

Cohesion as continuity: the logogenesis of discourse

To fully appreciate how cohesion contributes to the texture of texts, it helps to think of cohesion from two different perspectives. When we look back at a text as a finished product, as we have done until now, cohesion looks like the 'glue' that sticks the elements and therefore meanings together in a text. But text really unfolds dynamically; text producers generate meanings in real time; and we apprehend those meanings in sequence, as we move from sentence to sentence. From this **logogenetic** or dynamic perspective, we can see that cohesion is fundamentally about the ongoing contextualization of meanings in terms of expectancy.

What lexical cohesion really does, for example, is that once the choice of one lexical item has been made (for example, *news*), it creates a context within which certain other words become more likely to occur than others. This probability of co-occurrence is experienced by readers as expectancy: having seen the word *news*, we are not at all surprised to soon come across the words *sentences, hints, intelligence, telegram, message*. We would be much more surprised to come across the words *flower pot*, or *metronome*, or *tissues*. In a highly crafted, cohesive text like Text 2.4, our expectations are met, and each successive mention of an 'expected' lexical item itself recalibrates the expectations for where the text will go next. In this way, the text can move forward, gradually expanding and shifting its meanings, without 'losing' us along the way by troubling or thwarting our expectations – until it does so in its strategic and spectacular dénouement.

This dynamic view also explains our problems with Text 2.3: lexical items in sentence 1 set up a particular context within the text. Having read *Stalin's genius*, we would perhaps not be surprised to read *powers, gift, strategem, Russia* or *revolution*, etc. What we do not expect – what has not been contextualized by the text – are the semantic domains of sexual behaviour (*French kissing*), appearance (*visibility*), fashion accoutrements (*accessories*) and rain (*get you wet*).

The same logogenetic contextualization occurs with the other systems of cohesion. Once a particular participant has been introduced into a text, the context is created for future references to that participant or to other participants somehow connected with it. We 'expect' to hear more about them. Once an opening sentence is 'on the table', all the possible ways of logically developing from that sentence become constrained, a few becoming more likely than others. For example, when we read a general statement (that *Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death*), the text has created its own context for now providing us with specific elaborations (*Thus, her friends told her gently . . .*), extensions (*But she heard it abruptly from the maid . . .*) and enhancements (*So they waited for several hours . . .*) of the meanings realized in that sentence. If explicit or implicit conjunctive relations allow us to make sense of the following text in that way, we are not troubled. The text does what we expect it to. But when a sentence sets up confusing expectations (just what do we expect next, after *Stalin's genius consisted of not French-kissing?*), or when what we expect does not happen, we find the text troubling, its texture problematic.

As this dynamic perspective on text indicates, cohesion is a process through which each successive moment in a text can be linked to the moments that have gone before. As Halliday and Hasan put it: 'Cohesion expresses the continuity that exists between one part of the text and another' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 299). As links are created through the use of cohesive resources, the text ongoingly recalibrates its context, making both continuity and change the defining characteristics of text. This logogenetic view of cohesion allows us to understand what Halliday and Hasan suggest is a general principle of how cohesion works:

> The continuity that is provided by cohesion consists, in the most general terms, in expressing at each stage in the discourse the points of contact with what has gone before. (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 299)

This general principle is useful in exploring longer passages of discourse, such as linked 'pages' of hypertext. Skilfully constructed websites ensure that hot linked pages are linked cohesively with preceding text. Navigational icons at the top or side of the page continually remind readers of the continuity possible within the text. Martin and Rose (2003) offer

analyses of longer texts, demonstrating the ongoing recontextualizing role of cohesive choices.

Texture: from cohesion to coherence

In asking 'what is (a) text?', this chapter has explored one component of texture: the internal cohesion through which referential, lexical and logical ties bind passages of language into relatively coherent, unified semantic units. As examples of non-text and problematic text have shown, cohesion is not an optional add-on to the process of creating text, but an essential element in the process of meaningful communication: 'There has to be cohesion if meanings are to be exchanged at all' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 300). But, as we saw earlier in this chapter, cohesion is not the only component of texture. Not only must a text ongoingly create its own cohesion, but so also a text must relate in relatively stable, coherent ways to the contexts in which it is functioning to mean. In the next chapter we explore one dimension of coherence: the functional-semantic relationship between a text and its generic purpose in the culture.

Notes

1. Example taken from p. 12 of *NSW Foundation Handwriting* Year 5 (J. Barwick (1996), Pascal Press).
2. Source: e. e. cummings in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* 3rd edition (1983), p. 1044.
3. From *The BFG* by Roald Dahl (p. 51, Puffin Edition 1984).
4. Bruce Andrews 'Stalin's Genius', p. 531 in *Postmodern American Poetry – a Norton Anthology*, edited by Paul Hoover (1994), New York: Norton.
5. 'The Story of an Hour' by Kate Chopin (1851–1904), in S. Barnet and W. Cain (2000), *A Short Guide to Writing About Literature*, 8th edn, New York: Longman, pp. 13–14.
6. Source: David Wells, text held in the Nestlé Write-around-Australia archive, State Library of NSW.
7. From John Ashbery *Selected Poems* (1987), London: Paladin, p. 9.

Chapter 3

Genre: context of culture in text

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Introduction

As we saw in Chapter Two, although a text is physically made up of grammatical units (clauses, phrases, words), text is more than just any collection of these units in a sequence. To be text, there must be patterns of cohesion tying the elements of the text together. But texture also involves the text's relationship with its context. Unproblematic texts are, as we saw in Chapter Two, coherent with their context.

This chapter explores the first dimension of contextual coherence, that of genre. We look at the systemic functional interpretation of genre as the 'cultural purpose' of texts, and examine how texts express genres through structural and realizational patterns. The chapter also touches on some implications and applications of genre analysis, including using knowledge of genre to help students write appropriately, genre in fictional and literary texts, and how to read genres critically.

An illustration of genre

To illustrate the principles of genre theory, let's turn to a short, published text:

Text 3.1: Threshold[1]

(1) You are on the threshold of a magnificent chapter in your private life, with substantial opportunities emerging after the new moon on the 5th. (2i) A man who is resourceful, good looking or born around November could be very helpful with your quest for a promotion, (2ii) and you could be celebrating a minor victory on the 9th, 24th or 28th. (3i) A trip, reunion or important talk that you could not fit in last month

will be more straightforward or enjoyable $_{(3ii)}$if you wait until November. $_{(4i)}$If single, $_{(4ii)}$you may start dating a charming man whom you met briefly a few weeks ago. $_{(5i)}$Others may be startled by your apologetic actions $_{(5ii)}$as you seek a reconciliation. $_{(6i)}$Long-range ventures or people you have not met before should be avoided between the 12th and 17th, $_{(6ii)}$especially if your birthday is after the 12th. $_{(7)}$The pieces of a puzzle will fall into place in the last 10 days of the month or by early November.

Most readers have no problems identifying this bit of language as an example of a *type* of text, in this case a horoscope. Text 3.1 is doing something with language that we're familiar with. In its apparent claim to be able to predict events in our lives for the month ahead, we recognize that it's like other texts we've read in the horoscope section of magazines and newspapers.

When we state so comfortably that Text 3.1 is a horoscope text, what we are really stating is what purpose the text fulfils, what kind of job it does in its culture of origin. Identifying the purpose of a text clues readers in to how to 'read' and therefore interpret the (sometimes indeterminate) meanings of the text.

This apparently simple act of recognizing the **genre** of the text has important implications for text analysis, for it suggests that one aspect of the meaning of text is a text's relationship to types, its **generic identity**. It suggests that negotiating texts depends in part on identifying ways in which a particular text is similar to, reminiscent of, other texts circulating in the culture.

You can get a feel for the importance of genre to our understanding of text by comparing Text 3.1 to Text 2.3, 'Stalin's Genius', first presented in Chapter Two (page 28).

While Text 3.1 is 'easy to read', it's likely that you struggled to make sense of Text 2.3. All the individual words are fine; the grammar is apparently English. But it just doesn't all add up. We saw in Chapter Two that one of the problems with this 'text' is that it doesn't display much cohesion at all. The participants introduced in sentence 1 (*Stalin, I*) are not referred to again, and participants change from sentence to sentence; the lexical items are from a dozen different unrelated fields; and there are no interpretable conjunctive relations between sentences.

But perhaps even more disorienting than the text's lack of cohesion is its lack of purpose. Just what, you may wonder, is this text trying to do? How are we supposed to read this text? As a piece of fictional prose? But where's the narrative structure? Or as a poem? But where are the poetic conventions? Or as non-fiction? But of what kind? Different sentences in the text appear to come from different types of texts. For example, *No, I don't mean the missile crisis* appears to be an answer given in dialogue, but where is the question? *Cat goes backward to suit international organization* sounds like the clue to a cryptic crossword puzzle, while *the accessories get you wet* just might be from advertising.

What you're struggling with is the text's generic identity, and the example shows us that if a text can't easily be attributed to a genre, then it is in some ways a problematic text.

Genre is a term you'll come across in many disciplines, including literary studies, film studies, art theory and cultural studies. But we're using it here in a specifically systemic functional way, best captured by Martin's two definitions of genre. Firstly, 'a genre is a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture' (Martin 1984: 25). Less technically, 'Genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them' (Martin 1985b: 248). Defining genres in this way, we

can see that there are as many different genres as there are recognizable social activity types in our culture. There are:

- literary genres: short stories, autobiographies, ballads, sonnets, fables, tragedies
- popular fiction genres: romantic novels, whodunits, sitcoms
- popular non-fiction genres: instructional manuals, news stories, profiles, reviews, recipes, how-to features
- educational genres: lectures, tutorials, report/essay writing, leading seminars, examinations, text-book writing

And there is also an extensive range of everyday genres, genres in which we take part in daily life, such as:

- buying and selling things ('transactional' genres)
- seeking and supplying information
- telling stories
- gossiping
- making appointments
- exchanging opinions
- going to interviews
- chatting with friends

But just how is genre signalled? For example, just how do readers recognize Text 3.1 as a horoscope text, even when it is presented (as in this book) without any explicit clues to its publication source?

Systemic linguistics suggests that the generic identity of a text, the way in which it is similar to other texts of its genre, lies in three dimensions:

1. the co-occurrence of a particular contextual cluster, or its **register configuration**
2. the text's staged or **schematic structure**
3. the **realizational patterns** in the text

We will briefly outline each of these areas.

Register configuration

To understand the relationship between register and genre, it helps to consider how genres come about. In an old but very useful exploration of social processes, Berger and Luckmann (1966: 70) suggest that 'all human activity is subject to habitualization'. You can see this in your everyday life. You probably eat breakfast every day. Although there is an almost infinite range of foods and food combinations from which you could constitute your breakfast, it's a fair bet that most days you eat the same things. You probably don't work your way around the 50 or so different cereals at the supermarket, or the dozens of breads, to say nothing of the rice, eggs, fish, meat and noodle alternatives.

As Berger and Luckmann point out, to simplify everyday life we quickly routinize the way we perform repeated activities:

> Any action that is repeated frequently becomes cast into a pattern, which can then be reproduced with an economy of effort and which, *ipso facto*, is apprehended by its

> performer *as* that pattern. Habitualization further implies that the action in question may be performed again in the future in the same manner and with the same economical effort. (Berger and Luckmann 1966: 70–1)

Developing patterned ways of achieving tasks is useful to us as individuals, but it's even more essential when the tasks we face are social ones, such as using language to co-operatively achieve an outcome. The Russian linguist and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin pointed out that as language use becomes habitualized, we can recognize what he called 'speech genres'. Bakhtin claimed that speech genres develop as language patterns in particular contexts become predictable and relatively stable:

> We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing others' speech, we guess its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end; that is, from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech process. (Bakhtin 1994: 83)

Why do we develop habits, patterns, genres? Theorists point out (and, again, you know this from your own everyday experiences) that doing something in pretty much the same way saves us time and energy. As Berger and Luckmann put it:

> Habitualization carries with it the important psychological gain that choices are narrowed. While in theory there may be a hundred ways to go about the project of building a canoe out of matchsticks, habitualization narrows these down to one. This frees the individual from the burden of 'all those decisions', providing a pyschological relief. (Berger and Luckmann 1966: 71)

In other words, eating the same things for breakfast day after day saves us from the psychological effort of having to make decisions so early in the morning, and the physical effort of having to spend more time at the supermarket.

On the subject of language genres, Bakhtin goes even further. He claims not just that genres are 'economic' but that they are essential:

> If speech genres did not exist and we had not mastered them, if we had to originate them during the speech process and construct each utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be almost impossible. (Bakhtin 1994: 84)

In other words, if members of a culture did not jointly construct and maintain genres, meaningful interpersonal communication would be very difficult, if not impossible. Just imagine if every time you went to the café to buy your take-away latté you had to come up with a novel way of interacting with the person behind the cappuccino machine.

But what exactly do we habitualize when developing genres? As Martin and Rose suggest, the impetus for genres lies in the recurrence of the situations in which we use language:

> As children, we learn to recognize and distinguish the typical genres of our culture, by attending to consistent patterns of meaning as we interact with others in various situations. Since patterns of meaning are relatively consistent for each genre, we can

> learn to predict how each situation is likely to unfold, and learn how to interact in it. (Martin and Rose 2003: 7)

In other words, as situations, or contexts, recur, so we develop recurrent ways of using language. But this begs two questions:

1. What aspects of situations need to recur for two situations to be felt by interactants to be 'similar enough' to call for the habitualized genre?
2. In what aspects of our language use do we see the 'relatively consistent' patterns of meaning in recurrent situations?

These two questions are what systemic linguistics deals with in its theory of register. As you will see in Chapter Four, register theory identifies three main dimensions of situations or context: field, tenor and mode. A genre comes about as particular values for field, tenor and mode regularly co-occur and eventually become stabilized in the culture as 'typical' situations. For example, the transactional genre of buying your coffee from the corner café involves the field of 'coffee', the tenor of 'customer/provider' and the mode of 'face-to-face'. Each of these situational dimensions can be related predictably to certain patterns in language: we see the field in the use of lexical items to do with requesting coffee (*latté, take away, no sugar*), the tenor in the request/compliance sequences of turns (*'Can I please have . . .', 'Right away'*), and the mode in the use of language markers of co-presence (*'Here you go'*).

Similarly, most horoscope texts bring together a field of 'predicting romantic, material, and career events'; a tenor of advice and warning; and a mode of direct address from writer to (generic) reader. We see these situational values realized in the predictable language choices of horoscope texts: nouns about love, marriage, physical appearance and acquisition of wealth and attitudinally loaded adjectives; the writer's use of imperatives (*avoid all men with blue eyes . . .*); and the use of spoken language features (the pronoun *you*, elliptical structures) combined with written language techniques of nominalization.

We will return to these register implications for genre in Chapter Four, but for now the point to note is that genres develop as ways of dealing linguistically with recurrent configurations of register variables. In other words, as certain contextual combinations become stable, ways of interacting within those contexts also become habitualized and, eventually, institutionalized as genres. There come to be preferred, typical ways of negotiating such contexts.

We'll turn now to the most overt expression of genres: their tendency to develop into staged or structured linguistic events.

Schematic structure

Bakhtin suggested that we recognize speech genres because they have predictable 'compositional structure'. As he says: 'from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole'. Another way of saying this is that genres develop linguistic expression through a limited number of functional stages, occurring in a particular sequence. Horoscope texts, for example, typically involve the following stages, occurring in the following order:

General Outlook: a stage in which the astrologer makes a general statement about the period covered by the horoscope (e.g. *it's going to be a rosy month for you*)

Uncontingent Predictions: a stage in which general predictions are made about your immediate future (*you'll meet and marry a tall man*)

Contingent Predictions: a stage in which different advice is offered according to the salient category membership of readers (*if single, x will happen; if married, y*)

Advice: a stage in which the astrologer offers advice and warnings (*invest wisely*, etc.)

For example, here are these stages in Text 3.1:

General Outlook

(1)You are on the threshold of a magnificent chapter in your private life, with substantial opportunities emerging after the new moon on the 5th.

Uncontingent Predictions

(2i)A man who is resourceful, good looking or born around November could be very helpful with your quest for a promotion, (2ii)and you could be celebrating a minor victory on the 9th, 24th or 28th. (3i)A trip, reunion or important talk that you could not fit in last month will be more straightforward or enjoyable (3ii)if you wait until November.

Contingent Predictions

(4i)If single, (4ii)you may start dating a charming man whom you met briefly a few weeks ago. (5i)Others may be startled by your apologetic actions (5ii)as you seek a reconciliation.

Advice

(6i)Long-range ventures or people you have not met before should be avoided between the 12th and 17th, (6ii)especially if your birthday is after the 12th. (7)The pieces of a puzzle will fall into place in the last 10 days of the month or by early November.

As we habitualize our joint negotiation of communicative tasks, we establish a series of steps or stages. These stages are called the **schematic structure** of a genre. The term **schematic structure** simply refers to the staged, step-by-step organization of the genre, or, in Martin's terms:

> Schematic structure represents the positive contribution genre makes to a text: a way of getting from A to B in the way a given culture accomplishes whatever the genre in question is functioning to do in that culture. (Martin 1985b: 251)

Martin points out that the reason that genres have stages is simply that we usually cannot make all the meanings we want to at once. Each stage in the genre contributes a part of the overall meanings that must be made for the genre to be accomplished successfully.

Often as native speakers we only need to hear one stage to recognize the genre that it comes from. For example, when we hear *Once upon a time* we know that we are about to hear a narrative of mythical events; when we hear *Can I help you?* we expect a transactional genre; *A funny thing happened to me on the way to the office* has us expecting a narrative of personal experience; and *Have you heard the one about the two elephants?* tunes us in for a joke.

Describing the schematic structure of genres brings us to two fundamental concepts in linguistic analysis: **constituency** and **labelling**. We will encounter both concepts again when we begin describing the lexico-grammatical organization of language, but they are also important for understanding how genres are structured.

Constituency

As the name suggests, constituency simply means that things are made up of, or built out of, other things. For example, a house is made up of bricks and mortar, a book is made up of a number of chapters, etc.

Most things are in fact made up of layers of constituents. For example, a book is made up of a number of chapters, and each chapter is made up of a number of paragraphs, and each paragraph is made up of a number of sentences, and each sentence is made up of a number of words, etc.

In the same way, a genre is made up of constituent stages – the steps discussed above. When we describe the schematic structure of a genre, what we are describing is its constituent structure – the structure by which the whole, complete interaction is made up of parts. In the most general terms, the constituent stages of a genre are a **Beginning**, a **Middle** and an **End**.

The aim of our description is both to identify the parts that constitute the whole, and, preferably at the same time, explain how the parts relate to each other in constituting that whole. This can be achieved by using **functional labelling** in our generic description.

Functional labelling

Once we begin thinking about dividing a text into its constituents we must consider on what basis we will establish that two parts of a text constitute separate stages. There are essentially two kinds of criteria we could use:

1. **Formal** criteria: we could divide the text into stages/parts according to the **form** of the different constituents. This approach emphasizes sameness, as we divide the text so that each unit/stage is a constituent of the same type.
2. **Functional** criteria: we could divide the genre into stages/parts according to the **function** of the different constituents. This approach emphasizes difference, as we divide the text according to the different functions of each stage.

Table 3.1 summarizes these differences in labelling.

If we took a formal approach to constituent analysis of genres, we could divide up the horoscope text into paragraphs, then each paragraph into sentences, each sentence into words and so on.

While this approach certainly tells us something about the class of linguistic items that occur within genres, it does not help us answer the sort of functionally-oriented question we are concerned with: how does each stage in the genre contribute towards achieving the overall purpose of the text?

For this reason we take the second approach to generic analysis and divide the text into functional constituents. That is, we recognize as stages only those sentences or groups of

Table 3.1 Formal vs functional criteria

FORMAL CRITERIA	FUNCTIONAL CRITERIA
asks: how does each constituent relate formally to the whole? i.e. what 'class' of item is it?	asks: how does each constituent relate functionally to the whole? i.e. what functional role is it playing?

sentences which fulfil a function relative to the whole. We therefore only call something a stage if we can assign to it a functional label.

In assigning labels, the aim is to describe what the stage is doing, relative to the whole, in terms as specific to the genre as can be found. 'Empty' functional labels such as Beginning, Middle, End, or Introduction, Body, Conclusion, should be avoided since they are not genre-specific (all genres have Beginnings, Middles and Ends). Instead, to find labels, ask, for example: 'what exactly is being done in this beginning of the text?' or 'what is being done in the body of an essay that is different from what is done in the body of a transactional genre?', etc.

As we have worked so far with written text, let us demonstrate schematic structure analysis on a spoken, interactive text. Text 3.2 below is a transactional or service encounter genre. In this interaction, our customer walks into the post office with the purpose of carrying out a transaction. In our culture, this particular register configuration regularly recurs, and it has become habitualized into a genre which most adult native speakers control quite effortlessly. Both our postal worker and our client have a sense (quite unconsciously, most of the time) of the script they need to follow to achieve the transaction successfully.

Both know that to accomplish this transaction it is necessary to go through a number of steps or stages. The customer cannot simply barge into the post office, throw her letters at the postal worker and rush out. Nor can the postal worker simply see the customer enter, grab her letters and disappear out the back into the nether regions of the post office. Habitualization of interactions like this has led to social conventions about which stages the interactants must jointly negotiate their way through in order to complete the transaction successfully.

Ventola (1987) identifies the following stages (the schematic structure labels are written with initial capitals):[2]

Text 3.2: Post Office Transaction[3]

Sales Initiation

1 Salesperson yes please

(Customer steps forward)

Sales Request

2 Customer can I have these two like that

(Customer hands over two letters)

Sales Compliance

3 Salesperson yes

Price

(3 secs – Salesperson weighs one letter)

4 Salesperson one's forty

(3 secs – Salesperson weighs the other letter)

5 Salesperson one's twenty-five

Sales Request

6	Customer	and have you got . . . the . . . first day covers of . . .
7	Salesperson	yes
8	Customer	(Anzac[4])

(2 secs – Salesperson looks for the stamps)

Sales Clarification

9	Salesperson	how many would you like?
10	Customer	four please
11	Salesperson	two of each?
12	Customer	what have you got
13	Salesperson	uh there's two different designs on the –

(5 secs – Salesperson shows Customer the stamps)

Purchase

14	Customer	I'll take two of each
15	Salesperson	Uhum

(6 secs – Salesperson gets the stamps for the letters and the covers)

Price

16	Salesperson	right . . . that's a dollar seventy thank you

(10 secs – Salesperson puts the covers into a bag; Customer gets out the money)

Payment

17	Salesperson	here we are

(2 secs – Salesperson hands over the stamps and the covers; Customer hands the money to Salesperson)

18	Customer	thank you
19	Salesperson	thank you

(5 secs – Salesperson gets the change)

Change

20	Salesperson	dollar seventy that's two four and one's five
21		thank you very much

Purchase Closure

22	Customer	thank you

(2 secs – Customer reaches for the letters)

23	Salesperson	they'll be right I'll fix those up in a moment
24	Customer	okay

(Customer leaves)

A more compact description of the generic structure of this text can be achieved by writing the stages out in a linear sequence, with the symbol ^ between stages to indicate that stages are **ordered** with respect to each other. Thus, a linear description of the schematic structure of the post office text becomes:

> Sales Initiation^ Sales Request^ Sales Compliance^ Price^ Sales Request^ Sales Clarification^ Purchase^ Price^ Payment^ Change^ Purchase Closure

This statement of schematic structure is a description of the schematic structure of the specific post office text reproduced in this chapter: i.e. it is the generic structure of an **actual** text. But you probably take part in transactions very similar to Text 3.2 on a regular basis, not all of them in a post office, not all of them even face-to-face. For example, Text 3.3 is a

phone transaction. Notice how closely the stages of schematic structure from the post office interaction match the stages of this service transaction:

Text 3.3: Service Transaction over the Phone[5]

Sales Initiation		
1	Salesperson	Good morning. Sydney Opera House Box Office. How may I help you?
Sales Request		
2	Customer	Oh, hallo. Um, I'd like to book three tickets to the Bell Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, please
Sales Compliance		
3	Salesperson	Bell Shakespeare, yes, that's in the Drama Theatre
Sales Clarification		
4		Now what date did you want those for?
5	Customer	Saturday the 16th. In the evening
(checking availability)		
6	Salesperson	Saturday the 16th . . . Yes, I can give you three seats in row 'F' for the evening performance at 8pm. Fifty-six dollars per seat
7	Customer	Great, thanks
Purchase		
8	Salesperson	So you'll take those? Three seats for *Hamlet* at 8pm in the Drama Theatre
9	Customer	Yes, please
Price		
10	Salesperson	Is that three adults, or any concessions?
11	Customer	No, three adults please
12	Salesperson	That'll be three times fifty-six plus the booking fee, that's one hundred and seventy one dollars. Is that alright?
13	Customer	Whew, pretty pricey, but OK, yeah
Payment		
14	Salesperson	Could I have your credit card details please?
15	Customer	Yes, it's a Mastercard. Number 3852 9483 1029 0323
16	Salesperson	That's Mastercard 3852 9483 1029 0323?
17	Customer	Yes
18	Salesperson	And the expiry date?
19	Customer	09 04
20	Salesperson	Cardholder's name?
21	Customer	Emily Rimmer. R – I – M – M – E – R
Purchase Delivery		
22	Salesperson	And would you like us to post those tickets to you? Or will you pick them up from the Box Office?
23	Customer	No, post them please
24	Salesperson	The address?
25	Customer	25 Jellico J–E–double L – I – C – O Street, Mirameer Heights

26	Salesperson	That's 25 Jellico Street, Mirameer Heights?
27	Customer	Yes
Purchase Closure		
28	Salesperson	Right, the tickets will be in the mail today. Is there anything else we can help you with?
29	Customer	Umm, no that's all, thanks
30	Salesperson	Thank you. Goodbye
31	Customer	'Bye

The similarity of structure between the post office and the box office transactions suggests that there are some elements of schematic structure that are somehow defining of the transactional genre, some elements which are keys to recognizing what a transaction is. To discover which elements of the schematic structure are the **defining or obligatory elements**, we can ask: what stages could we leave out and yet still have a transactional text?

We can use a variety of symbols to move from a description of schematic structure in a specific text to a general statement of schematic structure for a particular genre. By placing parentheses around a schematic structure stage ( ), we can indicate that a particular element is optional. The symbols < > placed round a stage indicate that a particular stage is recursive (can occur more than once); unordered stages can be indicated by being preceded by an asterisk *; and parentheses { } can be used to enclose a sequence of stages which are recursive as a whole. In summary, our schematic structure symbols are listed in Table 3.2. Using these symbols, we can refine our schematic structure description to give the more general description of transactional genres as:

(Sales Initiation)^ < {Sales Request^ Sales Compliance^ (Sales Clarification)^ Purchase^ (Price)}>^ Payment^ (Change)^ (Purchase Delivery)^ Purchase Closure

This should be read as stating that a minimal transactional interaction could consist of only the stages of Sales Request, Sales Compliance, Purchase, Payment and Purchase Closure. Thus, imagine a situation in which you do not wait for the assistant to offer service, but initiate the interaction yourself, where you do not need to be told the price (as perhaps it is clearly displayed for you), where you skip the niceties of thank-yous, and where you do not require change. You would still have achieved a transaction, although the text you produce would look somewhat different from the post office or box office examples analysed above.

The formula also captures the fact that more than one Sales Request may occur within a transaction, and that each Sales Request will be resolved through the stages of Purchase and Price, while there will be only one Sales Initiation, Payment and Purchase Closure per transaction.

Table 3.2 Symbols used to describe schematic structure

SYMBOLS	MEANING
X ^ Y	stage X precedes stage Y (fixed order)
* Y	stage Y is an unordered stage
(X)	stage X is an optional stage
<X>	stage X is a recursive stage
<{X^Y}>	stages X and Y are both recursive in the fixed order X then Y

We use the distinction between obligatory and optional schematic structure elements to help us define what constitutes a particular genre. A genre is thus defined in terms of its obligatory elements of schematic structure, and variants of a genre are those texts in which the obligatory schematic structure elements are realized, as well as perhaps some of the optional ones. While any interaction realizing the obligatory elements only is therefore what we describe as a Transactional text, the inclusion of optional elements gives more extended variations of the genre.

We can therefore recognize the difference between what Hasan (1985a: 63–4) refers to as the **generic structure potential** of a particular genre, and the **actual generic structure** of a particular text.

As our description of schematic structure has indicated, the order of elements of schematic structure is a significant constraint. In many genres, such as the transactional one, most elements are fixed in their order of occurrence. For example, the stage of Payment can only come after the stage of Sales Compliance; and of course the stage of Change can only occur after Payment. As was suggested in Chapter Two, the linearity of linguistic interactions means order often carries dimensions of meaning.

Realization of elements of schematic structure

Although identifying the schematic structure of a genre is a major part of generic analysis, it cannot be performed accurately without an analysis of the **realizations** of each element of schematic structure. You will remember from Chapter One that realization refers to the way a meaning becomes **encoded** or expressed in a semiotic system. We need now to relate our elements of schematic structure to language.

Taking the step of relating stages of schematic structure to their linguistic realizations is the central analytic procedure in generic analysis. The analysis of the schematic structure of both our horoscope text (Text 3.1) and the post office text (Text 3.2) above might seem to you largely an intuitive and personal one. Perhaps you would argue for different stages, or different boundaries between the stages. If our generic analysis is to have any validity, it must be possible for us to establish objective justification for claims that, for example, horoscope texts may have stages of Uncontingent and Contingent Predictions; or that Sales Compliance is a different element of schematic structure from Sales Clarification, or that the stage Purchase begins and ends where it does.

It is obvious that all we have to go on in analysing genre is **language** – the words and structures speakers use. Technically, we can see that it is through language that genres get realized. It is through the discourse-semantic, lexico-grammatical and phonological patterns of the language code that the contextual level of genre is realized through, or expressed in, language.

For example, in our horoscope text, we only 'see' the field of 'romantic predictions' through the recurrent patterns of ideational meanings in the text: the choices of related lexical items to do with heterosexual relationship (*man, dating, private life*) and expressions of time (dates, months). We only see the tenor of advice and warnings through the recurrent patterns of interpersonal meanings: the use of modality and modulation (*could be, may, should be*). And the mode is only visible through the textual meanings: the patterns of direct address to the reader (the pronoun *you*).

The systematic hook-up we're suggesting here between dimensions of the context and types of meaning in language is fundamental to the functional approach to language. By

suggesting that each dimension of social context is related in predictable and systematic ways to each type of meaning, functional analysis claims to show that language is 'naturally' related to the structure of social life.

There are two clear consequences of this. Firstly, if genres are different ways of using language, then we should find that the speakers make different lexico-grammatical choices according to the different purposes they want to achieve. That is, texts of different genres will reveal different lexico-grammatical choices – different words and structures. For example, the types of words and structures used in a transactional genre will not be the same as those used in an exchanging opinion genre, or in a narrative genre, or in a horoscope. Thus, *realization patterns will differ across genres.*

Secondly, if each genre is made up of a number of different functionally related stages, then we should find that different elements of schematic structure will reveal different lexico-grammatical choices. For example, we should find that the types of words and structures used in the stage Sales Initiation will not be the same as the types of words and structures used in the stage Purchase, and the language of both those stages will differ from the language of the stage Thanks. Thus, *realization patterns will differ across schematic stages.*

However, since we have only one language to use to realize all these different stages, it cannot be a question of stages using totally different words, or totally different structures, from each other. Rather, we would expect to find that different stages use different configurations of words and structures, different clusterings of patterns. Realization patterns can be exemplified by referring to a simple written genre: the recipe.

Schematic structure and realizations in the recipe genre

So far in our discussion of genre we have worked from the text to description. To demonstrate that genres (their schematic structure and their realizations) are something that as native speakers we unconsciously draw on in using language, we can now reverse the procedure. Instead of describing a text, we can predict schematic structure and realizations, and then compare those predictions against authentic examples.

You will remember that in Chapter One I expressed great confidence in your ability to produce an appropriate example of a recipe text for scrambled eggs. Part of that task involved your ability to predict the elements of schematic structure, in their likely order. Before you read any further, you might make a quick note of the schematic structure you would predict in a recipe for your favourite dish.

Here now is an authentic recipe text. Is your schematic structure appropriate to describe this text?

Text 3.4: Spinach Risotto[6]

This traditional dish of Greek-Cypriot origin offers an economical but substantial vegetarian meal.

3 tablespoons olive oil
2 onions, chopped
1–2 bunches silverbeet or English spinach
1 375 gr tin peeled tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cup water
1 cup risotto rice

white wine (optional)
salt and pepper

Slice the dead ends off the spinach. Slice stalks off from leaves. Wash stalks and leaves. Slice stalks finely, and shred leaves.

In a large saucepan, heat the oil. Fry the onions till soft. Add the stalks and fry till soft. Add the shredded leaves and cook for several minutes. Then add the tomatoes and tomato paste. Turn low and cook for about 10 mins. Add water, wine, salt and pepper, and the rice. Cook until the rice has absorbed the liquid (10–15 mins).

Serve with Greek salad and crusty wholemeal bread.

Serves 4.

If we follow through the functional approach developed in this chapter, we would see that to describe this text we need to recognize the following stages:

Title: Spinach Risotto

This stage labels the name of the dish to be prepared. The stage obviously functions to differentiate individual recipes from each other.

Enticement: This traditional dish of Greek-Cypriot origin offers an economical but substantial vegetarian meal.

The purpose of this stage is to suggest why you should bother making this dish.

Ingredients:
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 onions, chopped
1–2 bunches silverbeet or English spinach
1 375 gr tin peeled tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cup water
1 cup risotto rice
white wine (optional)
salt and pepper

This stage functions to tell you what you will need.

Method:

Slice the dead ends off the spinach. Slice stalks off from leaves. Wash stalks and leaves. Slice stalks finely, and shred leaves.

In a large saucepan, heat the oil. Fry the onions till soft. Add the stalks and fry till soft. Add the shredded leaves and cook for several minutes. Then add the tomatoes and tomato paste. Turn low and cook for about 10 mins. Add water, wine, salt and pepper, and the rice. Cook until the rice has absorbed the liquid (10–15 mins). Serve with Greek salad and crusty wholemeal bread.

This purpose of this stage is to tell you how to make the dish.

Serving Quantity: Serves 4.

This final stage functions to inform you how many the dish will feed.

Expressed linearly, the schematic structure of this text is:

Title^Enticement^Ingredients^Method^Serving Quantity

Now, the schematic structure you have established for this text might differ from the one I have offered. In particular, you might wish to include an additional stage to describe the sentence *Serve with Greek salad and crusty wholemeal bread.* After all, that sentence is presented as a separate paragraph in the original text, so it might seem that it should have a separate functional label – Serving Suggestions, perhaps?

To resolve the question of how many stages, we need to consider the lexico-grammatical patterns realized in each stage of the recipe. In other words, we need to look closely at the language of the recipe text.

We are somewhat hampered here by the fact that we do not yet share a common technical vocabulary for talking about lexico-grammatical patterns (we will by the end of this book). Using only some fairly common grammatical terms, we can see that each of the stages of the recipe genre can be associated with clearly distinct realizational patterns.

Title: this stage is realized by what we call a nominal group or noun phrase (a group of words where the main word is a noun), not by a complete clause or sentence. The type of nominal group typically contains a sequence of nouns (two in this case), rather than adjective and noun (e.g. the title is not Simple Risotto).

Enticement: unlike the Title stage, this stage is realized by a complete sentence. It begins with a 'be' clause, where *this dish* is described using positive attitudinal words *traditional, economical, substantial* (imagine how unenticing it would be to begin this stage with a clause like: *This revolting dish will take hours to cook.*).

Ingredients: here we return to only a nominal group as the pattern, but this time the nominal group does not have a sequence of classifying words, but of numbers and measuring words, e.g. *2, 375 gr, tin.* The head noun being modified by these measuring terms is of course the name of a food.

Method: this stage is expressed by clauses (not just phrases or groups), in the imperative mood (i.e. expressed as orders, rather than as statements). Circumstantial meanings of location (*in a large saucepan*), time (*for about 10 mins*), and manner (*till soft*) are expressed. The clauses are linked logically by time sequence (*Then . . . then*), although this is not always explicitly encoded (*then* only occurs once). The kinds of verbs are action-oriented: *slice, wash, heat, fry, cook*, etc.

Serving Quantity: this stage is realized by an elliptical declarative: i.e. a part of a clause. The full clause would be *This dish serves 4.* The clause is a declarative (statement), not an imperative: it gives information, but does not command us to do anything.

And it is this last realizational pattern that helps us to determine the schematic structure location of the sentence *Serve with Greek salad and crusty wholemeal bread.* Grammatically we see that the pattern of this sentence involves an imperative structure (a command), involving a verb of action (*serve*), and including circumstantial information about the manner in which the process should be carried out (*with Greek salad*, etc.). This pattern is the same as the other sentences of the Method stage. Therefore, on grammatical criteria we would consider that clause part of the Method stage, not a separate stage on its own, nor part of the Serving Quantity stage, where the pattern is for a different clause type altogether[7].

Although you may not understand all the terms used in the realization statements, you will be able to see that each stage of schematic structure is clearly associated with a number of grammatical and lexical features. By specifying in as much detail as possible the grammatical patterns of each part of the text, we can determine both how many stages we need to recognize and where to place the boundaries between the stages.

The same link between stages and realization applies to any text we care to analyse, whether spoken or written. With our horoscope text, we can clearly see that the language of the General Outlook stage is very different from the language of the Contingent Predictions stage: the first involves a relational process (the verb 'to be') with 'you' as Subject and general, abstract nouns, expressing your overall situation or quality, while the second involves conditional clauses (if . . ., then . . .), specific time references and process types, and modulation. Likewise, with the post office text, grammatical description would show that the patterns in the Sales Request stage (modulated interrogative clauses, i.e. questions using *could/can*) are different from patterns in the Sales Clarification stage (unmodulated interrogatives).

From the texts presented above we can note that there are different types of realization patterns. Some stages have ritualistic or conventional realizations. For example, the expressions which realize Thanks or Greeting stages are fairly limited and predictable. Other stages are realized by a limited range of linguistic structures. For example, the realization of a Service Request stage in a transactional genre can be through various (but limited) alternative structures: e.g. modulated declaratives (*I'd like 5 apples please*), imperatives (*Give me 5 of those apples, please*) or modulated interrogatives (*Would you have 5 of those apples, please?*).

Yet other stages are realized by the clustering of particular linguistic choices, rather than the simple choice of just one linguistic feature. One example is the Method stage of the recipe genre whose patterns were described above; a further example would be the Event or Action stage of a narrative, which is typically realized by the combination of temporal successive conjunctions (*then . . . then . . .*), action processes (e.g. verbs like *went, ran, caught, did, happened*, etc.), specific (usually human) participants and circumstances of time, manner, place (often in first position in the clause).

Finally, it is possible for some stages to be realized non-verbally. For example, the Payment stage of a transactional genre is very frequently realized non-verbally.

At the moment our discussion of the lexico-grammatical realizations of generic stages is very limited because we lack a common **metalanguage**, i.e. we do not share a common technical vocabulary, based on a shared approach to analysing language, through which we could specify realization statements in detail. The aim of Chapters Four to Ten is to equip you with that metalanguage, so that you are then able to complete the description of whatever genres interest you by specifying the grammatical and discourse-semantic patterns by which different genres, and different stages within genres, are realized.

At this stage the important point to grasp is that that schematic structure analysis is neither intuitive nor *ad hoc*. Every time we recognize an element of structure we have to be able to argue for it, and its boundaries, by finding its reflex in linguistic realization. Chapter Eleven will demonstrate generic analysis applied to the three Crying Baby texts introduced in Chapter One.

Short and long genres: the macro-genre

For reasons of space, the principles and procedures of genre analysis have been presented in this chapter using brief, everyday texts as examples. Generic analysis is of course equally

applicable to much longer texts, both spoken and written. In these longer, more complex texts, Martin (1992b) suggests we may need to identify the entire text as an example of a **macro-genre**, within which it is possible to identify a range of other genres being used. For example, a university department's handbook is itself a macro-genre (the text as a whole fulfils a specific cultural function), but it typically contains sections exemplifying the genres of exposition (why you should study in particular faculties and disciplines), description (course outlines) and regulation (the student's rights/responsibilities/penalties). Martin uses Halliday's grammatical categories of logico-semantic relations (first encountered in our Chapter Two discussion of conjunctive cohesion, and revisited in Chapter Nine) to capture the relationship between the constituent genres in a macro-genre. For an example of macro-genre analysis, see the treatment of several very lengthy texts in Martin and Rose (2003).

The uses of genre analysis

Genre analysis is just a first step towards making explicit the cultural and social basis of language in use, but it can be a very powerful step. A systemic analysis of genre has three immediate applications. Genre analysis can help us:

1. to make explicit why some texts are successful and appropriate while others are not;
2. to contrast types of genres and their realizations in pragmatic contexts and interpersonal contexts;
3. to understand similarities and differences between non-fiction and fiction genres;
4. to carry out critical text analysis.

Space only allows a brief demonstration of these applications here. Those with more time will find Martin and Rose (2003) a useful – if demanding – extension.

Successful and unsuccessful examples of genres

One of the most useful applications of genre analysis for those of us who work in educational settings is that it can help us make explicit why some texts 'work' and others don't. Have another look at Text 2.5, 'Fatal Alaska', first presented in Chapter Two, page 40. We noted in Chapter Two that this story by a 12-year-old boy has serious cohesive problems. In particular, referential ties are ambiguous, with the writer presuming what should be presented. But the problems of cohesion are symptomatic of more general problems he's having achieving an appropriate realization of the genre of narrative.

The sociolinguists Labov and Waletzky (1967) offer a functional analysis of the schematic structure of narratives. I'm using **narrative** in a technical sense here, to refer to a particular genre. Not all stories are narratives – see Eggins and Slade (1997) for discussion and exemplification of other story genres which occur in casual conversation and in written texts. Narratives can be defined as 'stories which are concerned with protagonists who face and resolve problematic experiences' (Eggins and Slade 1997: 239). Using the formalism identified earlier, the schematic structure of the narrative genre can be represented as:

(Abstract) ^ Orientation ^ <{Complication ^ Resolution ^ Evaluation}> ^ (Coda)

Abstract: this stage, if present, functions as a signal to prepare readers for the text that follows, often by orienting them to the kind of story that will be told or to the story's themes. For example, *Once upon a time* is a generic realization for folktale narratives.

Orientation: this stage provides readers with the information they need to understand the narrative and usually gives at least preliminary information about the participants in the story (who), the setting in space (where) and time (when), and the actions that were under way before things got sticky (what). This stage is typically realized by presenting reference and expressions of habitual actions.

Complication: this stage involves a problem culminating in a crisis. The events initiated in the Orientation somehow go wrong. There is a disruption to the usual sequence of events, and subsequent actions become problematic and unpredictable. This stage is typically realized by a shift from conjunction relations of temporal sequence (*and then . . . and then . . .*) to relations of concessive counter-expectancy and simultaneity (*but, all of a sudden . . .*).

Evaluation: Labov and Waletzky (1967) argue that the Evaluation stage is what gives the text its significance; it establishes the point of the narrative. As it occurs between the Complication and the Resolution, it creates a feeling of suspense and marks a break between these two action stages. Labov argues that this stage is obligatory as without it a narrative is incomplete:

> Evaluation devices say to us: this was terrifying, dangerous, weird, wild, crazy; or amusing, hilarious, wonderful; more generally, that it was strange, uncommon, or unusual – that is, worth reporting. It was not ordinary, plain, humdrum, everyday or run of the mill. (Labov 1972a: 371)

The shift from action to evaluation is realized by a shift from ideational into interpersonal meanings, expressed through some of the following patterns:

1. the expression of attitudes or opinions denoting the events as remarkable or unusual;
2. the expression of incredulity, disbelief, apprehension about the events on the part of the narrator or a character of the narrative, including highlighting the predicament of characters;
3. comparisons between usual and unusual sequences of events in which participants in the narrative are involved;
4. predictions about a possible course of action to handle a crisis or about the outcome of the events. (Rothery 1990: 203)

Although evaluative comments are often spread throughout a narrative (often 'embedded', Labov says, in other stages), a successful narrative will always also have a discrete Evaluation stage. The progress of the action will be interrupted while the narrator or characters explicitly offer an assessment of the emotional point of the story. (See Eggins and Slade 1997: 241–2 for further examples of Evaluations.)

Resolution: in this stage we are told how the protagonist manages to resolve the crisis. Through the Resolution, usuality returns and equilibrium is restored. Realizations include causal conjunctive relations (*so*) introducing the redemptive action, followed by a return to temporal sequential relations.

In extended narratives, there may be a sequence of {Complication^ Evaluation^ Resolution} sequences, in which case convention suggests that each Complication should be more dramatic than the one before. To build suspense, each Resolution will then also grow in difficulty, lack of predictability, and usually length.

Coda: this stage often refers back to the theme of the Abstract and makes an overall statement about the text. In conversational narratives, the Coda signals to listeners that the speaker no longer needs to hold the floor – her story is told. In written narratives, the Coda often creates a sense of finality by its circular return to the starting point of the narrative. This stage is often signalled by a shift in tense (from the simple past of the narrative events back to the present of the narration, for example), or by a shift from statements about specific participants, events and setting to generalizations about 'experiences like that'.

Applied to 'Fatal Alaska', this schematic structure allows us to identify several problems:

1. the sequencing of the stages is unhelpful: instead of beginning with an optional Abstract followed by the Orientation stage, David plonks us right into what is presumably one of several Complications. The Orientation seems to begin in paragraph 2, although paragraph 3 contains the most basic information and so should logically come first of all;
2. the successive Complications do not build gradually enough in intensity – we've already had one death in the first sentence – and so there is too little suspense created;
3. the writer ends his story with TO BE CONTINUED, instead of with a culminating Resolution and perhaps a Coda. While David is borrowing a device appropriate in other genres (e.g. TV or book series), this non-ending is really a cop-out in this case. He knows his story *can't* be continued, and it seems likely that he has simply 'lost the plot' and run short of time. Planning the stages of his narrative first could have avoided this problem.

Despite these problems, David's story has the skeleton structure for a well-formed narrative. Below I re-present his text with the stages reordered, and a suggested final Resolution. My contributions are shown in *italics*.

Text 3.5: Fatal Alaska[8]
reordered, with schematic structure labelled

(Abstract)

I've been in a lot of tricky situations, but I've never been as close to death as I was up north once.

Orientation

My name is Samual Jacobson, I am a 17 year old Canadian piolot who was assigned to this mission. My journey to Alaska consisted of two reason, finding the two men who set off from Canada to study penguins and to give the two Canadian mountys some experience in Alaska.

At first I was proud to do it, then nervous and now I'm terrified. The snow storm last week is said to have covered their plane in ice and snow. I am told they were proffsianals.

Complication 1

I watched as my companion was attacked by the polar bear. Then he fell to the ground and didn't move. I knew he was dead. My other companion was still in the plane, looking like it was he who had been attacked.

Evaluation 1

I tried to ignore the body but two hours later could stand it no longer.

Resolution 1

I made a whole in the ice and left it for whatever actic creature was hungry.

Complication 2

I had to get my live companion to refrain from losing his mind.

Evaluation 2

I could not afford to lose another friend or I might lose my own mind.

Resolution 2

It took a great deal of shaking to bring my friend to his senses, then I urged him to get moving, which he reluctantly did. We moved for several hours getting colder by the minute, and less confident.

Complication 3

Just when I feared we would have to turn back, I saw a light, that looked like a fire. I don't think my partner saw it so I steered him towards it. We saw then what it was, a fire, recently lit, in the middle of a cave.

We ventured into the cave and saw nothing inside but a rack with bones and body parts in it, a billy with meat in it and blood! Then a shadowy figure loomed at the entrance of the cave.

I stared at my partner, who once again had not noticed the happenings around him.

Evaluation 3

I froze, I know its stupid but as the figure advanced, I just froze. My heart was a straight six motor for that ten or so seconds, and it was revving its guts out.

Resolution 3

Then, when the figure stepped into the flickering light of the fire I felt relief, as I recognized him from the photo of the explorers as Captain John, the leader of the expidition, and the brains. I knew the bones and body parts and meat were not animal, they were his crew! Just then he pulled a hatchet from his coat and ran at me. That confirmed to me that he had canaballised on his men. I ducked sending him over my back and into the fire, he set alight. I watched as he frantically jumped up, ran outside and rolled in the snow, all the time holding his hatchet.

Complication 4

He got up, furious and I knew he wouldn't miss again . . .

Within seconds, he was running at me again, swiping at me with his lethal hatchet.

Evaluation 4

This time, I knew it was him or me! And I hadn't come all this way to be eaten.

Resolution 4

So I dodged around the cave, just out of reach of the crazy Captain, till I got close to a clump of loose rocks. Ducking down, I managed to pick up two really sharp, pointed ones. But it was a close thing – as I jumped away, his hatchet scratched down my arm, drawing blood.

I ducked back and took aim. I had only two chances, and he was moving all the time. I threw the first rock – it hit him on the shoulder, and slowed him for a second, but he recovered and came at me again.

I aimed the second rock carefully. This time I waited until he was really close. I knew if I missed, I'd be dead meat. When I could feel his smelly cannibal breath, I threw.

Crunch. Thump. He fell down, knocked out cold. My companion and I quickly tied him up and radioed out for help.

Coda
That was a really close call. And since then I've never eaten a mouthful of meat!

Explicit modelling of the target genre, with scaffolding of the generic structure and realizations, could help young writers like David produce much more successful texts. With better control of the genre, they give themselves the opportunity to then take the next step of playing creatively with its conventions. As literary biographies and autobiographies show, the writers we most admire began by mastering conventional realizations of genres. Only once they fully grasped the possibilities and constraints of a genre did they move on to defamiliarize and interrogate genre conventions.

SFL has been influential in promoting genre-based approaches to literacy. Christie and Martin (1997) and several chapters in Unsworth (2000) provide overviews of this work.

Genre in pragmatic and interpersonal contexts

For reasons of space and clarity in this chapter I have had to choose examples from a limited range of genres. But the spectrum of genres is of course vast indeed. Wherever language is being used to achieve a culturally recognized and culturally established purpose, there we will find genre. One application of genre analysis is to explore the ways genres from different contexts are similar to and different from each other.

Once we start looking at genre in spoken interactions, we find that not all interactions have the simple staged schematic structure of such texts as the post office or the box office. For example, in sustained casual conversation among a group of friends or workmates, although there may be moments with recognizable generic structure (when someone is telling a story, for example), there may be long segments of talk that do not seem to have a clear generic structure at all. This is not because the talk is unstructured, but rather that such talk is structured in a different way because it has different motivations.

We can in fact distinguish between two kinds of functional motivations for linguistic interactions: pragmatic motivation and interpersonal motivation. Pragmatically motivated interactions are those like the post office, the recipe, the narrative, even the horoscope: the interaction has a clear, tangible goal to be achieved. As Bakhtin would say, from the beginning of such texts we have a clear sense of an end. Interpersonal interactions, in contrast, do not have any tangible goal to be achieved. Instead these are interactions motivated by the exploring and establishing of interpersonal relations, the mutual creation of good feelings. The conversational texts presented in Chapters Six and Eight are examples of interpersonally motivated interactions.

When we compare interactions motivated in each of these ways, we find that the kinds of structure associated with each differs. Where the social goals to be achieved by talk are principally pragmatic (there are goods or services to be exchanged, information to be transmitted), talk and writing is organized with the kind of schematic structure we have seen in this chapter. Such schematic structure is entirely appropriate to interactions which have clear end points, and where in fact the goal of the interaction is to attain that end point. When we go into the post office to buy stamps for our letters, we don't wish to spend two hours in friendly chat with the salesperson in order to get that goal satisfied.

But where the social goals to be achieved by talk are principally interpersonal ones, to do with establishing and reinforcing social relations, then we find that other types of structure dominate. Thus, more open-ended structures tend to take over, as the talk develops

dynamically, with no clear end point to be achieved, and few discrete steps or stage boundaries along the way. This more fluid structure of conversation can be captured by dividing a conversational text into **phases** rather than stages. The term phase (taken from Gregory 1985, Malcolm 1985) can be used to indicate a segment of talk (usually highly interactive talk) in which there is a certain stability of realizational patterns, but for which a functional schematic structure label does not seem appropriate (the talk is not a step on the way to somewhere else). An example of a conversational excerpt divided into phases on the basis of grammatical patterns is discussed in Chapter Eight, where it will also be seen that conversation typically involves an alternation between sections in which a phasal organization dominates, and sections which have clear schematic structure (for example, narratives).

Thus while the most common realization of genre is through staged, constituent structure, some genres are realized by different, more localistic types of structure. (For a detailed discussion of the structure of casual conversation, see Eggins and Slade 1997; for the use of phase as a text division in long texts, see Martin and Rose 2003).

However, recognizing different structural patterns does not in any way detract from the central claim of a systemic functional approach that all interactions are goal-oriented and purposeful. We never just use language – we are always using it 'to do something'. In putting a label on what it is that we are doing, and in analysing how we use language to do it, we are describing genre. In the following chapter, we will explore the fact that whatever we are doing with language, we are always doing it within a particular situational context.

Genre in fiction

Our concept of genres can also be applied and expanded by looking at genre in fictional texts. Genre has long been a foundational concept in literary studies. The traditional genre categories of poetry, prose and drama were then subdivided to give the different genres of poetry (ballads, sonnets, lyrics, epics . . .), prose (historical novel, crime novel . . .), drama (tragedy, comedy . . .). So central is genre identity to literary work that some categories of prose are known as 'genre fiction'.

An example from a 'genre fiction' sub-genre appears as Text 3.6 below. How long does it take you to work out what genre this excerpt is from?

Text 3.6: an excerpt from genre fiction[9]

(1i)When he placed a thermos on the wooden picnic table, (1ii)Taylor suddenly sensed (1iii)that Quinn was a deliberate man. (2i)His long fingers slid slowly away from the thermos, (2ii)and the movement reminded Taylor of a caress. (3i)His gaze ran down her body, (3ii)lingering, (3iii)touching, (3iv)seeking, (3v)and something within her stirred (3vi)and grew taut.

(4)'My mother sent potato soup. (5i)She's worried (5ii)you'll have a poor picture of the people hereabouts.'

(6i)Taylor pressed her lips together, (6ii)sensing (6iii)that Donovan's low voice shielded his real thoughts. (7i)She shifted uneasily, (7ii)disliking the leaping sense of awareness in her body, (7iii)uncomfortable with his eyes watching her carefully. (8i)'The thought was nice, (8ii)but I can find a restaurant.'

(9i)He took a few steps nearer, (9ii)and Taylor found (9iii)her hand locked to the back of the chair. (10)Donovan topped her five-foot-ten-inch height by half a foot. (11)His broad shoulders, narrow hips, and his carelessly combed hair only served to enhance

his raw masculinity. (12i)He'd discarded the red bandanna tied around his forehead, (12ii)and his black brows and lashes gleamed in the sun, (12iii)shadowing his jutting cheekbones. (13i)His eyes caught hers – (13ii)a curiously dark shade of green that matched his daughter's. (14i)His dark skin gleamed as it crossed his cheekbones and his jaw; (14ii)a tiny fresh cut lay along his jaw, (14iii)as though he'd just shaved.

(15)Taylor jerked her eyes away from the grim set of his mouth. (16i)Despite his apparent dark mood, Donovan's mouth was beautiful, sensuous, (16ii)and her heart quivered (16iii)and flip-flopped just once. (17i)There was a beauty about Donovan, a raw male look – an arrogance, a certainty – (17ii)and beneath it lay a fine, grim anger that startled her.

(18)Taylor shifted her weight impatiently. (19i)Few men could intimidate her, (19ii)and she disliked the sense that this man – this Quinn Donovan – knew exactly what she was thinking. (20i)Despite her resolve not to give him another inch, when Donovan took another step toward her, (20ii)she released the chair and stepped backward.

(21i)A quick flare of satisfaction soared through Donovan's narrowed eyes, (21ii)and Taylor's throat tightened.

(23)She straightened her shoulders. (24)She refused to be intimidated by a towering bully. (25i)She caught his scent – (25ii)soap, freshly cut wood, sweat, and a dark, masculine tang that she knew she'd remember forever.

(26i)Taylor stepped back again, (26ii)then regretted the action. (27)Donovan was hunting her now. (28i)The dark meadow green eyes skimmed her mussed hair, the loose, untucked blouse open at her throat, (28ii)catching the fast beat of her heart, (28iii)then flowing down her body (28iv)to linger on bare toes locked in the grass.

(29i)The heat of his body snared her; (29ii)his inspection of her feet too intimate.

(30i)'I haven't invited you (30ii)to spoil my day. (31)Creeping up on me this way is trespassing.'

(32)'I don't creep.' (33)Donovan's flat statement cut into the clean spring air.

(34)His voice reminded her of the rumble of a storm, of a dark beast rising from his lair. (35i)From his narrowed eyes came the glittering thrust of a sword, (35ii)raised (35iii)and waiting.

It's likely that if you're a native speaker of English, resident in a western country, you very rapidly identified the source of Text 3.6 as 'romance fiction'. Romance fiction, like crime fiction, is referred to as one type of 'genre fiction' exactly because its texts adhere very closely to an almost inflexible schematic structure. In her pioneering work into this genre, Janice Radway (1991: 150) identified what she called a 'narrative logic' which successful romance novels follow. According to Radway, romances which experienced readers judged 'successful' generally work through the following 13 stages:

1. the heroine's social identity is thrown into question
2. the heroine reacts antagonistically to an aristocratic male
3. the aristocratic male responds ambiguously to the heroine
4. the heroine interprets the hero's behaviour as evidence of a purely sexual interest in her
5. the heroine responds to the hero's behaviour with anger or coldness
6. the hero retaliates by punishing the heroine
7. the heroine and hero are physically and/or emotionally separated

8. the hero treats the heroine tenderly
9. the heroine responds warmly to the hero's act of tenderness
10. the heroine reinterprets the hero's ambiguous behaviour as the product of previous hurt
11. the hero proposes/openly declares his love for/demonstrates his unwavering commitment to the heroine with a supreme act of tenderness
12. the heroine responds sexually and emotionally to the hero
13. the heroine's identity is restored

Not only does genre fiction have very fixed schematic structure, but also very predictable realization patterns. Realization patterns apply across three main dimensions of the narrative:

- **characterization**: in genre fiction a limited number of different character roles are realized, with the attributes of each role also limited and predictable
- **plot devices and sets of activities**: a limited and recurrent range of plot elements is used to realize each stage of the schematic structure
- **setting**: the events of genre fiction take place in predictable and limited settings

For example, Radway showed that successful romance fiction requires only four character-roles: the heroine and hero, and their opposites, a female foil and a male foil. The extreme focus on just two principal characters (heroine and hero) makes romance texts highly unrealistic, detached from social reality and claustrophobic. The foils function in the texts to exemplify negative female/male behaviour, in order to re-emphasize the qualities and behaviours of the desirable heterosexual couple.

Radway also identified the character attributes that must be realized by each role, and how, in the heroine's case only, these attributes change as the narrative progresses. The heroine, for example, must always be stunningly beautiful in a conventional western sense (slender not porky, and very sexually attractive to men but unaware of and uncomfortable with her 'thinly disguised sexuality'), while the hero must always display a 'spectacular masculinity' (Radway 1991: 128). This usually means he will be tall, dark, angular, and with a vast chest. But Radway points out that 'the terrorizing effect of his exemplary masculinity is always tempered by the presence of a small feature that introduces an important element of softness into the overall picture' (Radway 1991: 128). For example, he may have a loose curl of hair, or soft eyes. At the beginning of the romance, the heroine will be shown to be 'incomplete' in her femininity. This can be realized by having her wear business suits and other androgynous or at least not feminine clothes. She will often be hiding behind sunglasses, and her hair is often severely tied back or concealed. By the end of the novel, she will have changed her appearance to be more appropriately feminine: suits give way to dresses, her eyes glow, and her hair flows freely in the breeze. In other words, heroine and hero must exemplify patriarchal gender roles.

Similarly, the initiating stage of schematic structure which functions to throw the heroine's social identity into question is realized by plot devices that include: the heroine develops amnesia after an accident or illness; the heroine loses all family members through death or disaster; the heroine moves to an unfamiliar place in order to pursue her career (which she does to the exclusion of any romantic attachments).

Finally, the realization of settings of romance fiction limits the geographic, socio-economic and (until recently) racial options: many romances are set in semi-isolated, benign country villages, often after the heroine has fled from her unhomelike home in what is realized as an alienating western metropolis.

As our model of genre in relation to language implies, the predictability of realizations extends beyond these macro genre-level patterns through to micro lexico-grammatical patterns. Like our everyday genres of horoscope, recipe and transaction, romance texts are associated with particular preferred realizational patterns. For example, Text 3.6 displays the common preference in romance fiction for verbs of sensing, feeling and remembering (technically, mental processes, as we'll see in Chapter Eight). Every act of the hero – no matter how mundane – triggers an affective, mental reaction on the part of the heroine, whose viewpoint we are positioned to share: *When he placed a thermos on the wooden picnic table, Taylor suddenly sensed that Quinn was a deliberate man.* She may never have met the hero before, but his presence evokes cultural memories in her: the movement of his fingers *reminded Taylor of a caress* and his voice *reminded her of the rumble of a storm.* While the heroine's mental processes are reacting to his *raw masculinity*, her body often seizes up or behaves in involuntary ways in his presence: *He took a few steps nearer, and Taylor found her hand locked to the back of the chair.* She is construed as both mentally and physically powerless to resist the force of his *raw male look . . . Despite her resolve not to give him another inch, when Donovan took another step toward her, she released the chair and stepped backward.*

As well as emphasizing the heroine's involuntary physical and mental reactions to the hero's actions, romance fiction is also heavily concerned with the effect of his gaze on her, and her inability to control her perception of him. Both hero and heroine do a great deal of looking at each other, and the heroine is often reacting to *his gaze* and *his eyes* (*the dark meadow green eyes skimmed her mussed hair . . .*). Usually she dislikes his gaze (she feels *uncomfortable with his eyes watching her carefully*) but has trouble resisting the urge to gaze back at him (*Taylor jerked her eyes away*). In this emphasis on gaze, a vocabulary of disguise and deception is common, construing a barrier of misperception and lack of trust between the couple (*Donovan's low voice shielded his real thoughts*). Much of the plot of romance fiction involves the heroine learning to accept the hero's gaze, and respond to it in the way it invites her to.

And of course here we must note that a distinctive realizational pattern of romance is the way every action and comment between hero and heroine is imbued with a sexual meaning. The hero's every act is sexualized, but particularly his gaze (*His gaze ran down her body, lingering, touching, seeking*). This sexual gaze again produces an affective reaction in the heroine because her body responds despite herself (*She shifted uneasily, disliking the leaping sense of awareness in her body, uncomfortable with his eyes watching her carefully*).

Sexual innuendo colours all vocabularly choices. The hero's presence and physical attributes, described in detail, always trigger sexual mental associations for the heroine: *From his narrowed eyes came the glittering thrust of a sword, raised and waiting.*

Although sometimes the sexual connotations are softened into romance (*His long fingers slid slowly away from the thermos, and the movement reminded Taylor of a caress*), more often the hero's presence is construed as threatening, associated with verbs of fear and violence (*trespassing, creeping up*) and nouns with violent connotations (*a quick flare of satisfaction*). Figurative representations of the hero represent him as *a dark beast rising from his lair* who is *hunting her now*, and her body (against the wishes of her mind) experiences behavioural responses associated with fear (*Taylor's throat tightened*).

Fearful though they are, his actions or attributes trigger thinly disguised sexual response (*something within her stirred and grew taut*), and she is inevitably, despite herself, caught: *The heat of his body snared her.*

Again, we are hampered in what we can say about these realizational patterns because we don't yet share a technical vocabulary. But we can say enough to show that the heroine

is consistently positioned through the grammar to react to the hero (rather than to initiate actions herself), and that her reactions are involuntary. The major drama of the plot comes from the heroine's ongoing conflict between what she desires mentally (*she refused to be intimidated by a towering bully*) and what she can actually do faced with this specimen of *raw masculinity*. The lexical and grammatical choices encode 'romance' as so overwhelming and fearful an experience for the heroine that she loses control of her own mind and body.

Crime fiction, another type of 'genre writing', similarly comes with a range of generic expectations in terms of characterization, plot devices and setting. The young writer of Text 3.7 below has already learnt many of the typical realization features of the 'hard-boiled detective' genre: the hardened but philosophizing first-person detective-narrator; the thematic emphasis on death and mortality; the use of a bleak urban setting; the creation of a sense of doom and foreboding; and, of course, the clever twist in the tail.

Text 3.7: Inside Edge[10]

Death hung in the air. A tangible presence; a reminder of our own mortality. The body, of course, had been reduced to a blood stain and a chalk outline by the time I arrived on the scene, but still, it's never easy. I ran my fingers through my hair, feeling it suction onto my scalp, glued by my nervous sweat. This was the fifth murder in as many days – never a good sign – especially if they're all identical. I pushed away the proffered photographs. I knew what the body would look like.

I walked slowly over to the window, shoes echoing on the bare wooden floor. Outside, the street swarmed with television cameras and reporters. I'd face those jackals later. Inside, the rooms swarmed with uniforms and glove wearing forensics – the usual crowd. I walked around amongst them, gathering bits and pieces of information, taking notes, feeling sick. Nobody paid any attention to me, despite the fact I was in charge of the whole thing. I shrugged philosophically. My part would come later.

At the station that afternoon I added what evidence we had gathered on to the massive whiteboard. The smell of the whiteboard marker, and the emptiness of the air-conditioning made me feel dizzy and sick. The migraine that had begun at the scene that morning lapped around my neck and eyes. I pinched the top of my nose. I could taste the fumes of the marker, which had begun to leak, dribbling on my hands like black rivers of blood.

At home that evening I washed my hands carefully, scrubbing at my discoloured fingernails, watching as the stained water gurgles down the laundry sink. I think it gets harder every time. Another body, another uneaten lunch, another nightmare-filled sleep . . . If I can get to sleep at all. Sometimes I feel as if I bring death home with me. Can't escape what I do for a living. I can taste the bitter bile at the back of my throat. My thoughts rush chaotically around, chasing their tails. The phone will be ringing in a minute. It will be my partner. 'I hate to disturb you this late,' he'll say, 'but there's been another murder'. I'll have to act surprised. Again. It's not easy investigating your own crimes.

Genre in literary texts

Genre fiction is defined precisely by its predictability, its conformity to genre patterns. And, just as many of us find it 'economical' to interact in conventional genres, so we also

derive much pleasure from reading genre fiction. Once we've identified a genre that we like, we can be pretty much guaranteed to find novels that please us under the relevant section in the bookshop.

But what about more creative writing, writing which falls outside the obvious predictability of 'genre fiction'? How is genre relevant to the analysis of the latest winner of the Booker Prize for fiction? Or to postmodern poetry? How, for example, can the concept of genre help us when we read the Kate Chopin short story presented in Chapter Two? Or 'The Grapevine' by John Ashbery, also presented there?

As I suggested in Chapter Two, Ashbery's use of conventional signals of poetry in 'The Grapevine' triggers our socialized reading practice and we read the text *as a poem*. Similarly, when you know that the text by Kate Chopin is a short story, rather than, say, a news story, you draw on certain ways of approaching the text: at the very least, you probably read it slowly. While we'll generally read a poem or short story many times (because we learn we have to work at it to understand it), we almost certainly won't re-read the same romance text over and over again, though we might go and buy another in the same imprint. We learn to expect that literary texts don't usually give up their meanings on a casual first reading. In other words, part of learning how genres mean is learning to read different genres in different ways.

Our deeper engagement with literary texts is partly the result of our apprenticeship into ways of reading. But that itself is a functional response to the different ways language is used in literary, as opposed to non-literary, texts. As Shklovsky and the Russian Formalists argued, the function of literary texts is to defamiliarize experience, and they generally do this by defamiliarizing the use of language. This defamiliarization then forces us to slow down. One of the dimensions of language that literary works often defamiliarize is genre. Literary works very often deliberately exploit the tension between the replication of genre conventions and their subversion. The literary text, some would say, is *always* and inevitably a comment on genre, as each text seeks to defamiliarize the genre in order to slow us down so that we can apprehend new meanings.

For example, we saw in Chapter Two how Ashbery frustrates our expectations about referential identity in 'The Grapevine'. Although poems are often difficult, most of the time we can figure out who is talking about what. In 'The Grapevine', we can't be sure.

Similarly, although Kate Chopin's short story appears to follow the expected stages of the narrative genre, she actually subverts conventional patriarchal realizations of the genre and confronts us with what would now be called a feminist interrogation. 'The Story of an Hour' falls into the following stages:

> **Orientation**: breaking the news to Mrs Mallard about the death of her husband
> **Complication**: her husband dies, so she is now alone
> **Evaluation**: she should be sad, but she realizes she is the opposite
> **Resolution**: he returns, unharmed; she dies
> **Coda**: how they explain her death

The subversion builds throughout the Evaluation, when Mrs Mallard (contrary to convention) realizes that she is not sad about her husband's death but in fact filled with joy at her unexpected liberty. Then in the Resolution, where a conventional narrative would have Mrs Mallard happy to have him back home (quietly packing back into the box any slightly risqué feelings she may have experienced), Chopin has his return kill his wife. The Coda is ironic, because what the doctors read as 'joy', we know to read as something akin to horror.

Through this generic structure and its realizations, Chopin offers a counter-narrative to texts such as Mills & Boon romance fiction. Chopin's evocation and then subversion of our expectations (that a wife without a husband must be very sad and incomplete) forces us to consider how women's experience of marriage is so often quite the opposite of the patriarchal ideal, so totally at odds with the representation relentlessly offered to women through romance fiction.

Literature exposes both our essential need for genre (we can only recognize meaning when it is expressed in largely conventional forms) and the necessity of creativity (we need to keep transforming genres if we're not to lose ourselves in a life (and world) of endless, deadening sameness). It is through playing with the system, stretching the genre boundaries both in structure and realization, that we open our lives up to meanings yet to be made.

Genre hybridity

Another form of creativity in fiction texts is to combine or blend different genres to produce 'hybrids'. While many texts confine themselves to a single genre, postmodern fiction is characterized by its interest in genre hybridity. The mixing and blending of genres is nowhere more apparent than in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series[11], where a novel combination of some very traditional children's literature genres is a large part of the series' success. Rowling blends genre elements from at least four children's genres:

1. high fantasy: Rowling takes the character roles of Fatherlike Chief Magician (Dumbledore) and Orphaned or Unlikely Apprentice with a special gift and unique destiny (Harry Potter); the theme of a perpetual battle between Good and Evil, Light and Dark (the wizarding world and Voldemort); the creation of a nostalgic secondary world under threat from the Forces of Darkness; and a 'natural' hierarchical social organization with rules and the compliantly ruled. Similar patterns are also present in other well known examples of this genre, e.g. J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of The Rings* and Ursula Le Guin's *The Wizard of Earthsea.*
2. low or domestic fantasy: from this genre, quintessentially represented by Roald Dahl (e.g. *Matilda, The BFG*), Rowling takes elements of humorous and unsympathetic caricature; the use of vernacular (rather than elevated) language; a mundane (rather than a fantastic) secondary world, and a reluctant anti-hero with an unlooked-for talent.
3. school story: a realist genre first realized by Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857). From this genre Rowling takes what Hunt (2001: 139) identifies as the basic character types of: the basically upright hero (Harry himself), the best friend (Ron), the decent head of house or dormitory (Professor McGonagall), the small, frightened (but often highly religious) child (Neville), the bully (Malfoy), the God-like headmaster (Dumbledore). She also takes plot elements of: initiation into a new community, learning to cope with life, the idiosyncrasies of society (and especially restricted society). There's the use of conventional plot devices – bullying and the defeat of the bully, the hero who is nearly led astray but is saved by a good friend, and the moral role of sport as a means of proving character.
4. detective/mystery story: a realist genre. In 'rational' mysteries (e.g. Enid Blyton's *Secret Seven* and *Famous Five* series), mysteries are solvable (and are solved) through rational methods. The *Harry Potter* books fall very clearly into this rational mystery

sub-genre. At the local level, the mystery in each novel is resolved by the text's closure, while at the general level, the source of evil is clearly located within the character of Voldemort, who can only be defeated through the joint efforts of a tightly controlled, ever vigilant wizarding society. There is a validation of rational adult behaviour as the way to go about solving the problem of evil, with adults including Dumbledore and Sirius Black encouraging Harry and his friends to become detectives.

In blending fantasy genres with realist genres, Rowling sets up contradictions between the types of meanings her texts are making. In particular, fantasy and realist genres make very different meanings about destiny and self-determination. Fantasy genres generally suggest (through their schematic structure, characterization and settings) that we have little control over our destiny or social organization. Both are usually pre-ordained by god, tradition or some other transcendental force. Our task in life is to 'live up to our destiny' as best we can, accept our lot and – if we be 'chosen' – perform heroic tasks.

Realist genres, on the other hand, suggest that it is our own actions and decisions that create the world in which we live. Social structure and our own character is shaped by our specific socio-historical context and by our self-determined actions.

The blending of these two very different types of genres in the *Harry Potter* series results in a text which is postmodern in its method but traditional in its values. A text which appeals to those who like hierarchy, authority, security and compliance, as well as to those who want the risks of self-determination and change. See Eggins (in preparation). A genre analysis can help to explain, perhaps, why these texts really do seem to appeal to so many different groups of readers.

Another example of genre hybridity is the emergence of what's called 'new journalism' or 'creative non-fiction'. You can read an example of creative non-fiction in Chapter Nine, where I present an excerpt from Gail Bell's book *Shot*. In creative non-fiction we see a transfer of literary realizational techniques into the genres of journalism. For example, *Shot* recounts Gail Bell's experience of having been shot in the back when a teenager, so the book is based on real experience, and uses journalistic techniques such as interviews and factual reports to investigate the crime against her and the more general problem of guns in our culture. But *Shot* is also written in a very 'literary' way: Bell uses metaphor, intertextuality, polysemic vocabulary, subjective voice and unusual grammatical patterns. The language calls attention to itself, forcing us to slow down and work at the text. Creative non-fiction and other hybrid genres such as 'ficto-criticism' are functionally motivated responses to our endless pursuit of ways to move from the known and familiar towards the new.

Critical text analysis: reading genre

As I hope all the texts presented in this chapter have shown, the identification of genre is integral to how a text means. But there is more to genre analysis than just identifying the genre, analysing its schematic structure stages, and relating those to realizations. Useful genre analysis involves also reflecting critically on what cultural work is being done, whose interests are being served, by texts of particular genres.

With the genres of literary and genre fiction, the critical interpretation of genres is well developed, and books like Belsey's (2002) *Critical Practice* and Culler's (1997) *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* give some idea of the range of post-structuralist literary

and critical theory. But even so, the functional dimension of a systemic approach can often inflect these literary approaches in useful ways, as I hope my discussion of *Harry Potter* indicated.

Critical reading of genres is equally applicable and perhaps even more relevant for the genres of everyday life. When we analyse a genre, we should always ask: why is this genre useful for the culture? What does this genre tell us about the culture that uses it? For example horoscopes offer an interpretation of life as pre-destined to a large extent, in which material aspects (prosperity) and romantic (usually heterosexual) relationships are encoded as the most significant life concerns. These meanings reflect dominant cultural values, but values which are more useful to certain sectors of the culture than to others. Seeing life as predetermined not only removes our responsibility to act to change our circumstances, but it also implies the permanence of social inequities (such as class differences). Of course, such social differences are largely covered over by horoscopes (we don't get one lot of predictions for middle-class readers and another lot for working-class readers). Usually retained, though, is some recognition of the social dimension of married vs single, with its implicit claim that the goal of individuals is to be able to constitute a romantic (usually implicitly heterosexual) relationship, thus perpetuating dominant beliefs in (the myths of) romantic love. Encouraged to believe that happiness lies in acquiring (through luck/destiny) more wealth and perhaps more status (e.g. through promotion), readers are re-inscribed as competitive consumers in materialistic society. Determination by factors outside ourselves also removes anxiety; if it's 'in the stars', why worry? What can we do about anything, after all?

Horoscopes, then, encode meanings about life which support the maintenance of the social status quo, and the passivity of the individual. For many readers, they complement or replace other authorities no longer accessible or respected: ministers of religion, elders, doctors, etc. Their continued existence provides evidence of our craving for authority, guidance, dependence and social inertia.

Yet there is something very important that this critical analysis has to this point ignored: the fact most of us don't read horoscopes 'seriously'; we don't base our life decisions on them (and so we don't hold our breaths for the 12th of the month). Part of the generic identity of the horoscope text, then, is that it carries with it certain taken-for-granted assumptions about how it is to be read within dominant cultural practice (in this case, as 'not seriously'). Part of the generic coherence of a text is our willingness and ability to read the text 'unproblematically', in this naturalized, hegemonic way. We can only learn to do this through continual participation in the culture. So we grow up seeing many adults flipping to the 'Star Signs', but we do not see the majority of them living their lives based on the advice or predictions they find there. For most (compliant) readers, then, horoscope texts are largely entertainment, not direction. However, for a minority of readers, 'resistant' to the practices suggested by dominant culture, horoscopes can be read 'seriously'.

Yet although horoscopes are mostly read 'for fun', we may still want to question why we need to be spoken to in the form of such texts. Horoscopes may be highly unproblematic as texts, while being (for some of us) highly problematic as cultural processes.

This analysis also helps us to understand how a text like 'Stalin's Genius' (Text 2.3) could still be seen as a text, problematic though most of us will find it. Deliberately problematic texts like Bruce Andrew's 'poem' are just as functionally motivated in their use of language as conventional texts such as horoscopes. But they are motivated by political desire to *disrupt* meaning, to pull us up and make us think about how language works, and in doing that they also challenge us to reflect on how culture works. Once we know the generic identity it is claiming (as a postmodern poem), we have at least some handle on how to read it,

if simply that we now cease to expect the text to 'make sense' in conventional ways. The classifiers 'high art' and 'postmodern', particularly juxtaposed, imply a suspension of everyday conventions of texture, and an expectation that whatever we expect, we will somehow be disappointed! As the text denies us the familiar comforts of referential stability, interpersonal consistency and textual continuity, it perhaps leads us to wonder if other things can be achieved through language than those currently recognized in dominant cultural practice. It suggests that the taken-for-granted can be purposefully disrupted, although with what outcome the text does not make clear.

To repeat a point made earlier, genres are about expectations, not about determination. Genres are open, flexible and responsive to users' needs. Thanks to the semiotic system of language, there is always the option of meaning the unexpected.

Summary: genre through language

Our ability to make predictions about genres illustrates that, as members of this culture, we have somehow acquired a knowledge about how people use language to achieve different things. When called upon, we find ourselves familiar with not only the schematic structure of many genres, but also the typical realizations: the typical types of meanings that get made in each stage of a genre, the typical words and structures that get used to express them. Genre theory is about bringing this unconscious cultural knowledge to consciousness by describing how we use language to do things, and reflecting critically on just what our cultural life involves. In the next chapter we extend this exploration of the dual predictability but also creativity of language when we look at the relationship between text and situation.

Notes

1. Source: *New Woman* magazine, September 1994.
2. See also Hasan (1985a: 59–69) for a detailed discussion of how to identify and label the structural stages of a genre.
3. Source: Ventola 1987: 239–40.
4. 'Anzac' is in parentheses because this is a guess by the transcriber.
5. Source: author's data.
6. Source: author's data (family recipe, written down for a school 'multicultural cookbook').
7. This analysis does not preclude later, more delicate (detailed) description, where the Method stage might be subdivided into the two sub-stages of Procedure and Serving Suggestion, with realizational patterns relating to the verb (*take/mix*, etc. vs *serve*).
8. Source: David Wells, text held in the Nestlé Write Around Australia archive, State Library of NSW.
9. Excerpt from *Fusion* by Cait London (1994), Silhouette Desire series (Harlequin Enterprises), pp. 20–1.
10. Source: Jacinda Smith, text held in the Nestlé Write Around Australia archive, State Library of NSW.
11. J. K. Rowling *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and sequels, published by Bloomsbury, London.

Chapter 4

Register: context of situation in text

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Introduction

In Chapter Two I introduced the concept of **texture** as the defining characteristic of text. We saw there that one aspect of texture is the text's internal **cohesion**, but that texts also display **coherence** with their extra-textual environments. In the previous chapter we explored how texts are coherent with respect to their cultural context, through the concept of **genre**. In this chapter we look more closely at how texts are coherent with respect to their context of situation, through the concept of **register**. The chapter is framed to explore the two questions:

1. What is meant by context of situation and the register variables?
2. How is register realized in language?

Why does context matter?

In our discussion of **texture** in Chapter Two, I pointed out that succeeding moments in the text project expectancies about what will happen next or later in the text. Some of these expectancies are to patterns *within* the text itself, as the unfolding text binds itself into a semantic unit through ties of cohesion. Through this process, later parts of a text display continuity with earlier parts.

But the expectancies on which texts depend to make sense may come not just from within the textual environment but from the extra-textual context. In other words, texts display continuity not just with elements within their boundaries, but with the contexts within which they take place.

The most obvious sense in which text has continuity with its context can be demonstrated by Text 4.1, a handwritten sign sticky-taped above the sink in the tea room at my workplace.

Text 4.1: Sign

You use it, you wash it!

The meanings of Text 4.1 are highly indeterminate in a number of respects. Firstly, the sign contains presuming reference items whose referents cannot be retrieved from the text itself

(who is the *you*?, what is the *it*?). Secondly, the two key lexical items in the text are also vague: just what kind of *use* is meant here? And what kind of *washing*? Put it in the washing machine? Soak it in a bucket? Thirdly, the clauses are simply juxtaposed, so what is the intended link between them? Is it *you use it BECAUSE you wash it*? Finally, what is the meaning of the exclamation mark? Why not just a full stop?

And yet despite these indeterminancies, this short text is not at all problematic for the hundreds of people who see it daily for the simple reason that context, the environment in which the piece of language occurs, constitutes the text as a meaningful exchange. Context allows us to interpret *you* as 'you who are standing at the sink making your cup of tea or coffee or preparing your food'; *it* as 'the crockery you are using'. Context tells us that *using* here means 'having eaten off or drunk out of', and *washing* means 'washing up'. Context also suggests that the events referred to (*using, washing*) are being linked in a temporal cause/consequence sequence (*if you use it, then afterwards you wash it up*).

The exclamation mark is an explicit signal that the sentence is intended as an imperative (telling *you* what to do) and is not merely offered as a description of actions that might commonly occur around kitchen sinks. But even without the exclamation mark, readers are not likely to be confused because they correctly assume that language relates purposefully to its context, and there seems to be very little purpose achieved by merely appending a description of common activities above the sink, while there is a clear purpose achieved by commanding people to clean up their own mess (whether or not they comply with the command is beside the point).

This simple example suggests that context is an important dimension of texture, since context may function as the retrieval source to clear up indeterminacies of meaning. In fact in the washing up example we cannot interpret the text at all *except by* reference to context. Such highly context-dependent texts are risky: the less you spell out, the more chance there is that readers will (accidentally or intentionally) misinterpret your meanings (and use that as an excuse not to wash up their dishes). Such texts only work when there is a high level of shared understanding between the text users, which usually implies a high level of shared socio-cultural identity.

But it's not just signs and notices that depend on context for their meanings. *All* texts involve indeterminacies of meanings. As readers of texts, we learn how to tell when indeterminacies need to be resolved by reference to extra-textual context (as with our sign) or when indeterminacies are an integral feature of the genre and must be read for meaning *within* that genre.

For example, even in an apparently very self-contained text like Kate Chopin's 'The Story of an Hour' (Text 2.4, page 31), there are many aspects of meaning that are indeterminate. On the one hand, many details about characters, setting and plot are simply not supplied by the story. For example, what town or country is this story set in? At what period? What kind of house does Mrs Mallard live in? How old is her husband? How well off are they? Is Josephine, her sister, older or younger than her? How old is Richards? Does he live in the same town? What kind of work does Mr Mallard do? Why was he travelling by train? Part of learning to read the genre of the literary short story is learning that these details are not necessary. A short story is not a novel; there is no time for in-depth characterization or setting, and usually only one event can be represented. We learn to take the suggestive evocation of characters, setting and events from the brief schematic mention the short story writer provides. We learn not to need to know everything but instead to follow the writer's signals as she moves us rapidly past such unnecessary detail towards the main meanings of the text.

Then there are other indeterminacies created by meanings mentioned but not elaborated on in the text: what exactly were the *broken sentences* and *veiled hints* through which her sister told her the news? We know Mrs Mallard was *young*, but how young? What exactly is the nature of Richards' friendship with her husband? Again, we have absolutely no problem with these indeterminacies because they are signalled as peripheral to the main point of the story.

And finally there are the deliberate indeterminacies, the gaps the writer wants us to have to explore through the text. One we explore with Mrs Mallard as the text unfolds: just what is this *something coming to her*? Another, the nature of Mrs Mallard's *heart trouble* we must interpret for ourselves. If we read the text carefully, as a literary short story, we will have no problem with this and will appreciate retrospectively the double meaning the term has in the opening sentence.

Thus, both everyday and literary texts inevitably involve indeterminacies of meaning. Learning to tolerate a high level of indeterminacy is one of the skills we must acquire if we're to enjoy literary genres. But to negotiate more pragmatic, everyday texts, we generally try to reduce indeterminacies by anchoring a text firmly in its immediate context of situation. Register theory helps explain how this works.

How context gets into text

Just as all texts in fact point outwards, to context, and depend upon context for their interpretation, so also all texts carry their context within them. As we read texts, we are always encountering the traces of context in text, whether we are conscious of this or not. You will remember that in Chapter One you were asked to suggest the sources of the three Crying Baby texts. It is likely that you were able to do that quite accurately, deducing that Text 1.1 was taken from a popular magazine, Text 1.2 from an academic textbook, and Text 1.3 from casual conversation. It was suggested that your ability to deduce the source of a text merely from the text itself indicated that in some sense *context is in text*. Systemic linguists are interested in exploring just *how* context gets into text.

In the light of Chapter Three, you may now appreciate that one way in which context gets into text is through schematic structure. That is, one dimension of the three Crying Baby texts which would have helped you determine their sources was your (intuitive) analysis of the genres represented by each text. You might have noted that both Texts 1.1 and 1.2 are Explanation texts, sharing common goals to inform and educate by presenting information through a Problem ^ Possible Solutions schematic structure. The genre of explanation is a not uncommon one in textbooks or magazines. Text 1.3, on the other hand, is clearly an interactive genre, only the second half of which (the funny story) has an identifiable schematic structure. Such a pattern (interaction/narration) is common of conversational situations, rather than pedagogic/explanatory ones.

But generic considerations alone are not enough to explain how you identified the sources of the texts. Simply recognizing Texts 1.1 and 1.2 as Explanation texts does not explain how you deduced that such genres are more likely to occur in certain situations than in others. Similarly, how did you identify the fact that Texts 1.1 and 1.2 each explain to very different audiences? And how could you tell that the story told in Text 1.3 was not being told to someone the speaker had just met, or the Managing Director of the company she works for?

Observations such as these lead systemicists to argue that there is a second level of situational, as distinct from cultural, context which both constrains the appropriacy of using a particular genre, and which gives to the abstract schematic structure the 'details' that allow

us to accurately place a text in terms of dimensions such as who was involved in producing the text, what the text is about and what role language was playing in the event.

It is of course easy to recognize that language use varies according to situations. We are well aware (consciously or unconsciously) that there are some situations in which the genre Lecture would be inappropriate. Similarly, we appreciate that we do not talk in the same way to an employment interview panel as we do to our best friends, that we do not talk in the same way about linguistics as we do about cooking, and that we do not write the same way we talk. However, it is much more difficult to formalize the nature of this relationship between language use and aspects of different contexts.

The question centres around the observation that although some aspects of situations seem to have an effect on language use, others do not. For example, although the different social statuses held by the interactants do seem to affect language use, it does not seem to matter much what the weather is like, what clothes the interactants are wearing, or what colour hair they have. Thus, some dimensions of a situation appear to have a significant impact on the text that will be realized, while other dimensions of a situation do not.

One of the first researchers to pursue this issue was the anthropologist, Branislaw Malinowski (1923/46, 1935). In transcribing the daily life and events of the Trobriand Islanders, Malinowski found that it was impossible to make sense of literal, or word-for-word translations from their language into English. In part, Malinowski argued that this indicated the need for the researcher to understand the cultural context in which the language was being used:

> The study of any language, spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and their environment. (Malinowski 1946: 306)

In order for observers to make sense of the events being described in his attempted translations, he found he had to include contextual glosses, i.e. the linguistic events were only interpretable when additional contextual information about the situation and the culture was provided. Malinowski claimed that language only becomes intelligible when it is placed within its **context of situation**. In coining this term, Malinowksi wanted to capture the fact that the situation in which words are uttered 'can never be passed over as irrelevant to the linguistic expression', and that 'the meaning of any single word is to a very high degree dependent on its context' (1946: 307).

Although confining his argument to so-called 'primitive' (i.e. non-literate) cultures, Malinowski developed an account of language that is both functional (makes reference to why people use language) and semantic (deals with how language means). In the following extended quotation, you will see Malinowski making an important association, between the fact that language only makes sense (only has meaning) when interpreted within its context *and* the claim that language is a functional resource (i.e. language use is purposeful):

> It should be clear at once that the conception of meaning as contained in an utterance is false and futile. A statement, spoken in real life, is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered. For each verbal statement by a human being has the aim and function of expressing some thought or feeling actual at that moment and in that situation, and necessary for some reason or other to be made known to another person or persons – in order either to serve purposes of common action, or to establish ties of purely social communion, or else to deliver the speaker

> of violent feelings or passions . . . utterance and situation are bound up inextricably with each other and the context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of the words . . . a word without linguistic context is a mere figment and stands for nothing by itself, so in reality of a spoken living tongue, the utterance has no meaning except in the context of situation. (Malinowski 1946: 307)

Malinowski thus considered that, at least in primitive cultures, language was always being used to do something. Language functioned as 'a mode of action' (1946: 312). In developing an account of the different functions to which language could be put, Malinowski differentiated between the pragmatic function (when language is being used to achieve concrete goals, as well as to retell experience) and the magical (the non-pragmatic functions). Even what appeared to be 'free, aimless social intercourse' (1946: 315) he considered to be a highly functional use of language. Labelling it 'phatic communion', he described such conversational uses of language as 'a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words' (*ibid.*: 315). While Malinowski made an enormous contribution in identifying the fundamental semantic role of the **context of situation** and the **context of culture**, and in developing a functional account of language, he did not go on to formulate more precisely the nature of these two contexts, nor their relation to the functional organization of language. In addition, Malinowski restricted his observations by drawing an artificial distinction between 'primitive' and 'civilized' languages. Later theorists have argued that context is critical to meaning in *any* linguistic event in *any* language.

One scholar who developed a more general theory of meaning-in-context, influenced by Malinowski's work, was the linguist J. R. Firth (1935, 1950, 1951). With a life-long interest in the semantics of language, Firth extended the notion of context of situation to the more general issue of linguistic predictability. Firth pointed out that given a description of a context we can predict what language will be used. His rather quaint but exact formulation of this was to claim that learning to use language is very much a process of:

> learning to say what the other fellow expects us to say under the given circumstances . . . Once someone speaks to you, you are in a relatively determined context and you are not free just to say what you please. (Firth 1935/57: 28)

Predictability also works in the other direction: given an example of language use (what we would now call text), we can make predictions about what was going on at the time that it was produced.

In trying to determine what were the significant variables in the context of situation that allowed us to make such predictions, Firth suggested the following dimensions of situations:

> A. The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.
> (i) The verbal action of the participants.
> (ii) The non-verbal action of the participants.
> B. The relevant objects.
> C. The effect of the verbal action. (Firth 1950/57: 182)

This interest in specifying context was also pursued by researchers working within sociolinguistic and ethnography of speaking approaches (for example, Hymes 1962/74, 1964/72, Gumperz 1968, 1971), with significant contributions from early register theorists such as Gregory 1967, Ure 1971, Ure and Ellis 1977. The major contribution of Halliday's

approach to context has been to argue for *systematic* correlations between the organization of language itself (the three types of meanings it encodes) and specific contextual features.

Register theory

Following in the functional-semantic tradition pursued by Firth, Halliday also asked *which* aspects of context are important, i.e. what aspects of context make a difference to how we use language? He has suggested (e.g. Halliday 1978, 1985b) that there are three aspects in any situation that have linguistic consequences: **field, mode** and **tenor**. As we saw in Chapter One, these can be briefly glossed as

field: what the language is being used to talk about
mode: the role language is playing in the interaction
tenor: the role relationships between the interactants.

These three variables are called the **register variables**, and a description of the values for each of these variables at a given time of language use is a **register description** of a text. A very brief register description of the three Crying Baby texts from Chapter One would be as follows:

Text 1.1
Field: childcare
Mode: written to be read
Tenor: specialists to general audience
Text 1.2
Field: childcare
Mode: written to be read
Tenor: specialist to trainee-specialists
Text 1.3
Field: childcare
Mode: interactive face-to-face
Tenor: friends

From this very limited register description we can suggest that the three texts are alike in field, but different in mode and tenor. (We will return to these observations in Chapter Eleven.)

In proposing these three variables, Halliday is making the claim that, of all the things going on in a situation at a time of language use, only these three have a direct and significant impact on the type of language that will be produced.

In order to test out his claim, we need to consider each register variable more closely, asking what exactly field, mode and tenor refer to (here we will be more specific about the dimensions of each register variable), and in what ways each variable impacts on language use (here we will illustrate briefly how each register variable makes a difference in text).

In asking why Halliday argues for these three register variables and not any others, we will review the systematic relationship set up in the systemic model between these contextual categories and the structure of language itself.

Mode

The general definition of mode offered above referred simply to 'the role language is playing in an interaction'. Martin (1984) has suggested that this role can be seen as involving two

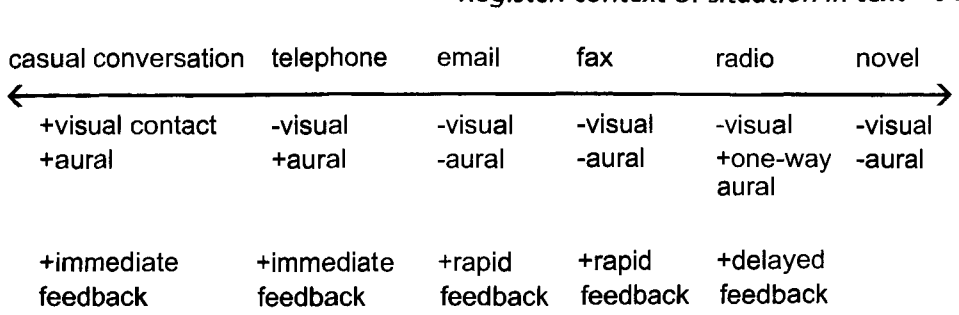


Figure 4.1 Spatial or interpersonal distance (simplified from Martin 1984: 26)

simultaneous continua which describe two different types of **distance** in the relation between language and situation:

1. **spatial/interpersonal distance**: as Figure 4.1 above indicates, this continuum ranges situations according to the possibilities of immediate feedback between the interactants. At one pole of the continuum, then, is the situation of sitting down to a casual chat with friends, where there is both visual and aural contact, and thus feedback is immediate. If you disagree with what your friend is saying, you say so straight away, or 'to her face'. At the other end of the continuum would be the situation of writing a book, where there is no visual or aural contact between writer and reader(s), and thus no possibility of immediate feedback, and even the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. If you don't like a novel, how do you let the author know?

In between these two poles we can locate other types of situations, such as telephone calls (where there is aural but not visual contact, with slightly constrained feedback possibilities), and radio broadcasts (with one-way aural contact, but no immediate feedback). Modern communication modes (such as email, same-time internet chat rooms, fax, etc.) reveal complicated mode dimensions.

2. **experiential distance**: Figure 4.2 illustrates the second continuum of experiential distance, which ranges situations according to the distance between language and the social process occurring. At one pole of this continuum, we can put situations such as playing a game (of cards), where language is being used to accompany the activity interactants are involved in. We can describe the role of language here as almost a kind of action: as well as the action of dealing and playing the cards, there is the verbal action of making a bid, talking about whose turn it is, naming the cards to be played, etc. In such a situation, language is just one of the means being used to achieve ongoing action.

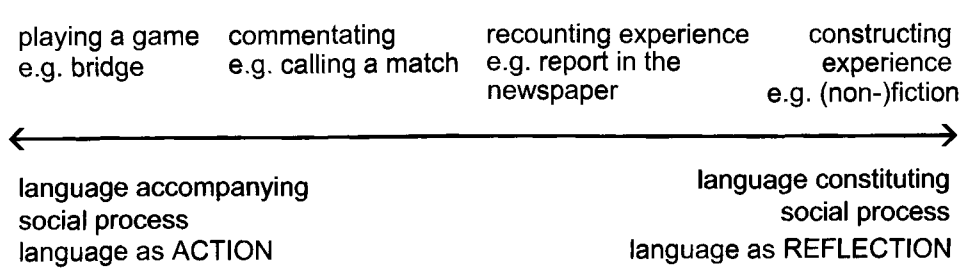


Figure 4.2 The experiential distance continuum (based on Martin 1984: 27)

Contrast this with the other polar extreme, for example writing a piece of fiction, where language is all that there is. There is no other social process going on: language is in fact creating, and therefore constituting, the social process. In these situations, language is being used to reflect on experience, rather than to enact it.

If we combine these two dimensions of mode (by taking the end points of each continuum), we can characterize the basic contrast between spoken and written situations of language use. Summarized in Table 4.1 below, we can see that situations where we use spoken language are typically interactive situations (we do not usually deliver monologues to ourselves, although we do often interact with ourselves by imagining a respondent to our remarks). In most spoken situations we are in immediate face-to-face contact with our interactant(s), and we are very typically using language to achieve some ongoing social action – e.g. to get the furniture positioned, the kids organized, etc. In such situations we usually act spontaneously, so that our linguistic output is unrehearsed. Because spoken situations are often 'everyday', we are generally relaxed and casual during the interaction.

Contrast this with a typical situation where we are using written language – for example, writing an essay for university. There we would typically find ourselves alone, not in face-to-face, aural or visual contact with our intended audience (the marker of our essay). Language would be being used to reflect on some topic – the lecturer does not want to read a commentary on our actions, feelings and thoughts of our essay writing process (*'now I'm picking up my pen, but I'm not really feeling like writing this essay . . .'*!). Written situations in our culture call for rehearsal: we draft, edit, rewrite and finally re-copy our essay. Finally, for most of us writing is not a casual activity: we need peace and quiet, we gather our thoughts, we need to concentrate. The two situations of language use, then, reveal very different dimensions.

To this point all we have done is suggest ways of analysing situations of language use. But you will remember that the SFL claim is much more than that: it is that this analysis of the situation tells us something significant about how language will be used. To evaluate that claim, what we have to do is to demonstrate that these dimensions of the situation have an effect on the language used.

In fact it turns out that there are some very obvious implications of the contrast between spoken and written modes. Certain linguistic patterns correspond to different positions on the mode continua.

Table 4.1 Mode: characteristics of spoken/written language situations

MODE: TYPICAL SITUATIONS OF LANGUAGE USE	
SPOKEN DISCOURSE	**WRITTEN TEXT**
+ interactive	non-interactive
2 or more participants	one participant
+ face-to-face	not face-to-face
in the same place at the same time	on her own
+ language as action	not language as action
using language to accomplish some task	using language to reflect
+ spontaneous	not spontaneous
without rehearsing what is going to be said	planning, drafting and rewriting
+ casual	not casual
informal and everyday	formal and special occasions

Table 4.2 Characteristic features of spoken and written language

SPOKEN and WRITTEN LANGUAGE the linguistic implications of MODE	
SPOKEN LANGUAGE	**WRITTEN LANGUAGE**
turn-taking organization	monologic organization
context-dependent	context independent
dynamic structure	synoptic structure
–interactive staging	–rhetorical staging
–open-ended	–closed, finite
spontaneity phenomena	'final draft' (polished)
(false starts, hesitations,	indications of earlier
interruptions, overlap,	drafts removed
incomplete clauses)	
everyday lexis	'prestige' lexis
non-standard grammar	standard grammar
grammatical complexity	grammatical simplicity
lexically sparse	lexically dense

Table 4.2 above summarizes the linguistic differences that correspond to our two polar extremes of a spoken and a written language situation. Here we can see that the language we use in a spoken situation will typically be organized according to the turn-by-turn sequencing of talk: first you speak, then I speak, then you speak again. Written language, on the other hand, will be produced as a monologic block. Because we are usually in the same place at the same time when we talk to each other, our language can depend in part on the context: when we're washing up, I can say to you *pass it to me* or *put it over here* or *don't do that*, because you will be able to interpret the *it* or the *that* from the ongoing context we share. But a written text needs to stand more or less by itself: it needs to be context-independent. It is not a good strategy to begin an essay with *I agree with this*, or *As it says here in this book*, as the reader will not be able to decode the *this* or the *it . . . here*. Because a spoken interaction tends to accompany action, so the structure of the talk will be a largely dynamic one, with one sentence leading to another to another to another (*Well if you don't pass me that I won't be able to get in here and then we'll be stuck because what will they say?*). Written text, however, because it is intended to encode our considered reflections on a topic, will be organized synoptically, i.e. it will have the Beginning ^ Middle ^ End type of generic structure that we discussed in Chapter Three. The structure will be determined before the text itself is complete. So, regardless of the specific essay question, the (good!) student will try to follow the stages of Statement of Thesis, Evidence, Summary, Reiteration of Thesis.

Further, if we recorded the spoken text, we would find that it contained a range of spontaneity phenomena such as hesitations, false starts, repetitions and interruptions, whereas the written text will (ideally) have all such traces removed. The spoken text will contain everyday sorts of words, including slang and dialect features (e.g. *youz*), and often sentences will not follow standard grammatical conventions (*I usen't to do that; I seen it yesterday*). In the written text, however, we will choose more prestigious vocabulary, and use standard grammatical constructions.

To this point the differences we have noted between the language of spoken and written situations are no doubt quite familiar to you. It is important to appreciate that these

linguistic differences are not accidental, but are the functional consequence (the reflex) of the situational differences in mode.

However, there are two more linguistic features that are highly sensitive to mode variation: the degree of grammatical complexity, and the lexical density of the language chosen. As these features are responsible for perhaps the most striking differences between spoken and written language, we will spend a moment exploring them. As both can be related to the process of **nominalization**, we will begin there.

Nominalization

Let us imagine that you are behind in your university work and have to explain to your tutor why your essay has been handed in after the due date. When speaking to your tutor, you might say something like:

i) I handed my essay in late because my kids got sick.

But imagine now that you have to write a letter of explanation, accompanying your essay. In that letter you will probably write something like:

ii) The reason for the late submission of my essay was the illness of my children.

When we compare these two sentences we see that the same content, the same set of actions and events in the real world, get related in two very different linguistic forms according to whether we are speaking or writing.

In sentence i), we have one sentence made up of 2 clauses (*I handed my essay in late// because my kids got sick*). The two clauses are linked with the logical connective (conjunction) *because*. Each of the two clauses describes the concrete actions (*hand in, get sick*), expressed by verbs, performed by different human actors (*I, my kids*), with the actors occupying first position in each clause.

In sentence ii), however, we find that our message has somehow been condensed to fit into only one clause. This has been achieved by turning the actions of *handing in* and *getting sick* into nouns: *submission, illness*: the traditional category of abstract nouns. The only verb we now have is the non-action verb *is*. By turning what were verbs into nouns, sentence ii) is now able to express the logical relation between the two events also through a noun, *reason*, which now becomes the point of departure for the message. Finally, our human actors from sentence i) have been dramatically demoted in sentence ii): both the *I* and the *my kids* are no longer pivotal actors in the clauses, but only possessors (*my*), positioned now as qualifiers to nouns (*essay, children*). Here we also note also the lexical change from the slang form *kids* to the standard form *children*. (See Eggins *et al.* 1992 for more extensive discussion and exemplification of nominalization.)

We can summarize the differences between sentences i) and ii) as in Table 4.3.

This simple example illustrates the major differences between spoken and written language: that spoken language is concerned with human actors, carrying out action processes, in dynamically linked sequences of clauses, whereas written language is concerned with abstract ideas/reasons, linked by relational processes (verbs of being), in condensed sentences. A summary is in Table 4.4.

As we move from the spoken to the written version, the main means of achieving these changes is through the process of **nominalization**: turning things that are not normally nouns into nouns, with consequences for other parts of sentences.

Table 4.3 Contrasts between spoken and written examples

features of example i)	features of example ii)
two clauses	one clause
linked explicitly with *because*	no link
human, personal actors	abstract actors (reason, illness)
action processes	'being' process
	logical relation now a noun
	actors now possessors
	action processes now nouns

Table 4.4 Summarizing differences between spoken and written examples

spoken language	written language
human actors	ideas, reasons linked by
action processes	relational processes
dynamically related clauses	in condensed, dense sentence

The main parts of clauses that get turned into nouns are verbs (e.g. *to hand in, to get sick* become *submission, illness*) and conjunctions or logical connectives (*because* becomes *reason*). The following sentence exemplifies how other parts of clauses can also be nominalized:

> The increased complexity of tasks will lead to the extension of the duration of training programmes.

If we compare this written sentence with its spoken equivalent (*because the jobs are more complex, programmes to train people will take longer*), we can see that not only has the process *extend* been nominalized, but so also has an adjective (*complexity*) and an adverb (*duration*).

Although heavily nominalized language can sound pretentious and may make the meaning obscure, the real motivation for this grammatical process is a functional one: by nominalizing we are able to do things with the text that we cannot do in unnominalized text. Nominalization has two main textual advantages: rhetorical organization and increased lexical density.

Rhetorical organization

Nominalization allows us to get away from the dynamic and usually real-world sequencing that goes with speaking, where we relate sequences of actions in which we featured as actors. By nominalizing actions and logical relations, we can organize our text not in terms of ourselves, but in terms of ideas, reasons, causes, etc. Consider this short text from a university department handbook, detailing policy regarding late essays. The nominalizations have been underlined, and clause boundaries have been indicated with double slashed lines:

Text 4.2: Late Essays[1]

> Formal extensions of time are not granted as such,// but if, through misfortune or bad planning, an assignment cannot be submitted on time,// it may be submitted within the next 14 days . . . If it is late because of some unforeseen disability// it will

not be penalised,// provided that (i) documentary evidence of the disability is attached to the essay and// (ii) the nature of the disability and of the evidence is acceptable to the Late Essay Committee. Full details of penalties are provided in the 'Submission of Essays and Assignments' document.

Compare Text 4.2 with Text 4.3, a spoken rewrite (or **unpacked** version) of the text. When we **unpack** a text, we remove as many of the nominalizations as possible, changing nouns back to verbs or conjunctions, etc. Note that unpacking frequently demands making some vocabulary changes as well:

Text 4.3: Late Essays (unpacked)

We won't formally extend the time you have to do your assignments,// but if you can't hand your assignment in on time// because something has gone wrong// or because you didn't plan properly,// then you can submit it within the next 14 days . . . If it is late// because something happened to disable you// and you couldn't have foreseen// that that would happen,// then it will not be penalised,// provided that (i) you attach a document which proves what happened to you to the essay and// (ii) the Late Essay Committee accepts// what you say// you had wrong with you// and the way you prove that to us . . . Look in the booklet about submitting essays and assignments// if you want to find out more about how we penalise you.

While the clauses in the first text frequently begin with nominalizations (*formal extensions, misfortune or bad planning, documentary evidence, nature of the disability, full details of penalties*), those in the second text begin with human actors: either *you*, the student, *we*, the School or *the Late Essay Committee*.

Rhetorical organization of the kind made possible by nominalization only becomes an option because written text is rehearsed, polished, redrafted: with the time that writing allows, we can reorganize our sentences to give priority to different parts, whereas in speaking the pressure of the dynamically unfolding situation means we generally do not plan much beyond the clause we are speaking now.

Lexical density

Nominalization also allows us to pack in more lexical content per sentence. This relates to the potential of what we call the **nominal group** in English. The nominal group is the part of the clause that contains nouns and the words that can accompany nouns. For example, all the following are nominal groups:

spiders
the three spiders
the three redback spiders
the three shiny redback spiders
the smallest of the three shiny redback spiders
the smallest of the three shiny redback spiders in the corner
the smallest of the three shiny redback spiders spinning their webs in the corner
etc.

These examples illustrate that we can do many things with nouns in English: we can count, specify, describe, classify and qualify them. It turns out that these are all things we cannot

do with other parts of the clause, for example with verbs. Although the verbal group (the part of the clause where we express the verb or doing word) does have potential to be expanded, the result of expansion is very different. For example:

spins
is spinning
has been spinning
will have been spinning
may have been going to have been spinning
etc.

Although we have expanded the verbal group considerably, you can see that we have not added any more content than we had to start with: the content of *spin*. The effect of expansion has to do with specifying non-content aspects: tense, number, aspect, voice, etc. Thus, unlike the nominal group, expansion in the verbal group does not add more content to our clause.

It is by turning verbs and other parts of speech into nouns, then, that we increase the possible content of our text, and thus increase its **lexical density**. The lexical density of a text can be calculated by expressing the number of content carrying words in a text/sentence as a proportion of all the words in the text/sentence. Content carrying words include nouns, the main part of the verb, adverbs and adjectives. Non-content carrying words include prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs and pronouns. Table 4.5 below compares the lexical density of the two sample paragraphs given above.

Table 4.5 Contrasting lexical density

	Text 4.2	Text 4.3
no. of content carrying lexical items	37	43
no. of lexical items in text	89	130
total lexical density	42%	33%

This example shows that the highly nominalized written text allows a far greater proportion of the words in the text to be content carrying. Thus, written language generally has a much higher rate of lexical density than does spoken text.

Halliday (1985b) points out that the corollary of this is that spoken language has a higher level of **grammatical intricacy**. Grammatical intricacy relates to the number of clauses per sentence, and can be calculated by expressing the number of clauses in a text as a proportion of the number of sentences in the text. Whereas in spoken language we tend to chain clauses together one after another, to give often very long sentences, in written language we tend to use relatively few clauses per sentence. For example, Table 4.6 below compares the grammatical intricacy figures for Texts 4.2 and 4.3.

Table 4.6 Contrasting grammatical intricacy

	Text 4.2	Text 4.3
no. of clauses in the text	8	17
no. of sentences in the text	3	3
grammatical intricacy score	2.6	5.6

Table 4.7 Density and intricacy in spoken and written language

spoken language	written language
low lexical density	high lexical density
• few content carrying words as a proportion of all words	• many content carrying words as a proportion of all words
high grammatical intricacy	low grammatical intricacy
• many clauses per sentence	• few clauses per sentence

Table 4.7 summarizes the associations noted in these examples.

Text example: Crying Baby texts revisited

It is revealing to relate this discussion of mode differences back to the Crying Baby texts presented in Chapter One. You will remember that we characterized Text 1.2 as 'formal' and 'abstract', and we can now demonstrate that much of what gave us that impression has to do with the fact that this text is heavily nominalized.

This can be demonstrated by **unpacking** the text as much as possible, turning it back into a more spoken version. An unpacked version of Text 1.2 might be:

Text 1.2 unpacked

When an infant cries the sound compels (people) because it signals distress, which makes it appropriate to the way the human infant depends for a long time on a person who cares for it.

However, when an infant cries people get discomforted and parents may get alarmed. Many parents find it very difficult to listen to their infant crying for even a short time. Sometimes infants cry because they are hungry or are uncomfortable or because they are too hot, too cold, ill, or lying in the wrong position. But infants cry because of many other things too. When infants are crying because they are hungry, uncomfortable, hot, cold or in the wrong position, then people usually recognize why infants are crying and alleviate them. Sometimes we do not know why infants stop crying but they do often stop crying when they are held. Most infants cry frequently but we don't know why, and holding the infant or soothing him seems ineffective . . .

If parents are counselled to understand how much a normal infant cries, then they may feel less guilty and they may be less concerned. But some parents are so distressed when their infant cries that they cannot logically suppress feeling guilty. Those parents may need to spend time somewhere away from where the infant is crying so that they can cope appropriately and not feel distressed. Unless they are relieved, they will get tired and tense and they may respond inappropriately when their infant cries and may leave the infant in the house or abuse the infant.

As this shows, unpacking a text often involves re-inserting human actors, often rendered unnecessary by nominalization. The ability of nominalization to condense meanings is also clearly shown when we simply compare the length of the original nominalized text with the length of the unpacked version.

Significantly, this unpacked version has lost much of its 'prestigious' sound: it now seems very much more ordinary (and perhaps more accessible) than the original text. If we also substituted more everyday lexical items for the academic vocabulary used (e.g. used *baby* instead of *infant*), the text would seem very much like Text 1.1.

And this begins to explain how Text 1.1 achieves its aim of pitching itself to a more popular audience: how it will meet what we will see below are tenor demands to create a more 'friendly fellow-sufferer' (rather than 'distant objective specialist') role for the writer. It does it by being more like talk. This can be demonstrated by **packing** the text, i.e. increasing the lexical density, by nominalizing more frequently. For example:

Text 1.1 packed

> An infant's incessant crying can lead to despair on the part of caregivers. When feeding, changing, nursing and soothing techniques fail, the reasons for his crying are not immediately discernible. The most common reason for crying is hunger. Even following a recent feed the infant may still be experiencing adaptation to the pattern of satisfaction resulting from sucking until replete, followed by dissatisfaction due to the subsequent experience of emptiness. As a foetus, nourishment came automatically and constantly. Food should be offered first. In the event that the infant declines nourishment from either breast or teat, another cause can be assumed for his crying . . .

The effect of nominalization here is to make Text 1.1 sound very much like Text 1.2: heavy and serious. We thus see that Texts 1.1 and 1.2, while both written texts, exploit the potential to nominalize quite differently: Text 1.2 uses heavy nominalization to make it quite clear that it is a reflective, authoritative text; Text 1.1 keeps nominalization to a minimum in order to retain some of the immediacy and personalization typical of speech.

Nominalization is one type of what Halliday identifies as **grammatical metaphor**, situations where meanings typically (**congruently**) realized by one type of language pattern get realized by other less typical (**incongruent**) linguistic choices. The concept is explained and exemplified more fully in Halliday (1985a: Chapter 10, 1985c), Eggins *et al.* (1992), Martin (1992a: 406–17) and Martin and Rose (2003: 103–9).

To this point, we have used nominalization to demonstrate very briefly some of the effects that the mode of a situation has on language use. The different types of linguistic patterns found in spoken as opposed to written situations are the realization of the impact of mode on language.

It would seem then that we can justify the claim that mode is an important aspect of context, for mode clearly has an effect on how we use language. We can now turn to consider tenor.

Tenor

Our initial definition of tenor was 'the social role relationships played by interactants'. For example, roles such as student/lecturer, customer/salesperson, friend/ friend.

Instinctively you can no doubt recognize that the kind of social role you are playing in a situation will have an effect on how you use language. For example, you do not talk to the greengrocer the same way as you talk to your mother. However, we need to get more precise about just what aspects of the tenor of situations are important, and in what ways.

Building on early studies of language variation and role relationship variables such as formality, politeness and reciprocity (e.g. Brown and Gilman 1960/1972), Cate Poynton (1985) has suggested that tenor can be broken down into three different continua: **power**,

contact and **affective involvement**. What this means is that the general notion of 'role relationships' can be seen as a complex of these three simultaneous dimensions:

1. **power**: Figure 4.3 schematizes the power continuum, which positions situations in terms of whether the roles we are playing are those in which we are of equal or unequal power. Examples of roles of equal power are those of friends; examples of roles of unequal (non-reciprocal) power would be those of boss/employee.
2. **contact**: Figure 4.4 schematizes the contact continuum, which positions situations in terms of whether the roles we are playing are those that bring us into frequent or infrequent contact. For example, contrast the frequent contact between spouses, with the occasional contact with distant acquaintances.
3. **affective involvement**: Figure 4.5 schematizes the affective involvement continuum, in which situations can be positioned according to whether the roles we are playing are those in which the affective involvement between us is high or low. This dimension refers to the extent to which we are emotionally involved or committed in a situation. For example, friends or lovers are obviously affectively involved, whereas work associates are typically not.

Halliday's identification, and Poynton's sub-classification, of tenor is proposed as more than just an interesting description of the interpersonal aspects of situations. It is proposed as a direct claim about the link between language and context. The claim, then, is that these aspects of our role occupation in a given situation will have an impact on how we use language.

Following the approach we used to discuss mode, we can draw a contrast between two situation types, the **informal** and the **formal**, according to their typical tenor dimensions. Thus, as summarized in Table 4.8, an informal situation would typically involve interactants who are of equal power, who see each other frequently, and who are affectively involved (e.g. close friends). A formal situation would be one where the power between the interactants is not equal, the contact is infrequent, and the affective involvement low (e.g. a first-year university student meeting the Vice Chancellor).

Figure 4.3 The power continuum

Figure 4.4 The contact continuum

Figure 4.5 The affective involvement continuum

Table 4.8 Formal vs informal situations

TENOR: typical situations of language use	
INFORMAL	**FORMAL**
equal power	unequal, hierarchic power
frequent contact	infrequent, or one-off contact
high affective involvement	low affective involvement

Just as we did with mode, so with tenor we can establish that language use will vary quite significantly from the informal to the formal situation. These differences, summarized in Table 4.9 below, include different vocabulary choices. In informal situations (e.g. chatting with our friends) we tend to use words that express our attitude (*fantastic, shitty, unbelievable*). Attitudinal lexis can express either a positive or a negative evaluation, and we often refer to these as 'purr and snarl' words. In a formal situation, on the other hand, we tend to keep our attitudes to ourselves, or to express them in apparently objective language (*unfortunate, surprising*). Lexis will also differ in terms of its degree of standardization: in informal situations, we frequently use slang and abbreviated forms of word (*chockies*). In the formal situation we use the complete lexical item (*chocolates*), and avoid slang. Other lexical differences will be that in formal language we find many politeness expressions (*please, thank you, you're welcome*, etc.), often absent from informal language. Swearing, while common in informal settings, is taboo in most formal situations.

One area of considerable interest that differentiates the informal from the formal is that of vocatives (see Poynton 1984 for a detailed discussion). Vocatives, or terms of address, are the words that people call each other when, for example, they wish to get each other's attention. The choice of which vocative to use reveals important tenor dimensions. Compare: *Sir John! Mr Smith! John! Johnno! Darl! Idiot Features!* As these examples indicate, vocatives are a very potent area for the realization of interpersonal meanings, an area very sensitive to these contextual constraints of tenor.

Poynton's study of vocatives in Australian English has suggested that there are correlations between the dimensions of power, contact and affect and the choice of vocatives. It appears that:

- when power is equal, vocative use is reciprocal: if I call you by your first name, you will call me by my first name. Or if I use title plus surname, so will you
- where power is unequal, vocative use will be non-reciprocal: you may call your doctor *Dr Bloggs*, but he may call you *Peter*
- where contact is frequent we often use nicknames: *Johnno, Pete, Shirl*
- where contact is infrequent, we often have no vocatives at all (e.g. the clerk at the post office, or the bus driver)
- where affective involvement is high, we use diminutive forms of names and terms of endearment: *Georgie-Porgie, Petie-Pie, Honey Bunch, Darl*
- where affective involvement is low, we use formal 'given' names: *Peter, Suzanne.*

Aside from vocatives, there are many other very significant ways in which these dimensions of tenor impact on language use. For example, in casual conversations (where you are talking not to achieve any clear pragmatic purpose but are just chatting), we can

see a clear correlation between the tenor variables and both the length and type of interaction:

- where both affective involvement and contact are low (e.g. a conversation with your neighbour), conversations tend to be fairly brief; whereas with high affective involvement and frequent contact (e.g. with friends), conversations can go on for hours.
- in addition, where affective involvement and contact are low, the conversation will emphasize consensus and agreement; whereas where contact and affect are high, the conversation is likely to be characterized by controversy and disagreement (Eggins 1990, Eggins and Slade 1997).

These correlations help explain both why we find 'polite' conversation so difficult to sustain, and also why we spend most of our time with our friends arguing!

One further area in which tenor differences impact on language use concerns the grammatical systems of **mood** and **modality**. These systems will be explored in detail in Chapter Six. Briefly, what we find is that just as the variable of mode can be related to nominalization (one kind of grammatical metaphor), so the variable of tenor can be related to a different kind of grammatical metaphor: metaphor where we play with what we call the mood structure of the clause. Imagine you need help moving some furniture. In an informal situation (e.g. at home) you might turn to your partner/kids/friends and say:

> Hey, Freddie! Get off your butt and give me a hand here. Shove that chair over closer to the desk.

Now imagine that you are moving furniture at work, and that the only available helper is your boss. This time you might say:

> Oh, Dr Smith. I'm just trying to tidy my office up a bit and I wondered if you'd mind maybe giving me a quick hand with moving some furniture? If you've got time, I mean. It won't take a moment. Now if we could just move this chair over a bit nearer to the desk there. Thanks very much.

If we compare these two examples, we can see a number of the differences we have already discussed: the choice of vocatives, use/avoidance of slang and politeness phenomena. But another major difference between the two concerns the choice of clause structure. In the informal version, we see that to get an action carried out by somebody else we would use an **imperative** clause (*get off your butt, shove that chair*). This is the typical choice of clause type we use when commanding family and friends. But in the formal situation, although the speaker is still making a demand of the other person, this time the clause type is the **interrogative** or question (*would you mind . . . if we could . . .*). The interrogatives also involve the use of words like *would, could, mind*, words we describe as functioning to **modulate** or attenuate the request. Clauses which package requests indirectly, using structures other than imperatives, are examples of grammatical metaphor. Thus, one of the realizations of the tenor of the situation can be seen in the choice of mood and related grammatical areas. These differences are summarized in Table 4.9 below.

It seems, then, that we can establish that as well as mode having an effect on language patterns, so do the values for tenor. The last situational variable we need to consider is field.

Table 4.9 Formal vs informal language

FORMAL and INFORMAL LANGUAGE: the linguistic consequences of TENOR	
INFORMAL language	**FORMAL language**
attitudinal lexis (purr and snarl words)	neutral lexis
colloquial lexis	formal lexis
– abbreviated forms	– full forms
– slang	– no slang
	politeness phenomena (Ps and Qs)
swearing	– no swearing
interruptions, overlap	careful turn-taking
first names	titles, no names
nicknames	
diminutives	
typical mood choices	incongruent mood choices
modalization to express probability	modalization to express deference
modulation to express opinion	modulation to express suggestion

Field

We initially defined field as the situational variable that has to do with the focus of the activity in which we are engaged. Sometimes field can be glossed as the 'topic' of the situation, but Martin's (1984: 23, 1992a: 536) broader definition in terms of institutional focus or social activity type is more useful to capture the field in situations where language is accompanying action.

The effect of field on language use is perhaps the easiest register variable to demonstrate convincingly. Consider the following text:

Text 4.4: PC Care

> A PC which won't stop crashing can drive anyone to despair. You boot it, you format your CDs, you create a file, you try to protect your edits, but the minute you try to save your file to a CD, the PC crashes. Why? The most common reason computers crash is faulty CDs. Even if the CD is brand new, it might still have a faulty track and so the CD won't accept any messages from the CPU. When the CDs are packaged, they pass through often lengthy transportation, and may be damaged in the process. Try another CD first; if the PC still crashes you can assume it's something else. It happens that PCs sometimes crash for inexplicable reasons – perhaps they are just overloaded. Perhaps you have inadvertently entered an unacceptable control code, or have accidentally pressed too many keys at once. Perhaps the CPU is faulty . . . etc.

You will no doubt have quickly recognized this text as very similar to Text 1.1, our first Crying Baby text from Chapter One. In fact, this text is exactly the same as Text 1.1, but for one thing: the field has changed, from childcare to 'PC care'. As you can see, changing the field has had a very immediate and significant impact on the text, particularly on the content words used.

But there is more to field than these obvious changes of topic. Consider now Texts 4.5 and 4.6 below:

Text 4.5: The Bermuda Bowl[2]

After three 16-board segments of the quarterfinals of the 1991 Bermuda Bowl. Iceland was well ahead of US-2 but the other matches were more competitive.

Fourth Segment

Board 52 furthered both the Brazilian and Polish rallies.

South dealer

Both sides vulnerable

North
♠ 2
♡ 6 2
◇ K 8 7 6 5
♣ A Q 8 7 5

West
♠ K 10 9 8
♡ Q J 8 7 3
◇ Q J 10 3
♣ —

East
♠ A 7 5 4
♡ K 9 2
◇ 4
♣ J 10 9 3 2

South
♠ Q J 6 3
♡ A 10 4
◇ A 9 2
♣ K 6 4

US-1 vs BRAZIL

Table 1

South	West	North	East
P. Branco	*M'stroth*	*Mello*	*Rodwell*
1 ♣	Double	3 ♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Table 2

South	West	North	East
Miller	*Chagas*	*Sontag*	*M. Branco*
1 ♣	1 ♡	2 ♡	3 ♡
Pass	Pass	4 ♣	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Rodwell's decision to pass out three clubs seems wise, and was justified by the layout – he went plus and had no obvious making contract of his own – but this led to the lowest East-West score on this trouble deal. Declarer won the diamond lead with the ace, cashed the club ace, recoiled, and led a spade to the jack and king. West tried the three of diamonds, but declarer deep-finessed, suffered a ruff, won the trump return with dummy's queen, cashed the club king, and gave up another diamond ruff. West had pitched hearts on the early trump leads, so the defense had to let declarer make his spade queen for an eighth trick, minus 100.

At Table 2 the final contract was not bad, the layout was awful. Declarer won the diamond lead with dummy's king to lead a spade: queen, king. Declarer won the

heart shift with the ace, and led to the club ace to lead a diamond towards the ace in the closed hand. East discarded, so the declarer took his diamond ace, ruffed a spade, and exited with a heart. A further major-suit ruff in dummy could not be prevented; declarer had five clubs, two diamonds and a heart, eight tricks, minus 500, 9 imps to Brazil.

ICELAND vs US-2

Table 3

South	West	North	East
Ornstein	*Bald'sson*	*Ferro*	*Jorgensen*
1 ♣	1 ♡	2 ♡	3 ♡
Pass	Pass	4 ♣	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Table 4

South	West	North	East
Arnarson	*Bramley*	*Johnsson*	*Feldman*
1 ♣	1 ♡	2 ♡	3 ♡
3 NT	4 ♡	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

At Table 3, declarer won the diamond ace, led to the club queen, ducked a diamond to West's ten. Then, he won the heart shift with the ace and finessed in diamonds, East ruffing. The defense cashed two major-suit winners, then tapped dummy, but declarer was in control – he took two high clubs ending in dummy and continued diamonds. Nicely played, but only the same eight tricks, minus 500.

Text 4.6: excerpt from Marston's *Bridge Workbook for Beginners*[3]

How Bridge is played

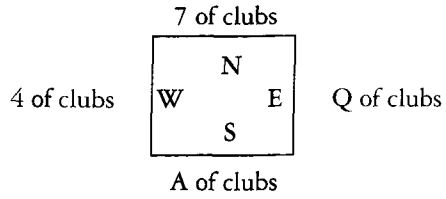
In this lesson you will learn the basic rules of the game. You will learn which bids you are allowed to make and those that you are not. You will also learn that the number of tricks you must take is dependent upon the bidding. The basic mechanics of whose turn it is to play, whose turn it is to lead and so on will be covered.

Bridge is a game for four players who form two partnerships. An ordinary deck of cards is used without jokers or bowers. The cards are ranked from the ace (highest), king, queen, jack, ten, nine, eight and so on down to the two. The full pack is dealt, one card at a time, in a clockwise direction, starting with the player on the dealer's left, so that each player begins with 13 cards.

Tricks

The cards are played out one at a time. One card from each of the four players is called a 'trick'. Each player plays in turn in a clockwise direction around the table and each player must follow suit if he can, that is if a spade is led (the first card played in a trick) each player must play a spade if he has one. If he cannot follow suit a player may play any card he wishes. The player who plays the highest card in the suit wins the trick, unless a trump has been played, but more about that in a moment. The player who wins the trick leads to the next trick. There is no need to

keep track of the individual who has won the trick, only which partnership. Let's look at a sample trick:

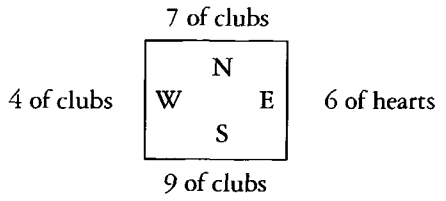


You may be wondering what the W, E, S, N is. In bridge diagrams, for easy reference, the four players are referred to by the four cardinal points. Assume that West was the first to play and led the four of clubs, North followed with the seven, East tried to win the trick for his side with the queen but South won the trick with the ace. South would then lead to the next trick.

Naturally each player works in with his partner. For example, if your partner led the king of spades you wouldn't top it with the ace unless you had to. If, however, one of the opponents led the king of spades you would play the ace because you would know that your partner could not possibly beat the king.

Trumps

A trump suit may be named in the bidding. When that happens that suit takes precedence over the others. When a trump is played on a trick it wins the trick no matter what is led. Here is an example:



Imagine that hearts are trumps and West leads the four of clubs. North plays the seven of clubs and East who has run out of clubs plays a small trump. South must follow suit with a club so East's six of trumps wins the trick. If South was also out of clubs he would have won the trick by playing a trump higher the six.

The auction

A hand of bridge is played in two stages. First there is the auction to determine which suit, if any, is to be trumps and how many tricks must be won. Then comes the play of cards when the side that won the 'contract' tries to fulfil their obligation while the opposition are doing there best to take enough tricks to defeat them. The contract is the name of the last bid in the auction.

After the cards have been dealt the dealer has the right to make the first bid. He will pass with a weak hand and bid with a hand of above average strength. A bid in bridge is an undertaking to win the stated number of tricks plus six with the nominated suit as trumps, or no trumps. No trumps is as you would think – the highest card in the suit that's led ALWAYS wins the trick since there are no trumps to interfere. A bid of say 3 ♣ is an undertaking by that partnership to take at least nine

tricks with clubs as trumps; a bid of six no trumps means your side must take at least 12 tricks without a trump suit.

As in other sorts of auction the early bids are usually made at a low level. After the dealer has made his bid or passed, the player on his left has a turn.

Both these texts have the same field: both texts are about the game of bridge. However, it is very clear that the situations which gave rise to each of these texts were very different: while Text 4.5 is written for experts (serious competition players), Text 4.6 is written for beginners. It seems, then, that we need to recognize that situations may be either technical or everyday in their construction of an activity focus. In other words, field varies along a dimension of technicality, as is schematized in Figure 4.6.

A situation which we would describe as technical would be characterized by a significant degree of assumed knowledge among the interactants about the activity focus, whereas in an everyday (or commonsense) situation, the only assumed knowledge is 'common knowledge'. The knowledge that constitutes a field can be represented in **taxonomies**, by asking 'how do people who act in this field classify and sub-classify the areas of the field?' When we construct field taxonomies, we find a striking difference between the depth and complexity of a technical taxonomy and that of a commonsense taxonomy. For example, part of the taxonomy of bridge which specialist bridge players share is represented in the following taxonomy, in Figure 4.7.

We can see that this taxonomy is complex: it involves initial classification of *bridge* into three main aspects, each of which is further sub-classified. The extent of the sub-classification involves up to five steps. Sub-classification to this degree produces what we describe as a **deep taxonomy**. This particular deep taxonomy represents a detailed, in-depth organization of the activity focus of bridge, and the taxonomy can thus be seen to encode the expert's understanding of the field of bridge.

Compare this to the layperson's taxonomy, in Figure 4.8.

As we can see, the commonsense taxonomy has a larger number of initial cuts (the basic classification of the activity into constituent aspects is more diverse, less generalized), but each aspect is only sub-classified a further one or two times. Thus, this **shallow taxonomy** captures the layperson's encoding of the field of bridge, which can be seen to be significantly different from the technical construction of that same field.

Table 4.10 summarizes the differences between technical and everyday situations.

As Texts 4.5 and 4.6 demonstrate, there are a number of linguistic implications to this variation in field. The most striking feature is that in a technical situation we find a heavy use of technical terms: not just technical nouns (*contract, ruff, layout, tricks*) but also verbs (*to pass out, to go plus, to cash a trick, to deep-finesse, to suffer a ruff*). These terms are usually drawn from the 'deep' end of the taxonomy, and of course no explanation for the terms is given. Even more inaccessible to the layperson are technical acronyms (IMPs). This use of 'jargon' is not designed to impress the outsider, although it can be used in that disempowering way. Its principal motivation is to allow the elaboration of the deep taxonomies of the field.

Figure 4.6 The field continuum

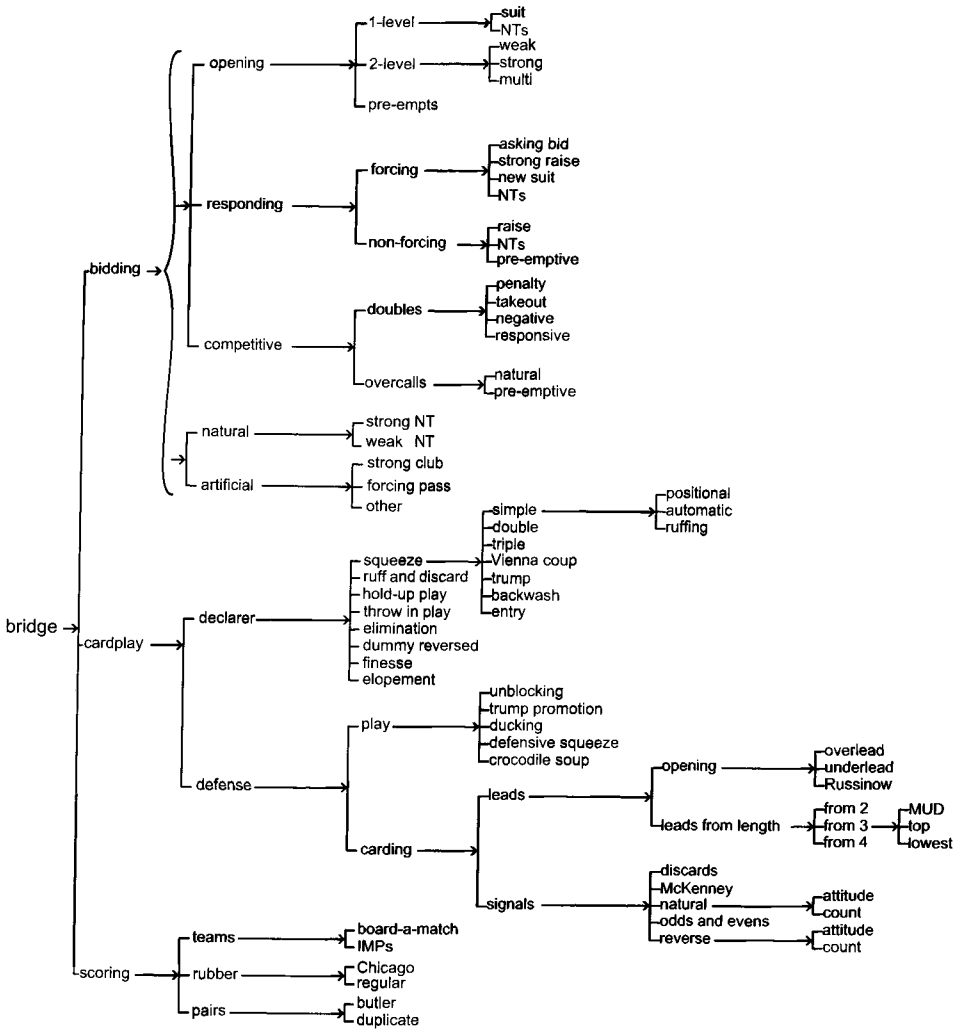


Figure 4.7 Bridge player's taxonomy of bridge

Technicality is not only encoded in the lexis, however. Technical texts frequently use abbreviated, non-standard syntax, although Text 4.5 does not. Instead, it exploits another common technical technique: the use of a visual representation of a type particular to the field (e.g. the bidding sequence diagrams in Text 4.5). The types of verbs used tend to be of technical processes (*trump, squeeze, finesse*), or of attributive (descriptive) processes (*the final contract was not bad*). These grammatical choices reflect the focus of a technical situation, which is to relate, comment on and evaluate an already shared knowledge base.

Language in an everyday field is more familiar to us: the lexis tends to consist of everyday words. Where a term is used technically, it will usually be signalled as such by being printed in bold or having quotation marks around it (e.g. Text 4.6: a 'trick'). Verbs will tend to be of the identifying (defining) kind, as technical terms are progressively introduced and defined (e.g. *bridge is a game for four players; one card from each of the four players is called a 'trick'*). The grammatical structures will be standard, and acronyms and visual representations will

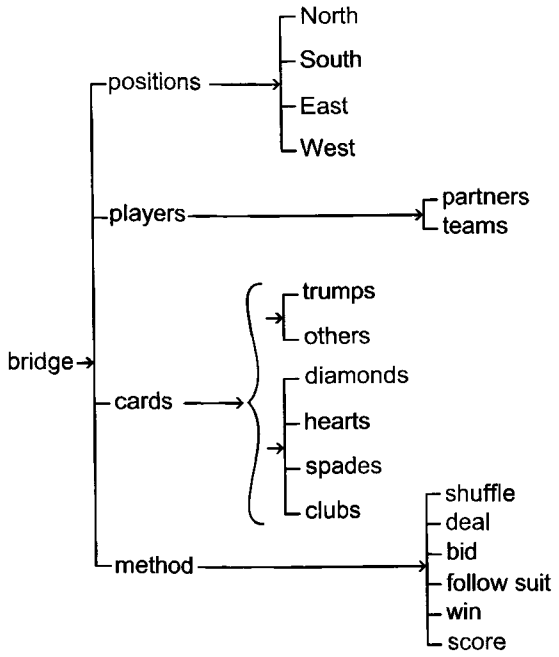


Figure 4.8 Non-player's taxonomy of bridge

Table 4.10 Technical vs everyday situations

TECHNICAL situation	**EVERYDAY situation**
assumed knowledge of an activity/ institution/area	'common knowledge' no (or little) assumed knowledge
deep taxonomies	shallow taxonomies
– detailed sub-classification	– limited sub-classification

only be used if they are first introduced and explained. Text 4.6 provides a clear example of how readers are moved from the everyday understanding of bridge towards its technical construction. These differences in technical and everyday language are summarized in Table 4.11 below.

Since we can find clear linguistic implications corresponding to situational variation in the focus or topic of an activity, we are thus justified in claiming that field is a linguistically relevant dimension of the context of situation.

Register and types of meaning in language

If the claim that field, mode and tenor are the significant situational variables were the full extent of register theory, then it would have the same limitations identified for Firth's contextual description. But Halliday differs from Firth in that he pushed the analysis one step further and asked: *why these three variables?* Why are field, mode and tenor the three key aspects of situation? And he suggests that the answer lies in the structure of the semiotic system of language itself.

Table 4.11 Technical vs everyday language

Technical and Everyday Language: the linguistic implications of FIELD	
TECHNICAL language	EVERYDAY language
technical terms	everyday terms
– words only 'insiders' understand	– words we all understand
acronyms	full names
abbreviated syntax	standard syntax
technical action processes	identifying processes (defining terms)
attributive (descriptive) processes	

Halliday claims that these are the three variables that matter because they are the three kinds of meanings language is structured to make.

He reaches this conclusion by analysing (in much more detail than we have been able to do here) exactly how each register variable affects language use. It turns out to be possible to identify parts of the language system that are concerned with realizing each type of contextual information.

Consider, for example, the variable of field. When I changed the field of Text 1.1 from childcare to PC care, I clearly did not change every linguistic feature of the text (you would not have recognized it as 'like Text 1.1' if I had).

This suggests that field is realized through just some parts of the grammatical system – in fact, through the patterns of processes (verbs), participants (nouns) and circumstances (prepositional phrases of time, manner, place, etc.). These types of grammatical patterns, expressing 'who is doing what to whom when where why and how', can be collectively described as the **transitivity** patterns in language. Describing these transitivity patterns is the focus of Chapter Eight.

With tenor, by contrast, we find interpersonal meanings of roles and relationships realized not through the transitivity patterns, but through patterns of what we call **mood**. As we will see in Chapter Six, mood refers to variables such as the types of clause structure (declarative, interrogative), the degree of certainty or obligation expressed (modality), the use of tags, vocatives, attitudinal words which are either positively or negatively loaded (the 'purr and snarl' words mentioned above), expressions of intensification and politeness markers of various kinds.

Mode is realized through yet a further area of the language system, that of **theme**. These textual patterns, to be explored in Chapter Ten, are patterns of foregrounding and continuity in the organization of the clause. Figure 4.9 schematizes this link between the register variables and their lexico-grammatical realizations.

It would seem, then, that there is a correlation between the situational dimensions of context and these different types of lexico-grammatical patterns. However, a further stage in this link between context and language comes from the SFL claim that the lexico-grammatical organization of language is itself a realization of the **semantic** organization of language.

You will remember from Chapter One that when we asked what a text means, we were able to identify three different strands of meaning: the **ideational**, the **interpersonal** and the **textual**. In identifying these three main types of meaning, Halliday is suggesting that of all the *uses* we make of language (which are limitless and changing), language is designed

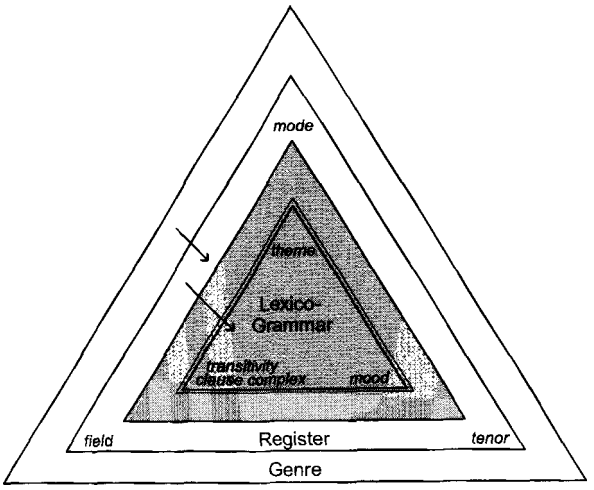


Figure 4.9 Context in relation to language

to fulfil three main *functions*: a function for relating experience, a function for creating interpersonal relationships, and a function for organizing information.

Halliday suggests that these types of meaning can be related both 'upwards' (to context) and 'downwards' (to lexico-grammar).

The upwards link is that each register variable can be associated with one of these types of meanings. Thus, field is expressed through patterns of ideational meaning in text, mode is expressed through textual meaning, and tenor through interpersonal meaning.

The downwards link is that we 'see' the types of meanings being realized through the associated lexico-grammatical patterns. Thus, putting this all together, Halliday claims that:

- the **field** of a text can be associated with the realization of **ideational** meanings; these ideational meanings are realized through the **Transitivity** and **Clause Complex** patterns of the grammar.
- the **mode** of a text can be associated with the realization of **textual** meanings; these textual meanings are realized through the **Theme** patterns of the grammar.
- the **tenor** of a text can be associated with the realization of **interpersonal** meanings; these interpersonal meanings are realized through the **Mood** patterns of the grammar.

These relationships are represented in Figure 4.10.

Thus, the claim Halliday makes is that each type of meaning is related in a predictable, systematic way to each situational variable. It is therefore no accident that we single out the three register variables of field, mode and tenor as the aspects of the situation significant to language use. Their status derives from the fact that they are linked to the three types of meaning language is structured to make: the ideational, the textual and the interpersonal. We can see that language is structured to make these three kinds of meanings because we find in the lexico-grammar the main grammatical resources of Transitivity, Clause Complex, Theme and Mood.

As this is a complex picture, one final restatement may be useful. Language is structured to make three kinds of meanings. And these are the three kinds of meanings that matter in

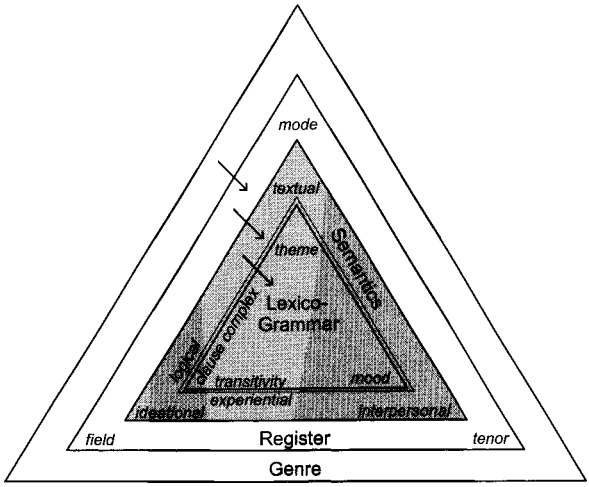


Figure 4.10 Context, semantics and lexico-grammar

any situation. It is this non-arbitrary organization of language that Halliday means when he states that:

> The internal organization of natural language can best be explained in the light of the social functions which language has evolved to serve. *Language is as it is because of what it has to do.* (Halliday 1973: 34: my emphasis)

We have thus reached a point where exploring our initial functional question (how is language used?) has led us to explore the more abstract dimension of 'functional' in the systemic approach: how is language structured for use? It is this second question which will be explored in Chapters Five to Ten, as we pursue an approach that is functional not only in relation to language use, but also in relation to the organization of the linguistic system itself. The core of the linguistic system is the lexico-grammar, and Chapter Five begins our exploration of the lexico-grammatical level of language by asking what grammar does and how we can analyse its patterns.

Notes

1. Source: *School of English Handbook* (1993), School of English, University of New South Wales, p. 4.
2. Source: *The Bridge World*, Vol. 63, No. 7, April 1992, pp. 4–5, 'The Bermuda Bowl III'.
3. Source: P. Marston and R. Brightling *The Bridge Workbook for Beginners* (1985), Contract Bridge Supplies, Sydney, pp. 1–3.

Chapter 5

Introduction to the lexico-grammar

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Introduction

While Chapters Two, Three and Four have looked at how people use language in texts and how those texts make meanings in cultural and situational contexts, this chapter begins our exploration of the lexico-grammatical level of language by asking: what is the function of grammar? That is, why does language have this intermediate level of grammatical coding? The chapter then examines some basic principles of SFL grammatical analysis, and presents the multifunctional perspective on the clause that will be developed in subsequent chapters.

The traffic lights revisited: extending the system

In Chapter One, traffic lights were described as a two-level semiotic system, involving a level of content realized through a level of expression. Language, on the other hand, was seen to involve three levels: two levels of content (semantics and lexico-grammar), encoded in phonology. The difference between the simple and the complex semiotic systems, then, was the presence of this level of wording, the lexico-grammar.

The lexico-grammatical level was described simply as an intermediate level of linguistic coding. We must now consider in more detail what the function of this level is. What, for example, does it allow us to do in language that we cannot do with a two-level semiotic system like the traffic lights?

We can approach this question by considering how we could extend the traffic light system. The red/amber/green system that was described in Chapter One has two limitations:

1. it does not allow us to mean very much: in fact, we can only make three meanings.
2. it only allows us to mean *one thing at a time*: there is a one-to-one (**bi-unique**) relationship between content and expression, as each expression (coloured light) stands for one and only one content (desired behaviour), so each content is realized by one and only one expression.

come from, and some of the implications they may carry with them. The close-up linguistic analysis of three very ordinary texts has illustrated that the texts are rich in meanings: they make not just meanings about what goes on and why, but also meanings about relationships and attitudes, and meanings about distance and proximity. By relating specific linguistic choices to the construction and reflection of situational, cultural and ideological contexts, these three texts have been shown to encode meanings about such far-reaching dimensions as ways of talking to parents, the experience of parenthood, the responsibility of the medical professional and the expected behaviour of 'good' mothers.

As this chapter and the book have shown, a systemic approach requires the detailed, close-up examination of patterns of language. It involves the use of a technical meta-language, which gives precise ways of identifying and talking about different cohesive patterns. It requires an investment of time and effort by the analyst, as learning to carry out linguistic analyses of any kind is a skill that must be worked at. Life is short, and if your background is not in functional linguistics, or even in linguistics at all, you may quite legitimately ask: why bother? Why not take other approaches to text which, superficially at least, seem less arduous and certainly involve less technicality and exactitude?

A functional linguistic approach is demanding because its ultimate goal is very different from that of other approaches to text. Functional linguistic analysis is not about offering a range of possible readings of texts, supported by carefully selected excerpts. It is about dealing with entire texts in their authentic form in their actual contexts of social life. And it is about explaining them, accounting for what they are doing and how they achieve that in the culture.

As Halliday suggests, the real value of a systemic functional approach to language is that:

> when we interpret language in these (functional-semantic) terms we may cast some light on the baffling problem of how it is that the most ordinary uses of language, in the most everyday situations, so effectively transmit the social structure, the values, the systems of knowledge, all the deepest and most pervasive patterns of the culture. With a functional perspective on language, we can begin to appreciate how this is done. (Halliday 1973: 45)

At issue in all linguistic analysis is the process by which lived or imagined experience is turned into text. Text is not life – it is life mediated through the symbolic system of language. I hope this book has shown you how SFL analysis can help us understand something of the process by which we live much of our lives at one remove – as texts.

Appendix

Analyses of the Crying Baby texts

A1. Clause analyses

Each text is analysed three times: the first time for Mood; the second time for Transitivity and Theme; the third time for clause complexing. Keys are presented for each analysis. The texts have been divided into clauses, with embedded clauses [[shown within double brackets]]. These are analysed for Mood and Transitivity, but not for Theme. Inserted clauses, indicated by three dots . . . at beginning and end, have been repositioned at the end of the clause they were inserted in where this facilitates analysis. Three dots within a clause indicate the place from which an inserted clause has been removed. Double slashed lines // indicate clause boundaries within embedded clauses.

A1.1. Mood analysis

Key:
S = Subject, F = Finite, Fn = negative, Fms = modalized, Fml = modulated
P = Predicator, Pml = modulated Predicator, Pms = modalized Predicator, F/P = fused Finite and Predicator
C = Complement, Ca = attributive Complement
A = Adjunct, Ac = circumstantial, Am = mood, Ao = comment, Ap = polarity, Av = vocative, Aj = conjunctive, At = continuity
WH = WH element, WH/S, WH/C, WHAc = fused WH element
mn = minor clause
MOOD element of ranking (non-embedded) clauses is shown in **bold**

Text 1.1

1.**A baby [[who (S) won't (Fn) stop crying (P)]] (S) can** (Fml) drive (P) anyone (C) to despair (P). 2i.**You (S) feed** (F/P) him (C), 2ii.**you (S) change** (F/P) him (C), 2iii.**you (S) nurse** (F/P) him (C), 2iv.**you (S) try** (F) to settle (P) him (C), 2v.but (Aj) the minute (Ac) **you (S) put** (F/P) him (C) down (Ac) 2vi.**he (S) starts** (F) to howl (P). 3.Why? (WH/Ac) 4.**The most common reason [[baby (S) cries (F/P)]] (S) is** (F) hunger (C). 5i.Even if (Aj) **he (S) was (F) just (Am)** recently (Ac) fed (P) 5ii.**he**

(S) **might** (Fms) **still** (Am) be adapting to (P) the pattern [[of sucking (P) // until (Aj) his tummy (S) is (F) full (Ca) // and (Aj) feeling (P) satisfied (Ca) // until (Aj) it (S) empties (F/P) again (Ac)]] (C). 6i.When (Aj) **he** (S) **was** (F) in the womb (Ac) 6ii.**nourishment** (S) **came** (F/P) automatically and constantly (Ac). 7i.Offer (P) food (C) first (Ac); 7ii.if (Aj) **he** (S) **turns** (F/P) away (Ac) from the nipple or teat (Ac) 7iii. **you** (S) **can** (Fms) assume (P) 7iv.**it** (S) 's (F) something else (C). 8i.**It happens** (Am) that (Aj) **babies** (S) **go** (F/P) through grumpy, miserable stages (Ac) 8ii.when (Aj) **they** (S) **just** (Am) **want** (F/P) 8iii.to tell (P) everyone (C) 8iv.how unhappy (WH/C) **they** (S) **feel** (F/P). 9i.**Perhaps** (Am) **his digestion** (S) **feels** (F/P) uncomfortable (Ca) 9ii.or (Aj) **his limbs** (S) **are** (F) twitching (P). 10i.If (Aj) **you** (S) **can't** (Fml) find (P) any specific source of discomfort such as a wet nappy or strong light in his eyes (C), 10ii.**he** (S) could (**Fms**) **just** (Am) be having (P) a grizzle (C). 11.**Perhaps** (Am) **he** (S) 's (F) just (Am) lonely (Ca). 12i.During the day (Ac), a **baby sling** (S) **helps** (F/P) you (C) to deal with (P) your chores (C) 12ii. and (Aj) keep (P) baby (C) happy (Ca). 13i.At night (Ac) . . . you (S) **will** (Fms) need to take (Pml) action (C) 13iv.to relax (P) and settle (P) him (C). 13ii . . . when (Aj) **you** (S) **want** (F/P) 13iii.to sleep (P) . . . 14i.**Rocking** (S) **helps** (F/P), 14ii.but (Aj) if (Aj) **your baby** (S) **is** (F) in the mood [[to cry (P)]] (Ac) 14iii.you (S) **will** (**Fms**) **probably** (Am) find (P) 14iv.**he** (S) **'ll** (Fms) start up (P) again (Ac) 14v.when (Aj) **you** (S) **put** (F/P) him (C) back (P) in the cot (Ac). 15i.**[[Wrapping baby up** (P) **snugly** (Ac)]] (S) **helps** (F) to make (P) him (C) feel (P) secure (Ca) 15ii.and (Aj) **stops** (F) him (C) from jerking about (P) 15iii.**which** (S) **can** (Fms) unsettle (P) him (C). 16i.**Outside stimulation** (S) **is** (F) cut down (P) 16ii.and (Aj) he (S) **will** (Fms) lose (P) tension (C). 17i.**Gentle noise** (S) **might** (Fms) soothe (P) him (C) off [[to sleep (P)]] (Ca) – a radio played softly, a recording of a heartbeat, traffic noise – 17ii.**even the noise of the washing machine** (S) is (F) effective! (Ca) 18i.**Some parents** (S) **use** (F/P) dummies (C) – 18ii.**it** (S) 's (F) up to you (Ca) – 18iii.and (Aj) **you** (S) **might** (Fms) find (P) 18iv. **your baby** (S) **settles** (F/P) 18v.sucking (P) a dummy (C). 19i.**'Sucky' babies** (S) **might** (Fms) be able to find (Pml) their thumbs and fists (C) 19ii.to have (P) a good suck (C). 20i.Remember (P) 20ii. that (At) **babies** (S) **get** (F/P) bored (Ca) 20iii.so (Aj) when (Aj) **he** (S) **is** (F) having (P) a real grizzle (C) 20iv.**this** (S) **could** (Fms) be (P) the reason (C). 21.**Is** (F) **his cot** (S) an interesting place [[to be (P)]] (C)? 22.**Coloured posters and mobiles** (S) **give** (F/P) him something [[to watch (P)]] (C). 23i.**You** (S) **could** (**Fms**) **maybe** (Am) tire (P) him (C) out (P) 23ii.by (Aj) taking (P) him (C) for a walk . . . or a ride in the car (Ac) – 23iii.not always practical (Ca) in the middle of the night (Ac). 24i.**A change of scene and some fresh air** (S) **will** (**Fms**) **often** (Am) work (P) wonders (C) – 24ii.**even a walk around the garden** (S) **may** (Fms) be (P) enough (Ca). 25i.As (Aj) **baby** (S) **gets** (F/P) older (Ca) 25ii.**he** (S) **will** (Fms) be more able to communicate (Pml) his feelings (C) 25iii.and (Aj) **you** (S) **will** (Fms) be (P) better [[at judging (P) the problem (C)]] (Ca). 26i.Although (Aj) **you** (S) **might** (Fms) be (P) at your wit's end (Ca), 26ii.remember (P) 26iii.that (Aj) **crying** (S) **is** (F) communication with you, his parents (C). 27.And (Aj) **you** (S) **are** (F) the most important people in your baby's life (C).

TEXT 1.2

1.**The compelling sound of an infant's cry** (S) **makes** (F/P) it (C) an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a

caregiver (Ca). 2i.However (Aj), **cries** (S) **are** (F) discomforting (Ca) 2ii.and (Aj) **may** (Fms) be (P) alarming (Ca) to parents (Ac), 2iii.**many of whom** (S) **find** (F/P) 2iv.**it** (S) very difficult (Ca) [[to listen to (P) **their infant's crying** (C) for even short periods of time (Ac)]] (C). 3.**Many reasons for crying** (S) **are** (F) obvious (C), like hunger and discomfort due to heat, cold, illness, and lying position (S). 4i.**These reasons** (S), however (Aj), **account for** (F/P) a relatively small percentage of infant crying (C) 4ii.and (Aj) **are** (F) **usually** (Am) recognized (P) quickly (Ac) 4iii.and (Aj) alleviated (P). 5i.In the absence of a discernible reason for the behaviour (Ac), **crying** (S) **often** (Am) **stops** (F/P) 5ii. when (Aj) **the infant** (S) **is** (F) held (P). 6i.In most infants (Ac), **there** (S) **are** (F) frequent episodes of crying with no apparent cause (C), 6ii.and (Aj) **holding or other soothing techniques** (S) **seem** (F/P) ineffective (Ca). 7.**Infants** (S) **cry** (F/P) **and fuss** (F/P) for a mean of 1¾ hr/day at age 2 wk, 2¾ hr/day at age 6 wk, and 1 hr/day at 12 wk (Ac). 8i.**Counselling about normal crying** (S) **may** (Fms) relieve (P) guilt (C) 8ii.and (Aj) diminish (P) concerns (C), 8iii.but (Aj) for some (Ac) **the distress [[caused** (P) **by the crying** (Ac)]] (S) **cannot** (Fml) be suppressed (P) by logical reasoning (Ac). 9i. For these parents (Ac), **respite from exposure to the crying** (S) **may** (Fms) be (P) necessary (Ca) 9ii.to allow (Pml) them (C) to cope (P) appropriately (Ac) with their own distress (Ac). 10i.Without relief (Ac), **fatigue and tension** (S) **may** (Fms) result in (P) inappropriate parental responses 10ii. such as leaving (P) the infant (C) in the house (Ac) alone (Ac) 10iii.or abusing (P) the infant (C).

TEXT 1.3

1.**Did** (F) **your kids** (S) used to cry (Pms) a lot (Ac)? 2.When (Aj) **they** (S) **were** (F) little (Ca)? 3.Yea (Ap). 4.Well (At) == what (WH/C) **did** (F) **you** (S) do (P)? 5.== **still** (Am) do (F) 6.Yea? (At) [laughs] 7.Oh (At) pretty tedious (Ca) at times (Ac) yea (At). 8.**There** (S) **were** (F) all sorts of techniques == Leonard Cohen (C) 9.== Like (Aj) what (WH/C) [laughs] 10.Yea (At) **I** (S) **used** (Fms) to use (P) . . . 11.**What** (S) **'s** (F) that American guy [[that (S) did (F) 'Georgia on your mind' (C)]] (C)? 12.Oh (At) yea (At) 13.== **Jim – James Taylor** (S) 14.== **James Taylor** (S) 15.Yea (At) yea (At). 16.**He** (S) **was** (F) pretty good (Ca). 17.Yea (At). 18i.No (At) **Leonard Cohen** (S) **'s** (F) good (Ca) 18ii.cause (Aj) **it** (S) **'s** (F) **just** (Am) so monotonous (Ca). 19.And (Aj) **there** (S) **'s** (F) only (Am) four chords (C). 20i.And (Aj) ah (At) **we** (S) **used** (Fms) to have (P) holidays (C) . . . on a houseboat (C) 20ii . . . when (Aj) **we** (S) **only** (Am) **had** (F) one kid (C) . . . 21.And (Aj) **that** (S) **was** (F) fantastic (C) **just** (Am) **the rocking motion of the houseboat** (S) 22.Mmm (mn) 23.Mmm (mn) 24.**Were** (F) **there** (S) **ever** (Am) times (C) . . . 25i.Like (Aj) I (S) **remember** (F/P) times (C) 25ii.when (Aj) I (S) **couldn't** (Fms) work out (P) 25iii. what the hell (WH/C) **it** (S) **was** (F). 26.**There** (S) **just** (Am) **didn't** (Fn) seem to be (P) anything == [[you (S) could (Fms) do (P)]] (C). 27.== No reason or (C) . . . 28.Yea (At). 29.Yea (At) every night between six and ten (Ac) 30.Yea (At) yea (At). 31i.Luckily (Ao) **I** (S) **didn't** (Fn) have (P) that (C) with the second baby (Ac) 31ii.but (Aj) **the first one** (S) **was** (F) that typical colicky sort of stuff (C) from about five o'clock (Ac). 32.Hmm (mn) 33i.**I** (S) **remember** (F/P) 33ii. one day (Ac) going (P) for a um walk (Ac) along the harbour (Ac) – 33iii.one of those you know harbour routes [[that (S) had (F) been opened up (P)]] (Ac). 34i.And (Aj) um (At) **he** (S) **started** (F) kicking up (P) from about five o'clock (Ac) 34ii.and (Aj) **we** (S)

were (F) getting (P) panic stricken (Ca). 35i.I (S) had (F) him (C) in one of those um front strap things (Ac) you know (At) sling things (Ac) 35ii.ah (At) cause (Aj) that (S) use (Fms) to work (P) wonders (C) from time to time (Am) 35iii.but (Aj) it (S) wasn't (Fn) working (P) this time (Ac). 36i.And (Aj) as (Aj) we (S) sat (F/P) on the foreshore (Ac) of this Vaucluse area (Ac) 36ii.these two women (S) came (F/P) down (Ac) 36iii.and (Aj) they (S) 'd (F) both (S) been working (P) as um governesses or something like that (Ac) – 36iv.very very classy ladies (Ca). 37i.And (Aj) they (S) said (F/P) 37ii.'Oh (At) what (WH/S) 's (F) wrong with the baby (Ac)? 38.He (S) 's (F) got (P) colic (C)?' 39i.You know (At), they (S) really (Am) wanted (F/P) 39ii.to take over (P). 40.Yea (At) 41.And (Aj) so (Aj) I (S) just (Am) handed (F/P) the baby (C) to them (Ac). 42i.And (Aj) LUCKILY (Ao) he (S) kept (F) on crying (P) – 42ii.they (S) couldn't (Fnml) stop (P) him (C) 43.So (Aj) I (S) was (F) really (Am) delighted (Ca). 44.They (S) handed back (F/P) this hideous little red wreck of a thing (C).

A1.2. Transitivity and Theme analysis

Key:
P = Process, Pm = material, Pme = mental, Pb = behavioural, Pv = verbal, Pe = existential, Pi = intensive, Pcc = circumstantial, Pp = possessive, Pc = causative
A = Actor, G = Goal, B = Beneficiary, R = Range
S = Senser, Ph = Phenomenon
Sy = Sayer, Rv = Receiver, Vb = Verbiage
Be = Behaver, Bh = Behaviour
X = Existent
T = Token, V = Value, Cr = Carrier, At = Attribute
Pr = possessor, Pd = possessed
C = Circumstance, Cl = location, Cx = extent, Cm = manner, Cc = cause, Ca = accompaniment, Ct = matter, Co = role
Ag = Agent
Theme is underlined
textual Theme: in *italics*
interpersonal Theme: in CAPITALS
topical Theme: in **bold**
dependent clause as Theme: **whole clause in bold**

Text 1.1

1.A baby [[who (Be) won't stop crying (Pb)]] (Ag) can drive (Pc) anyone (S) to despair (Pme). 2i.You (A) feed (Pm) him (G), 2ii.you (A) change (Pm) him (G), 2iii.you (A) nurse (Pm) him (G), 2iv.you (A) try to settle (Pm) him (G), 2v.*but* the minute (A) you (A) put (Pm) him (G) down (Pm) 2vi.he (Be) starts to howl (Pb). 3.Why? (Cc) 4.The most common reason [[baby (Be) cries (Pb)]] (V) is (Pi) hunger (T). 5i.*Even if* he (G) was just recently (Cl) fed (Pm) 5ii.he (Be) might still be adapting to (Pb) the pattern [[of sucking (Pm) // until his tummy (Cr) is (Pi) full (At) // and feeling (Pi) satisfied (At) // until it (A) empties (Pm) again (Cl)]] (Ph). 6i.*When* he (Cr) was (Pi) in the womb (AtCl) 6ii.nourishment (A) came (Pm) automatically and constantly (Cm). 7i.Offer (Pm) food (G) first (Cl); 7ii.*if* he

(A) turns away (Pm) from the nipple or teat (Cl) 7iii.you (S) can assume (Pme) 7iv.it (V) 's (Pi) something else (T). 8i.IT HAPPENS *that* babies (A) go through (Pm) grumpy, miserable stages (R) 8ii.*when* they (S) just want (Pme) 8iii.to tell (Pv) everyone (Rv) 8iv.how unhappy (At) they (Cr) feel (Pi). 9i.PERHAPS his digestion (Cr) feels (Pi) uncomfortable (At) 9ii.*or* his limbs (Be) are twitching (Pb). 10iIf you (S) can't find (Pme) any specific source of discomfort such as a wet nappy or strong light in his eyes (Ph), 10ii.he (Be) could just be having (Pb) a grizzle (Bh). 11.PERHAPS he (Cr) 's (Pi) just lonely (At). 12i.During the day (Cl), a baby sling (Ag) helps (Pm) you (A) to deal with (Pm) your chores (G) 12ii.*and* keep (Pc) baby (Cr) happy (At). 13i.At night (Cl) . . . you (A) will need to take (Pm) action (R) 13iv.to relax (Pm) and settle (Pm) him (G). 13ii . . . *when* you (S) want (Pme) 13iii. to sleep (Pb) . . . 14i.Rocking (A) helps (Pm), 14ii.*but if* your baby (Cr) is (Pi) in the mood [[to cry (Pb)]] (At) 14iii.you (S) will probably find (Pme) 14iv.he (Be) 'll start up (Pb) again (Cx) 14v.*when* you (A) put (Pm) him (G) back (Pm) in the cot (Cl). 15i.[[Wrapping (Pm) baby (G) up (Pm) snugly (Cm)]] (Ag) helps to make (Pc) him (Cr) feel (Pi) secure (At) 15ii.*and* stops (Pc) him (Be) from jerking about (Pb) 15iii.which (A) can unsettle (Pm) him (G). 16i.Outside stimulation (G) is cut down (Pm) 16ii.*and* he (A) will lose (Pm) tension (R). 17i.Gentle noise (Ag) might soothe (Pc) him (Be) off to sleep (Pb) – a radio played softly, a recording of a heartbeat, traffic noise – 17ii.even the noise of the washing machine (Cr) is (Pi) effective (At)! 18i.Some parents (A) use (Pm) dummies (G) – 18ii.it (Cr) 's (Pi) up to you (At) – 18iii.*and* you (S) might find (Pme) 18iv. your baby (Be) settles (Pb) 18v.sucking (Pm) a dummy (G).19i.'Sucky' babies (S) might be able to find (Pme) their thumbs and fists (Ph) 19ii.to have (Pm) a good suck (R). 20i.Remember (Pme) 20ii.*that* babies (Cr) get (Pi) bored (At) 20iii.*so* when he (Be) is having (Pb) a real grizzle (Bh) 20iv.this (T) could be (Pi) the reason (V). 21.IS (Pi) his cot (Cr) an interesting place [[to be (Pi)]] (At)? 22.Coloured posters and mobiles (A) give (Pm) him (B) something [[to watch (Pb)]] (G). 23i.You (A) could maybe tire (Pm) him (G) out (Pm) 23ii.*by* taking (Pm) him (G) for a walk . . . or a ride in the car (Cl) – 23iii.not always practical (At) in the middle of the night (Cl). 24i.A change of scene and some fresh air (A) will often work (Pm) wonders (R) – 24ii.even a walk around the garden (Cr) may be (Pi) enough (At). 25i.As baby (Cr) gets (Pi) older (At) 25ii.he (Cr) will be (Pi) more able [[to communicate (Pv) his feelings (Vb)]] (At) 25iii.*and* you (Cr) will be (Pi) better [[at judging (Pme) the problem (Ph)]] (At). 26i.Although you (Cr) might be (Pi) at your wit's end (At), 26ii.remember (Pme) 26iii.*that* crying (T) is (Pi) communication with you, his parents (V). 27.*And* you (T) are (Pi) the most important people in your baby's life (V).

TEXT 1.2

1.The compelling sound of an infant's cry (Ag) makes (Pc) it (T) an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a caregiver (V). 2i.*However*, cries (Cr) are (Pi) discomforting (At) 2ii.and may be (Pi) alarming (At) to parents (B), 2iii.many of whom (S) find (Pme) 2iv.it (Cr) very difficult (At) [[to listen to (Pb) their infant's crying (Ph) for even short periods of time (Cx)]] (Cr). 3.Many reasons for crying (Cr) are (Pi) obvious, like hunger and discomfort due to heat, cold, illness, and lying position (At). 4i.These reasons (T),

however, account for (Pi) a relatively small percentage of infant crying (V) 4ii.and are usually recognised (Pme) quickly (Cm) 4iii.and alleviated (Pm). 5i.**In the absence of a discernible reason for the behaviour (Cm)**, **crying** (A) often stops (Pm) 5ii.**when the infant (G)** is held (Pm). 6i.**In most infants (Cl)**, there are (Px) frequent episodes of crying (X) with no apparent cause (Cc), 6ii.*and* **holding or other soothing techniques (Cr)** seem (Pi) ineffective (At). 7.**Infants (Be)** cry (Pbh) and fuss (Pbh) for a mean of 1¾ hr/day at age 2 wk, 2¾ hr/day at age 6 wk, and 1 hr/day at 12 wk (Cx). 8i.**Counselling about normal crying (A)** may relieve (Pm) guilt (G) 8ii.*and* diminish (Pm) concerns (G), 8iii.*but* **for some (Cc)** the distress [[caused (Pc) by the crying (Ag)]] (G) cannot be suppressed (Pm) by logical reasoning (A). 9i.**For these parents (Cc)**, respite from exposure to the crying (Cr) may be (Pi) necessary (At) 9ii.**to allow** them (S) to cope (Pme) appropriately (Cm) with (Pme) their own distress (Ph). 10i.**Without relief (Cm)**, fatigue and tension (T) may result in (Pc) inappropriate parental responses 10ii.*such as* **leaving** (Pm) the infant (G) in the house (Cl) alone (Cm) 10iii.*or* **abusing** (Pm) the infant (G).

TEXT 1.3

1.DID your kids (Be) used to cry (Pb) a lot (Cx)? 2.*When* **they** (Cr) were (Pi) little (At)? 3.YEA 4.*Well* == **what** did you (A) do (Pm)? 5.== still do 6.Yea? [laughs] 7.*Oh* **pretty tedious** (At) at times yea. 8.**There** were (Px) all sorts of techniques (X) == Leonard Cohen 9.== *Like* **what** [laughs] 10.*Yea* **I (A)** used to use (Pm) . . . 11.**What (T)** 's (Pi) that American guy [[that (A) did (Pm) 'Georgia on your mind' (G)]] (V)? 12.Oh yea 13.== **Jim – James Taylor (T)** 14.== **James Taylor** (T) 15.*Yea yea*. 16.**He (Cr)** was (Pi) pretty good (At). 17.*Yea*. 18i.*No* **Leonard Cohen (Cr)** 's (Pi) good (At) 18ii.*cause* **it (Cr)** 's (Pi) just so monotonous (At). 19.*And* **there**'s (Px) only four chords (X). 20i.*And ah* **we** (A) used to have (Pm) holidays (R) . . . on a houseboat (Cl) 20ii. . . . *when* **we (Cr/Pr)** only had (Pp) one kid (At/Pd) . . . 21.*And* **that** (Cr) was (Pi) fantastic (At) just the rocking motion of the houseboat (Cr) 22.Mmm 23.Mmm 24.**WERE (Px) there** ever times (X) . . . 25i.*Like* **I** (S) remember (Pme) times (Ph) 25ii.*when* **I** (S) couldn't work out (Pm) 25iii.**what the hell (At)** it (Cr) was (Pi). 26.**There** just didn't seem to be (Px) anything == [[you (A) could do (Pm)]] (X) 27.== No reason or . . . 28.*Yea* 29.*Yea* **every night** (Cx) between six and ten (Cl) 30.*Yea yea*. 31i.**LUCKILY I** (A) didn't have (Pm) that (G) with the second baby (Cl) 31ii.*but* **the first one** (Cr) was (Pi) that typical colicky sort of stuff (At) from about five o'clock (Cl). 32.Hmm 33i.**I (S)** remember (Pme) 33ii.**one day** (Cl) going for (Pm) a um walk (R) along the harbour (Cl) – 33iii.**one of those** you know harbour routes [[that (G) had been opened up (Pm)]]. 34i.*And um* **he (Be)** started kicking up (Pb) from about five o'clock (Cl) 34ii.*and* **we** (Cr) were getting (Pi) panic stricken (At). 35i.**I** (A) had (Pm) him (G) in one of those um front strap things you know sling things (Cl) 35ii.*ah cause* **that (A)** use to work (Pm) wonders (R) from time to time (Cx) 35iii.*but* **it (A)** wasn't working (Pm) this time (Cl). 36i.***And* as we (A) sat (Pm) on the foreshore of this Vaucluse area (Cl)** 36ii.**these two women (A)** came down (Pm) 36iii.*and* **they (A)** 'd both been working (Pm) as um governesses or something like that (Crl) – 36iv.very very classy ladies. 37i.*And* **they** (Sy) said (Pv) 37ii. *'Oh* **what (Cr)** 's (Pi) wrong with the baby (At)? 38.**He (Cr/Pr)** 's got (Pp) colic (At/Pd)?' 39i.*You know*, **they (S)** really wanted (Pme) 39ii.to take over (Pm). 40.Yea 41.*And so* **I (A)** just handed (Pm) the baby (G)

to them (B) 42i.*And* LUCKILY he (Be) kept on crying (Pb) – 42ii.they (A) couldn't stop (Pm) him (G). 43.*So* I (S) was really delighted (Pme). 44.They (A) handed back (Pm) this hideous little red wreck of a thing (G).

A1.3. Clause Complex Analysis

[[embedded clauses]], [ellipsed elements]
1, 2, 3: parataxis, α β γ: hypotaxis
" locution, ' idea, = elaboration, + extension, x enhancement

Text 1.1

clause simplex			(1)A baby who won't stop crying can drive anyone to despair.
1			(2i)You feed him,
+2			(2ii)you change him,
+3			(2iii)you nurse him,
+4			(2iv)you try to settle him,
+5	xβ		(2v)but the minute you put him down
	α		(2vi)he starts to howl.
clause simplex			(3)Why?
clause simplex			(4)The most common reason [[baby cries]] is hunger.
xβ			(5i)Even if he was just recently fed
α			(5ii)he might still be adapting to the pattern [[of sucking // until his tummy is full // and feeling satisfied // until it empties again.]]
xβ			(6i)When he was in the womb
α			(6ii)nourishment came automatically and constantly.
1			(7i)Offer food first;
x2	xβ		(7ii)if he turns away from the nipple or teat
	α	α	(7iii)you can assume
		'β	(7iv)it's something else.
α			(8i)It happens that babies go through grumpy, miserable stages
xβ	α		(8ii)when they just want
	'β	α	(8iii)to tell everyone
		'β	(8iv)how unhappy they feel.
1			(9i)Perhaps his digestion feels uncomfortable
+2			(9ii)or his limbs are twitching.
xβ			(10i)If you can't find any specific source of discomfort such as a wet nappy or strong light in his eyes,
α			(10ii)he could just be having a grizzle.
clause simplex			(11)Perhaps he's just lonely.
1			(12i)During the day, a baby sling helps you to deal with your chores
x2			(12ii)and keep baby happy.
α			(13i)At night
<xβ>	α		(13ii)when you want
	'β		(13iii)to sleep

α				(13iv)you will need to take action
xγ				(13v)to relax and settle him.
1				(14i)Rocking helps,
x2	xβ			(14ii)but if your baby is in the mood to cry
	α	α		(14iii)you will probably find
		'β	α	(14iv)he'll start up again
			xβ	(14v)when you put him back in the cot.
1				(15i)[[Wrapping baby up snugly]] helps to make him feel secure
+2	α			(15ii)and stops him from jerking about
	=β			(15iii)which can unsettle him.
1				(16i)Outside stimulation is cut down
x2				(16ii)and he will lose tension.
1				(17i)Gentle noise might soothe him off to sleep – a radio [[played softly]], a recording of a heartbeat, traffic noise –
+2				(17ii)even the noise of the washing machine is effective!
1	1			(18i)Some parents use dummies –
	=2			(18ii)it's up to you –
+2	α			(18iii)and you might find
	'β	α		(18iv)your baby settles
		xβ		(18v)sucking a dummy.
α				(19i)'Sucky' babies might be able to find their thumbs and fists
xβ				(19ii)to have a good suck.
1	α			(20i)Remember
	'β			(20ii)that babies get bored
x2	xβ			(20iii)so when he is having a real grizzle
	α			(20iv)this could be the reason.
clause simplex				(21)Is his cot an interesting place to be?
clause simplex				(22)Coloured posters and mobiles give him something to watch.
α				(23i)You could maybe tire him out
xβ				(23ii)by taking him for a walk . . . or a ride in the car –
xγ				(23iii)[although this is] not always practical in the middle of the night.
1				(24i)A change of scene and some fresh air will often work wonders –
+2				(24ii)even a walk around the garden may be enough.
xβ				(25i)As baby gets older
α	1			(25ii)he will be more able to communicate his feelings
	+2			(25iii)and you will be better [[at judging the problem.]]
xβ				(26i)Although you might be at your wit's end,
α	α			(26ii)remember
	'β			(26iii)that crying is communication with you, his parents.
clause simplex				(27)And you are the most important people in your baby's life.

Text 1.2

clause simplex	(1) The compelling sound of an infant's cry makes it an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a caregiver.
1	(2i) However, cries are discomforting
+2 α	(2ii) and may be alarming to parents,
xβ α	(2iii) many of whom find
'β	(2iv) it [to be] very difficult [[to listen to their infant's crying for even short periods of time.]]
clause simplex	(3) Many reasons for crying are obvious, like hunger and discomfort due to heat, cold, illness, and lying position.
1	(4i) These reasons, however, account for a relatively small percentage of infant crying
x2	(4ii) and are usually recognised quickly
x3	(4iii) and alleviated.
α	(5i) In the absence of a discernible reason for the behaviour, crying often stops
xβ	(5ii) when the infant is held.
1	(6i) In most infants, there are frequent episodes of crying with no apparent cause,
+2	(6ii) and holding or other soothing techniques seem ineffective.
clause simplex	(7) Infants cry and fuss for a mean of 1¾ hr/day at age 2 wk, 2¾ hr/day at age 6 wk, and 1 hr/day at 12 wk.
1	(8i) Counselling about normal crying may relieve guilt
+2	(8ii) and diminish concerns,
x3	(8iii) but for some the distress [[caused by the crying]] cannot be suppressed by logical reasoning.
α	(9i) For these parents, respite from exposure to the crying may be necessary
xβ	(9ii) to allow them to cope appropriately with their own distress.
α	(10i) Without relief, fatigue and tension may result in inappropriate parental responses
=β α	(10ii) such as leaving the infant in the house alone
+β	(10iii) or abusing the infant.

Text 1.3

clause simplex	(1) Did your kids used to cry a lot?
clause simplex	(2) When they were little?
clause simplex	(3) Yea
clause simplex	(4) Well == what did you do?
clause simplex	(5) == still do
clause simplex	(6) Yea? [laughs]
clause simplex	(7) Oh pretty tedious at times yea.
clause simplex	(8) There were all sorts of techniques == Leonard Cohen
clause simplex	(9) == Like what [laughs]
clause simplex	(10) Yea I used to use . . .

clause simplex	(11) What's that American guy [[that did 'Georgia on your mind'?]]
clause simplex	(12) Oh yea
clause simplex	(13) = = Jim – James Taylor
clause simplex	(14) = = James Taylor
clause simplex	(15) Yea yea.
clause simplex	(16) He was pretty good.
clause simplex	(17) Yea.
α	(18i) No Leonard Cohen's good
xβ	(18ii) cause it's just so monotonous.
clause simplex	(19) And there's only four chords.
α	(20i) And ah we used to have holidays
xβ	(20ii) when we only had one kid on a houseboat.
clause simplex	(21) And that was fantastic just the rocking motion of the houseboat
clause simplex	(22) Mmm
clause simplex	(23) Mmm
clause simplex	(24) Were there ever times . . .
α	(25i) Like I remember times
'β α	(25ii) when I couldn't work out
'β	(25iii) what the hell it was.
clause simplex	(26) There just didn't seem to be anything = = [[you could do]]
clause simplex	(27) = = No reason or . . .
clause simplex	(28) Yea
clause simplex	(29) Yea every night between six and ten
clause simplex	(30) Yea yea.
1	(31i) Luckily I didn't have that with the second baby
+2	(31ii) but the first one was that typical colicky sort of stuff from about five o'clock.
clause simplex	(32) Hmm
α	(33i) I remember
'β 1	(33ii) one day going for a um walk along the harbour
=2	(33iii) [it was] one of those you know harbour routes [[that had been opened up.]]
1	(34i) And um he started kicking up from about five o'clock
x2	(34ii) and we were getting panic stricken.
α	(35i) I had him in one of those um front strap things you know sling things
xβ 1	(35ii) ah cause that use to work wonders from time to time
x2	(35iii) but it wasn't working this time.
xβ	(36i) And as we sat on the foreshore of this Vaucluse area
α 1	(36ii) these two women came down
+2 1	(36iii) and they'd both been working as um governesses or something like that –
=2	(36iv) [they were] very, very classy ladies.
1	(37i) And they said
"2	(37ii) 'Oh what's wrong with baby?

clause simplex	(38) He's got colic?'
α	(39i) You know, they really wanted
'β	(39ii) to take over.
clause simplex	(40) Yea
clause simplex	(41) And so I just handed the baby to them
1	(42i) And LUCKILY he kept on crying –
=2	(42ii) *they couldn't stop him.*
clause simplex	(43) So I was really delighted.
clause simplex	(44) They handed back this hideous little red wreck of a thing.

A2. Cohesion analyses

The numbers in these analyses refer to the sentence numbers only.

A2.1. Conjunction

Key:
= elaborating
+ extending
x enhancing
Explicit conjunctions are given
Implicit conjunctions are lexicalized (in parentheses)

Text 1.1

1 x (because) 2 4=5 (i.e.) 5x6 (because) 6x7 (so) 7=8 (e.g.) 8+9 (or) 9x10 (however) 10=11 (e.g.) 12+13 (but) 13=14 (e.g.) 13=15 (e.g.) 13=16 (e.g.)13=17 (e.g.) 13=18 (e.g.) 18+19 (moreover) 19+20 (but) 20=21 (i.e.) 21=22 (e.g.) 22+23 (or) 23=24 (e.g.) 25x26 (so) 25+26 and

Text 1.2

1x2 however 3x4 however 5x6 (however) 6=7 (e.g.) 8x9 (so) 9x10 (since)

Text 1.3

1=2 (i.e.) 8=9 like 8=18 (i.e.) 18+=19 and (i.e.) 19+20 and 20+x21 and (so) 24+25 like 25=26 (i.e.) 26=27 (i.e.) 31=33 (e.g.) 33+34 and 35+36 and 36+x37 and (then) 37=38 you know 38+x40 and so 40+41 and 41x42 so 42x43 (so/when)

A2.2. Reference

Ties are anaphoric unless otherwise indicated with the following keys:
C: cataphoric S: esphoric P: comparative L: locational B: bridging
H: homophoric X: exophoric

Text 1.1

(2) you (X) – you – you – you – you – (7) you – (10) you – (12) you – (13) you – you – (14) your baby – you – you – (18) you – you – your baby – (23) you – (25) you – (26) you – you – (27) you – your baby

(1) a baby who won't stop crying – (2) him – him – him – him – him – he – (4) baby – he – he – his – (6) he – (7) he – (8) babies – they – they– (9) his digestion – (10) he – (11) he – (12) baby – (13) him – (14) he – him – (15) baby – him – him – him – (16) he – (17) him – (20) babies – he – (21) his cot – (23) him – (25) baby – he – his feelings – (26) his parents
(5) the pattern – of sucking until . . . (S)
(7) the nipple or teat (H)
(14) the mood – to cry (S)
(14) the cot (H)
(17) the noise – of the washing machine (S)
(17) the washing machine (H)
(20) babies get bored – this – the reason
(23) the car (H)
(23) the middle of the night (S)
(23) the night (H)
(24) the garden (H)
(1–24) – (25) the problem
(27) the most important people in your baby's life (S)

Text 1.2

(1) compelling sound – it
(2) parents – their infant's crying – (8) some – (9) these parents – them – their own distress
(3) many reasons for crying – (4) these reasons
(8) the distress – caused by the crying (S)
(8) normal crying – (8) the crying – (9) the crying
(10) the house (H)
(9) these parents – (10) the infant (B)

Text 1.3

(1) your kids (X) – (4) you – (10) I – (20) we – we – (31) I – (33) I – (34) we – (35) I – (36) we – (41) I – (43) I
(10) I – (25) I – I
(1) your kids (X) – (2) they – (20) one kid – (31) the second baby – the first one – (34) he – (35) him – (37) the baby – he – (41) the baby – (42) he – him – (43) this hideous little red wreck of a thing
(14) James Taylor (H) – (16) he
(18) Leonard Cohen (H) – it
(20) holidays on a houseboat – (21) that
(20) a houseboat – (21) the houseboat
(25–26) – (31) that – that typical colicky sort of stuff
(32) the harbour (H) – one of those harbour routes – that had been opened up (S)
(35) one of those front strap things (H) – that – it
(36) the foreshore – of this Vaucluse area (S)
(36) this Vaucluse area (H)
(36) these two women – they – (37) they – (38) they – (40) them – (41) they – (43) they

A2.3. Lexical Relations

Ties are superordination unless otherwise indicated, with:
X: expectancy
C: Composition

Text 1.1

(1) baby – (4) baby – (8) babies – (12) baby – baby – (14) baby – (15) baby – (18) baby – (19) babies – (20) babies – (25) baby – (26) baby
(5) tummy – (6) womb (C) – (7) nipple (C) – teat – (9) digestion (C) – limbs (C) – (10) eyes (C) – (19) thumbs (C) – fists (C)
(3) hunger – (6) nourishment – food
(5) full – satisfied – empties
(8) grumpy – miserable – unhappy – (9) uncomfortable – (10) discomfort – (11) lonely – (12) happy – (15) secure – lose tension – (20) bored – (21) interesting – (23) practical – (25) more able – better – (26) at your wit's end
(1) despair – (8) stages – (10) grizzle – (14) mood – (16) tension – (20) grizzle – (25) feelings
(2) feed – change – put down – (5) fed – sucking
(2) change – (10) nappy (X)
(12) day – (13) night – (23) middle of the night (C)
(9) twitching – (15) jerking about – unsettle – (16) stimulation
(16) cut down – lose
(17) noise – gentle (X)
(1) crying – (10) having a grizzle – (17) noise – radio – recording – noise – (20) having a grizzle – (26) crying
(18) dummies – dummy
(18) dummies – sucking (X)
(13) sleep – (23) tire out
(14) cot – (21) cot
(7) assume – (10) find – (14) find – (18) find – (19) find – (22) watch – (25) communicate – judging
(13) relax – settle – (14) rocking – (15) wrapping up – (17) soothe – (18) sucking – (19) sucky
(1) crying – (2) howl – (4) cries – (8) tell – (10) having a grizzle – (14) to cry – start up – (20) having a real grizzle – (25) communicate – (26) crying

Text 1.2

(1) sound – cry – signal – (2) cries – crying – (3) crying – (4) crying – (5) behaviour – crying – (6) crying – (7) cry – (8) crying – crying – (9) crying
(7) cry – fuss (X)
(2) discomforting – alarming – difficult
(3) lying – (5) held – (6) holding – soothing
(1) distress – (3) hunger – discomfort – illness – (8) guilt – concerns – distress – (9) distress – (10) fatigue – tension
(3) heat – cold
(4) alleviated – (8) counselling – relieve – diminish – suppressed – (9) respite – (10) relief

(1) infant – human infant – (2) infant – (4) infant – (5) infant – (6) infants – (7) infants – (10) infant – infant
(1) caregiver – (2) parents – (9) parents – (10) parental
(1) effective – appropriate – (2) discomforting – alarming – difficult – (3) obvious – (5) discernible – (6) apparent – ineffective – (9) necessary – appropriately – (10) inappropriate
(1) prolonged – (2) short – (4) small – (6) frequent
(2) periods of time – (6) episodes – (7) hour (C) – day (C) – age (C) – week (C) – hour (C) – day (C) – age (C) – week (C) – hour (C) – day (C) – week (C)
(4) percentage – (7) mean
(3) reasons – (4) reasons – (5) reason – (6) cause – techniques – (8) logical reasoning – (10) responses
(9) cope – (10) leaving alone – abusing

Text 1.3

(1) kids – (20) kid – (31) baby – (36) women – ladies – (37) baby – (41) baby
(2) little – (43) little
(7) tedious – (15) good – (18) good – monotonous – (21) fantastic – (34) panic stricken – (43) delighted – (44) hideous
(44) hideous – wreck (X)
(1) cry – (34) kicking up – (42) crying –
(34) started – (39) take over – (42) kept on – stop
(31) colicky sort of stuff – (37) wrong with the baby – (38) got colic
(36) Vaucluse – classy (X)
(20) houseboat – (21) houseboat – (33) harbour (X) – harbour – (36) foreshore – Vaucluse area
(33) walk – (36) sat – came down
(41) handed – (44) handed back
(37) baby – (38) got colic (X)
(1) a lot – (7) at times – (35) from time to time
(24) times – (25) times – (29) night – six (C) – ten (C) – (31) five o'clock (C) – (33) day (C) – (34) five o'clock (C)
(8) techniques – (25) work out (X) – (27) reason (X) – (35) work wonders (X) – working – (36) working – governesses (X)
(7) Leonard Cohen – (11) American guy – (13) James Taylor – (14) James Taylor – (18) Leonard Cohen

A3. Generic Analysis

In the following analysis, each text has been assigned to a genre, and divided into functionally labelled stages.

Text 1.1

Genre: Explanation of Problematic Behaviour
Statement of Problem
1. A baby who won't stop crying can drive anyone to despair. 2. You feed him, you change him, you nurse him, you try to settle him, but the minute you put him down he starts to howl. 3. Why?

Explanation 1

4. The most common reason baby cries is hunger. 5. Even if he was just recently fed he might still be adapting to the pattern of sucking until his tummy is full and feeling satisfied until it empties again. 6. When he was in the womb nourishment came automatically and constantly.

Suggested Alleviating Action 1

7. Offer food first; if he turns away from the nipple or teat you can assume it's something else.

Explanation 2

8. It happens that babies go through grumpy, miserable stages when they just want to tell everyone how unhappy they feel. 9. Perhaps his digestion feels uncomfortable or his limbs are twitching.

Suggested Alleviating Action 2

10. If you can't find any specific source of discomfort such as a wet nappy or strong light in his eyes, he could just be having a grizzle.

Explanation 3

11. Perhaps he's just lonely.

Suggested Alleviating Action 3

12. During the day, a baby sling helps you to deal with your chores and keep baby happy.

Suggested Alleviating Action 4

13. At night when you want to sleep you will need to take action to relax and settle him. 14. Rocking helps, but if your baby is in the mood to cry you will probably find he'll start up again when you put him back in the cot.

Suggested Alleviating Action 5

15. Wrapping baby up snugly helps to make him feel secure and stops him from jerking about which can unsettle him.

Suggested Alleviating Action 6

16. Outside stimulation is cut down and he will lose tension. 17. Gentle noise might soothe him off to sleep – a radio played softly, a recording of a heartbeat, traffic noise – even the noise of the washing machine is effective!

Suggested Alleviating Action 7

18. Some parents use dummies – it's up to you – and you might find your baby settles sucking a dummy. 19. 'Sucky' babies might be able to find their thumbs and fists to have a good suck.

Explanation 4

20. Remember that babies get bored so when he is having a real grizzle this could be the reason. 21. Is his cot an interesting place to be?

Suggested Alleviating Action 8

22. Coloured posters and mobiles give him something to watch.

Suggested Alleviating Action 9

23. You could maybe tire him out by taking him for a walk . . . or a ride in the car – not always practical in the middle of the night. 24. A change of scene and some fresh air will often work wonders – even a walk around the garden may be enough.

Outlook: improvements to come

25. As baby gets older he will be more able to communicate his feelings and you will be better at judging the problem.

Morale Booster

26. Although you might be at your wit's end, remember that crying is communication with you, his parents. 27. And you are the most important people in your baby's life.

TEXT 1.2

Genre: Explanation of Problematic Behaviour

Statement of Problem

1. The compelling sound of an infant's cry makes it an effective distress signal and appropriate to the human infant's prolonged dependence on a caregiver. 2. However, cries are discomforting and may be alarming to parents, many of whom find it very difficult to listen to their infant's crying for even short periods of time.

Explanation 1

3. Many reasons for crying are obvious, like hunger and discomfort due to heat, cold, illness, and lying position. 4. These reasons, however, account for a relatively small percentage of infant crying and are usually recognised quickly and alleviated.

Explanation 2

5. In the absence of a discernible reason for the behaviour, crying often stops when the infant is held.

Explanation 3

6. In most infants, there are frequent episodes of crying with no apparent cause, and holding or other soothing techniques seem ineffective. 7. Infants cry and fuss for a mean of 1¾ hr/day at age 2 wk, 2¾ hr/day at age 6 wk, and 1 hr/day at 12 wk.

Suggested Alleviating Action 1

8. Counselling about normal crying may relieve guilt and diminish concerns, but for some the distress caused by the crying cannot be suppressed by logical reasoning.

Suggested Alleviating Action 2

9. For these parents, respite from exposure to the crying may be necessary to allow them to cope appropriately with their own distress.

Outlook: warning

10. Without relief, fatigue and tension may result in inappropriate parental responses such as leaving the infant in the house alone or abusing the infant.

TEXT 1.3

Genre: conversational exchange, including Topic/Comment and Narrative of personal experience genres

Exchange 1		
question	S	1. Did your kids used to cry a lot?
question		2. When they were little?
answer	C	3. Yea
Exchange 2		
question	S	4. Well == what did you do?
answer	C	5. == still do
acknowledge	S	6. Yea? [laughs]
answer	C	7. Oh pretty tedious at times yea.
answer		8. There were all sorts of techniques == Leonard Cohen
tracking	S	9. == Like what [laughs]

Exchange 3		
statement		10. Yea I used to use . . .
tracking		11. What's that American guy that did 'Georgia on your mind'?
response	C	12. Oh yea
statement	S	13. == Jim – James Taylor
acknowledge	C	14. == James Taylor
follow-up	S	15. Yea yea.
Exchange 4		
statement		16. He was pretty good
agree	C	17. Yea.
Exchange 5		
statement		18. No Leonard Cohen's good cause it's just so monotonous
acknowledge	S	[laughs]
statement	C	19. And there's only four chords.
Topic^Comment		
statement: Topic		20. And ah we used to have holidays when we only had one kid on a houseboat.
statement: Comment		21. And that was fantastic just the rocking motion of the houseboat
acknowledge	S	22. Mmm
follow-up	C	23. Mmm
Exchange 6		
question	S	24. Were there ever times . . . 25. Like I remember times when I couldn't work out what the hell it was. 26. There just didn't seem to be anything == you could do
acknowledge	C	27. == No reason or . . .
acknowledge		28. Yea
answer	S	29. Yea every night between six and ten
agree	C	30. Yea yea.
Exchange 7/Narrative		
answer: **Abstract**		31. Luckily I didn't have that with the second baby but the first one was that typical colicky sort of stuff from about five o'clock.
acknowledge	S	32. Hmm
Orientation 1	C	33. I remember one day going for a um walk along the harbour – one of those you know harbour routes that had been opened up.
Complication 1		34. And um he started kicking up from about five o'clock and we were getting panic stricken.
Orientation 2		35. I had him in one of those um front strap things you know sling things ah cause that use to work wonders from time to time but it wasn't working this time.
Complication 2		36. And as we sat on the foreshore of of this Vaucluse area these two women came down and

		they'd both been working as um governesses or something like that – very very classy ladies. 37. And they said 'Oh what's wrong with the baby? 38. He's got colic?'
Evaluation 1		39. You know, they really wanted to take over
	S	40. Yea
Complication 3	C	41. And so I just handed the baby to them
	S	[laughs]
Resolution	C	42. And LUCKILY he kept on crying – they couldn't stop him
	S	[laughs]
Evaluation 2	C	43. So I was really delighted.
Coda		44. They handed back this hideous little red wreck of a thing [laughter]

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