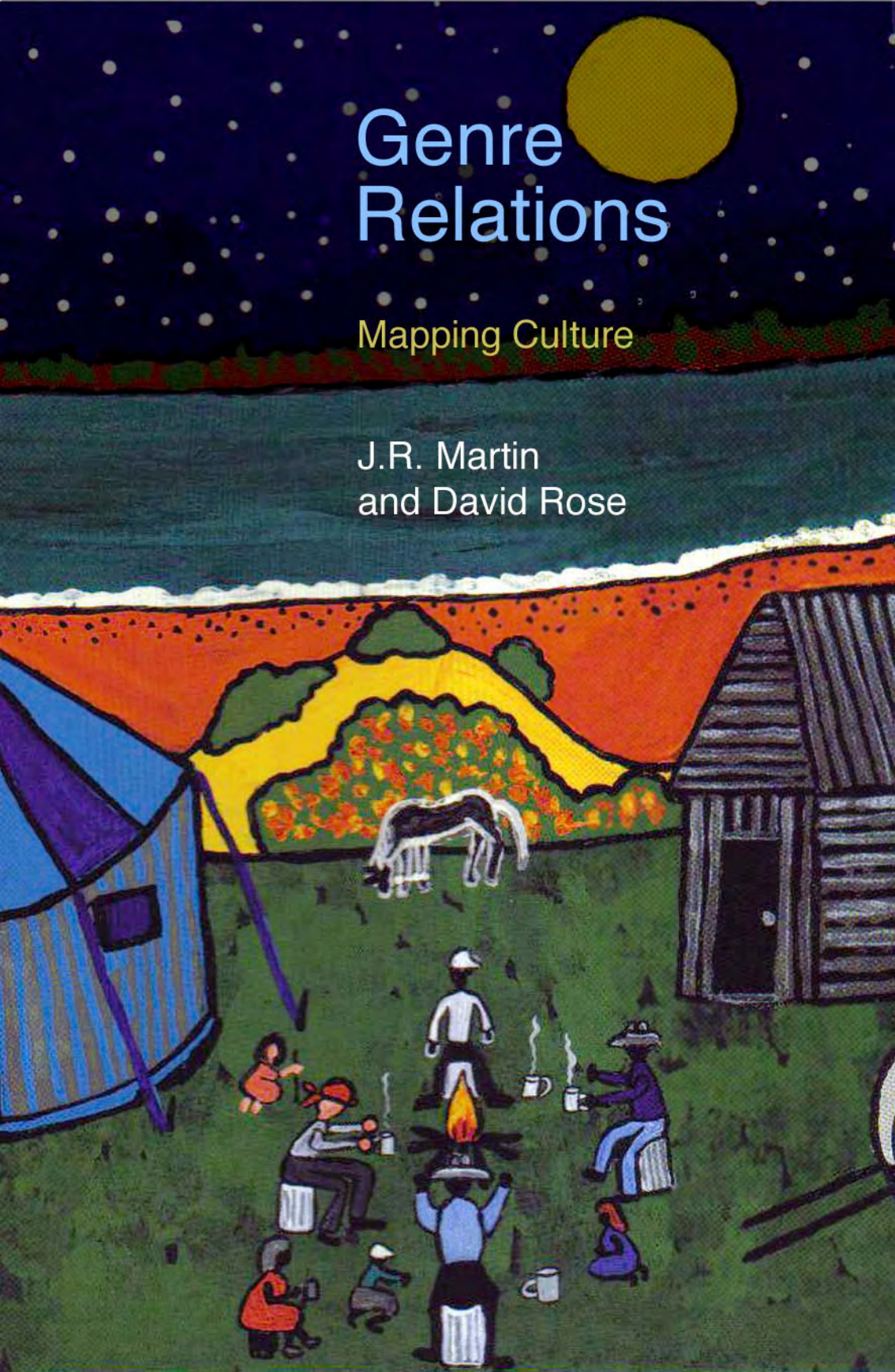


# Genre Relations

Mapping Culture

J.R. Martin  
and David Rose



### **Preface**

For this book we have tried to write an accessible introduction to the genre theory underpinning the literacy programmes of what has come to be referred to as the 'Sydney School'. Jim began working with Joan Rothery and Fran Christie on this initiative in 1979, to address the literacy needs of primary school students. David was first drawn to the project in 1989, by the literacy needs of the Indigenous communities he worked for. Pedagogy and curriculum have always been important aspects of this action research, but we won't deal directly with questions of practice here. Rather our focus is on the way we have theorised genre as part of a functional model of language and attendant modalities of communication. Our aim is that this description will continue to inform the pedagogic work, as well broader research in language and culture.

The first phase of this research (1980-1987), the 'Writing Project' involved a study of student writing in Sydney schools. Jim worked closely with Joan Rothery and with Suzanne Eggins, Radan Martinec and Peter Wignell analysing text types across the curriculum in primary school, with a focus on geography and history in secondary school. This phase of schools based work was considerably enhanced by studies of various community genres undertaken by post-graduate students in the Linguistics Department at the University of Sydney, including work by Eija Ventola on service encounters, Guenter Plum on narrative and Suzanne Eggins on casual conversation. It was during this period that Fran Christie developed her interest applying genre theory to classroom discourse, leading to her ongoing focus on what she calls curriculum genres.

From 1986 the Disadvantaged Schools Program in Sydney played a critical role in the development of this work, beginning with the primary school focussed 'Language and Social Power Project' (1986-1990) and continuing with the secondary school and workplace focussed 'Write it Right Project' (1990-1995). Jim acted as chief academic adviser and David coordinated work on the discourse of science based industry. Mary Macken-Horarik worked closely with Joan Rothery on both of these projects, the second of which involved important contributions from Caroline Coffin, Sally Humphrey, Maree Stenglin and Robert Veel (school genres), from Susan Feez, Rick Iedema and Peter White (workplace genres) and from David McInnes who worked with both the school and workplace teams. Inspired by our work on science discourse, Len Unsworth undertook his detailed study of scientific explanations, which he later extended to his work on multimodal discourse.

We were fortunate throughout this work to be able to draw on relevant thinking about genre in the Sydney metropolitan region by Ruqaiya Hasan (on narrative, appointment making and service encounters) and by Gunther Kress, who worked with Jim as part of LERN (Literacy and Education Research Network) in its early years. In addition we benefited from having our work taken up in the context of EAP by the Learning Centre at the University of Sydney (under the direction of Carolyn Webb and later Janet Jones) and for ESL by Sue Hood and Helen Joyce at AMES (Adult Migrant English Service). While a major focus of the theory has been on writing in English, it has increasingly been applied to mapping genres across other cultures, such as David's work on the language and culture of Australia's Western Desert.

## Genre Relations

None of this would have been thinkable of course without the informing systemic functional linguistic theory and guiding hand of Michael Halliday, whose thinking about language underpinned the research, who organised the 'Working Conference on Language in Education' in 1979 where Jim first met Joan Rothery, and who established the undergraduate Linguistics and MA/MEd Applied Linguistics programs at the University of Sydney. It was in these programs that so many of the colleagues noted above became interested in genre, and where Joan Rothery and Guenter Plum first came up with the idea of distinguishing register from genre circa 1980-1981.

In Halliday's linguistics, theory emerges out of a dialectic with practice, and we want to especially thank here all of the students and teachers and language consultants who have tried out our ideas and challenged us to improve them over the years. Our thanks as well to the many colleagues who have taken an interest in this work, in functional linguistics and beyond - at meetings and on the web. Like all knowledge, genre theory is a continuing project, and has been an excellent excuse for keeping in touch. Ever more so, we hope, as a result of this particular packaging up of what we've seen so far.

Joan Rothery's name has come up at several points in this discussion, and we would like to acknowledge her contribution as the principal co-architect of the theory we present her by dedicating this book to her - a small tribute to one of the world's most inspiring educational linguists.

**For Joan**

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## Chapter 1 Getting going with genre

### 1.1 Back to school

Walk into a primary school in Australia in 1980<sup>1</sup> and here's the kind of writing you would likely find:

[1:1]

On Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup> of November Jesse my friend and me Conal, went to the park called Jonson park me and Jesse played on the playaquitmint and it was very fun but me and Jesse both like the same peace of equipment I don't know wa...

What can we say about it? As for the text itself, the spelling and punctuation are far from standard; the grammar is quite spoken, unfolding serially from clause to clause; and the writing is unfinished, arresting in the middle of a word beginning 'w-a'. Alongside the writing we would very likely find a colourful drawing, of Jesse and Conal playing in the park. The writer could be around 7, 8, 9 or 10 years old, depending on their social background and the school involved. The teacher would be relatively supportive, ready to correct the spelling and punctuation and keen to encourage the young writer to try harder and hand in a complete text next time round.

But what does this text do? As far as meaning goes, the text makes an observation about something that has happened to the writer (going to the park to play); and it makes some comments about how they felt about it (what they liked). Jesse and Conal's teacher would have called it a story, since *story* was the term that primary school teachers used to refer to children's writing in their school. Functional linguists working in the school would have christened it an **observation/comment** text, in order to distinguish it from texts like [1:2] which record a series of events unfolding through time:

[1:2]

Last Sunday me and My family went to the blue Mountains to go and see my dads friends. There were two children as well One of the children's name was Hamish, Hamish was about 12 years old and his brother was about 19 or 18 years old. So when we arrived we all had lunch and we had chicken, bread, salad and a drink. after we had lunch I went on the trاملen after I went on the trاملen for about half an hour we went to go to a rugby leeg game for about 3 hours and I got an ice-cream and a packet of chips after the rugby leeg game I went on the trاملen agin and I got another ice-cream and after I had finished my ice-cream we went home. I had a great day.

Here the trip to the Blue Mountains north of Sydney is broken down into steps – going to the mountains, having lunch, playing on the trampoline, going to the rugby, playing on the trampoline again and going home; and the steps are explicitly sequenced in time (*when we arrived, after we had lunch, after I went on the trاملen, after the rugby leeg game, after I finished my ice-cream*). The linguists involved called this kind of text a **recount**, and noticed that it became more common as the literacy pedagogy known in Australia as process writing<sup>2</sup> became popular in schools in the early eighties. Process writing experts encouraged teachers to set aside more time for writing on a daily basis, which led to longer texts about children's first hand experiences. The longer and more unusual the experience, the more kids had to write about:

[1:3] I woke up and got redy to get on the giant plain. Me my sister my Brother my dad and Sue our house mate all got ready to go so when the taxi came we would be ready so the taxi came at about 9:30 so we got on the taxi and went to the airport and waited for the people to announe when our plain is going to come or if it is here. they finily announced that the plain is here and we got strait on the plain and it left at about 10:00 in the morning it took a day and a harf to get there so when we got off the plain we went on a taxi to Autawa, Autawa is where my grandma and granpa live. On that same day we went to a playce called cascads it was a water park. it was so big there was only about 10 or 11 water slides but they were so fun. My favorite water salide was the gost slide it was pitch black four or five people can go at a time because it was lick one of those small pools but it didn't have water in it when you went down you would get a bit scared because you couldn't see everything. There was holes in it shaped lick gost's and there was heps of other rides. We stayed there for about three hours. After three hours we went back to my grandma and grandpas house after one week later we wrang a taxi and asked him to come and tack us t the airport and we got on the plain back home when we got back home we had dinner.

For everyday events kids simply had to go into more and more detail to fill up the time slot set aside for writing and produce the longer texts their teachers desired.

By 1985 there were lots of recounts, although numerically observation/comment texts were still the most common text type. And you couldn't count on children graduating from primary school having written anything other than observation/comments and recounts, although other kinds of text appeared. We found factual texts, written especially by boys:

[1:4] **Crocodile**

Crocodiles are from the reptile family. Crocodiles are like snakes but with two legs on each side of the crocodiles body.

Crocodiles have four legs and the crocodiles have scales all over its body. Crocodiles have a long gore and they have a long powerful tail so it can nock its enems into the water so it can eat the animal.

Crocodiles live on the ege of a swamp or a river. They make there nests out of mud and leaves.

Crocodiles eat meat lke chickens, cows and catle and other kinds of animals.

Crocdils move by there legs. Crocodiles can walk on legs. Crocodiles have four legs. Crocodiles also have scals all over there body and they have a powerfall tail to swim in the water.

Crocdils have eggs they do not have (live) babys.

Crocodiles can carry there egg(s) in there big gore.

Some factual texts, like [1:4] generalised about experience, drawing on research about classes of phenomena; these were called **reports**. Others focussed on specific first hand observations, and often expressed the feelings of writers to what they were describing (these were written by both boys and girls):

[1:5] **My dog Tammy**<sup>3</sup>

My dog Tammy has a lovely reddy brown furr. Here eyes are brown too. Her shape is skinny. She has a fluffy, furry, smooth and shinny texture. She moves by wagging her tail and waving her body. The feelings that I feel of my dog is sweat, loving and cute. My dog is very loved. She smells sweet. My dog is big, tall and very long.

Text of this kind were termed **descriptions**. Beyond this there were occasional 'how to' texts, designated **procedures**:

**[1:6] How to brush your teeth**

1. Turn the taps on and fill your glass with water.
2. Get your tooth brush.
3. Put tooth paste on your tooth brush
4. put your tooth brush in your mouth and scrub your teeth.
5. When you are finished brushing your teeth rins out your mouth with water.
6. ...

Sometimes these procedures had been specially adapted to suit the goals of scientific experimentation:

**[1:7] The Strongest Parts of a Magnet**

Aim:

To find out which part of the magnet is the strongest.

Equipment:

You will need a magnet, pins or some-thing that is mad out of iron.

Steps:

1. Spread your pins out on the table.
2. Put your magnet over your pins.
3. See what happened/s.
4. Repet trying sides with pins.
5. See which side is the strongest by comparing.

Results:

The pins all went to the poles.

Conclusion:

I found out that the poles where the strongest part of the magnet.

Now and again procedures would be complemented by **protocol** – lists of rules which restrict what you can do instead of explaining how to do it:

**[1:8] Bus Safety**

1. Alwas keep your hands and feet to yourself.
2. Never eat or drink it the bus because you could chock on your food when the bus stops.
3. Don't draw on the bus.
4. Don't litter on the bus because a babby could pick it up and he or she could chock on it.
5. Don't arguw on the bus because it could distrack the bus driver.

And there were some real stories too – or at least attempts at them. In these **narrative** texts there is something that goes wrong, that needs to be set right:

**[1:9] The duff children**

In the outback in vicktorya in 1918 there was three there names where isack, jane, and frank isack was 4, Jane was 7 and frank was 9. there mother told them to go to some brom bushes so there mother could mack a brom. They left on Friday and when they didn't come back!!!!!!

[A good start, Conal. What next?]



And there were '**just so stories**', that explain how the world came to be the way it is:

[1:10] **How the sparrow could glide**

Once when the white people came to Australia there was a little bird called a sparrow. It was a very nice bird but the white people that first came to Australia they thoute that the sparrow as a very annoying bird because it slowly flew around them slowly. One time they got so annoyed that they got a gun out and tride to shote it so he got his gun out and shot his gun but it didn't hit the bird it was write behind the sparrow the sparrow's aims got so tiyard that he had to stop flapping its wings and it sort of glided just near the ground and he moved and the bullets went away and that is how the sparrow's lernt how to glide. And they lived happily ever after.

In general narrative writing reflected the reading and viewing experiences of children, often with girls modelling narrative on what they'd read in books and boys retelling the plot of action drama they had seen on screen.

Other kinds of writing were pretty rare. And teachers not only called everything the kids wrote a story but evaluated everything as if it were a story too. Here's a short **explanation** of the history of the planet written in 1988 by Ben, then 8 years old (Martin 1990):

[1:11] **OUR PLANET**

Earth's core is as hot as the furthest outer layer of the sun. They are both 6000c°.

Earth started as a ball of fire. Slowly it cooled. But it was still too hot for Life. Slowly water formed and then the first signs of life, microscopic cells. Then came trees. About seven thousand million years later came the first man.

His teacher commented as follows:

[Where is your margin? This is not a story.]

And on his picture of the planet, which accompanied his text, she wrote "Finish please." Ben's parents were quite concerned. And as linguists we felt we had some work to do.

One job was to identify and name the kinds of texts we found. We approached this by looking closely at the kinds of meaning involved – using global patterns to distinguish one text type from another and more local patterns to distinguish stages within a text. Recurrent global patterns were recognised as genres, and given names. For example, the distinction we drew between observation/comments and recounts was based on the presence or absence of an unfolding sequence of events; and the distinction between reports and descriptions was based on whether the facts presented were generic or specific.

Recurrent local patterns within genres were recognised as **schematic structures**, and also labelled. For most people the most familiar example of this kind of labelling is the experiment report from school science. Example [1:7] above used the terms Aim, Equipment, Steps, Results and Conclusion for its staging structure. This genre and its staging was normally taught explicitly to students in Australian schools and was thus the sole exception to the prevailing practice in process writing and whole language classrooms of not teaching students genres (or even telling them what to write).

As a working definition we characterised genres as staged, goal oriented social processes. Staged, because it usually takes us more than one step to reach our goals; goal oriented because we feel frustrated if we don't accomplish the final steps (as with the aborted narrative [1:9] above); social because writers shape their texts for readers of particular kinds.

In functional linguistics terms what this means is that genres are defined as a recurrent configuration of meanings and that these recurrent configurations of meaning enact the social practices of a given culture. This means we have to think about more than individual genres; we need to consider how they relate to one another.

Relations among genres implicitly informed the presentation of the examples considered above. To begin, two event and reaction genres were considered and distinguished with respect to the presence of a time line (observation/comment vs recount). Then two factual genres were introduced and opposed in terms of generic or specific reference (report vs description). We then looked at two directive genres, separated according to whether they tell us how to do something or what not to do (procedure vs protocol). Finally we presented two story genres in which complications arose that needed to be set right – one which used drama to entertain, the other which explained (narrative vs just so story).

Overall, we might oppose procedures and protocols to the others, on the grounds that are mainly instructing rather than informing. And within informing genres, we might oppose those organised around sequences of events to those focused on describing things; and those organised around events could be divided into those that present an expectant sequence, and those with complicating actions. An outline of these relationships is presented in Figure 1.1. A network diagram is used here to present genres as a series of choices. The first choice is between genres that instruct or inform, secondly between genres that inform about things or events, and thirdly between event sequences that are expectant or complicating. Each choice is indicated by an arrow leading to two or more options.

Figure 1.1: Relations among junior primary genres (provisional)

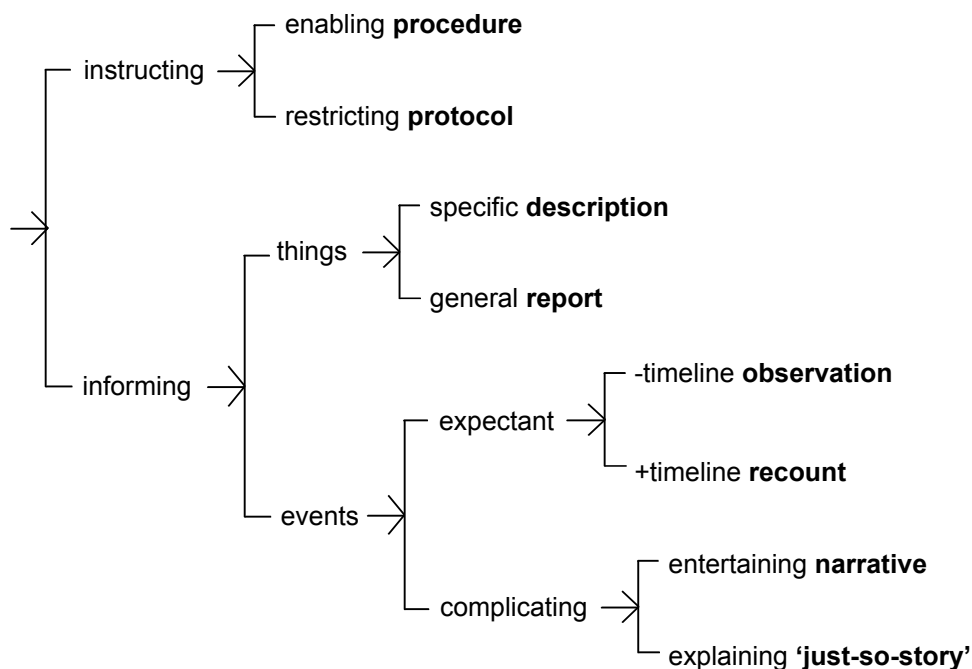


Figure 1.1 gives us an approximate map of the 1980s literacy terrain in Australian primary schools as we presented it above (although it doesn't include Ben's history of the planet, and doesn't show how overwhelmingly common the observation/comment and recount genres were compared with the others). Technically speaking we have a genre system - we have organised what kids wrote into a taxonomy of text types, based on the recurrent configurations of meaning they produced. Network diagrams such as Figure 1.1 are used in SFL to model language as systems of resources for meaning, that speakers and writers choose from in the process of making meaning. At the level of genre, this system network shows relations among genres that at least some children were able to choose from for their writing tasks.

What kind of literacy world was this? Basically one in which writing was not taught. For models kids had to depend on texts they'd bumped into on their own. These included spoken genres like observation/comment and recount they'd heard in conversation at home, and written genres they might have seen in books or on screen - dependent of course on what they read and viewed (only a few students like Ben drew now and again on factual writing they had encountered in their own research). The school's contribution was pretty much limited to the instructional genres, since writing up science experiments was taught and rules for behaviour were regularly negotiated early in the school year, posted round classrooms and recorded in student's notebooks.

It seemed a bad idea to us to leave all this to chance since by and large students were not being prepared for writing across the curriculum in primary school, nor were they being introduced to the kinds of writing they would have to read and produce in secondary school. And in schools with large populations of non-English speaking children (whether Indigenous or migrant) there was the additional problem that these kids were often the most fluent English speaker in their families and the go-between as far as a range of professional and government services were concerned. The

community oriented literacy which could help them out wasn't part of the curriculum either. On top of all this the fact that teachers called every genre a story reflected their own lack of genre consciousness. This impacted heavily on both implicit and explicit evaluation – since everything was treated as good or bad narrative (as was text [1:11] above). Handy if as a student you tweak that this is what teachers have in mind, but debilitating if you can't read between the lines.

It didn't seem like social justice to us and we tried to intervene. This meant identifying and describing the genres we thought every student should learn to write in primary school. And it meant developing pedagogy and curriculum to make sure they learned them (Cope & Kalantzis 1993, Johns 2002). This book is not however about this ongoing intervention in literacy teaching, which over time had considerable influence on Australian primary and secondary schools, adult migrant English teaching and on academic literacy teaching in universities. But this intervention was the context in which Jim and later David began to worry seriously about genres. And it influenced the funding that became available to pursue our research. So we probably have to acknowledge an educational bias in the genre theory we present below.

## 1.2. Where did we turn?

As systemic functional linguists we had a rich tradition of work on language and social context to draw on, going back through Halliday, Hasan and Gregory to the work of their mentor Firth and his colleagues in Britain. From this tradition two publications were directly related to our concerns - Mitchell 1957 and Hasan 1977. Mitchell was a colleague of Firth's specialising in Arabic; based on his research in the Libyan market place he wrote the classic Firthian study of language in relation to context of situation - focussing on what came to be known as the service encounter genre. Mitchell distinguished market auctions from market stall and shop transactions, and proposed partially overlapping schematic structures for each (the difference between market stall and shop transactions was the optional nature of a Salutation in the former). Mitchell's structures are presented below, using '^' to mean 'is followed by' (although we must note in passing that Mitchell did recognise the possibility of alternative and overlapping sequencing conditioned by context):

### MARKET AUCTION:

Auctioneer's Opening ^ Investigation of Object of Sale ^ Bidding ^ Conclusion

### MARKET TRANSACTIONS:

Salutation ^ Enquiry as to Object of Sale ^ Investigation of Object of Sale ^ Bargaining ^ Conclusion

In his discussion Mitchell attended closely to the patterns of meaning characterising each genre and element of schematic structure. Mitchell's article was originally published in the relatively obscure Moroccan journal *Hesperis*, and we were fortunate to have a well-worn photo-copy of it; 'The language of buying and selling in Cyrenaica: a situational statement' became more widely available in 1975 when it was republished in a collection of Mitchell's papers, his *Principles of Neo-Firthian Linguistics*.

Hasan was a colleague of Halliday's working at Macquarie University in Sydney and in 1977 she published a paper on text structure which focussed on appointment making. Her obligatory stages for this genre were Identification ^ Application ^ Offer ^

Confirmation. For Hasan, these stages, additional optional stages and the linguistic realisation of stages were conditioned by Halliday's three social context variables field, tenor and mode; social context in this sense determined the genre. Later on Hasan's work on the structure of nursery tales and Australian service encounters<sup>4</sup> also became available to us (Hasan 1984, 1985).

The third major influence on our thinking came from a different tradition, the narrative analysis of the American variation theorist Labov. Labov and Waletzky's 1967 paper on the narratives of personal experience in Labov's corpus also focussed on schematic structure, including obligatory and optional staging (parentheses are used to signal optional elements below):

NARRATIVE OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

(Abstract) ^ (Orientation) ^ Complication ^ Evaluation ^ Resolution ^ (Coda)

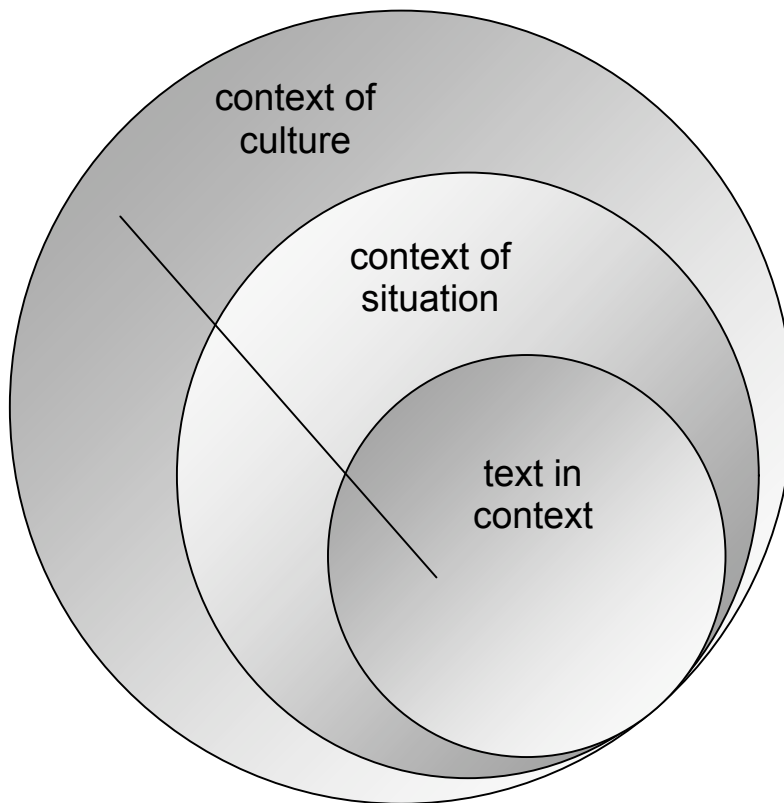
Like Hasan and Mitchell, Labov & Waletzky gave detailed semantic descriptions of each element of structure, relating these as far as possible to linguistic realisations (further elaborated in later work by Labov 1972, 1982, 1984, 1997). This work, alongside Hasan 1984, was a major influence on our analysis of story genres<sup>5</sup> which we present in Chapter 2 below.

To be frank, these three papers were pretty much what we had to go on, although there were obviously lots of concurrent developments going on around the world. We concentrated on making sense of these ideas within the framework of systemic functional linguistics as we understood it at the time. This meant working very hard on the notion of recurrent configurations of meaning, drawing on Halliday's emerging functional grammar of English (Halliday 1985) and Martin's emerging descriptions of discourse semantics (Martin 1992). The most distinctive thing about our approach to genre was probably that it developed within such a rich theoretical framework and drew upon far richer descriptions of meaning making resources in English than had been available in the past.

### 1.3 Modelling context

In our emerging interpretation of genre, we were strongly influenced by two developing theories of the social contexts of language, Halliday's model of language as text in context (1978, 1989), and Bernstein's model of the social contexts of language as 'codes' (1971, 1990, 1996). Halliday described social context as "the total environment in which a text unfolds" (1978:5), building on Firth (1957) and Malinowski for whom "the meaning of any significant word, sentence or phrase is the effective change brought about by the utterance within the context of the situation to which it is wedded" (1935:213). In an effort to present the discourse of Trobriand Islanders for a European audience, Malinowski interpreted the social contexts of interaction as stratified into two levels – 'context of situation' and 'context of culture', and considered that a text (which he called an "utterance") could only be understood in relation to both these levels. Conversely we could say that speakers' cultures are manifested in each situation in which they interact, and that each interactional situation is manifested verbally as unfolding text, i.e. as text in context. This stratified theory of text in context is illustrated in SFL as a series of nested circles, as in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Strata of language in social contexts



The relation between each of these strata of language and social context is modelled in SFL as 'realisation', represented in Figure 1.2 by a line across the strata. We described this concept in Martin & Rose 2003 as follows:

Realisation is a kind of re-coding – like the mapping of hardware through software to the images and words we see on the screen on our computers. Another way of thinking about this is symbolisation... Symbolising is an important aspect of realisation, since grammar both symbolises and encodes discourse, just as discourse both symbolises and encodes social activity. The concept of realisation embodies the meanings of 'symbolising', 'encoding', 'expressing', 'manifesting' and so on.

The concept of realisation also entails 'metaredundancy' (Lemke 1993) - the notion of patterns at one level 'redounding' with patterns at the next level, and so on. So patterns of social organisation in a culture are realised ('manifested/ symbolised/ encoded/ expressed') as patterns of social interaction in each context of situation, which in turn are realised as patterns of discourse in each text. Furthermore, if each text realises patterns in a social situation, and each situation realises patterns in a culture, then the stratification of context had implications for how we thought of the types of texts we were finding. Should we be modelling the relation between text types and their contexts at the level of situation or of culture? Since each genre can be written and read in a variety of situations, the latter option seems likely. But before we can begin to answer this question, we need to consider Halliday's model of situation in more detail.

### 1.3.1 Register - variations in situation

Halliday links contexts of situation to three social functions of language – enacting speakers' relationships, construing their experience of social activity, and weaving these enactments and construals together as meaningful discourse. Accordingly contexts of situation vary in these three general dimensions. The dimension concerned with relationships between interactants is known as **tenor**; that concerned with their social activity is known as **field**; and that concerned with the role of language is known as **mode**. Halliday has characterised these three dimensions of a situation as follows:

**Field** refers to what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place: what it is that the participants are engaged in, in which language figures as some essential component.

**Tenor** refers to who is taking part, to the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles: what kinds of role relationship obtain, including permanent and temporary relationships of one kind or another, both the types of speech roles they are taking on in the dialogue and the whole cluster of socially significant relationships in which they are involved.

**Mode** refers to what part language is playing, what it is that the participants are expecting language to do for them in the situation: the symbolic organisation of the text, the status that it has, and its function in the context (Halliday 1985/9:12).

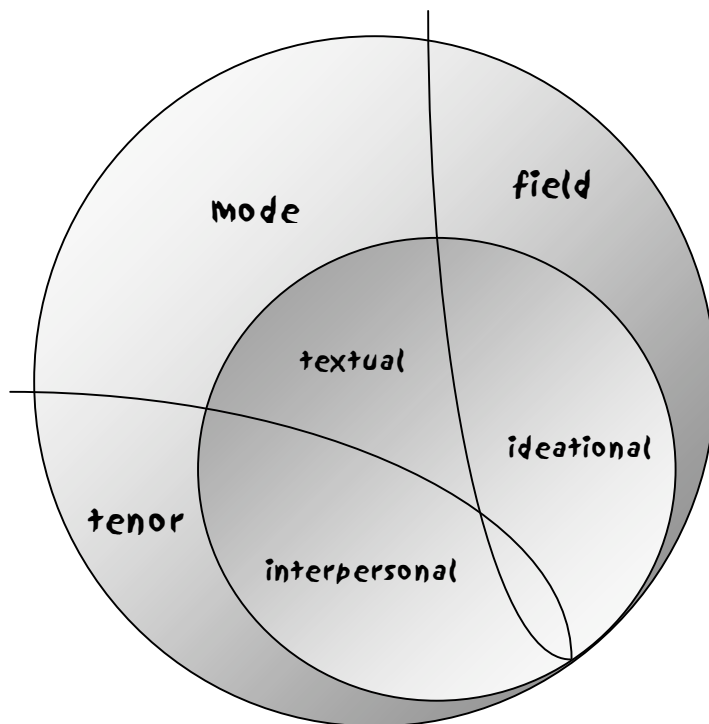
Taken together the tenor, field and mode of a situation constitute the register of a text. That is, from the perspective of language, we will now refer to the context of situation of a text as its **register**. As register varies, so too do the patterns of meanings we find in a text. Because they vary systematically, we refer to tenor, field and mode as **register variables**.

As language realises its social contexts, so each dimension of a social context is realised by a particular functional dimension of language. Halliday defines these functional dimensions as the 'metafunctions' of language: enacting relationships as the **interpersonal** metafunction, construing experience as the **ideational** metafunction, and organising discourse as the **textual** metafunction. Relations between register variables and language metafunctions are as follows:

REGISTER		METAFUNCTION	
<b>tenor</b>	'kinds of role relationship'	<b>interpersonal</b>	'enacting'
<b>field</b>	'the social action that is taking place'	<b>ideational</b>	'construing'
<b>mode</b>	'what part language is playing'	<b>textual</b>	'organising'

This set of functional relationships between language and context is illustrated in Figure 1.3, and expanded on as follows.

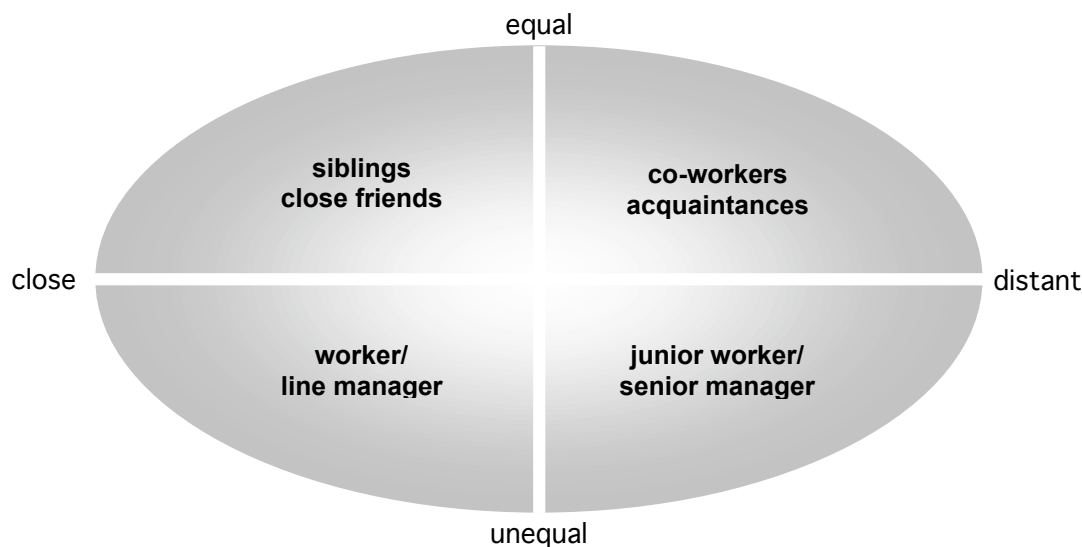
Figure 1.3: Field, tenor and mode in relation to metafunctions



**First tenor:** In a model of this kind, and here we follow Martin 2002 in particular, tenor is concerned with the nature of social relations among interlocutors, with the dimensions of status and solidarity. Status is equal or unequal and if unequal, is concerned with who dominates and who defers (the vertical dimension of tenor). Solidarity is concerned with social distance - close or distant depending on the amount and kinds of contact people have with one another, and with the emotional charge of these relations (the horizontal dimension of tenor). Status and solidarity are complementarities, and both obtain in all of our interactions with one another. The terms status and power are often used interchangeably, but in this discussion we will reserve the term power for more general relationships, beyond specific situations in the wider distribution of resources in a society, discussed below. Examples of varying tenor relations are given in Figure 1.4: close equal relations are characteristic of siblings or close friends, whereas distant equal relations are more likely between acquaintances or co-workers; close contact in unequal relations may be found between a worker and their line-manager, who work together each day, while a distant unequal relationship is more likely between a junior worker and a senior manager, who rarely meet.



Figure 1.4: Dimensions of variation in tenor

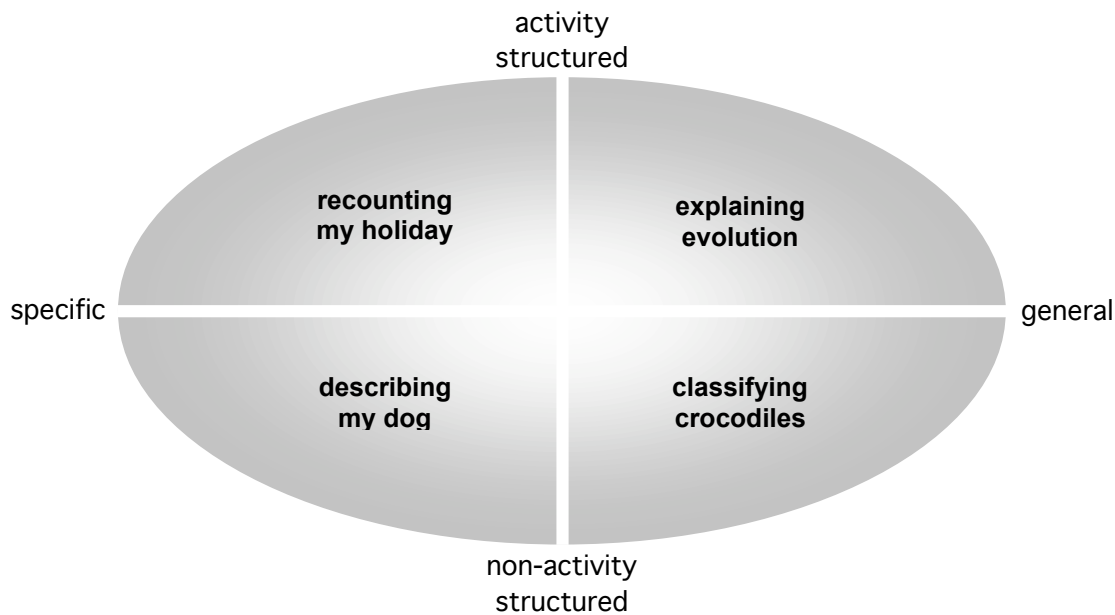


Some important realisation principles for status and solidarity are outlined by Poynton 1985. For status, 'reciprocity' of choice is the critical variable. Thus social subjects of equal status construe equality by having access to and taking up the same kinds of choices, whereas subjects of unequal status take up choices of different kinds. Terms of address are one obvious exemplar in this area – do we address each other in the same way (say first name to first name), or is the naming skewed (you call me Professor, I call you by your first name). For solidarity Poynton suggests the realisation principles of 'proliferation' and 'contraction'. Proliferation refers to the idea that the closer you are to someone the more meanings you have available to exchange. One way of thinking about this is to imagine the process of getting to know someone and what you can talk about when you don't know them (very few things) and what you can talk about when you know them very well (almost anything). Contraction refers to the amount of work it takes to exchange meanings, and the idea that the better you know someone the less explicitness it takes. Poynton exemplifies this in part through naming, pointing out that knowing someone very well involves short names, whereas knowing them less well favours longer ones (.e.g. Mike vs Professor Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday, FAHA). For foundational work on tenor in SFL see Poynton 1984, 1985, 1990a&b, 1993, 1996. Eggins & Slade 1997 develop this work focussing on casual conversation in the workplace and home. Martin & White 2005 look closely at evaluative language use, expanding on the appraisal framework introduced in Martin 2000 (see also Macken-Horarik & Martin 2003).

Next **field**: Field is concerned with the discourse patterns that realise the activity that is going on. Technically speaking a field consists of sequences of activities that are oriented to some global institutional purpose, whether this is a local domestic institution such as family or community, or a broader societal institution such as bureaucracy, industry or academia. Each such activity sequence involves people, things, processes, places and qualities, and each of these elements are organised into taxonomies – groupings of people, things and processes; these taxonomies in turn distinguish one field from another. From the perspective of field, the discourse patterns of texts vary in the degree to which they are organised as activity

sequences, and whether they are about specific people and things, or about general classes of phenomena and their features. For example, on the specific side, text [1:3] recounted a sequence of Conal's personal activities in minute detail, whereas [1:5] described his dog Tammy. On the general side, text [1:11] explained processes in the evolution of life, whereas [1:4] classified crocodiles and enumerated their parts. These examples of variation in field are illustrated in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5: Dimensions of variation in field



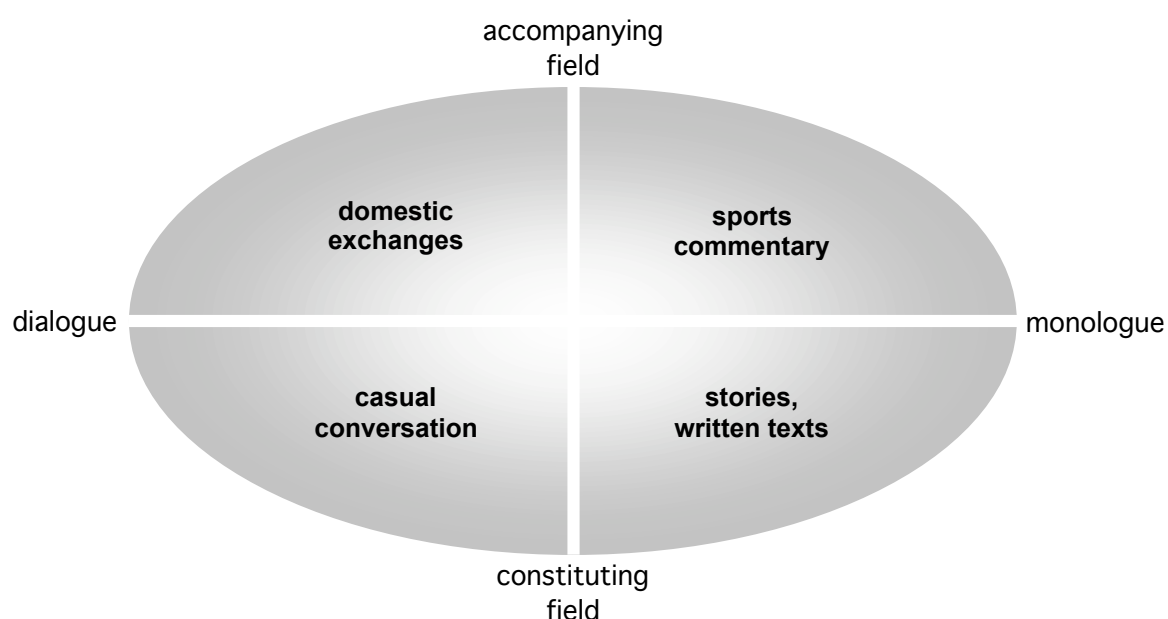
We'll explore just a few fields from the perspective of genre in this volume, including history in Chapter 3, science and geography in Chapter 4, and science based industry in Chapter 5 – in each case focussing on Australian texts in order to bring some topical unity to the volume. For related SFL work on field, exploring everyday language, technicality and abstraction, on technology and burueacuracy, and on the discourses of humanities, social science and science see Halliday & Martin 1993, Hasan & Williams 1996, Christie & Martin 1997, Martin & Veel 1998, Christie 1999, Unsworth 2000, Hyland 2000, Martin & Wodak 2003.

Next **mode**: Mode deals with the channelling of communication, and thus with the texture of information flow as we move from one modality of communication to another (speech, writing, phone, SMS messages, e-mail, chat rooms, web pages, letters, radio, CD, television, film, video, DVD etc.). One important variable is the amount of work language is doing in relation to what is going on. In some contexts language may have a small role to play since attendant modalities are heavily mediating what is going on (e.g. image, music, spatial design, action). In other contexts language may be by and large what is going on, sometimes to the point where its abstract phrasing is considerably removed from sensuous experience we might expect to touch, taste, feel, hear or see. This range of variation is sometimes characterised as a cline from language in action to language as reflection.

A second key variable is the complementary monologue through dialogue cline. This scale is sensitive to the effects of various technologies of communication on the kind

of interactivity that is facilitated. The key material factors here have to do with whether interlocutors can hear and see one another (aural and visual feedback) and the imminence of a response (immediate or delayed). As with field, mode is not our main focus here. This dimension of register is further explored in Halliday 1985, Halliday & Martin 1993, Martin & Veel 1998, Martin & Wodak 2003. Examples of variations in mode are illustrated in Figure 1.6. Varieties of dialogue that accompany social action include intermittent exchanges while carrying out domestic or other activities, whereas dialogue that constitutes social activity includes casual conversations (e.g. at the dinner table, in the coffee shop), arguments and so on. Monologues that accompany activity include sports commentary or oral instructions for doing a task, whereas monologue that constitutes its own field includes story telling, oratory, and all forms of written texts.

Figure 1.6: Dimensions of variation in mode



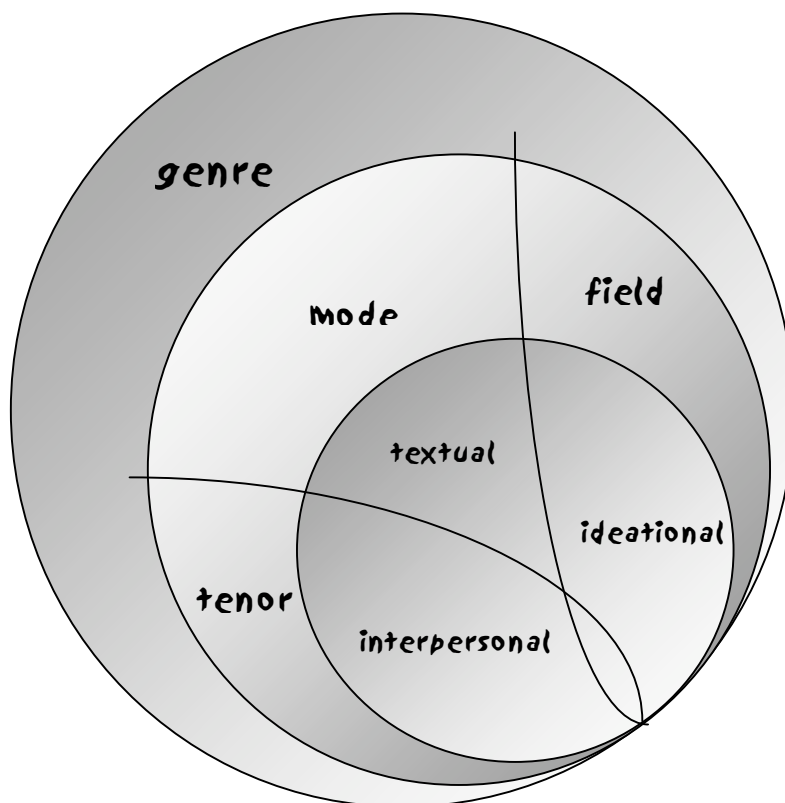
Looking beyond language, mode is the contextual variable that would have been developed to coordinate the distribution of meaning across modalities in multi-modal discourse. While SFL work on the grammars of various non-linguistic modalities of communication has developed rapidly over the past decade, work towards a theory of inter-modality is just beginning. For foundational SFL work on non-verbal modalities see O'Toole 1994, Kress & van Leeuwen 1996 on images (Goodman 1996, Jewitt & Oyama 2001, Stenglin & Iedema 2001 provide useful introductions), van Leeuwen 1999 on music and sound, Martinec 1998, 2000a, b on action and Martin & Stenglin in press on spatial design. As a result of these studies multimodal discourse analysis has become a very exciting area of work in functional linguistics (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, O'Halloran in press, Royce in press), inspired in part by the new electronic modalities of communication enabled by personal computing technologies (Baldry 1999).

### 1.3.2 Genre - variations in culture

This tenor, field and mode model was essentially the framework for studying social context we had to work with when we began looking at text types around 1980. And it left us with a puzzle – what to do with genre? Halliday (e.g. 1978) had treated genre as an aspect of mode; and Hasan (1977, 1985) derived her obligatory elements of text structure from field and so appeared to handle genre relations there. To our mind however each genre involved a particular configuration of tenor, field and mode variables, so we didn't feel comfortable making genre part of any one register variable on its own. Taking the genres in Figure 1.1 for example, procedures, protocols, descriptions, reports, observations, recounts and narratives could be about almost any field, they could be spoken or written, and their producers and audience could be close or distant, equal or unequal. Clearly genre and register could vary independently.

Our solution to this dilemma was to model genre at the stratum of culture, beyond register, where it could function as a pattern of field, tenor and mode patterns.<sup>6</sup> In this step we had remodelled language in social context as an integrated semiotic system, in which 'situation' and 'culture' were reconstrued as social semiotic strata – **register** and **genre**. Hjelmslev 1961 makes a relevant distinction here between connotative and denotative semiotics, defining connotative semiotics as semiotic systems which have another semiotic system as their expression plane. In these terms, language is a denotative semiotic realising social context, and social context is a connotative semiotic realised through language. This step is outlined in Figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7: Genre as an additional stratum of analysis beyond tenor, field and mode



The reasoning involved in this modelling decision is reviewed in some detail Martin 1992, 1999, 2001. Stratifying register and genre in this way allowed us to develop an integrated multi-functional perspective on genre, cutting across register variables. We can think of field, tenor and mode as resources for generalising across genres, from the differentiated perspectives of ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. This made it easier for us to model relations among genres (as in Figure 1.1 above) without being stuck in any one of tenor, field or mode. This was particularly important for our schools work, both in terms of mapping curriculum and building learner pathways (Martin 1999). It also made it easier to explore the range of field, tenor and mode configurations a culture enacts compared with those it doesn't - including configurations it has no more use for (extinct genres) and future possibilities. It seemed to us that tenor, field and mode choices in context combined nowhere near as freely as interpersonal, ideational and textual meanings did in grammar. That is to say, cultures seem to involve a large but potentially definable set of genres, that are recognisable to members of a culture, rather than an unpredictable jungle of social situations. To us cultures looked more like outer space than biospheres, with a few families of genres here and there, like far flung galaxies. We wanted a theory that accommodated all this empty room.

The potential emerging from this model, for mapping cultures from a semiotic perspective as systems of genres, together with variations in tenor, field and mode, also resonated with Bernstein's (1971, 1977, 1990, 1996) theory of socio-semantic codes. In this model, varieties of social subjectivities are distinguished by differing orientations to meaning, that Bernstein referred to as coding orientations, and these are manifested as 'relations between' and 'relations within' social contexts. Bernstein emphasised the primacy of relations between contexts; that is, individuals' coding orientations varied with their capacity for recognising one type of context from another, with what he called a 'sense of specialised interactional practices'. This obviously had implications for education - since teachers were failing to recognise distinctions between one genre and another, they were in no position to teach their students how to distinguish between them, let alone to successfully produce a range of written genres. Furthermore, since the privileged genres of modernism had evolved within the institutions of academia, science, industry and administration, that relatively few members of the culture had access to, relations between these and other genres reflected the structures of social inequality. The pathway for exercising control in these institutions was through tertiary education, and that in turn depended on learning to read and write their genres in school.

Members of cultural groupings gain control over a broad common set of genres as we mature - we learn to distinguish between types of everyday contexts, and to manage our interactions, apply our experiences, and organise our discourse effectively within each context. Control over the genres of everyday life is accumulated through repeated experience, including more or less explicit instruction from others. As young children, our experience of the culture is necessarily limited and the genres we can recognise and realise are relatively undifferentiated, but as our social experience broadens, the system of genres we control complexifies. In Bernstein's terms our coding orientation becomes more elaborated, as we learn to recognise and realise a more diverse range of contexts. We have illustrated a fragment of such a genre system, for written genres in primary schools, in Figure 1.1

above. But of course, differences in social experience will produce differences in access to the genre systems that have evolved in a culture.

### 1.3.3 Ideology - variations in access

Inequalities in access to the privileged genres of modern institutional fields is a concern for developing democratic pedagogies, but also more generally for understanding how symbolic control is maintained, distributed and challenged in contemporary societies. Bernstein's code theory has been expressly developed for exploring these issues. For Bernstein, differences in coding orientations are conditioned by one's relation to power and control within the division of labour in a society. In post-colonial societies five general factors are generally assumed to position us in relation to power and control: generation, gender, ethnicity, capacity and class. We use generation to refer to inequalities associated with maturation; gender covers sex and sexuality based difference; ethnicity is concerned with racial, religious and other 'cultural' divisions; capacity refers to abilities and disabilities of various kinds; class is based on the distribution of material resources and is arguably the most fundamental dimension since it is the division on which our post-colonial economic order ultimately depends. Our positioning begins at birth in the home, and all five factors condition access to the various hierarchies we encounter beyond domestic life - in education, religion, recreation and the workplace.

It is of course ideology that regulates social categories, of generation, gender, ethnicity, capacity and class, to differentially condition our access to power and control. It is ultimately ideology that differentially shapes our coding orientations, through our socialisation in the home and education systems. And it is ideology that differentially distributes control over the privileged genres of modernism, by means of differing educational outcomes. Bernstein refers to these effects of ideology as 'distributive rules', i.e. the patterns of distribution of material and semiotic resources in a society. The distribution of material resources is mediated by the distribution of semiotic resources, so that in industrialised societies power operates through control of both industrial capital and symbolic capital. For Bernstein this duality gives rise to tension between what he calls the old and new middle classes, whose occupations are associated with material and symbolic production respectively. He defines ideology as "a way of making relations. It is not a content but a way in which relationships are made and realised" (1996:31). This makes an important distinction from other interpretations that construe ideology as a content of discourse, leading for example to the popular liberal view that social equity can be achieved by changing the ideological content of school curricula. In our emerging model of discourse in social context, ideology is understood more generally as relations that permeate every level of semiosis; there is no meaning outside of power.

Even in everyday contexts within our local kin and peer groups, our relative power and control in a context may be conditioned by age, gender and other status markers. In post-colonial societies the range of genres in a culture is further differentiated by institutions such as science, industry and administration, and as we have said, control over these genres depends on specialised educational pathways, and access to these pathways depends largely on our position in relation to socio-economic power (i.e. our socio-economic class position). In this kind of social complex, the scope of our control over genres of power in turn conditions our status

ranking in social hierarchies, our claim to authority in institutional fields, and our prominence in public life. Within specific situations, these register variables translate into our options to dominate or defer, to assert or concede authority, and to command attention or pay attention to others. Ideology thus runs through the entire ensemble of language in social context, differentiating social subjects in hierarchies of power, control, status, authority and prominence, for which we have used the following proportions (from Martin 1992):

ideology (access)	power
genre (management)	control
tenor (social hierarchy)	status
field (expertise & rank)	authority
mode (attention)	prominence

### 1.3.4 Related approaches to genre - three traditions

Space precludes a scholarly review of alternative approaches to genre that have developed in parallel to our own. Our own approach has come to be referred to as the 'Sydney School', a term introduced by Green & Lee 1994<sup>7</sup>. Hyon's influential 1996 article on 'Genre in three traditions' designates New Rhetoric and ESP traditions as the main alternative perspectives; her framework also informs Hyland's 2002 review of genre theory and literacy teaching. Seminal publications associated with the New Rhetoric group include Miller 1984, Bazerman 1988 and Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995; Freedman & Medway 1994a, b and Coe et al. 2002 assemble inspiring collections of like-minded work. Seminal work grounding the ESP tradition would include Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, Paltridge 1997 and Hyland 2000. Paltridge 2001, Johns 2002 and Hyland 2004 focus on a range of applications of ideas from all three schools to literacy teaching. Coppock 2001 and Colombi & Schleppegrell 2002 provide expansive windows on recent research.

From our own perspective the main thing that distinguishes our work is its development with SFL as a functional linguistic perspective on genre analysis. This means that our approach is:

- social rather than cognitive (or socio-cognitive as in say Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995)<sup>8</sup>
- social semiotic rather than ethnographic, with tenor, field and mode explored as patterns of meaning configured together as the social practices we call genres
- integrated within a functional theory of language rather than interdisciplinary; note however that our theory is multi-perspectival (i.e. including several complementary ways of looking at text, e.g. metafunction, strata)
- fractal rather than eclectic, with basic concepts such as metafunction redeployed across strata, and across modalities of communication (e.g. image, sound, action and spatial design)

- interventionist rather than critical<sup>9</sup>, since following Halliday we see linguistics as an ideologically committed form of social action.

Our basic definition of genre as a configuration of meanings, realised through language and attendant modalities of communication, is designed to generalise across these distinguishing features. Among linguists, our approach is probably most closely related to the work of Biber and his colleagues on text types<sup>10</sup> (e.g. Biber & Finnegan 1994, Biber 1995), although their work has been far more quantitative than ours and far less informed by rich descriptions of meaning such as those we derive from SFL. So it is to this model of language, and the thinking it enabled, that we now turn.

## 1.4 Systemic functional linguistics

Systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL) is a big multi-perspectival theory with more dimensions in its theory banks than might be required for any one job. So we're going to be selective here and introduce some of the basic ideas we need for the chapters which follow, setting aside some things to be introduced as they impinge on what we're doing later on. We'll begin with why SFL is systemic and why it's functional.

### 1.4.1 Axis - system and structure

SFL is called systemic because compared with other theories it foregrounds the organisation of language as options for meaning. In this view, the key relations between the elements of language are relationships of choice – basically between what you say and what you could have said instead if you hadn't decided on what you did say. Traditionally these relations are modelled in paradigms like those you find for inflecting verbs and nouns in language manuals. For example, Table 1.1 shows the choices that speakers of the Australian language Pitjantjatjara can make, for expressing the time of events in the tense system of verbs.

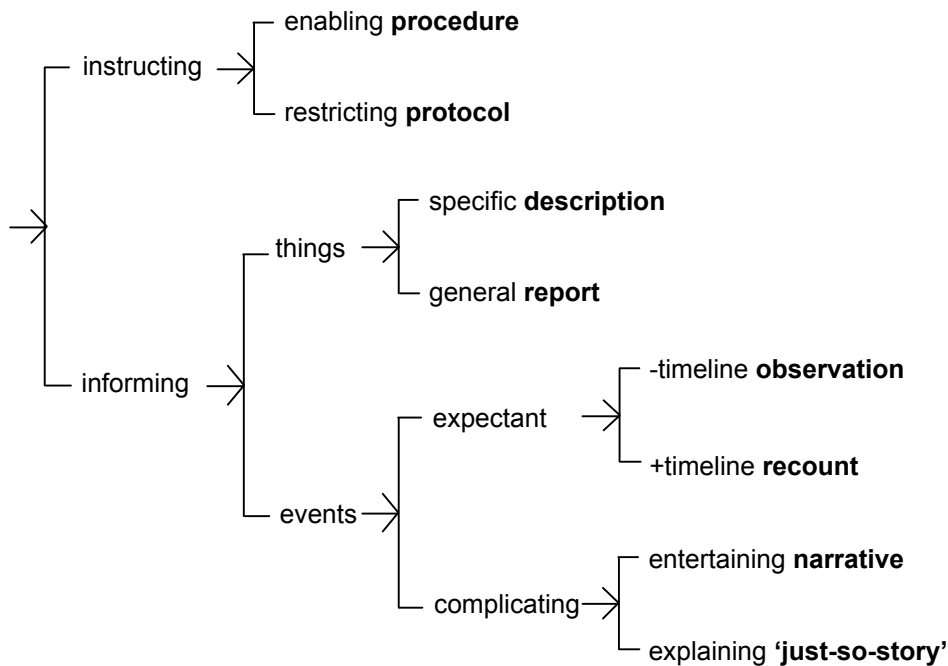
Table 1.1: Options in TENSE in Pitjantjatjara

<b>time</b>	<b>verb inflection</b>	<b>translation</b>
future	<i>tati-lku</i>	will climb
present	<i>tati-ni</i>	is climbing
past	<i>tati-nu</i>	did climb
past durative	<i>tati-ningi</i>	was climbing
habitual	<i>tati-lpai</i>	does climb

Such a paradigmatic perspective is often used in linguistics, but SFL privileges this perspective on language as sets of resources for making meaning, rather than rules for ordering structures. Furthermore, because the relations among options for making meaning are so complex, systemic linguists generally model paradigms as diagrams called system networks, rather than as tables. We used one of these networks in Fig. 1.1 above to show how the genres we were discussing were related to one another, shown again here.



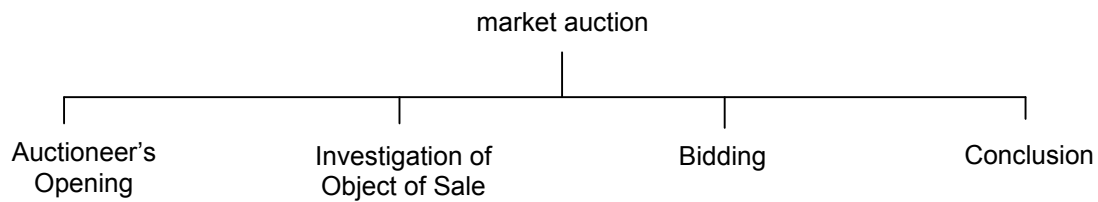
Figure 1.1 (repeated)



The horizontal arrows in the network lead to systems of choices in which you can choose one feature or another; and these choices lead on to other systems, in which you can choose another feature, until you get to the end of the feature path. So to get to the recount genre you have to choose **informing** (not instructing), and then **events** (not things) and then **expectant** (not complicating). The final choice for recount genre inherits meaning from each choice taken up along the path. As we can see, this is a relational theory of meaning, influenced by Saussure's notion of *valeur* - which means that the features don't refer to objects in the world or concepts in the mind (as is supposed in representational theories of meaning) but rather outline the significant contrasts that organise language or other semiotic systems as a meaning making resource.

Although paradigmatic relations are foregrounded in SFL, each feature in a system is realised as some kind of structure, or 'syntagm' (including of course structures consisting of a single element). Units of syntagmatic structure are given functional labels, that describe the contribution they make to the structure as a whole. We presented structures of this kind above, in relation to the staging of genres of service encounter, appointment making and narrative of personal experience. The structure of Mitchell's market auction can be represented as a tree diagram with four constituents (a constituency tree), as in Figure 1.8.

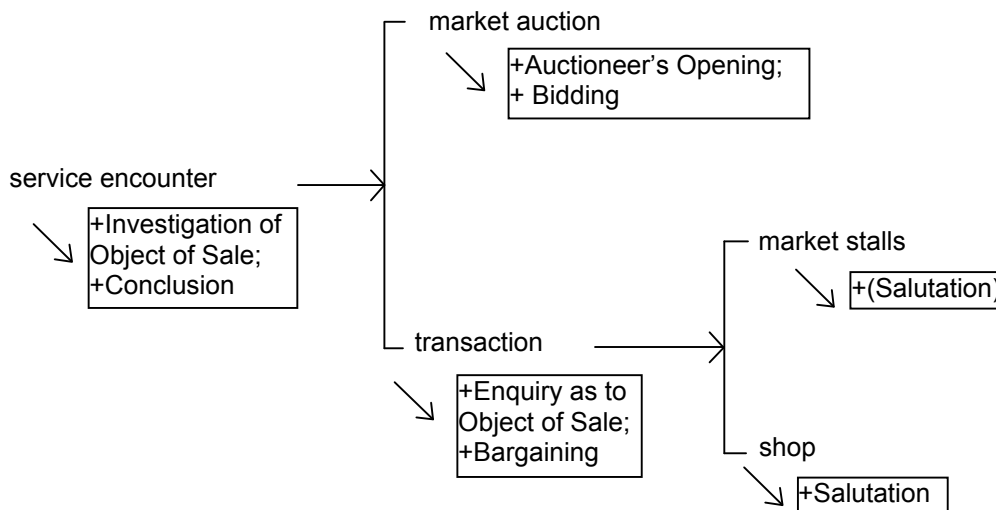
Figure 1.8: Schematic structure for Mitchell's market auction



In SFL constituency diagrams of this kind, labels for classes of structures (such as 'market auction') are conventionally written in lower case, while functional elements of structure are written with an initial upper case letter. The class labels correspond with choices, or bundles of choices, from system networks, and each choice is realised as a functional element of structure, or **function structure**.

The 'underlying' connection between paradigmatic choice and syntagmatic realisation is outlined in Figure 1.9, for the three kinds of Libyan service encounters in Mitchell's description. The small arrows angled from top left to bottom right symbolise this 'choice to chain' connection; the '+' sign indicates that the stage is present; and parentheses indicate that the element is optional. To simplify the presentation we haven't tried to specify in the network how elements are sequenced in structures, although this is another important aspect of the realisation relationship between system and structure.

Figure 1.9: System network and realisation rules for Mitchell's analysis



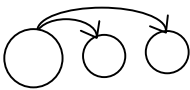


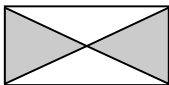
The system network and realisation rules in Figure 1.9 help to clarify the sense in which system is foregrounded over structure in SFL. Both are considered, but structure is derived from system – syntagmatic relations are modelled as the consequence of paradigmatic choice. The complementary dimensions of system and structure in SFL are referred to as **axis**.

### 1.4.2 Metafunction - enacting, construing, organising

SFL is called functional because compared with other theories it interprets the design of language with respect to ways people use it to live. It is one of a family of functional linguistic theories (reviewed by Butler 2003) that share this goal. Within this family SFL stands out with respect to the emphasis it places on interpreting language as organised around three major strands of meaning that we introduced above as **metafunctions** - the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. Ideational resources are concerned with construing experience: what's going on, including who's doing what to whom, where, when, why and how and the logical relation of one going-on to another. Interpersonal resources are concerned with negotiating social relations: how people are interacting, including the feelings they try and share. Textual resources are concerned with information flow: the ways in which ideational and interpersonal meanings are distributed in waves of semiosis, including interconnections among waves and between language and attendant modalities (action, image, music etc.).

Metafunctions have implications for both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. Paradigmatically, they organise system networks into bundles of interdependent options, with lots of internal dependencies within metafunctions but fewer connections between metafunctions. Halliday & Matthiessen's 2004 networks for TRANSITIVITY, MOOD and THEME in the English clause reflect organization of this kind. Syntagmatically, metafunctions are associated with different kinds of structure (Halliday 1979). In Martin's terms (1996, 2000), ideational meaning is associated with particulate structure, textual meaning with periodic structure and interpersonal meaning with prosodic structure, schematised in Figure 1.10.

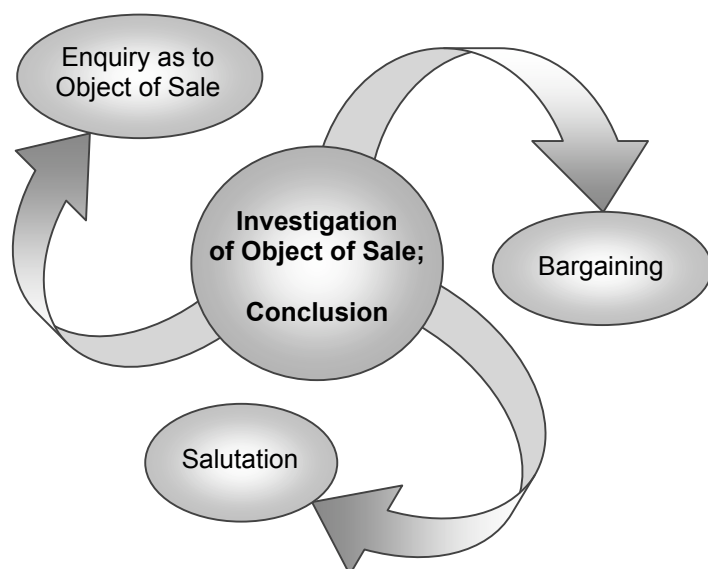
Figure 1.10: Kinds of meaning in relation to kinds of structure

<i>Type of structure</i>		<i>Type of meaning</i>
particulate		<b>ideational</b>
orbital [mono-nuclear]		- <b>experiential</b>
serial [multi-nuclear]		- <b>logical</b>
prosodic		<b>interpersonal</b>
periodic		<b>textual</b>

Particulate structure is segmental, with segments organised into orbital or serial patterns. By orbital structure we mean structure with some kind of nucleus on which other segments depend – as with solar systems and atoms. For Mitchell's service encounters for example we might argue that examining the object for sale and

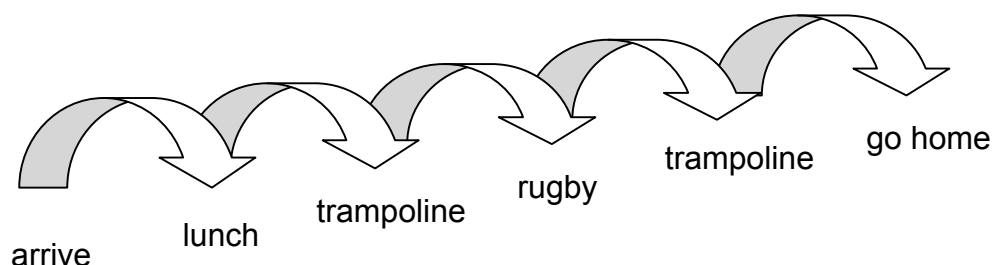
deciding whether to buy it or not are nuclear; you can't have a service encounter without these steps. Then for market and shop transactions there are additional dependent stages – asking whether the goods are available or not, bargaining for them if they are present and desirable, and perhaps more peripherally an exchange of greetings between buyer and seller. This nucleus and satellite proposal is outlined in Figure 1.11.

Figure 1.11: Orbital ideational structure (nucleus & satellites)



By serial structure we mean structure in which segments depend on one another but there is no nuclear element – as with links in a chain or a line of telephone poles. These might be thought of as multi-nuclear rather than mono-nuclear structures. The protocol text reviewed above is a canonical example of this genre. There we had a list of rules, with no one rule more important than the others. The sequence of events in recounts and procedures also displays serial structure of this kind. This relatively open ended iterative organization is exemplified in Figure 1.12, drawing on the event sequence in text [1:2] above (Conal's trip to the Blue Mountains).

Figure 1.12: Serial ideational structure (segmental interdependency)



Periodic structure organises meaning into waves of information, with different wave lengths piled up one upon another. Linguists may be most familiar with this kind of pattern from phonology, where we can interpret a syllable as a wave of sonority (rising then falling), a foot as a wave of stressed and unstressed syllables, and a tone

group as a wave of pre-tonic and tonic feet (Cleirigh 1998). To see how this works for genre let's go back to the magnet experiment, text [1:7]. This experimental procedure began with a title, 'The Strongest Parts of a Magnet', and continued with five headings: Aim, Equipment, Steps, Results, Conclusion. As far as layout is concerned, these headings were given equal status; but semantically speaking the first pairs off with the last. This is made clear by through the complementarity of the headings (Aim and Conclusion) and by the wording *to find out* and *I found out* (a switch from an irrealis to a realis process of discovery):

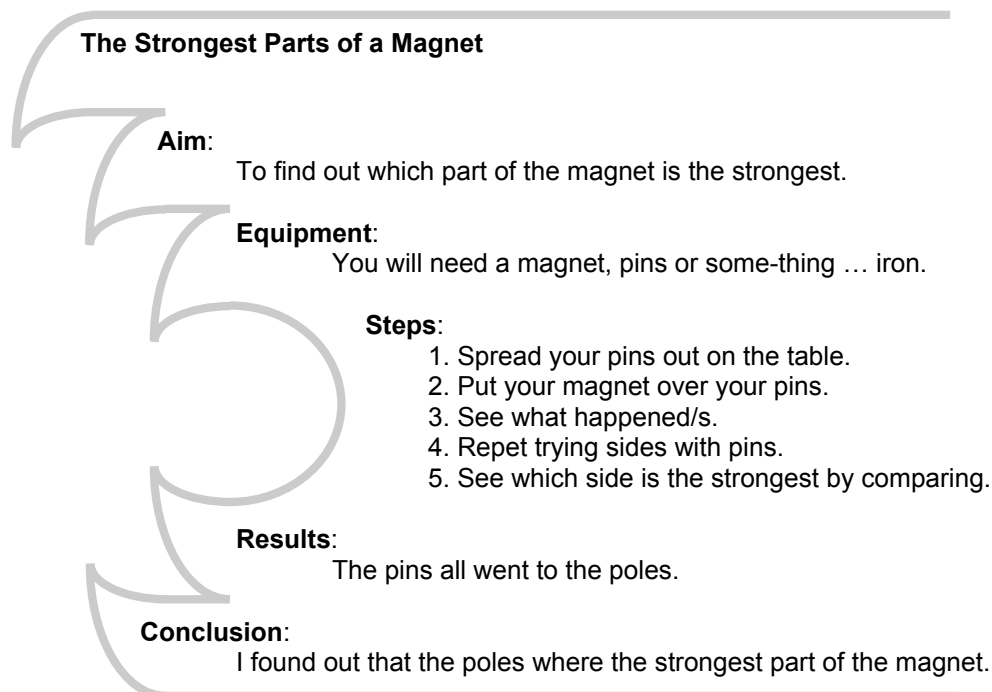
Aim: **To find out** which part of the magnet is the strongest.

Conclusion: I **found out** that the poles where the strongest part of the magnet.

The Aim predicts what is to come (much as the title predicted the topic of the experiment) and the Conclusion consolidates what was discovered. These two segments thus bracket the experiment itself, which is played out in the Equipment, Steps and Results sections. On a smaller scale, each heading prefaces the details which follow.

Overall then we have three layers of prediction: the title to the rest of the text, the Aim to the rest of the text minus the Conclusion, and each of the 5 headings in relation to the clauses that spell them out (so 4 layers in all). Retrospectively on the other hand we have just two layers, the Conclusion in relation to the text that it distills. We've used indentation to display these layers of scaffolding for text [1:7] in Figure 1.13.

Figure 1.13: Waves of periodic structure



The wave metaphor suggests that each clause is a small pulse of information, that each of these combines with its heading to form a larger wave, that the Equipment, Steps and Results wave combine with Aim in one direction and Conclusion in the other to form a larger wave still, and that finally all of this combines with the title to

form the tidal wave of information comprising the text as a whole. From this example we can see that periodic structure organises serial or orbital structure into pulses of information of different wave lengths so that the ideational meanings can be digested textually, byte by byte.

Prosodic structure involves continuous motifs of meaning colouring extended domains of discourse. In text [1:5] for example, Conal doesn't just describe his red setter, he tells us how he feels about her as well. For this he uses some explicitly evaluative lexis (*lovely, sweet, loving, cute, very loved*), and also some descriptive lexis that can be read as connoting positive qualities (*fluffy, furry, smooth, shiny, big, tall, very long*). The effect is cumulative, and relays to readers his positive feelings for his pet (attitudinal lexis in boxes, descriptive lexis in **bold**).

[1:5] My dog Tammy has a lovely reddy brown furr. Here eyes are brown too. Her shape is skinny. She has a **fluffy, furry, smooth and shinny texture**. She moves by wagging her tail and waving her body. The feelings that I feel of my dog is sweet, loving and cute. My dog is very loved. She smells sweet. My dog is **big, tall and very long**.

Conal's description reflects two strategies for mapping prosodic structure onto discourse – saturation and intensification. Saturation involves opportunistic realisation; you realise a meaning wherever you can (for Conal this means creating opportunities for attitudinal adjectives). Intensification involves amplifying the strength of your feeling so that it has more mass; turning up the volume as it were. This can be done through submodification (*very loved*) and iteration (*fluffy, furry, smooth and shiny; sweet, loving and cute*), illustrated in Figure 1.14.

Figure 1.14: Prosodic intensification



Another way in which prosodic structure can map itself over a stretch of discourse is to associate itself with a dominant textual position – the peak of a higher level wave which previews or reviews smaller waves of information. Conal's trip to the park observation/comment and Blue Mountains recount use evaluation retrospectively in this way to project his positive feelings over the experience as a whole.

[1:1] On Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup> of November Jesse my friend and me Conal, went to the park called Jonson park me and Jesse played on the playaquitmint and **it was very fun...**

[1:2] Last Sunday me and My family went to the blue Mountains to go and see my dads friends. ... I had **a great day**.

This kind of cumulative evaluation scoping back over stretches of text is illustrated in Figure 1.15.

Figure 1.15: Cumulative evaluation scoping back



From examples like these we can see that textual meaning packages interpersonal and well as ideational meaning, reconciling particulate and prosodic with periodic structure. The result is a metafunctionally composite texture integrating ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning with one another. It follows from this that the staging structures proposed by Mitchell, Hasan and Labov & Waletzky have to be read as provisional, since they in fact reduce three strands of meaning to a simple constituency tree. We'll unpick the limitations of this compromise at several points in Chapters 2 to 7 below.

### 1.4.3 Stratification - levels of language

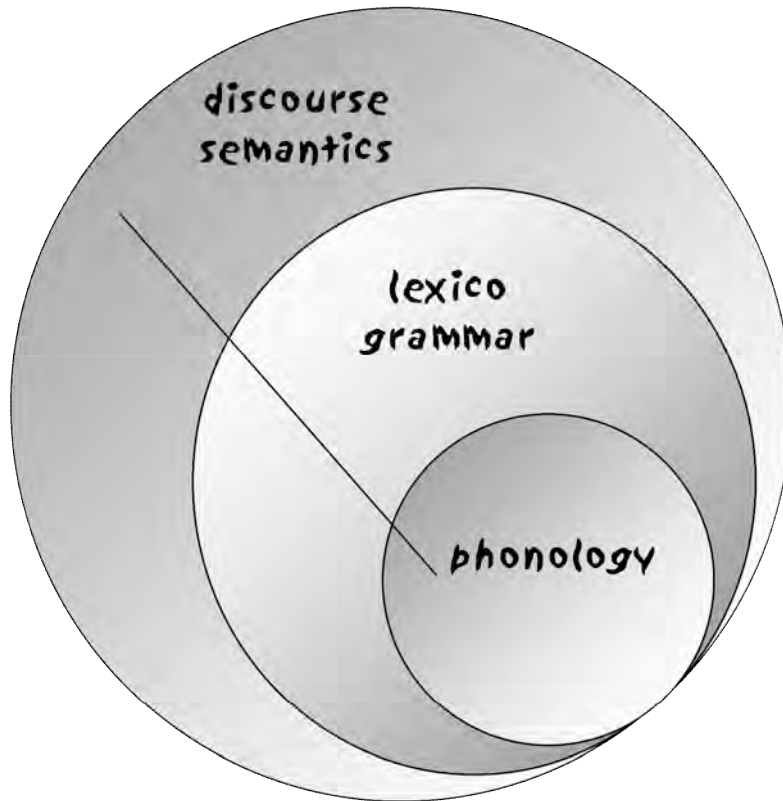
Alongside axis and metafunction, we also need to look at stratification. We introduced this dimension of analysis above, in relation to the strata of social context, but within language itself the way in which SFL interprets levels of language is distinctive in important respects.

Basically what we are dealing with here is a hierarchy of abstraction, which for linguists is grounded in phonology.<sup>11</sup> But beyond phonology, the levels of language we recognise and what we call them gets very theory specific. Hjelmslev 1961 moves from 'expression form' to 'content form', arguing that language is a stratified semiotic system, not simply a system of signs. In mainstream American linguistics the most familiar hierarchy is probably phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. SFL's approach to stratification is influenced by the fact that it is a functional theory not a formal one, and so is more concerned with language and social context than language and cognition; and as far as levels are concerned, axis and metafunction play a critical role.

The impact of axis and metafunction is the descriptive power they bring to a given level in the model. Both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations are considered; and three complementary kinds of meaning and their distinctive structuring principles are brought into play.<sup>12</sup> The richness of the descriptions these complementarities afford is best exemplified in SFL's extravagant descriptions of lexicogrammar, in English (e.g. Halliday & Matthiessen 2004) and other languages (e.g. Caffarel et al. 2005, Rose 1993, 1996, 2001a, 2004a, 2005a&b). In these grammars a good deal of analysis that is relegated to semantics or pragmatics in formal models is managed at a less abstract level of interpretation, next to phonology. This makes room at the next level up for the discourse oriented semantics developed in Martin 1992 and Martin & Rose 2003.

Levels of language, or strata, are conventionally modelled as nested co-tangential circles in SFL, as shown for language in context in Figures 1.2, 1.3 and 1.7 above, and here in Figure 1.16 for levels within language.

Figure 1.16: Levels within language



Layers of abstraction begin with expression form in the lower right hand corner of the diagram (here phonology). Phonological patterns are reinterpreted at a higher level of abstraction as grammar and lexis (or lexicogrammar as it is generally known). Lexicogrammatical patterns are in turn reinterpreted at the next stratum as discourse semantics. Strata are related through realisation and metaredundancy - patterns of patterns of patterns, as we discussed above. It is important to note that realisation is not directional – lexicogrammar for example construes, is construed by, and over time reconstrues and is reconstrued by discourse semantics. It's the same for all levels.

It is important to keep in mind at this point that axis, metafunction and stratification articulate a multi-dimensional theoretical space which is difficult to represent in two-dimensional diagrams on a printed page. The intersection of metafunction and stratification is configured in Figure 1.7 above; but behind this lies axis; and beyond this there is the alignment of axis with constituency hierarchy to worry about. For example, there are system and structure cycles for clauses, for their component groups and phrases, for their component words in turn, and ultimately in a language like English for their component morphemes. For the purposes of this book we don't need to probe further into this complexity here.



## 1.5 Tools for analysis: discourse semantics

Defining genre as a configuration of meanings means that we have to analyse those meanings. When analysing English genres the SFL descriptions we've relied on are Halliday 1967, 1970 for phonology, Halliday 1985/1994 and Halliday & Matthiessen 2004 for lexicogrammar and Martin 1992 for discourse semantics. Obviously we can't introduce all of this description here. Our basic strategy in the chapters which follow will be to introduce analyses as we need them, especially for phonology and lexicogrammar. We will however at this point present a brief overview of discourse semantics as it is developed in Martin & Rose 2003, since these are the resources which interface most directly with register and genre. In addition we'll include short notes on negotiation, Halliday's concept of grammatical metaphor and emerging work on multimodality.

Martin & Rose organise their discourse analysis around five major headings: appraisal, ideation, conjunction, identification and periodicity. They introduce these systems as follows (2003: 16-17):

- **Appraisal** is concerned with evaluation – the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned. Appraisals are interpersonal kinds of meanings, that realise variations in the tenor of a text. ...
- **Ideation** focuses on the content of a discourse – what kinds of activities are undertaken, and how participants undertaking these activities are described and classified. These are ideational kinds of meaning, that realise the field of a text.
- **Conjunction** looks at inter-connections between activities – reformulating them, adding to them, sequencing them, explaining them and so on. These are also ideational types of meanings, but of the subtype 'logical'. Logical meanings are used to form temporal, causal and other kinds of connectivity.
- **Identification** is concerned with tracking participants – with introducing people, places and things into a discourse and keeping track of them once there. These are textual resources, concerned with how discourse makes sense to the reader by keeping track of identities.
- **Periodicity** (as we've already seen) considers the rhythm of discourse – the layers of prediction that flag for readers what's to come, and the layers of consolidation that accumulate the meanings made. These are also textual kinds of meanings, concerned with organising discourse as pulses of information.

We'll now illustrate each of these with examples from the texts introduced above.

### 1.5.1 APPRAISAL - negotiating attitudes

The focus here is on attitude – the feelings and values that are negotiated with readers. The key resources here have to do with evaluating things, people's character and their feelings. In [1:10] for example Conal describes the feelings of the white people and the sparrow (affect), makes a judgement about the physical

capacity of the sparrow when it was trying to escape the bullets (judgement) and comments on his own and the white people's reactions to the sparrow (appreciation).

[1:10] Once when the white people came to Australia there was a little bird called a sparrow. It was a **very nice** bird but the white people that first came to Australia they thoute that the sparrow as a **very annoying** bird because it slowly flew around them slowly. One time they got **so annoyed** that they got a gun out and tride to shote it so he got his gun out and shot his gun but it didn't hit the bird it was write behind the sparrow the sparrow's aims got **so tiyard** that he had to stop flapping its wings and it sort of glided just near the ground and he moved and the bullets went away and that is how the sparrow's lernt how to glide. And they lived **happily** ever after.

Four of these evaluations are explicitly intensified, through submodification (*so, very*), reflecting the fact that attitude is a gradable system:

**affect:**            **so** annoyed; happily  
**judgement:**    **so** tiyard  
**appreciation:**  a **very** nice bird; a **very** annoying bird

It's also possible to scale the grading of a feeling down, as Conal did in [1:3] when describing how he felt riding on the ghost slide (*a bit scared*). Grading is also related to quantity, and distance in time and space:

**heps of** other rides [1:3]  
you coldn't see **everything** [1:3]  
they **finily** announced [1:3]  
they lived happily **ever after** [1:10]  
**just near** the ground [1:10]

In addition to grading of this kind, we find resources for blurring and sharpening categories. Conal uses these blur one of his processes, and to approximate age and time:

it **sort of** glided [1:10]  
**about** 19 or 18 years old [1:2]  
**about** half an hour [1:2]

Alternatively, boundaries might have been strengthened (e.g. *true gliding, exactly half an hour*).

Alongside attitude and graduation, the other dimension of appraisal analysis we need to consider has to do with the sourcing of evaluation. Conal himself is the source of opinions in most of the writing introduced above, but he does use projection to assign feelings to others (he thinks the sparrow was a very nice bird but it was the white people who came to Australia who found it annoying):

It was a **very nice** bird  
but  
[the white people... they thoute] that the sparrow as a **very annoying** bird [1:10]

Projection (quoting and reporting) and related resources such as modality, polarity and concession bring voices other than the writer's own voice into a text. Together they are referred to as engagement, which we'll explore in more detail as analysis requires in Chapters 2-6 below (drawing on Martin & White 2005).

### 1.5.2 IDEATION - construing experience

Here we're concerned with people and things, and the activities they're involved in. In Conal's recounts and procedure, there's lots of activity involved and it unfolds in sequences. Getting to Ottawa in [1:3] takes 10 steps (activities in **bold**):

Me my sister my Brother my dad and Sue our house mate all **got ready to go**  
 the taxi **came** at about 9:30  
 we **got on** the taxi  
 (we) **went** to the airport  
 (we) **waited** for the people to announce when our plane is going to come...  
 they finally **announced** that the plane is here  
 we **got straight on** the plane  
 it **left** at about 10:00 in the morning  
 it **took** a day and a half **to get** there  
 we **got off** the plane  
 we **went** on a taxi to Ottawa

Each step tells us who or what was involved (people, taxi, plane), what happened (come, go, wait etc.) and sometimes when and where it happened as well (at about 9:30, to the airport).

As well as sequences of activities, ideation is concerned with describing and classifying people and things. In [1:4] for example Conal classifies crocodiles as reptiles, decomposes them (four legs, scales, jaw, tail, eggs) and describes their parts (long, powerful, big).

### 1.5.3 CONJUNCTION - inter-connections between processes

Conal uses a variety of these in his 'just so' story [1:10]. His favourite move is simply to add on clauses with *and*, leaving it to readers to construe implicit temporal or causal links as required. Next most common are his explicit causal connections (*because*, *so* x *that* and *so*). And there are two concessive links, countering expectations (*but*). Interestingly enough there is no explicit temporal succession at all, which underscores the importance of field specific activity sequencing (in this case a hunting sequence) in structuring recount and narrative genres.

Once **when** the white people came to Australia  
 there was a little bird called a sparrow.  
 It was a very nice bird  
**but** the white people ... they thought that the sparrow was a very annoying bird  
**because** it slowly flew around them slowly.  
 One time they got **so** annoyed<sup>13</sup>  
**that** they got a gun out  
**and** tried to shoot it  
**so** he got his gun out  
**and** shot his gun  
**but** it didn't hit the bird  
 it was right behind the sparrow  
 the sparrow's aim got **so** tight  
**that** he had to stop flapping its wings  
**and** it sort of glided just near the ground  
**and** he moved  
**and** the bullets went away

**and** that is how the sparrow's learnt how to glide.  
**And** they lived happily ever after.

The system of conjunction described in Martin & Rose 2003 is also closely related to the model of logicosemantic relations developed by Halliday 2004, summarised in Table 1.2. We use this model in *Genre Relations* to describe how text segments are linked to each other in series, including phases within stories (Chapter 2), images to verbal text (Chapter 4), and genres connected in series in textbooks (Chapter 5).

Table 1.2: Types of logicosemantic relations (from Halliday 2004: 220)

type	symbol	subtypes
elaborating	=	<i>restating in other words, specifying in greater detail, commenting or exemplifying</i>
extending	+	<i>adding some new element, giving an exception to it, or offering an alternative</i>
enhancing	x	<i>qualifying it with some circumstantial feature of time, place, cause or condition</i>
projecting	“	<i>a locution or an idea</i>

#### 1.5.4 IDENTIFICATION - tracking people and things

Conal's 'just so' story for example has a sparrow as its main protagonist. This character is introduced indefinitely as *a little bird called a sparrow*, and then tracked through various forms of anaphoric reference – via the definite deictic *the* (*the sparrow, the bird*), and the pronouns *it, its* and *he*.

a little bird called a sparrow  
 the sparrow  
 it  
 it  
 the bird  
 the sparrow  
 the sparrow's [arms]  
 he  
 its [wings]  
 he

Note how Conal's reference switches from specific to generic in the last two lines (*the sparrow's* <- *they*) as he generalises an explanation from his tale. The second last line also includes a good example of text reference, with his story as a whole consolidated as an anaphoric participant *that* (*that's how the sparrow's learnt to glide*). Text reference like this is an important resource for organising the global structure of genres.

#### 1.5.5 PERIODICITY - the rhythm of discourse

Here we're concerned with information flow – the way in which meanings are organised so that readers can process phases of meaning. We looked at this from a top-down perspective when introducing periodic structure above. Moving down to information flow inside the clause we need to consider two complementary peaks of textual prominence. According to Halliday (e.g. 1994) in English the first of these occurs at the beginning of the clause and extends up to and including the first

ideational element of structure. Halliday calls this peak of prominence **Theme**. In Conal's crocodile report [1:4] the ideational Theme is always *crocodiles* (realised lexically and pronominally), since this is his invariant angle on the field.

The second peak of prominence regularly falls towards the end of the clause, where English places the major pitch movement for each unit of information. According to Halliday (e.g. 1967, 1970, 1994) this pitch movement signals the culmination of **New** information, which can extend indefinitely to its left towards the beginning of the clause. For written texts we can usually assume an unmarked intonation structure, and treat the last ideational element of structure as minimal New. On the basis of this assumption we can analyse Theme and New in the crocodile report [1:4] as outlined below (Themes are underlined, New in **bold**).

Crocodiles are **from the reptile family**.

Crocodiles are **like snakes but with two legs on each side of the crocodiles body**.

Crocodiles have **four legs**

and the crocodiles have **scales<sup>14</sup> all over its body**.

Crocodiles have a **long gore**

and they have a **long powerful tail**

so it can **nock its enems into the water**

so it can **eat the animal**.

Crocodiles live on the **ege of a swamp or a river**.

They make there **nests out of mud and leaves**.

Crocodiles eat meat lke **chikens, cows and catle and other kinds of animals**.

Crocdils move by **there legs**.

Crocodiles can **walk on legs**.

Crocodiles have **four legs**.

Crocodiles also have **scals all over there body**

and they have a **powerfall tail**

[-]<sup>15</sup> to swim **in the water**.

Crocdils have **eggs**

they do not have (live) **babys**.

Crocodiles can carry **there egg(s) in there big gore**.

Clearly choices for New are much more variable than for Theme. Conal uses them to elaborate his field, incorporating a range of information into his report. Although exaggerated here, this kind of complementarity between consistent selections for Theme and varied selections for New is quite typical.

In adult texts it is more common to find discontinuity in Theme selection. We'll deal with the meaning of such discontinuity as examples arise in Chapters 2-6 below. But we can note here in passing the way in which Conal manages the transition in his recount [1:3], from his trip to Ottawa to his day at Cascades water park. The trip to Ottawa features people as Theme (Conal and his family, and airport officials); the trip to Cascades on the other hand features the park and its rides. So Conal's angle on the field shifts from people to places. He also uses what Halliday 2004 calls a **marked Theme** to signal his move from one activity sequence to the next (*On that same day*). Because the most typical ideational Theme is Subject in English, an ideational element coming before the Subject is a marked Theme (in declarative clauses). Marked Themes and shifts in thematic continuity of this kind are important realisations of global text organization.

...  
and we got strait on the plain  
and it left at about 10:00 in the morning  
it took a day and a harf to get there  
so when we got off the plain<sup>16</sup>  
we went on a taxi to Autawa,  
Autawa is where my grandma and granpa live.  
**On that same day** we went to a playce called cascads  
it was a water park.  
it was so big there was only about 10 or 11 water slides  
but they were so fun.  
My favorite water salide was the gost slide  
it was pitch black  
four or five people can go at a time  
because it was lick one of those small pools  
but it didn't have water in it  
 ...

Taking this clause perspective back to the discussion of periodic structure above, we can treat peaks of textual prominence which predict how a text will unfold as higher level Themes, and peaks which sum up what has unfolded as higher level News. Martin & Rose 2003 use the terms hyperTheme and hyperNew for the first level up from clause Theme and New, and macroTheme and macroNew for further layers in a text's hierarchy of periodicity. We modelled this kind of hierarchy with the diagram in Figure 1.17.

Figure 1.17: Layers of Theme and New in discourse



### 1.5.6 NEGOTIATION - enacting exchanges

These are discourse semantic resources for managing turn taking and speech functions in dialogue. Unlike Martin 2002, Martin & Rose 2003 don't deal with negotiation. Since we're dealing mainly with written genres here we'll follow roughly the same course, directing readers interested in work by the Sydney School on spoken genres to Ventola 1987 (service encounters), Eggins & Slade 1997 (casual conversation), Christie 2002 (classroom discourse) and Iedema 2003 (meetings).

However the interpersonal systems of mood and speech function, that enact negotiation, are relevant to both genre classification and genre staging. Halliday 2004 describes how selections in the mood of clauses typically realise speech functions in the following proportions:

MOOD	SPEECH FUNCTION
imperative	command
declarative	statement
interrogative	question

In terms of negotiation, the function of a command is to demand goods-&-services, the function of a question is to demand information, while a statement gives information. In Figure 1.1 we distinguished instructing from informing genres on the basis of the way they interact with readers through speech functions: procedures and protocols give commands, while the other genres make statements. And inside [1:7], the science experiment text, we find commands in imperative mood in the Steps section, but statements in declarative mood in the Results and Conclusion.

#### [1:7] The Strongest Parts of a Magnet

##### **Aim:**

To find out which part of the magnet is the strongest.

##### **Equipment:**

You will need a magnet, pins or some-thing that is mad out of iron.

##### **Steps:**

1. Spread your pins out on the table.
2. Put your magnet over your pins.
3. See what happened/s.
4. Repet trying sides with pins.
5. See which side is the strongest by comparing.

##### **Results:**

The pins all went to the poles.

##### **Conclusion:**

I found out that the poles where the strongest part of the magnet.

The Equipment section is arguably a command too, although the mood is declarative. The Aim is moodless (a non-finite clause) and so harder still to classify as statement or command. Perhaps like the title of the text, which is a nominal group rather than a clause, it would be better left alone as far as speech function analysis is concerned. We'll return to these issues of interpretation in our discussion of grammatical metaphor in a moment. Our point here is simply to illustrate that the way a text interacts with readers is an important interpersonal dimension of a genre.

We can also note that even though our sample texts are in one sense monologue, they do involve some repartee – since Conal's and Ben's teachers have responded to them. In this negotiation, Conal's narrative, text [1:9] functions as a kind of initiation, and his teacher's encouragement and query as a response (in this context an evaluation of his unconsummated narrative structure).

**Initiation** - In the outback in vicktorya in 1918 there was three there names where isack, jane, and frank isack was 4, Jane was 7 and frank was 9. there mother told them to go to some brom bushes so there mother could mack a brom. They left on Friday and when they didn't come back!!!!!!

**Response** - A good start, Conal. What next?

Ben's teacher was less understanding, using a range of moods to respond to his history of the planet:

Where is your margin? [interrogative]  
 This is not a story. [declarative]  
 Finish please. [imperative]

Despite their grammatical variety, these can all arguably be interpreted as commands, since each tells Ben to do something to his text and image (literally speaking she says “*Add a margin, switch genres and finish your picture*”). This brings us once again to the problem of grammatical metaphor, and the role it plays in interpreting genres as configurations of meaning.

### 1.6 Grammatical metaphor

This takes us back to the stratified model of language we presented in Fig. 1.16 above. Basically Halliday is suggesting that in models of this kind lexicogrammar can realise discourse semantics directly or not. Suppose for example it is the first day of school and Conal’s teacher is asking him his name. The direct way of doing this is through a wh-interrogative clause:

What’s your name? [interrogative:wh mood]  
 - Conal.

But there are alternatives. The teacher could use an imperative clause with a process naming what she wants him to do and a participant naming the information she wants:

Tell me your name. [imperative mood]  
 - Conal.

Or she could use a declarative, with rising intonation, and with an empty slot instead of New at the end:

And you are... ? [declarative mood]  
 - Conal.

From the perspective of discourse semantics each alternative has a comparable effect; as exemplified through Conal’s compliant responses above the teacher does learn Conal’s name - he gives her the information she demands. But Halliday’s point is that they don’t all mean the same thing since in the first example the grammar and semantics match whereas in the second and third examples they don’t. The second example is an imperative standing for a question, just as the third is a declarative standing for one. For indirect realisations to work they have to dress themselves up as the meaning they imply, so listeners know not to take them at face value. The second example symbolises a question by combining the demanding function of imperative with naming what the teachers wants done (*tell* and *name*). The third example symbolises a question by using rising intonation to signal a demand and leaving a hole at the end to be filled with the new information she wants.

Halliday refers to realisations of this kind as grammatical metaphors because:

- there are two meanings involved (the lexicogrammatical and the discourse semantic one)



- the meanings are layered, with the grammar as figure and semantics as ground (grammar the 'literal' meaning and semantics the meaning it is 'transferred' to)
- one layer resembles the other, with grammar symbolising semantics.

Technically speaking there is inter-stratal tension, and the meaning of the metaphor is more than the sum of its parts. This makes it possible for grammatical metaphors to be misunderstood or deliberately ignored. In the opening scene of the film *Educating Rita* for example Frank (Michael Caine) asks Rita (Julie Walters) indirectly for her name, but she misunderstands the move completely:

Frank:           And you are ...?  
Rita:             I'm a what?

And a close colleague of ours once walked into a bakeshop and asked politely for his favorite bun, only to have the server parry his indirectness with some blunt repartee:

Client:           I wonder if I could have one of those...  
Server:          Why do you wonder? It's right here in front of you.

Failed metaphors are of course the exception to the rule. In general people deploy them to expand their resources for making meaning. A language with grammatical metaphor is not grammar squared, since the grammar has to symbolise semantics and this acts as a constraint on indirectness. But a system with interpersonal grammatical metaphor has an indefinitely larger repertoire of meanings for negotiating social relations than one without – as any parent knows from their interactions with pre-pubescent offspring who are largely limited to managing family life with direct commands working in tandem when required with emotional and physical outbursts.

So far we've looked at interpersonal metaphors of mood. Interpersonal metaphors of modality are also possible, and will be explored in more detail as required in the chapters below. Basically what is involved here are alternatives to direct realisations through modal verbs and adverbs. This can involve making the modality more subjective, by symbolising it with a first person present tense mental process:

direct:           That's probably Conal's.  
subjective metaphor:    I suppose that's Conal's.

Or it can involve making the modality more objective, by nominalising it as an adjective or noun:

direct:           You must finish it.  
objective metaphor:    It's necessary for you to finish it.

As with metaphors of mood, there are possibilities for misunderstanding and for resistance - at times enabling verbal play, as Doyle's long suffering Dr Watson knows very well:

"I'm inclined to think---" said I.  
"I should do so," Sherlock Holmes remarked impatiently. [Doyle 1981: 769]

Watson's metaphorical modality is taken literally by Holmes, who dismisses Watson's subjectively modalised conjecture before he gets it out of his mouth.

A comparable process of inter-stratal tension is found in the ideational realm. In English grammar, Halliday divides ideational meaning into logical and experiential resources. Logical resources expand segments in serial chains, as we described above, whereas experiential resources arrange segments in orbital configurations. Logical grammatical metaphors involve indirect realisations of conjunction, several examples of which are used to scaffold Conal's magnet experiment: Aim, Steps, Results, Conclusion<sup>17</sup>. Each of these headings is a noun and nominalises a temporal or causal meaning. We can explore this by re-writing these sections of [1.7] as a recount, turning these logical metaphors back into direct realisations as conjunctions linking clauses to one another.

[1.7']

We did an experiment

**in order to** find out which part of the magnet is strongest.

**First** we spread the pins out on the table.

**Then** we put our magnet over our pins.

**Then** we saw what happened.

**Then** we tried the sides with pins.

**Then** we saw which side was strongest by comparing.

**Because** we did this,

we saw that the pins all went to the poles.

**So** we found out that the poles were the strongest part of the magnet.

Thus the heading Aim corresponds with the purpose linker *in order to*; Steps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are reworked as successive connectors (*first, then*); and Results and Conclusion are rewritten as causal conjunctions (*because, so*). The proportions are as follows:

[1:7]	[1.7']
Aim	in order to
1.	First
2.	Then
3.	Then
4.	Then
5.	Then
Results	Because
Conclusion	So

The nominalised realisations are used as scaffolding for stages in [1.7']; but as nouns they could have been deployed to realise logical connections inside the clause. So we can rewrite [1.7] again, expressing logical relations inside the clause this time, as [1.7'']:

[1.7''] **The aim** of our experiment was to find out which part of the magnet is the strongest. **The steps** involved spreading our pins out on the table, putting our magnet over our pins, seeing what happened, repeating trying the sides with pins and seeing which side was the strongest by comparing. **The result** was that the pins all went to the poles. **Our conclusion** is that the poles are the strongest part of the magnet.

This text reconstructs what happened through a series of relational clauses in which the aim, steps, results and conclusion are identified with respect to what went on. The overall effect is to make things more abstract than [1.7] rather than more concrete.

Conjunctive relations can also be realised through verbs and prepositions:

verbal realisation: Careful experimentation **led to** our results.  
 prepositional realisation: We reached our conclusion **through** experimentation.

Logical metaphors of this kind depend on nominalising what happened as well, so that the prepositions and verbs have something to hang on to. Nominalisation of goings on is referred to by Halliday as experiential grammatical metaphor. Put simply, this involves realising processes and information dependent on them as nominal groups. To explore this process let's go back to Conal's crocodile report and look at some of the scaffolding his teacher used to help him organise his information when he was doing research as part of a unit of work on Kakadu National Park. At the top of a 2 page worksheet she outlined his task as follows:

Pick one of the animals mentioned in the book Kakadu and write a report on it. You will need to find the information and take notes in point form first. Then you need to write the report using full sentences, a new paragraph for each heading and don't forget capital letter and full stops.

And she then provided a list of seven headings with room next to each for Conal to record his information. He undertook this task as follows:

**Classification:** crocodiles are in the reptile family. Crocodiles are like snakes but with legs.

**Appearance:** crocodiles have legs and have scabies and they have a long gore and It as a long and powerful tail to nock down its enemy in the water so it can eat it.

**Habitat:** crocdiles live on the ege of a swamp or a river. They make there nests out of mud and some leaves.

**Food:** crocodiles eat meat like chickens and cows and cattle and other animals.

**Movement:** Crocodiles can walk on land and they swim with there powerfall tail.

**Reproduction:** Crocodiles have egge they don't have babyies.

**Interesting Information:** Crocodiles cary eggs in there moth.

This scaffolding involves several nominalisations, alongside the general terms *habitat* and *food* (comparable to *equipment* in the science experiment). Each is derived from a process, and so can be rewritten in a non-metaphorical way:

experiential metaphor	direct realisation
classification	classify
appearance	appear
movement	move
reproduction	reproduce
interesting information <sup>18</sup>	interest (as in <i>that interests me</i> )

As with the logical metaphors scaffolding the experiment, none of this metaphorical language appears in Conal's notes, nor in his report. At age 8, he's too young a writer to manage ideational metaphor on his own. Watching his struggles with this phenomenon reflects one of the most fascinating aspects of language and literacy development (Derewianka 2003, Painter 2003). For his description of Tammy, for example, his teacher provided him with comparable scaffolding (although in the shape of a pie with wedges for each heading this time and with more general terms than genuine metaphors); Conal compiled his notes as follows:

**Size:** big tall long  
**Colour:** reddy, brown brown eyes  
**Shape:** skinny  
**Texture:** fluffy furry smoth shinny  
**Movement:** waggy wavy  
**Feelings:** sweat loving cute  
**Uses:** loving  
**Smell:** sweet

He then wrote a first draft of his description, in which he tried to incorporate a number of the headings (something he didn't attempt at all for the crocodile report):

[1.5'] My dog Tammy has a lovely reddy brownny furr. her eyes are brown too. The shape of my dog is skinny. The texture of Tammy my dog is fluffy, furry, smoth and shinny. The movement of my dog is she has a wagging tail and waving body. The feelings that I feel of my dog is sweat, loving and cute. My dog is used for loving. My dog smells like sweet. The size of my dog. My dog is big, tall and very long.

This works out fine as far as general terms like shape and texture are concerned. But his language doesn't unfold maturely once experiential metaphors are involved. He simply doesn't have the nominalisations to finish off his relational clauses, and so ends them as best he can. We know what he means, but it's not written English (this is a native speaker keep in mind). His teacher steps in and edits the *movement* clause (producing the version in [1.5] above):

The movement of my dog is she has a wagging tail and waving body.  
**[edited as:** She moves by wagging her tail and waving her body.]

But she leaves the feeling clause, which isn't quite so easy to fix up:

The feelings that I feel of my dog is sweat, loving and cute.

This seems to frustrate Conal too, who verbalises *uses* in the following clause, with rather amusing results<sup>19</sup> (needless to say his teacher does edit this one).

My dog is used for loving.  
**[edited as:** My dog is very loved.]

As a final step, Conal decides to avoid integrating headings in his sentences completely, writing down the heading and then starting a new sentence about the size of his dog:

The size of my dog. My dog is big, tall and very long.

What these struggles underscore is the immense and generally overlooked watershed constituted by processes of grammatical metaphor for literacy development. We'll return to this theme at various points in our discussion, and try and address it explicitly in our presentation of a learner pathway for history genres (Chapter 3). As Conal's description suggests, certain kinds of abstraction are fine in primary school; general terms like *equipment*, *habitat*, *food*, *size*, *shape*, *colour*, *texture* and *smell* are not an issue. But experiential and logical metaphors are not under productive control; that control is the mission of secondary schooling, although few teachers there have any linguistic awareness at all of what they are meant to achieve.

That said, the abstract and grammatically metaphorical scaffolding Conal's teachers are providing seems to be working very well as an organising tool for his research and writing. It functions in a sense as a surrogate hierarchy of periodicity for his texts, and in doing so it anticipates the uses he will make of this kind of language to construct his own layers of prediction and summary as he develops his writing in secondary school. As may be apparent, the scaffolding is derived from the generic staging proposed for various genres by ourselves and various colleagues. So it is also introducing a degree of metalinguistic awareness into schools, at least with respect to genres (grammar is another matter). In this regard it is useful to keep in mind as genre analysts that the names we use for genre and genre stages are just that – names. As such they compartmentalise complex linguistic processes as things, and misconceive texts as compositions made of of parts in wholes. It's hard to hang on to a dynamic conception of genres as ongoing expansions of instancial meaning; but we should try.

### 1.7 A note on multimodality

Having defined genres as configurations of meaning, our ultimate goal has always been to map cultures as systems of genre. This is an ambitious project, that we are nowhere near achieving. It's important to stress at this point however that the project depends on multi-modal discourse analysis, since genres are typically realised through more than one modality of communication (i.e. some combination of language, image, sound, action, spatial design etc.). Multi-modal analysis is not the focus of this book, although we will deal with inter-modality issues as they arise, especially in Chapters 4 and 5. For ongoing social semiotic work on this frontier see Iedema 2001, 2003b, Jewitt 2002, Lemke 1998, 2002, Macken-Horarik 2003, 2004, Martin & Stenlin 2004, O'Halloran 1999a, b, 2000, Ravelli 2000, Royce 1998, Unsworth 2001, van Leeuwen & Humphrey 1996.

The first multimodal text we presented here was Ben's history of the planet, text [1:11]. The image from is text is presented as Figure 1.18 – a drawing of the planet earth with what appear to be continents sketched in. In Kress & van Leeuwen's 1996 terms, the image is a conceptual rather than a narrative representation, analytical (involving a part-whole structure), and has a scientific coding orientation. As such, it is an appropriate image to accompany Ben's geological discourse. Taken together, the verbiage and image certainly interact to construct [1:11] as a scientific explanation, not a narrative. Their multi-modal synergy makes the teacher's an even less compliant one than it might be had she evaluated either modality on its own.

Figure 1.18: Ben's drawing of the planet earth

[Ben's picture here; from Martin 1990]

The other multimodal text we noted in passing was Conal's pie chart scaffolding for his description of his dog, shown here as Figure 1.19. Once again this involves a conceptual, analytical image, but this time with a centre and margin textual organization (and with a ring of section headings mediating nucleus and periphery). The verbiage, including both the teacher's scaffolding and Conal's notes, is part of this image.

Figure 1.19: Conal's pie chart scaffolding for text [1:5]

[Conal's pie chart here]

This kind of integrated multimodal text makes us wonder whether pie charts (and tables in general) should be treated as extensions of English graphology, or as images in their own right. This reminds us that writing systems have evolved from images, and that electronic texts seem to be in the process of reinvigorating this imagic potential through the use of elaborated fonts, formatting, colour, layout, emoticons, symbols and the like. The graphology in other words is making meaning, in ways reminiscent of the wonderful illuminated manuscripts that constituted writing before the domination of the printing presses dulled things down.

Conal's handwriting and spelling underscore the contribution that graphology can make to the meaning of a genre. They mark his texts as immature, and to some readers perhaps shockingly illiterate. In his defence we perhaps need to explain that one of the legacies of process writing and whole language programs in Australia has been the idea that when students write they need to concentrate on lexicogrammatical and discourse semantic meaning (although the advocates of process writing had no such technical model of language) and not get bogged down in the finer points of spelling and punctuation. Errors are corrected (or not) by teachers as part of an editing, evaluation and 'publishing' process, and students are expected to move towards adult literacy over time. The idea here is that spelling and punctuation will mature 'naturally' in writing, just like pronunciation does for spoken language.

This is not the place to intervene too strongly in this debate. Obviously from the perspective on genre we are developing here the focus on developing whole texts is important and children are indeed managing meaning on several strata and in several metafunctions at the same time. There is no doubt that for young writers worrying too much about spelling first time round can get in the way. At the same time, invented spelling brands these writers as illiterate, and that's not part of the configuration of meanings they are trying to weave together in their genres. So traditional drilling, memorisation and spelling rules do have a role to play. The challenge is getting the balance right, when so many dimensions of meaning are being brought into play.

## 1.8 This book

Based on these foundations, we'll develop the rest of the book around families of genres. We begin in Chapter 2 with the story family, extending the discussion of recounts, narratives and 'just so' stories we began above. Then in Chapter 3 we turn to history, and look at the family of genres which have evolved to make sense of the past. In Chapter 4 we move into the fields of geography and science to look at reports and explanations. From there we move to the workplace, and consider the role of procedural and associated genres in science based industry. Finally in Chapter 6 we look briefly at some additional families in order to broaden our perspective on mapping culture as a system of genres.

Alongside concentrating on genre families, each chapter has a special theoretical focus. In Chapters 2 and 3 we focus on paradigmatic relations among genres; we consider this from the point of view of typology in Chapter 2, and topology in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 we develop our notion of macro-genres – the nature of texts composed of more than one genre and how they unfold. In Chapter 5 we expand on the multi-modal perspective introduced above, attending to verbiage/image relations. In Chapter 6 we canvass a range of issues, including ways in which different types of structure can be recognised in genres. Our aim throughout these chapters is to give analysts more tools for thinking about genres and genre relations than have been generally deployed in the past.

No single book can be the final word on genre, especially if mapping culture as a system of genres is the game we want to play. Even within our own SFL framework, we're cheating badly here, skipping over register to discuss genre in relation to discourse semantics (and the other levels of language only as required). This means we're not going justice to genre as a configuration of field, tenor and mode variables. For reasons of space and clarity of presentation this can't be helped here. But it is a big gap for future work to fill.

Our basic goal has been to document to some extent the explorations of genre undertaken by the so called Sydney School, both theoretically and descriptively. The many references to our colleagues work we hope pay tribute to their individual and collective contributions. In particular we are indebted to two action research projects undertaken in collaboration with the Sydney Metropolitan East Region of the New South Wales Disadvantaged School Program – the Language and Social Power project in the late 80s and the Write it Right project in the early 90s. We are trying here to voice their vision of the kind of genre theory they needed to get on with literacy work in disadvantaged schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Texts [1:1-1.10] were in fact written in 2003 by Conal (age 8) in Year 3 in a primary school in Sydney; we're using them as examples of the kinds of writing we found in Australian schools from the beginning of our research in 1979.

<sup>2</sup> The American guru of the process writing movement was Donald Graves, and his ideas were promoted in Australia by Jan Turbill, Brian Cambourne and others; later on in the eighties the Goodmans' whole language philosophy was to further propagate the recount genre.

<sup>3</sup> This version of Conal's description has been edited by his teacher; aspects of this editing process are discussed in relation to grammatical metaphor in section 4 below.

<sup>4</sup> Ventola, who had done an MA with Hasan at Macquarie, did her PhD with Jim in the early 80s at Sydney University (see Ventola 1987) and so provided a direct link with Hasan's work.

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<sup>5</sup> In 1997, the thirtieth anniversary of Labov & Waletzky's publication, Michael Bamberg guest edited a special commemorative issue of the *Journal of Narrative and Life History* in its honour; Martin & Plum's contribution to this volume reflects our ongoing engagement with Labov & Waletzky's initiative.

<sup>6</sup> An alternative perspective on the relationship between register and generic structure in SFL has been developed by Hasan and her colleagues, who model it on the 'axial' relationship between system and structure (cf. Hasan 1995, 1996, 1999, Matthiessen 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Ironically, by 1994 the name was already well out of date, since the model we're presenting here was being developed at all the metropolitan Sydney universities, at Wollongong University, at the Northern Territory University, at Melbourne University and beyond. By 2000 the work had become an export industry, with centres in Singapore and Hong Kong, and around Britain ('the empire strikes back' as it were).

<sup>8</sup> Compare however Halliday & Matthiessen's 1999 invitation to treat concepts as meanings in a language based approach to cognition.

<sup>9</sup> For discussion and exemplification of the relation of SFL to Critical Discourse Analysis see Martin & Wodak 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Note that Biber reserves the term genre (later register) for 'folk' categorisations of discourse glossed in terms of social purpose, and packages his corpora for both analysis and interpretation in relation to such criteria, which he sees as language external; his text type is closer to what we mean by genre.

<sup>11</sup> To simplify the discussion we'll set aside graphology and signing as alternative forms of expression here.

<sup>12</sup> Since constituency is an important dimension of analysis in all theories we won't review it here, although SFL's approach to constituency is distinctive in that it is organised by rank (a specific type of composition hierarchy); see Butler 2003 for discussion.

<sup>13</sup> Grammatically speaking *they got so annoyed that they got a gun out* is an attributive clause with *that they got a gun out* embedded in the attribute *so annoyed*; but semantically we can treat the two clauses as conjunctively linked.

<sup>14</sup> As noted, we are only concerned here with minimal New; everything except the crocodiles is arguably New in this report.

<sup>15</sup> We haven't analysed a Theme in this non-finite clause.

<sup>16</sup> Dependent clauses such as *when we got off the plain* which precede the clause they depend on can be themselves treated as marked Themes, an analysis which would reinforce the realisation of transition here.

<sup>17</sup> The fifth heading, **equipment**, is a general term for the things Conal needed for the experiment rather than a grammatical metaphor.

<sup>18</sup> Although obviously derived historically from the process *inform*, *information* is no longer a live metaphor, but merely a general term for the facts Conal finds (comparable to *food* and *habitat*); in order to re-activate the metaphor we'd have to use a wording such as *information process*.

<sup>19</sup> Upon learning Jim was using some of his writing in this book Conal immediately began negotiating a share of the royalties (how he found out about such his dad Jim is not sure); so we hope he'll forgive us one day for enjoying him here.



## Chapter 2 Stories

### 2.0 Variation in stories

Stories are central genres in all cultures, in some form in almost every imaginable situation and stage of life. They are intimately woven into the minutiae of everyday life, whenever we come together. They are told in all social groupings to interpret life's chaos and rhythms, to evaluate each other's behaviour, and to educate and entertain our children. There is something miraculous about the way a story instantly draws the attention of a child, as their imagination is ignited and held. And the power of stories to grip the imagination of adults is no less mysterious, either as origin myths so potent they have moulded the destinies of nations and continents for millenia, or as literary fiction that can absorb and excite the most rational minds of the modern era.

Stories are also the most widely studied family of genres; there is a very large narrative literature in many contemporary fields, not to mention classical traditions of story exegesis in literature, philosophy and religion. Contemporary narrative studies are often traced to Propp's (1958) 'morphology' of episode types in Russian folktales, and Levi-Strauss' (1960) 'semantic fields' in indigenous American myths, both of which influenced Barthes' (1966) *Introduction to Structural Analysis of Narratives*, and in turn Labov & Waletzky's (1967) *Narrative Analysis: oral versions of personal experience*. These are widely cited as founding texts, in the European and North American traditions of narratology and sociolinguistics respectively. Other influential work on narrative structure includes, among many others, van Dijk (1977) on semantic 'macrostructures' and 'macrorules', Chafe (1980), Hymes (1981) or Scollon & Scollon (1981) on variation in narrative across languages and cultures, and others who find narrative-type structures across various forms of discourse such as Hoey (1983) and Jordan (1984). In addition, narrative analysis has been applied extensively in psychology, sociology and related fields, such as Bruner's (1986) interest in the role of stories in shaping cultural identities, along with feminist, psychotherapeutic and other interpretations. Our work on stories from the late 1970s (Martin 1981) initially took Labov & Waletzky as point of departure, but expanded to explore variation in types of stories, their social roles, and their linguistic realisation.

Labov & Waletzky (1967, reprinted in Bamberg 1997) proposed a generalised structure potential for narratives of personal experience, unfolding through stages of Orientation, Complication, Evaluation, Resolution and Coda, with Complication and Resolution the obligatory stages, and other stages optional. In other words, they saw their oral stories as centrally concerned with a disruption to an expected course of events, resolved by a return to order. A simple example they present includes three steps, which we have labelled to the right:

Well this person has a little too much to drink  
and he attacked me  
and the friend came in  
and she stopped it (1997:12).

**Orientation**  
**Complication**  
**Resolution**

And they also found an evaluation stage to be a key narrative component, “defined by us as that part of the narrative that reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance of some narrative units” (1997:32).

Labov & Waletzky’s analysis is a useful starting point but also needs problematising from three perspectives. Firstly their attempt to account linguistically for narrative staging founders on what Bruner (1997:65) calls a “failed clausal analysis”, a consequence of the formalist grammatics of the time. Indeed, Bruner takes this shortcoming as an object lesson to advocate a more discourse oriented approach to narrative analysis, suggesting that “what one should look for as the constituents of narrative is not an underlying clausal structure, but the processes of linguistic construction by which prototype narratives are adapted to different and varying situations” (ibid). Secondly, while they recognise the importance of evaluation, a formalist bias towards constituency structure and experiential meaning leads them to subordinate its interpersonal function by using evaluation to define segmental structure (the boundary between complication and resolution):

It is necessary for the narrator to delineate the structure of the narrative by emphasizing the point where the complication has reached a maximum: the break between the complication and the result. Most narratives contain an evaluation section that carries out this function (1997:30).

Thirdly the reductive inclination of formal structuralism leads them to disregard significant variations in the staging of stories, using various rationales. For example they recognise that stories frequently terminate with an evaluation, but they maintain a universal complication-resolution rule with the artifice that “in many narratives, the evaluation is fused with the result” (1997:35). In the story cited to support this, a life-threatening incident is not explicitly resolved, but is simply commented on: “And the doctor just says, ‘Just about this much more,’ he says, ‘and you’d a been dead.’” (1997:7). They also exclude stories which they characterise as not ‘well-formed’, for example “in narratives without a point it is difficult to distinguish the complicating action from the result” (1997:30), and “unevaluated narratives lack structural definition” (1997:34). Ultimately, Labov & Waletzky construe story variation in terms of individually based language deficit - as deviance from what they term a ‘normal form’, which they believe is “told by speakers with greater overall verbal ability” (1997:37).<sup>20</sup>

With the advantages of a stratified model of text in context, that can motivate both text staging and relations between interpersonal meanings and social functions, SFL based research has been able to systematically identify and account for variation in types of stories, expanding and refining the models initiated by Labov & Waletzky and others. Working with a large corpus of oral stories Plum (1988) identified four other major story types, in addition to narratives, that display varying staging (cf. Martin & Plum 1997), varieties also found by Rothery (1990) in her corpus of children’s written stories (cf. Rothery & Stenglin 1997), in casual conversation (Eggins & Slade 1997), in literary fiction (Macken-Horarik 1999, 2003, Martin 1996), in stories of illness and treatment (Jordens 2002, 2003), and in traditional stories across language families (Rose 2001a&b, 2005c, to appear a). Each story type typically (but optionally) begins with an Orientation stage that presents an expectant activity sequence, but varies in how this expectancy is disrupted and how the

disruption is responded to. Indeed Plum (1988) found that the Complication-Resolution narrative structure accounted for only 15% of the 134 stories he recorded. For these reasons we refer to these genres as the 'story family', of which narrative is one member.

Alongside narratives, Plum recognised the recounts of personal experience introduced in Chapter 1, which record a sequence of events without significant disruption. Rather than a distinct evaluation stage, the events are typically appraised prosodically as the recount unfolds. Far from being 'pointless', recounts function in a wide variety of social contexts to share experiences and attitudes of all kinds.

Secondly, there were anecdotes, which involve some remarkable disruption to usuality, which is not resolved, but simply reacted to. The remarkable event may be tragic or comic, engaging or revolting, so the ensuing reaction may be either positive or negative affect.

Thirdly, exemplums, which also involve a disruption, but this is interpreted rather than reacted to, and the type of attitude expressed in the interpretation tends to be judgement of people's character or behaviour. Again the incident may involve behaviour that is either admirable or damnable, so the ensuing judgement may either admire or criticise, praise or condemn.

Fourthly, observations, which involve a description of a significant event, followed by a personal comment appreciating an aspect of it, again with either positive or negative value (as in the doctor's comment in Labov & Waletzky's example). Jordens (2002:68) succinctly summarises the rhetorical functions of these latter three story types:

Each of these terminate in an evaluative stage, and they are differentiated according to the 'point' of the story: the 'point' of an Anecdote is to share a reaction with the audience; the 'point' of an Exemplum is to share a moral judgement, and the 'point' of an Observation is to share a personal response to things or events.

Finally, we reserve the term 'narrative' specifically for the generic pattern that resolves a complication. Evaluation of narrative complications can vary between affect, judgement of people, or appreciation of things and events. The evaluation is often deployed to suspend the action, increasing the narrative tension, and so intensifying the release when tension is resolved. The options in staging in the story genre family, and tendencies in their appraisal, are set out in Table 2.1. These are the obligatory stages for each genre, each of which may also open with an Orientation stage, and close with a Coda.

Table 2.1: Family of story genres

staging:	<b>experience</b>	<b>response</b>	<b>experience</b>	<b>attitude</b>
<b>recount</b>	Record	[prosodic]	–	variable
<b>anecdote</b>	Remarkable Event	Reaction	–	affect
<b>exemplum</b>	Incident	Interpretation	–	judgement
<b>observation</b>	Event Description	Comment		appreciation
<b>narrative</b>	Complication	Evaluation	Resolution	variable

We have chosen to illustrate each of these types of stories with examples by or about Indigenous Australians, for several reasons. They allow us to introduce the Australian theme of this book through the voices of Indigenous speakers, they serve to illustrate the trans-cultural phenomena of story genres, and the stories themselves are intrinsically interesting and provide a window on the history, culture and politics of the country.

Several of the stories we present were told to the *National Inquiry on the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* (1995-7), by Indigenous people who were removed their families as children. These stories<sup>21</sup> of forced separation, and its long term consequences, are published in the report of the inquiry, *Bringing Them Home: The 'Stolen Children' report*, by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). Australian social commentator Robert Manne describes the policy of Indigenous child removal as follows:

*Bringing Them Home* suggests that between one in three and one in ten Aboriginal children were separated from their mothers... All one can say for certain is that in the seventy or so years in question tens of thousands of babies and children were removed. Yet there is an even more extraordinary fact than this. Until the last year or so most non-Aboriginal Australians either did not know or were at best dimly aware that for some seventy years Australian governments had been involved in a more or less routine practice of part-Aboriginal child removal. This was something almost every Aborigine understood (1998: 53).

## 2.1 Recount: recording personal experience

Two recounts are presented here, to display variations in the way that appraisal can be distributed through recounts. The first story [2:1] is from an Indigenous woman identified in *Bringing Them Home* as 'Fiona', who lived with her family in northern South Australia in the 1930s. Her European great-uncle ran a sheep station at Ernabella, on the margin of Australia's vast Western Desert, whose Indigenous people at that time still lived a traditional life of nomadic hunting and gathering. Fiona was one of many children born of Indigenous mothers and white fathers in the region, most of whom were removed from their families. Locations in Fiona's story are shown in Map 2.1. In the following story transcripts, headings are given for each stage and appraisals are highlighted in bold.

Map 2.1: Places in Fiona's story



## [2:1] Fiona's story

## Orientation

1936 it was. I would have been five. We went visiting Ernabella the day the police came. Our great-uncle Sid was leasing Ernabella from the government at that time so we went there.

## Record

We had been playing all together, **just a happy community** and the **air was filled with screams** because the police came and mothers tried to hide their children and blacken their children's faces and tried to hide them in caves.

We three, Essie, Brenda and me together with our three cousins ... the six of us were put on an old truck and taken to Oodnadatta which was hundreds of miles away and then we got there in the darkness.

My mother had to come with us. She had already lost her eldest daughter down to the Children's Hospital because she had infantile paralysis, polio, and now there was the prospect of losing her three other children, all the children she had. I remember that she came in the truck with us **curled up in the foetal position. Who can understand that**, the **trauma** of knowing that you're going to lose all your children? We talk about it from the point of view of our **trauma** but - our mother - to understand what she went through, I **don't think anyone can really understand that**.

It was 1936 and we went to the United Aborigines Mission in Oodnadatta. We got there in the dark and then we didn't see our mother again. She just kind of disappeared into the darkness.

## Reorientation

I've since found out in the intervening years that there was a place they called the natives' camp and obviously my mother would have been whisked to the natives' camp. There was no time given to us to say goodbye to our mothers.

HREOC 1997:129

As far as time is concerned, the story records a series of events that unfolded the day Fiona's family went visiting Ernabella. There is no resolution to the awful events, nor is there a terminating evaluative stage, rather evaluations of various kinds are dispersed through the events.

Firstly *playing altogether* is appraised with positive affect as *just a happy community*, and this contrasts with the next event *the police came*, which is appraised negatively

by the metaphorical *air was filled with screams*. The children themselves do not explicitly react to being taken to the distant railhead town of Oodnadatta, but their mother's intense unhappiness is evoked by her behaviour *curled up in the foetal position*. Rather than intensifying the feelings here, Fiona reconstrues them as an abstract 'thing' *the trauma of knowing that you're going to lose all your children*, which she appreciates as beyond understanding. Following this appreciation, the recount returns to the events without explicit appraisal. Rather the children's experience is recounted as arriving at Oodnadatta in the dark, and their mother disappearing. This Record of events is then followed by a Reorientation stage that reorients the last events from the perspective of adult knowledge. Note that although the reader may draw a moral conclusion about the children's and mother's treatment, there is no explicit judgement made in this final stage.

The next story [2:2] is from an Indigenous man identified as 'Greg', who was removed from the Tasmanian island of Cape Barren (see Map 2.2) as a 12 year old. Greg's island community are descendants of Indigenous Tasmanian women who survived the British genocide against their people in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and were married to European seal hunters.

Map 2.2: Places in Greg's story



### [2:2] Greg's story

#### Orientation

I was born on Cape Barren. At the time I was taken the family comprised mum, my sister and my two brothers. And of course there was my grandmother and all the other various relatives. We were only a **fairly small isolated community** and we all grew up there in what I considered to be a **very peaceful loving community**. I recall spending most of my growing up on the Island actually living in the home of my grandmother and grandfather. The other children were living with mum in other places. Until the time I was taken I had not been away from the Island, other than our annual trips from Cape Barren across to Lady Baron during the mutton bird season.

#### Record

The circumstances of my being taken, as I recollect, were that I went off to school in the morning and I was sitting in the classroom and there was only one room where all the children were assembled and there was a knock at the door, which the schoolmaster answered. After a conversation he had with somebody at the door, he came to get me. He took me by the hand and took me to the door. I was physically grabbed by a male person at the door, I was taken to a motor bike and held by the officer and driven to the airstrip and flown off the Island.

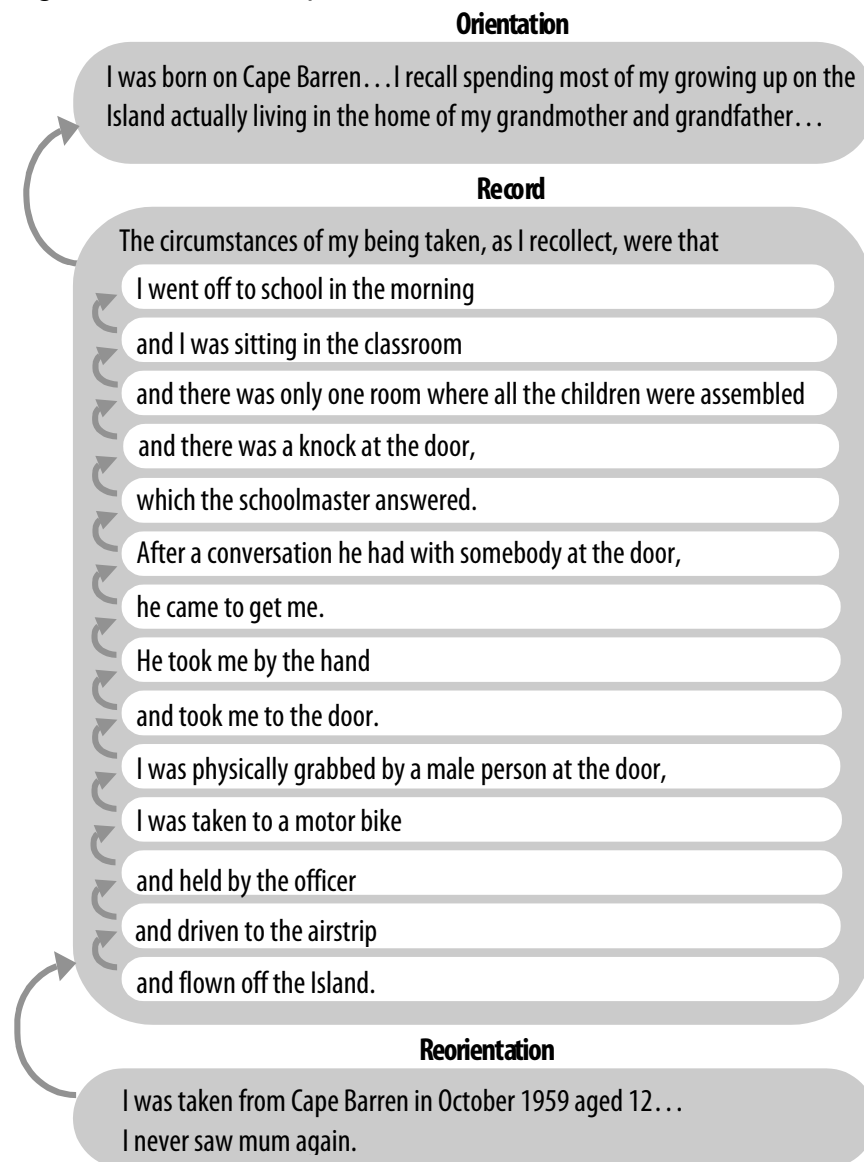
## Reorientation

I was taken from Cape Barren in October 1959 aged 12. I had no knowledge I was going to be taken. I was not even able to see my grandmother and I had just the clothes I had on my back, such as they were. I never saw mum again.

HREOC 1997:99

While the events in this story are harrowing, they are recounted relatively dispassionately. The Orientation stage establishes the context of family and community, and the stability of Greg and his siblings' home and family. The Record stage begins with the specific setting of his removal from the school, followed by the events in rapid succession. Note that the shift from Orientation to Record stages is explicitly signalled here as *The circumstances of my being taken*. Such explicit signalling of stage shifts is a common feature of story genres. In Chapter 1 we noted how Conal used a marked Theme to signal such a transition in his trip to Ottawa [1:3]. Finally the story concludes by re-orienting the events in relation to the place and time, his age and circumstances, and finally a consequence of separation. The pattern of event sequence is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Event sequence in recount



Appraisals in Greg's story are limited to appreciating his community as *fairly small isolated* and *very peaceful loving*, and suggestions that the circumstances of his removal and its outcome were unreasonable, using negatives and counterexpectant continuity (*no knowledge, not even able to see my grandmother, just the clothes I had on my back, never saw Mum again*). These resources suggest that Greg might reasonably have expected to have been warned, been allowed to see his grandmother, gotten his clothes and seen his mum again, but as with Fiona's story this is merely implied; there is no explicit affect or moral judgement. This type of recount with minimal attitude is a common choice in legal testimony, exemplified again with text [3:15] in the next chapter. The genre's significant 'point' in this context is the record of events, that are allowed to speak for themselves - as witnessing justice or truth.



## 2.2 Anecdotes - reacting to events

As quoted from Jordens above, the point of an anecdote is to share an emotional reaction. To this end, anecdotes present a sequence of events that is out of the ordinary, and conclude with the protagonists' reaction to the events. Here we present three examples; the first is again a story of personal experience from the *Bringing Them Home* report, the second is an extract from a novel (to illustrate how story genres are included and expanded in literature), and the third is a humorous story to illustrate the potential relationship between anecdotes and humour.

The first anecdote of personal experience [2:3] from Millicent D. illustrates the policy of separating children on the basis of gradations in skin colour. As the intent of the policy was to 'assimilate' Indigenous people into the colonising race, children with lighter skin were sent to institutions such as the notorious 'Sister Kate's Home' in Perth, and then if possible to white families as foster children or domestic servants. Map 2.3 shows the location of Millicent's home area Wonthella, Moore River Native Settlement and Perth, to where her siblings were taken.

Map 2.3: Places in Millicent's story



### [2:3] Millicent's story

#### Orientation

My name is Millicent D. I was born at Wonthella WA in 1945. My parents were CD and MP, both 'half-caste' Aborigines. I was one of seven children, our family lived in the sandhills at the back of the Geraldton Hospital. There was a lot of families living there **happy and harmonious**. It was like we were all part of **one big happy family**.

#### Remarkable Event

In 1949 the Protector of Aborigines with the Native Welfare Department visited the sandhill camps. All the families living there were to be moved to other campsites or to the Moore River Aboriginal Settlement. Because my parents were fair in complexion, the authorities decided us kids could pass as whitefellas. I was four years old and that was the last time I was to see my parents again. Because my sisters were older than me they were taken to the Government receiving home at Mount Lawley. My brother Kevin was taken to the boys home in Kenwick. Colin and I were taken to the Sister Kate's Home. We were put in separate accommodation and hardly ever saw each other.

## Reaction

I was **so afraid and unhappy** and **didn't understand** what was happening

HREOC 1996:115

The anecdote structure is distinct in [2:3], with the of Orientation establishing a happy normalcy, disrupted by a Remarkable Event that is signalled by a temporal Theme *In 1949*, and terminating with a Reaction which appraises the events from the narrator's perspective as a child, of her feelings of fear, unhappiness and confusion. Of course as a child she could not have known that the colonisers' theory of race classified both her parents as 'half' Aboriginal, and therefore herself as 'quarter' Aboriginal, and an ideal candidate for assimilation. We should note that 1949 was the year after Australia ratified the UN Charter on Human Rights, which expressly forbade such policies.

In the next story [2:4], the structure of anecdote is used by Indigenous author Doris Pilkington (also known as Nugi Garimara), to present the experience of child removal from the family's perspective, and invite the reader to empathise with their feelings. This anecdote is an extract from Pilkington's novel *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*, about the epic journey of three girls who had been removed from their families, to return to their home at Jigalong in the Western Australian desert (see Map 2.4). In this extract, the policeman charged with removing the girls appears at the family campsite, and announces his intention.

Map 2.4: Places in *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*



[2:4] **Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence p43**

## Orientation

Molly and Gracie finished their breakfast and decided to take all their dirty clothes and wash them in the soak further down the river. They returned to the camp looking clean and refreshed and joined the rest of the family in the shade for lunch of tinned corned beef, damper and tea.

## Remarkable Event

The family had just finished eating when all the camp dogs began barking, making a terrible din. "Shut up," yelled their owners, throwing stones at them. The dogs whined and skulked away.

Then all eyes turned to the cause of the commotion. A tall, rugged white man stood on the bank above them. He could easily have been mistaken for a pastoralist or a grazier with his tanned complexion except that he was wearing khaki clothing.

Fear and anxiety swept over them when they realised that the fateful day they had been dreading had come at last. They always knew that it would only be a matter of time before the government would track them down.

When Constable Riggs, Protector of Aborigines, finally spoke his voice was full of authority and purpose. They knew without a doubt that he was the one who took children in broad daylight - not like the evil spirits who came into their camps at night. "I've come to take Molly, Gracie and Daisy, the three half-caste girls, with me to Moore Rive Native Settlement," he informed the family.

The old man nodded to show that he understood what Riggs was saying. The rest of the family just hung their heads, refusing to face the man who was taking their daughters away from them. Silent tears welled in their eyes and trickled down their cheeks.

"Come on, you girls," he ordered. "Don't worry about taking anything. We'll pick up what you need later." When the two girls stood up, he noticed that the third girl was missing. "Where's the other one, Daisy?" he asked anxiously.

"She's with her mummy and daddy at Murra Munda Station," the old man informed him.

"She's not at Murra Munda or Jimbalbar goldfields. I called into those places before I came here," said the constable. "Hurry up then, I want to get started. We've got a long way to go yet. You girls can ride this horse back to the depot," he said, handing the reins over to Molly. Riggs was annoyed that he had to go miles out of his way to find these girls.

#### Reaction

Molly and Gracie sat silently on the horse, tears streaming down their cheeks as Constable Riggs turned the big bay stallion and led the way back to the depot. A high pitched wail broke out. The cries of agonised mothers and the women, and the deep sobs of grandfathers, uncles and cousins filled the air. Molly and Gracie looked back just once before they disappeared through the river gums. Behind them, those remaining in the camp found sharp objects and gashed themselves and inflicted deep wounds to their heads and bodies as an expression of their sorrow.

The two frightened and miserable girls began to cry, silently at first, then uncontrollably; their grief made worse by the lamentations of their loved ones and the visions of them sitting on the ground in their camp letting their tears mix with the red blood that flowed from the cuts on their heads.

#### Coda

This reaction to their children's abduction showed that the family were now in mourning. They were grieving for their abducted children and their relief would come only when the tears ceased to fall, and that will be a long time yet.

Pilkington 1996:43

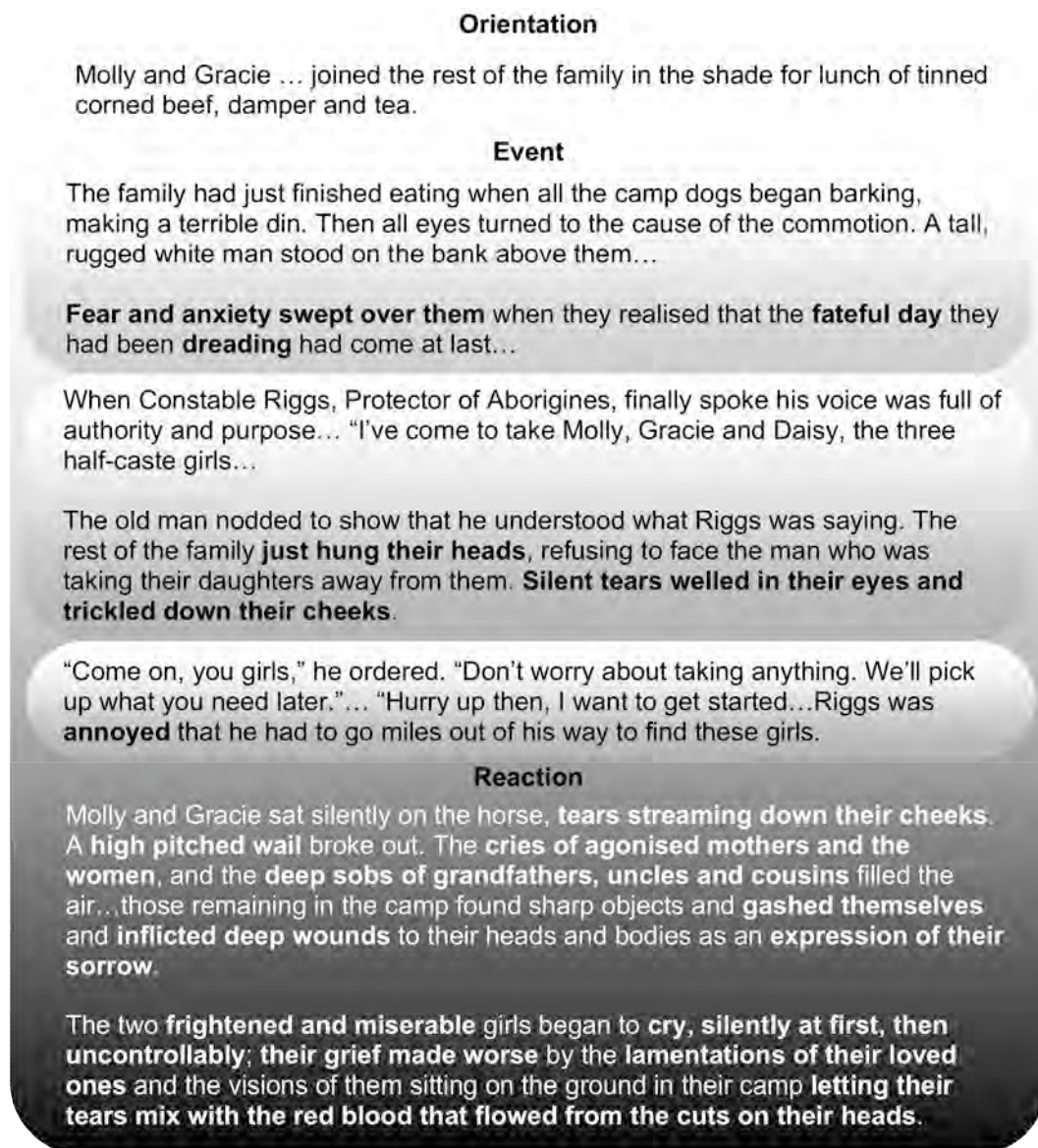
In this written story, Pilkington sets a scene of tranquil normalcy, then signals a disruption with a shift in time, as in the oral stories above, but here using a whole clause *The family had just finished eating*, when the tranquillity is shattered by the dogs barking. The Reaction stage is highly developed with a prosody of intense affect, realised by an intensifying series of behaviours including *tears, wail, cries, sobs, gashed themselves, lamentations, letting tears mix with blood*, and qualities *frightened, miserable, grief made worse*. This stage is also presaged by two lesser reactions: initially the Remarkable Event could be either good or bad, but the family's *fear and anxiety* establishes its negative character; and their initial reaction of *silent tears* to Constable Rigg's announcement foreshadows their intense grief when the girls are taken. There is a subtle contrast here between the family's feelings and the white man merely feeling *annoyed*. The author also provides a Coda interpreting the family's behaviours as 'now in mourning', and re-orienting the story from the past to

the present, with the final shift in tense from potential past *would only come when the tears ceased to fall* to unfulfilled future *that will be a long time yet*.

So from one stage to the next there is a shift in field and tenor, from the normality of the girls washing and family lunch, disrupted by the dogs and the appearance of Riggs, at first reacted to anxiously but silently, and then intensely as Riggs takes the girls. But the stages are also distinguished by the participants presented first, as the Theme of the opening sentence in each stage. In the Orientation this is *Molly and Gracie*. The Remarkable Event then opens with *The family*, who continue as thematic participants through this stage, along with Riggs. The Reaction then returns to *Molly and Gracie...The two frightened and miserable girls*, while the Coda begins with *This reaction* that the author explains for us.

The serial event structure we saw for the recounts is developed here at a larger scale, in a sequence of intensifying problems and reactions. The first is the appearance of the white man and the reaction of *fear and anxiety*; the next is Riggs' announcement and the reaction of *silent tears*; and the next is his taking the girls and the intense grief of the Reaction stage. These patterns are illustrated in Figure 2.2. The affect of the reactions scopes back over the events, indicated by shading.

Figure 2.2: Affect scoping back over events in anecdote



Beyond this extract, *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* is a long story whose overall purpose is to applaud the girls' tenacity at returning to their family against all odds. But like novels in general, it is constructed as a series of smaller stories which function to engage the reader in sharing the protagonists' feelings, admiring the girls and their helpers and condemning their captors and pursuers, and appreciating the events and the land through which they travelled. One way this is achieved is by building and releasing tension, through series of problems and responses on the various scales of events, story stages, and whole chapters. These kinds of story patterns will be discussed further in section 2.8 below.

An anecdote may be comic rather than tragic; indeed anecdotes are a popular genre for humorous stories and jokes, as the following example [2:5] illustrates. This anecdote was originally told by an Indigenous elder at a gathering called by the Narrandera Koori Community, NSW, to deal with emotional problems arising from continual deaths in the community and cultural loss. (The word *Koori* denotes the

Indigenous people of south-eastern Australia.) A distinctive theme of Indigenous humour is linguistic or cultural misunderstanding,<sup>22</sup> that may be intertwined in the same story. A favoured object of mirth is cultural naïvete, of either Indigenous or non-Indigenous individuals or both. In this story, the narrator makes fun of his own naïvete. It was retold in the written report of the gathering. Again staging is shown and attitude is highlighted.

#### [2:5] Uncle Mick's story

Uncle Mick also told a story about the funeral he went to at a Catholic Church.

#### Orientation

Most of the churches in town are Church of England, so to go to the Catholic Church was pretty unusual.

#### Remarkable Event

During the service there was a **huge** thunder and lightning storm. Every time the priest said something about the woman who had died, a **huge** clap of thunder would shake the building and Uncle Mick would think – whatever he just said about her couldn't have been true! This kept happening every time the priest said something about the woman who had died. Even when she was placed into the grave the same thing happened – **huge** thunder and lightning. But as soon as the earth was put over her, the storm finished, the sky cleared up, and the sun came out.

#### Reaction

Uncle Michael remembered thinking at the time that when he died he'd **like** to have his funeral at the Catholic Church because they put on a **very impressive** show there!

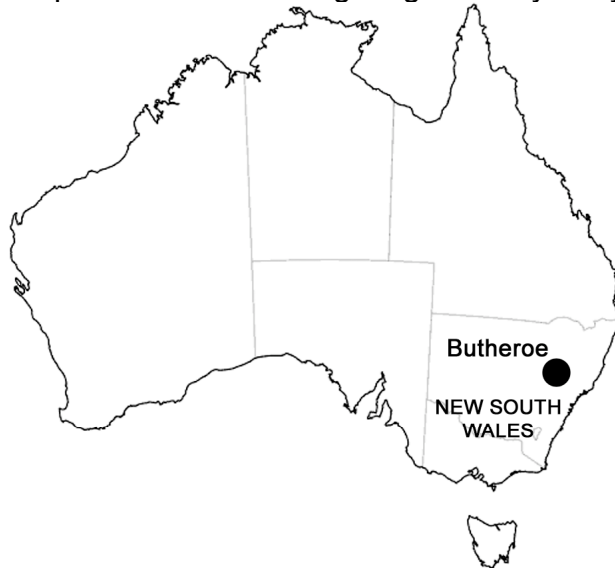
from Narrandera Koori Community Gathering 2002

This example contrasts with the previous anecdote in its understated reaction, a strategy of 'deadpan' humour. Uncle Mick's mild desire (*he'd like to have his funeral at the Catholic Church*) is built upon much stronger repeated appreciation of the storm (**huge thunder and lightning storm, very impressive show**). Again there is a lesser reaction within the Event stage (*Uncle Mick would think – whatever he just said about her couldn't have been true!*), foreshadowing the joke on his naïvete.<sup>23</sup> Again the Remarkable Event is signalled by time *During the service...*

### 2.3 Exemplum - interpreting incidents

The point of an exemplum is to share a moral judgement, illustrated here with one story that praises the protagonists and another that condemns them. The first is a story from *Lighting the Way: reconciliation stories*, a collection of stories about individual and community acts of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The story here [2:6] relates what now seems an extraordinary incident from colonial days at Butherie in central NSW, shown in Map 2.4, when a group of Aboriginal men lit the way home in the dark for a young European couple, by throwing returning boomerangs which they had set alight, above the couple's heads.

Map 2.4: Location of Lighting the Way story



### [2:6] Lighting the way

#### Orientation

When my parents were married in 1863, they lived across the creek at Butheroe, from the original home, where the Joseph Nevells lived then. My mother was **always nervous** of the Aborigines.

#### Incident

One dark night, my parents had been at tea at the Joseph Nevells' home and as they were going home, some Aborigines were sitting around a fire, about half way between the house and the old well, going down to the creek. Father said, '**don't be afraid**, they will not hurt us', and he spoke to one of the group as they passed by. A few minutes later, boomerangs were lighted at one end, came overhead and of course, went back to the Aborigines, then came a series of these lighted boomerangs showing a light to father and mother until they reached the front door.

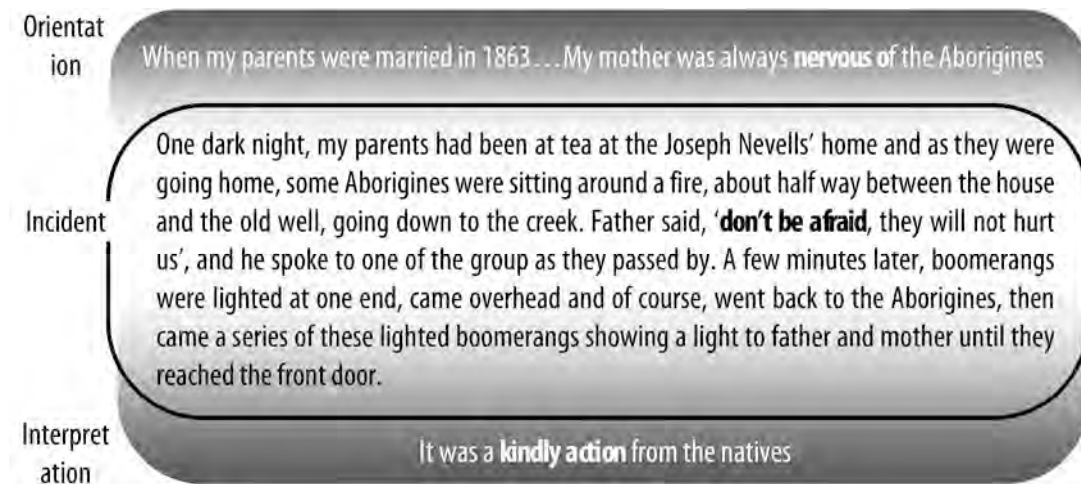
#### Interpretation

It was a **kindly action** from the natives

Miss F. May Nevell in Johnson 2002:iii<sup>24</sup>

While the behaviour of the 'the natives' is eventually praised as *a kindly action* in [2:6], the rhetorical effect of this emerges from the tension that is created and released in the preceding events. The mother's insecurity described in the Orientation (*always nervous*), creates an expectancy for an ensuing problem. The Incident is then signalled by the temporal circumstance *One dark night*, that strongly expects a frightening event. However this expectancy is countered by Father's reassurance (*don't be afraid, will not hurt*) and the tension is released by the *lighted boomerangs showing a light to father and mother*. This sequence of stages and attitudes is diagrammed in Figure 2.3. Here the affect in the Orientation scopes forward over the following events, expecting a problem. The judgement on the other hand scopes backwards over the preceding event, evaluating the behaviour (indicated by shading).

Figure 2.3: Attitude scoping forward and back

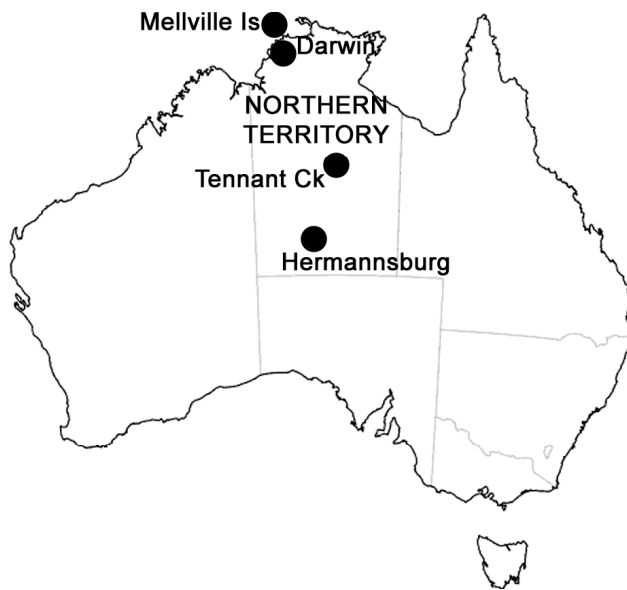


Perhaps because the mother's expectation of a problem with the Aboriginal men was countered by their 'kindly act', Miss Nevell's exemplum serves as the introduction and title for this collection of reconciliation stories. It is a token both for (unexpected) empathy between black and white, and for Indigenous people showing other Australians how to achieve it. Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians became a major national movement in the 1990s, with hundreds of thousands participating in symbolic walks across city bridges and legal recognition of Indigenous land title. Unfortunately it has since retreated from the centre of public life, discouraged by the neo-conservative government of Prime Minister John Howard, that has successfully distracted voters with a debilitating politics of fear focused on racial and religious difference.

A more negative judgement is made in the following exemplum by 'Evie' [2:7], from the *Bringing Theme Home* report. Evie's grandmother had been removed from her family in the Northern Territory, she had two children to a white Aboriginal Protection Officer, including Evie's mother who was also removed; Evie herself was removed from her mother as a baby in 1950, and her own children were removed from her as infants in 1977, so her story is a long one, involving a series of shorter stories of various types. The excerpt here begins with an observation about growing up in a church institution on Garden Point island in Darwin, on which Evie comments *I was **actually relieved** to leave the Island* (the observation genre is discussed in the next section). Locations in Evie's story are shown in Map 2.5, including Garden Point on Melville Island, the towns of Darwin and Tennant Creek, and the Aboriginal community of Hermannsburg near Alice Springs.



Map 2.5: Places in Evie's story



As the observation involves mention of sexual abuse, the interviewer asks Evie if any girls got pregnant and then who was responsible, which prompts Evie to relate an Incident and then judge the man responsible.

**[2:7] Evie's story**

Part 1: observation

Orientation

I was taken away in 1950 when I was 6 hours old from hospital and put into Retta Dixon until I was 2 months old and then sent to Garden Point. I lived in Garden Point until 1964. And from Garden Point, Tennant Creek, Hermannsburg.

Event Described

While in Garden Point I always say that some of it was the happiest time of my life; others it was the saddest time of my life. The happiest time was, 'Yippee! all these other kids there'. You know, you got to play with them every day. The saddest times were the abuse. Not only the physical abuse, the sexual abuse by the priests over there. And they were the saddest because if you were to tell anyone, well, the priests threatened that they would actually come and get you.

Everyone could see what they were doing but were told to keep quiet. And just every day you used to get hidings with the stock-whip. Doesn't matter what you did wrong, you'd get a hiding with the stock-whip. If you didn't want to go to church, well you got slapped about the head. We had to go to church three times a day.

Comment

I was actually relieved to leave the Island.

Q: Did any girls get pregnant at Garden Point when you were there?

Part 2: exemplum

Orientation

I remember one and they actually took her off the Island. And when I ask everyone, like even now when I ask people about her, they don't know what happened to her. All they remember is her being put on the helicopter and flown out and I've never heard her, about her name or anything about her anymore. They remember her but don't know what happened to her.

Q: Who was the Father?

The Priest. The same bastards who ...

Q: How do people know that?

Incident

Well, the reason they know is, Sister A, poor thing, who's dead - I know she was upset because that priest had that young girl living in his place. He used to come and get her out of the dormitory every night. He used to sneak in about half past twelve, one o'clock in the morning and take her. We'd get up in the morning and she'd be just coming in the door.

All the girls slept in one dormitory. All the boys slept in the other. And we couldn't lock the dormitory from the inside - it had a chain through and padlock outside, so there was only the nuns or priest could get in there. I know he used to come and get her because I was three beds up from her.

Interpretation

There was another priest, but he's dead. The rest of the mob that were on the Island are all dead. He's the only one that's kicking and **he should have been the one that's bloody dead for what he did**. He not only did it to girls, he did it to boys as well. There was six of 'em involved. Nuns were assaulting the young fellas as well as the priest assaulting the young fellas and the girls. There was four priests and two nuns involved. We were in their care.

Coda

That fella's still walking around. He's now got charge of other kids. He's got charge of other kids in D.  
HREOC 1997:147

Stories of personal experience are commonly prompted by the listener like this. To support her moral judgement of the priest that *he should have been the one that's bloody dead for what he did*, Evie first mentions how *Sister A* was upset about his behaviour. The judgement is then elaborated by the extent of his crimes against boys and girls, and the crimes of the other priests and nuns, and the judgement of criminality is reinforced by pointing out that *We were in their care*. The Coda then recontextualises the Interpretation in the present.

## 2.4 Observations - commenting on events

As Jordens explains, the point of an observation is to share a personal response to things or events. Rather than unfolding in a sequence, as in other stories, the events described in observations tend to be collapsed into what Rothery and Stenglin (1997) call "a snapshot frozen in time", followed by the narrator's comment. This is evident in Evie's observation about growing up at Garden Point above [2:7], in which she groups the events and generalises them as playing, abuse and the stockwhip. In a brief form, observations are probably very common in everyday discourse, as the following story [2:8] from 'Jennifer' illustrates.

[2:8] **Jennifer's story**

Event

When I was thirteen years old Mrs S. called this middle-aged male doctor to the house and said she wanted an internal examination of me.

Comment

That was terribly shameful for me, I will not say anymore.

HREOC 1997:52

In the next example from 'William' [2:9], the Event is described briefly, but the Comment stage is much longer, as it appreciates the consequences on his life of

repeated sexual abuse in a series of foster homes. This extract from his life story follows two anecdotes, about being removed and separated from his siblings after his mother's death, and about repeated sexual abuse as a young child in a foster home.

[2:9] **William's story**

Orientation

They shifted us again and that was into town again.

Event

And then they put us in with this bloke ... They've got records of what he did to me. That man abused me. He made us do dirty things that we never wanted to do.

Comment

Where was the counselling? Where was the help I needed? They knew about it. The guy went to court. He went to court but they did nothing for me, nothing. They sent us off to the Child Psychology Unit. I remember the child psychologist saying, 'He's an Aboriginal kid, he'll never improve. He's got behavioural problems'. I mean, why did I have behavioural problems? Why didn't they do anything? Why did I have behavioural problems?

I hit the streets of Adelaide. I drank myself stupid. I drank to take the pain, the misery out of my life. I couldn't stop. I smoked dope, got drugs. I tried everything. I did everything. I just couldn't cope with life. I lived under cardboard boxes. I used to eat out of rubbish bins. I'm so ashamed of what I've done.

I suffer today. I still suffer. I can't go to sleep at night. It's been on for years. I just feel that pain. Oh God, I wake up in the middle of the night, same time. My kids have asked me why I get up in the middle of the night and I can't explain it, I can't tell them - shamed. I can't sleep too well with it. I can't go to bed. I leave it 'til 12 o'clock sometimes before I go to bed. I lay there awake, knowing I'm gonna wake up at that time of the morning, night after night. I often wish I was dead. I often wish I was gone. But I can't because of my children. You can't explain this to your kids. Why did this happen? I had nobody. I've had my secret all my life. I tried to tell but I couldn't. I can't even talk to my own brothers. I can't even talk to my sister. I fear people. I fear 'em all the time. I don't go out. I stay home. It's rarely I've got friends.

HREOC 1997:371

So observations differ from other story genres, both in the brevity with which the events are described, and in the type of attitude that evaluates the events. The narrator may express strong feelings (*ashamed, suffer, pain, wish I was dead*), and imply judgements of people (such as the racist child psychologist), but the primary point is to appreciate the effect of the events on the narrator. Jordens (2003:107) expands on this function as follows:

Observations concern the appraisal of "states of affairs" rather than the choices and actions of purposive moral agents. They are also a symbolising genre: the "snapshot frozen in time" gathers up preceding meanings into a symbolic image, and in doing so creates a critical distance that is somehow useful in the process of making one's experience meaningful to one's self and to others.

## 2.5 Narratives - resolving complications

As with anecdote, exemplum and observation, narrative genres involve a disrupting event that is evaluated, but they differ in that the disruption is then resolved by the protagonists, returning the story to equilibrium, as Labov & Waletzky described. So the 'point' of a narrative is how the protagonists resolve a complication in their lives, once they have evaluated the complicating action with some type of attitude.

To this point we have illustrated story genres with oral stories of personal experience, and with an extract from written literature. Here we will expand our examples to show how story genres may occur as traditional stories told in Australian and other cultures. However we will begin with an oral narrative of personal experience [2:10], again from *Bringing Theme Home*. In this story 'Karen' relates and evaluates how her Aboriginality became a problem as she grew up in a white family, and how she attempted to resolve some issues by finding her birth parents.

#### [2:10] Karen's story

##### Orientation

I am a part Aboriginal woman, who was adopted out at birth. I was adopted by a white Australian family and came to live in New Zealand at the age of 6 months. I grew up not knowing about my natural Mother and Father. The only information my adoptive parents had about my birth, was the surname of my birth Mother. I guess I had quite a good relationship with my adoptive Mum, Dad and sisters. Though my adopted Mother said I kept to myself a lot, while I was growing up.

##### Complication

As I got older I noticed my skin colouring was different to that of my family. My Mother told me I was adopted from Australia and part Aboriginal.

##### Evaluation

I **felt quite lonely** especially as I approached my teens. I got teased often about being Aboriginal and became **very withdrawn and mixed up, I really did not know where I belonged**. As a result of this I started having **psychiatric problems**. I **seem to cope and muddle along**.

##### Resolution

I eventually got married to a New Zealander, we have two boys, who are now teenagers. One of our boys is dark like myself, and was interested in his heritage. I was unable to tell him anything, as I didn't know about it myself.

My husband, boys and myself had the opportunity to go to Melbourne about 7 years ago on a working holiday for 10 weeks. While in Melbourne I went to the Aboriginal Health Centre and spoke to a social worker, as I had a copy of my birth certificate with my birth Mother's name on it. The social worker recognized my Mother's surname 'Graham', and got in touch with my aunty, who gave me my Mother's phone number.

I got in touch with my birth Mother and made arrangements to meet her. I have a half brother and sister. My birth Mother and Father never married, though my Father knew my Mother was pregnant with me. My Mother did not know where my Father was, as they parted before I was born. My sister decided to call a local Melbourne paper and put our story in the paper on how I had found them after 29 years.

My Father who was in Melbourne at the time, saw the article and a photo of my Mother and myself in the paper. He recognized my Mother and got in touch with her. My Mother and I had been corresponding, after we returned to New Zealand. For her own reasons, she would not give my Father my address, so my Father went through the social service agency and got in touch with me two and a half years ago. I have met my birth Father, as I had a family wedding in Melbourne shortly after he made contact with me, so I made arrangements to meet him.

##### Coda

We kept in contact with one another, but I feel we will never be able to make up for lost time, as my birth parents live in Australia and myself in New Zealand.

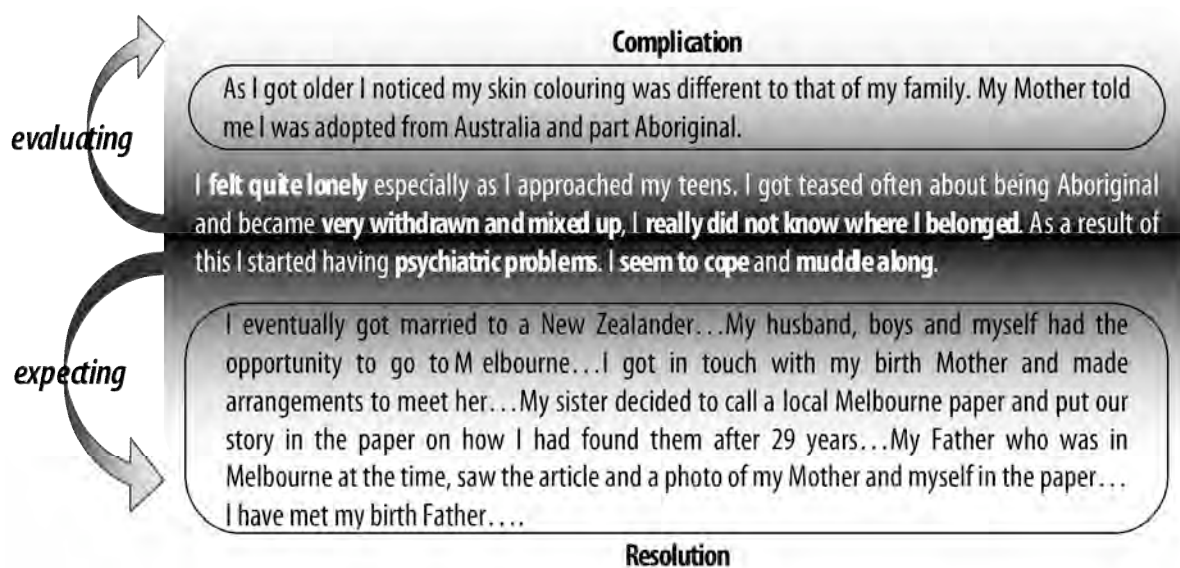
HREOC 1997:244

Karen's story follows the canonical narrative pattern, beginning with an Orientation stage that 'sets the scene' of her family situation, which is appraised positively as *quite a good relationship*. This is the context which the Complication then disrupts,

with problems arising from her skin colour, signalled by a time shift *As I got older...*, which is then evaluated in an intense series of her feelings and judgements on herself. The Resolution stage is signalled by a time shift *I eventually got married*, followed by a series of partial solutions to problems: marriage and children, finding her mother, and then her father finding her. However Karen's Coda returns us to the reality of the present, the damage to relationships that cannot be repaired.

The scope of the Evaluation in a narrative is both backwards, evaluating the preceding events as a Complication, and forward, expecting the following events to be a Resolution. This scoping of evaluation was recognised by Labov & Waletzky and diagrammed as an evaluation stage dominating the other stages (reproduced in Martin 1992). The pattern is illustrated here in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4: Scope of Evaluation in narrative



Long before the 'Stolen Children' inquiry, Indigenous Australians had been organising means to put people, who had been removed as children, in contact with their families, by word of mouth and by formal networks such as the *Linkup* organisation. It was through such a network that Karen was able to find her mother. For deeply moving perspectives on the process of reunion, see the *Bringing Them Home* report, or the song *Took the Children Away* by the great Indigenous Australian singer Archie Roach. This song is also a narrative, in which the Resolution begins with the line *One sweet day all the children came back...*

It is sometimes assumed that the narrative pattern of resolving a complication is particularly an artefact of the western cult of heroic individualism, and that very different cultures must tell very different kinds of stories. In our experience however, narrative is an important part of many cultures, although of course what constitutes complicating events and their resolution may differ. The following two mythic narratives illustrate this for Indigenous Australian and classical European cultures. The first [2:12] is from the Pitjantjatjara people of Australia's Western Desert (the people from whom 'Fiona' was taken in story [2:1]). This story was told by Nganyintja, the adoptive mother of David (who translated it),<sup>25</sup> and is about the origin of giant

mythic serpents known as *wanampi*. These beings are common to all Australian cultures, often known as ‘rainbow serpents’ (and perhaps analogous with mythic serpents and dragons the world over). In this complex narrative, the first Complication is temporarily resolved, which is followed by a second Complication, before the final Resolution.

Map 2.6: Location of the Piltati story



The Orientation presents two brothers married to two sisters, camping at a place called *Piltati*, in the Mann Ranges of South Australia (Map 2.6), with the men hunting game and the women gathering vegetable foods. The first Complication begins as a drought sets in, forcing the women to travel further each day, until they fail to return, leaving their husbands to wonder what has befallen them. The men imagine their wives have transformed into mythic beings, so their Resolution is to transform themselves into *wanampi* serpents, twisting around each others' bodies as they rise into the sky, before diving back into the earth. The second Complication begins as the women return, find the *wanampi* burrow and, mistaking them for a large edible desert python, try to dig them out. When at last they see them, in horror the elder sister stabs her *wanampi* husband with her digging stick, triggering the final Resolution. The English translation here maintains the textual, interpersonal and experiential patterns of the Pitjantjatjara original as closely as possible.<sup>26</sup>

#### [2:12] Piltati myth

##### Orientation

There were two men, it's said, who were brothers. Two young women were married to them, who were sisters. Those two men went hunting for kangaroos. For wallabies, that is, they climbed up in the hills, and they brought back wallaby meat. And the other two went down for vegetable foods, and were collecting wild figs. Exactly at that place [Piltati] they were living.

##### Complication1

Then one day as all the game finished, a drought began. Unable to dig anything up, the women kept walking. They travelled far away, it's said, and camped away overnight. Then after sleeping, hunting and camping out further, they reached another place. There they continued digging.

## Evaluation

Meanwhile the other two were unable to find them. They searched and searched, "The women should've arrived. What's happened to them, eh? They must've gone far away." Then they thought, "They're probably alright. So now if we can't see them, what will we do?"

## Resolution (temporary)

At that they put their spears in a cave, they thought some more, and then they rose up into the sky, twisting around each other. As those two climbed up, they transformed into wanampi serpents. Then they saw the women, "Oh, there they are, at that place far away." And then they descended and entered the earth.

Complication<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile those two sisters were still digging, heedlessly, the two women were digging, digging and digging. And one said "Hey, get me a long stick!"

So the other one went, and going she saw 'What's this? It's like a wanampi!' She mistakenly thought it was a desert python. A burrow mouth is what she saw, this was the mouth of a burrow. That wanampi crawled back inside the burrow and was lying close inside. And seeing its tail, the woman thought 'Ah, I'll catch it on my own!' But as she pulled its tail, trying to catch it, it nearly pulled her into the burrow. The woman jumped up and ran, and coming up to her sister she said "Get up and come here! Sister, will I tell you what happened?"

And her sister said "What did you see? What? What? Tell me quickly! What are you talking about?"

"Hey, come and look! A really huge python went into a burrow! It nearly dragged me in. It's really huge!"

They came and looked. They stopped digging for mitika (small marsupials) and came to that burrow. Then they saw it, "Something really big has gone in here!"

And the women started digging, digging and digging. And then they came out for a little while. They ate and slept, and waking up, they looked again. As the hole got bigger the Wanampi would keep going in. Crawling along it would now go further in. As they dug it out, the women kept killing and eating little snakes. They'd see this big thing and keep killing little ones. They kept doing this, kept on digging on and on. They'd keep on killing little ones and the big one would go further in. Digging, digging, they created the creek, *Piltati* creek they created, digging digging.

## Evaluation

Those two men were racing away from them. At last they reached the hills and could go no further. The elder brother said, "Coil up underneath and I will lie on top."

The women were digging and digging. And seeing the wanampi lying there they were horrified, "Aah, it's huge!" And the elder sister picked up her digging stick and stabbed the wanampi.

## Resolution

At that the two wanampi reared up. And seeing them the sisters ran; they threw away their head rings and ran. One ran up towards the hills, and the other ran down. But the wanampi chased them and caught them. The two sisters were in the mouths of the wanampi and were laughing. Then the men swallowed them and inside their husbands they also transformed into wanampi.

Nganyintja in Rose 2001a

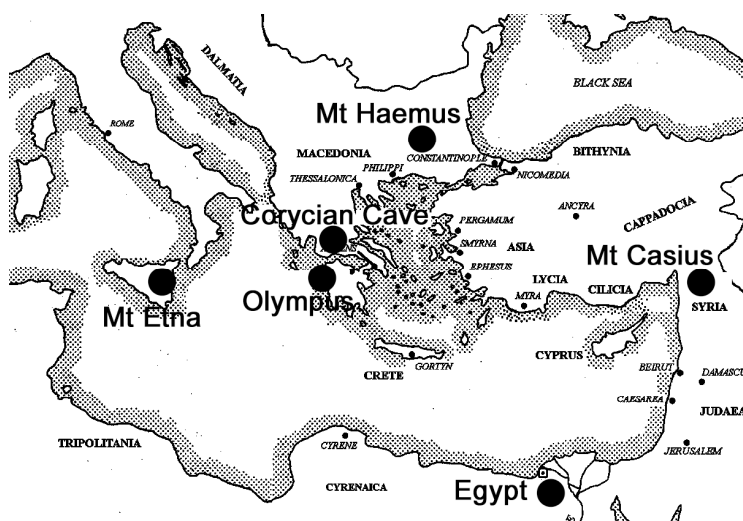
While getting swallowed by giant serpents may not seem to be a Resolution to many modern Europeans, for the Pitjantjatjara it signifies the transformation of the women into members of their husbands' estate group at marriage, so that their children will also be members. The positive value of this outcome is signalled by the women laughing in the wanampis' mouths before being swallowed, perhaps also an oblique sexual image. It's said the wanampi still reside in the deep pool at the head of Piltati creek, and that they recognise and assist members of the families that belong to the

Piltati area, who are considered to be their spiritual descendants, and therefore landowners and custodians of the area.

The narrative structure of the story unfolds as follows. Firstly the Orientation presents the men and women, their activities and locations, encoding the normative division of labour in Pitjantjatjara society between men who hunt game and women who gather vegetable foods and return each day. The first Complication is signalled by a shift in time (*Then one day...*), and a switch in thematic identity from the men and women to the drought that disrupts the daily routine. In the first Evaluation, the men's insecurity at their wives' disappearance is realised by repetitions of uncertainty, expressed as modality (*should've, must've, probably*), inability (*can't*), and questions (*What's happened?, what will we do?*), and in the spoken telling, the men's feelings are also expressed by the narrator as a querulous voice quality. The second Complication is signalled by switching identities back to the two sisters, and the events are now seen from their perspective as they react to their discovery of the 'python' in dialogue (*What did you see? What? What? Tell me quickly!... It's really huge...*). However their excitement is frustrated by the wanampi continually burrowing away from them, leaving them only little snakes to eat. The Evaluation is signalled by the identity switch back to the husbands/wanampi, which the women react to with fear, and the final Resolution is signalled by a marked Theme and identity switch (*At that the two wanampi...*).

Lest we imagine that stories of giant serpents and shaping landmarks are peculiar to Australian cultures that Europeans may see as remote from their own, the following narrative [2:13] is a European origin myth about a giant serpentine creature named Typhon. In this story the hero is not the serpent but the god Zeus who slays it. The story's locations around the Mediterranean are shown in Map 2.7.

Map 2.7: Places in the Typhon story



### [2:13] Typhon myth

#### Orientation

In revenge for the destruction of the giants, Mother Earth lay with Tartarus, and brought forth her youngest child, Typhon.



## Complication1

Typhon was the largest monster ever born. From the thighs downwards he was nothing but coiled serpents, and his arms had countless serpents' heads instead of hands. His ass-head touched the sky, his vast wings darkened the sun, fire flashed from his eyes, and flaming rocks hurtled from his mouth. He came rushing towards Olympus.

## Evaluation

As he rushed towards them, the gods fled in terror to Egypt, where they disguised themselves as animals, Zeus becoming a ram,... Athene alone stood her ground, and taunted Zeus with cowardice.

## Resolution (temporary)

Resuming his true form, Zeus threw a thunderbolt at Typhon, and followed this with a sweep of the same flint sickle that had served to castrate his grandfather Uranus. Wounded and shouting, Typhon fled to Mt Casius, which looms over Syria to the north.

## Complication2

There the two grappled. Typhon wound his myriad coils around Zeus, disarmed him of his sickle, and after severing the sinews of his hands and feet with it, dragged him into the Corycian Cave. Zeus is immortal but now he could not move a finger, and Typhon had hidden the sinews in a bear-skin, over which Delphyne [a serpent-tailed sister monster] stood ground.

## Evaluation

The news of Zeus' defeat spread dismay amongst the gods.

## Resolution

But Hermes and Pan went secretly to the cave, where Pan frightened Delphyne with a sudden horrible shout, while Hermes skilfully abstracted the sinews and replaced them on Zeus' limbs. Zeus returned to Olympus, and mounted upon a chariot drawn by winged horses, once more pursued Typhon with thunderbolts. Typhon reached Mount Haemus in Thrace and picking up whole mountains hurled them at Zeus. But Zeus interposed thunderbolts, so that they rebounded on the monster, wounding him frightfully. The streams of Typhon's blood gave Mt Haemus its name. He fled towards Sicily where Zeus ended the running fight by hurling Mt Aetna upon him, and the fire belches from its core to this day.

Graves 1955:133

This narrative pattern is comparable in several respects to that of the *Piltati* story, except that the Resolution is to kill the serpent instead of becoming one (a common trope in Indo-European and Semitic mythology). The *Typhon* myth is also a serial narrative with a temporary Resolution and second Complication. Again the attitudinal reactions of the protagonists evaluate the Complications and expect Resolutions. First the gods' terror evaluates *Typhon's* horrible description and aggressive action, but *Athena's* call to courage expects a victorious solution. Then the gods' dismay evaluates *Zeus's* temporary defeat and compounds our desire for his victory. As with the *Piltati* myth, material evidence of *Zeus's* victory is manifested in the landscape, in the bloody colours of Mt Haemus and the fiery character of Mt Aetna.

It is surely interesting that traditional stories from widely divergent cultures can share so much of their generic organisation and their fields, along with their social functions to encode certain ideological principles, such as the gendered mode of production in Pitjantjatjara society, or the military expansionism of Hellenic Greece.<sup>27</sup> But despite their similarities the myths differ markedly in the value they are afforded in contemporary European culture, in Australia and elsewhere: the Greek myths are treasured as artefacts of classical European civilisation, studied for their archetypal insights into human nature, while Indigenous Australian myths are generally regarded as childish explanations of physical phenomena - 'just-so-stories'. This attitude certainly has its roots in imperial propaganda, that infantilised the peoples and

cultures conquered by the European empires. It was in this climate that Kipling invented the just-so-story genre which is still the dominant template for interpreting Australian mythology,<sup>28</sup> evidenced in the school writing task to which Conal responded in his story *How the sparrow could glide* [1:10].

However the reason for this misinterpretation also lies to some extent in the way the myths themselves work as layered texts. At first glance they are partly about ordinary activities and emotions of people, partly about transformations into metaphysical creatures, and partly about creation of the landscape. This is the level accessible to children and the uninitiated, but to those in the know what is more significant are the abstract principles of social and natural order that such stories encode. In the Piltati myth these include marital and economic relations between the genders, and the spiritual basis of patrilineal land ownership (the present Piltati clan descends from the wanampi brothers). These levels of interpretation are revealed as individuals grow older, but are only meaningful in relation to the whole system of social principles encoded in the culture's mythological system, and its associated religious songs and ceremonies. Every landform in the entire Australian continent was once associated with such a sacred story, interconnected in complex networks of 'Dreaming tracks' or 'songlines', where the ancestor beings travelled over the country in creation times.

These 'inner' levels of interpretation are well known to scholars of the Greek myths, which would consequently never be regarded as simply just-so-stories. But they are not available to the average European on hearing apparently bizarre stories of other peoples, and unfortunately the surface interpretation often resonates with the widely held if unconscious view that other cultures lack the sophistication of European civilisation. If it were possible to treat Indigenous mythologies as part of our national heritage, as much as ancient Greek or Hebrew myths, it could perhaps help our transplanted European culture to find its place in the Australian landscape. The power of origin myths in shaping and holding group identities is well known. But story genres in general are clearly very powerful resources for cultural reproduction, which may have been a key factor in their evolution in human societies, and the reason for their extraordinary persistence across time and space.

## **2.6 News stories - new kinds of stories**

To this point we have explored types of stories, and their social functions in sharing a record of events, an emotional reaction, a moral judgement, a personal response or the resolution of a problem. We have found that these story types may be realised in various modes, including oral storytelling, written literature and song, and we have found them in various cultural contexts, including contemporary and pre-modern cultures of Indigenous Australia and Europe. In a preliminary survey of stories across fifteen language families (Rose 2005c), we have also found that traditional stories seem to be dominated by the generic patterns of narrative and exemplum, with some anecdotes. This suggests to us that these members of the story family persist because they are highly functional across diverse cultural formations, including the hunting-gathering, pastoralist, farming, and urban cultures surveyed in that study. The work of Labov & Waletzky and many others has also shown how stories tend to follow comparable patterns in contemporary industrial communities.

On the other hand, the rise of modernism has undoubtedly sparked significant changes in patterns of stories, as it has led to the development of other genres in the new social institutions of science, industry and bureaucracy. A very recent expansion in story genres is the evolution of the modern news story around the turn of the 19th century, described by Ledema, Feez & White 1994. Until this point, newspapers had tended to appeal to sectional readerships, and reporting consisted of sequential recounts written for specific audiences. However when broadsheets appeared for mass audiences from the 1890s, the nature of the stories began to change. The need for a sensational lead to attract readers met that a story might begin at any point in the sequence, and jump about in time as it presented different aspects of the events. Furthermore, a multiplicity of sources for a story and varying interests of readers met a shift from a single point of view on an event, to multiple points of view, each elaborating the event anew as the news story unfolded. The development of these patterns over a century is described in Ledema 1997.

These patterns are illustrated here with two news stories: the first reports the reaction of the neo-conservative government of Prime Minister John Howard to the *Bringing Them Home* report, showing how news stories are presented from various perspectives; the second reports the response of the Howard government to the crisis of refugees attempting to enter Australia, showing how news stories jump around in time.

When the *Bringing them Home* report was released in May 1997, newly elected Prime Minister Howard had his ministers attack the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) and its chairman, Sir Ronald Wilson, over the report, which found that the policy of Indigenous child removal constituted genocide under the UN definition of the term, and recommended a national apology and compensation for the suffering it caused. Howard also allowed the extreme views of Pauline Hanson to be aired in parliament without rebuttal, and later echoed them himself. As more and more state governments, churches and other organisations said sorry, Howard offered a 'personal apology' but refused to apologise on behalf of the nation, claiming that: "My view was that this generation can't be held accountable for the mistakes of past generations" (Gordon & Harvey 1997). The following story [2:14] from *The Australian* newspaper records the government's and Hanson's first reactions. The story's paragraphs have been numbered for discussion.

**[2:14] Government rejects genocide finding, compensation**

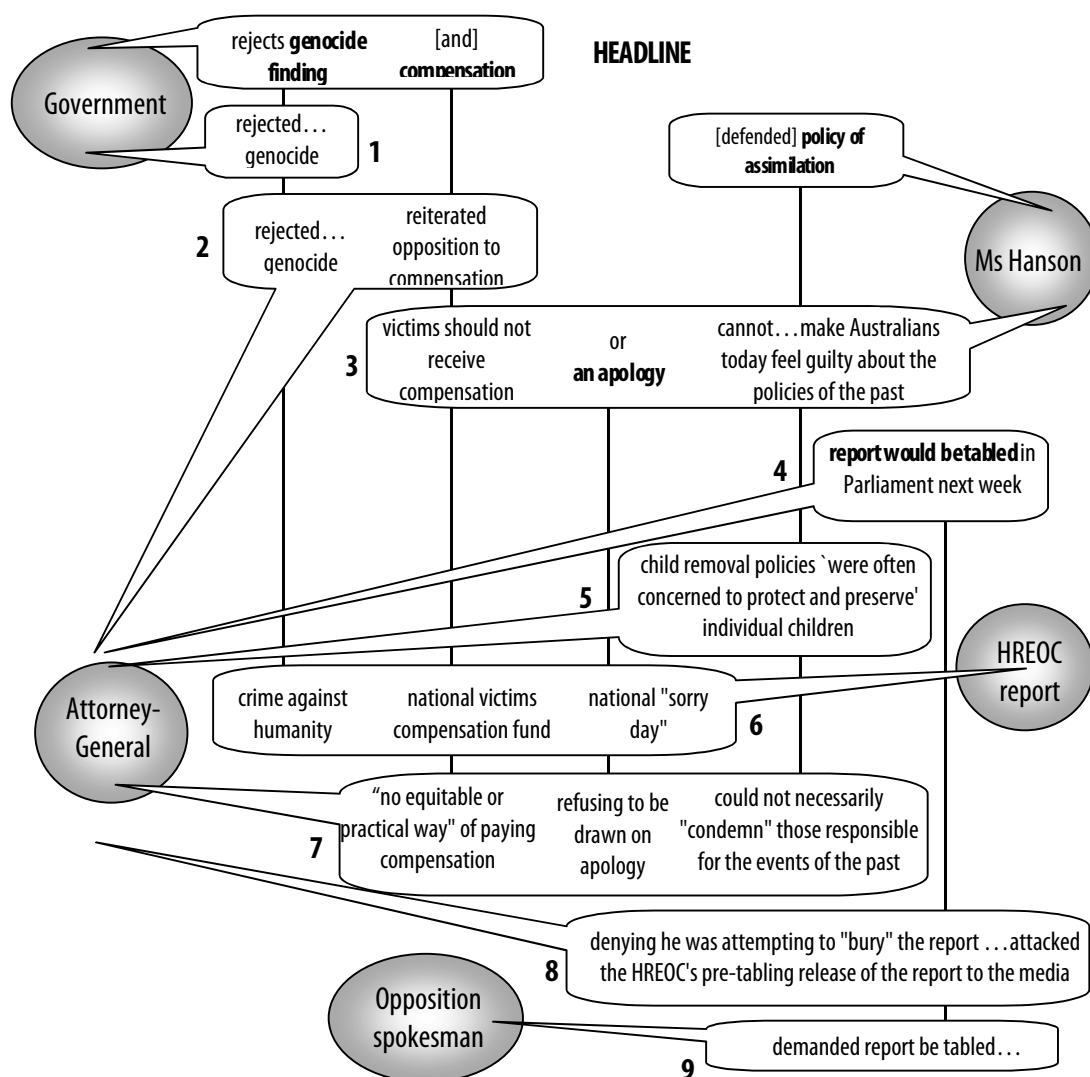
- 1 THE Federal Government yesterday rejected the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission finding that the forced removal of 100,000 Aboriginal children from their parents was genocide, as federal Independent MP Ms Pauline Hanson said many Aborigines "were only alive today" because of the policy of assimilation between 1910 and 1970.
- 2 In the Federal Government's first response to the commission's report into "the stolen children", the Attorney-General, Mr Williams, rejected the genocide finding as "flawed and wrong", and reiterated Canberra's opposition to compensation.
- 3 Ms Hanson said the victims should not receive an apology or compensation. "Many of the children that were taken away are only alive today because they were taken. They more than likely lived a better lifestyle and are healthier and better educated than they otherwise would have been," she said. I don't believe there is a need for an apology, these policies were well-meaning in their day. As with land rights, we can not continue to try and make Australians today feel guilty about the policies of the past." Society still removed children from families which do not look after their welfare, she said.

- 4 In a statement, Mr Williams said the Government "understands and appreciates the emotional and social significance" of the report for Aborigines and is committed to giving it "careful and proper consideration". He said the report would be tabled in Parliament next week.
- 5 In rejecting the commission's finding of genocide, Mr Williams said the UN convention on genocide defined it as an act intended "to destroy, in whole or in part" a racial group. "Adopting this view of the aim of removal is hard to reconcile with its (the commission's) own finding that child removal policies `were often concerned to protect and preserve' individual children," Mr Williams said.
- 6 The 689-page HREOC report has concluded the forced removal policies which continued until 1970 constituted a "crime against humanity", with many children emotionally, physically and sexually abused while in care. It has called for a national "sorry day" and a national victims compensation fund.
- 7 Mr Williams republished extracts from the Government's initial submission to the commission in which the Commonwealth stated it could see "no equitable or practical way" of paying compensation to stolen children. The Government had already voiced its opposition to the "notion of extravagant or divisive compensation claims", said Mr Williams, refusing to be drawn on the issue of an apology. He said the Government could not necessarily "condemn" those responsible for the events of the past.
- 8 Denying he was attempting to "bury" the report he received on April 5, Mr Williams said it would have been "inappropriate" to table it during Budget week and he did not have enough copies to table it earlier. He has attacked the HREOC's pre-tabling release of the report to the media on Tuesday.
- 9 The Opposition spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Daryl Melham, demanded the report be tabled, saying discussion in a "vacuum" was "not conducive to a good debate on the issue" (Sutherland & Windsor 1997:3).

The lead paragraph gives the nucleus of the story, expanding the headline, with the government's strategic attack on the report's genocide finding, and Hanson's defence of the assimilation policy. The story then oscillates between and expands these elements, and brings in other positions. Paragraph 2 introduces the voice of Howard's Attorney-General Williams to further attack the finding of genocide and recommendation for compensation. Paragraph 3 then switches to Pauline Hanson's voice rejecting the apology recommendation and expanding her defence of assimilation policies. Paragraph 4 returns to Williams introducing a new element of the story – the official tabling of the report in parliament. Paragraph 5 then continues with Williams, here echoing Hanson's defence of assimilation policies. Paragraph 6 introduces the voice of the HREOC report itself, to explain the genocide finding and introduce another recommendation for a national "sorry day". Paragraph 7 returns again to Williams reiterating his government's rejection of compensation and now echoing Hanson's rejection of an apology (for similar reasons). Paragraphs 8 and 9 return to the issue of the report's tabling, first with William's lame excuse for withholding it, and his attack on HREOC for forcing the government's hand, and then introducing the voice of the Opposition demanding it be tabled.

The pattern of alternation between voices and issues as the news story unfolds is diagrammed in Figure 2.5. The speakers are represented as projecting the issues (as speech bubbles), of which there are five: genocide, apology, compensation, past policies and tabling the report. The first mention of each issue is in bold, and further mentions are linked by vertical lines.

Figure 2.5: News story structured by alternating voices and issues



This switching from voice to voice differs from the representation of dialogue in stories, such as we saw in the novel *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* [2:4] and the Pitjantjatjara myth *Piltati* [2:12], which present one speaker then another in temporal sequence. Rather the sequence of speaking is chopped about in news stories to present various speakers and issues; the sequence of unfolding of the news story genre replaces the sequence of unfolding of the events it reports. We have referred to this tendency in written texts as organization according to 'text time vs field time'.

What we have not discussed here is the patterns of appraisal used by the speakers and journalists in [2:14] to engage and manipulate the reader. For a rich analysis of appraisal in news stories, see White 1997. The second news story [2:15] we have chosen is from *The Daily Telegraph* in August 2001. It reports an incident that brought international shame to Australia at the time, when the Howard government refused to allow the Norwegian container ship *MV Tampa*, that had rescued 438 refugees from a boat sinking in the Indian Ocean, to enter Australian waters at Christmas Island, off Western Australia. This text illustrates the way that action oriented news stories jump around in time. Here we have numbered each paragraph, and highlighted the wordings indicating the time of each event.

[2:15] **TURNED AWAY** - 'We have a lot of sick people on board. These people are in really bad shape'

- 1 DRIFTING 22km off Christmas Island and with food and supplies running low, Captain Arne Rinnan was **last night** trying to maintain order on his besieged ship **after being turned away by** Australia and warned off by Indonesia.
- 2 The Norwegian captain of the MS Tampa **last night** told The Daily Telegraph by satellite phone many of the 438 men, women and children on his ship were ill **after their 11th day at sea**.
- 3 "We have a lot of sick people on board. They are vomiting, have diarrhoea. These people are in really bad shape," Capt Rinnan said. "I have tried to explain that situation to Australian authorities."
- 4 But Prime Minister John Howard said **after a cabinet meeting yesterday afternoon** that the ship **would not be allowed to enter** Australian waters.
- 5 "It is our view that as a matter of international law, this matter is something that **must be resolved** between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Norway," Mr Howard said.
- 6 **Hours later**, the Indonesian Government responded by saying the boat people -- who are believed to be **from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Indonesia** -- **could not return to Indonesia**. Capt Rinnan told The Daily Telegraph he had not yet informed the boat people **last night** that Australia had refused them permission to land at Christmas Island.
- 7 Asked if he was afraid of violence, he said: "Not **at the moment**, but we **were** and we **will be** if they are turned away. They are starting to get frustrated."
- 8 The 26 women, 43 children and 369 men were in quarters below deck, and extra toilets had been installed.
- 9 The 262m long ship, which is fully loaded with mixed cargo headed for Singapore, has facilities intended only for the 27 Norwegian officers and Filipino crew. The captain said he and the crew **had done** the best they could for the boat people, but the situation was uncomfortable.
- 10 Some asylum seekers were dehydrated, two were unconscious, one had a broken leg, and two women were pregnant -- one in her third trimester.
- 11 Although Mr Howard said Australia had finished with the issue, **by late yesterday** no-one had told Capt Rinnan.
- 12 He said he was still hopeful Australian authorities **would allow him to enter** the waters off Christmas Island.
- 13 "If we are not allowed to go to Christmas Island, it **will be** very difficult for us," he said.
- 14 "This **might turn into a situation** where ... well, I don't know **what will happen**."
- 15 Capt Rinnan said he feared many **would carry out** their threat to jump overboard if they were not permitted to land at Christmas Island.
- 16 When he picked up the distress call **24 hours earlier**, he believed he would be carrying out a rescue operation, delivering the boat people to the nearest Indonesian port.
- 17 **After reaching** the stricken 20m wooden vessel, KM Palapa 1, the crew helped the boat people on board.
- 18 With the strong south-easterly winds which buffet the area at this time of year, it took the Tampa crew **three hours** to get them all on board.
- 19 "We helped them up the gangway, and they were running. It wasn't very orderly, they were running to get on the ship," said Capt Rinnan.
- 20 They were given basic food and the women and children were provided with blankets.
- 21 Capt Rinnan said the boat people had become distressed when told they might have to return to Indonesia **earlier in the day**, with some threatening to jump overboard.
- 22 "I said we are heading towards Indonesia and they said 'No, you must head to Australia'."
- 23 Capt Rinnan said they were "just hanging around" **late yesterday**, waiting for Australian officials to come on board (Tsavdaridis 2001:1).

Figure 2.6 diagrams the disjunction in [2:15] between the text time of the news story, and the field time of the events it reports (modelled on an analysis developed by Iedema 1997). Six general time periods are indicated for the events: **11 days ago** when the refugees first set sail, **24 hours ago** when the Tampa picked them up, **early yesterday** when they were refused permission to enter Australia or return to Indonesia, **late yesterday** when Howard announced it was a matter for Norway and

Indonesia, but had not informed the captain of the Tampa, **last night** when Captain Rinnan spoke to the press but had not told the refugees, and **possible future** events, when Rinnan was still hopeful Australia would allow him into Australian waters.

Figure 2.6: Text time reorders field time in news stories

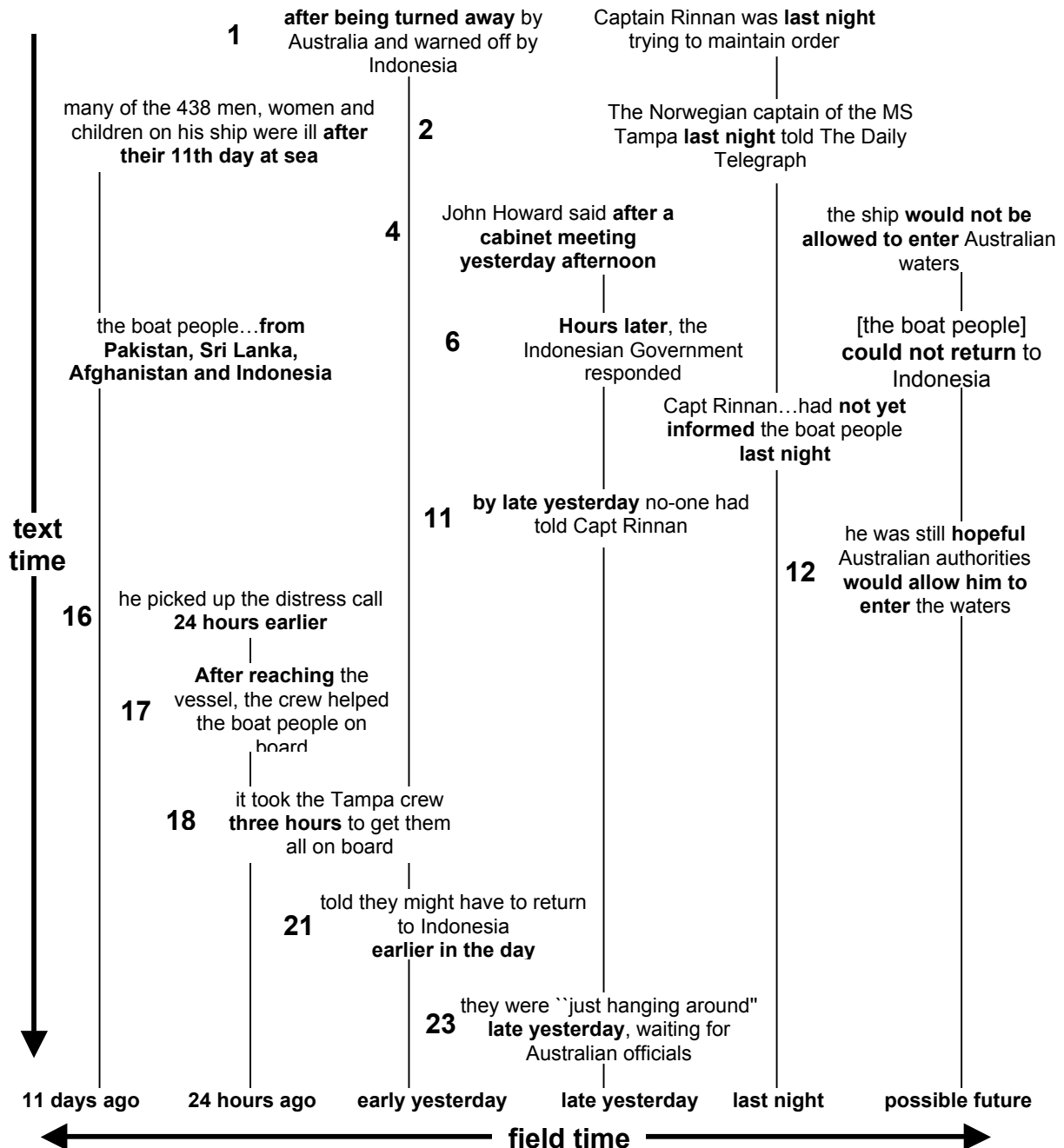


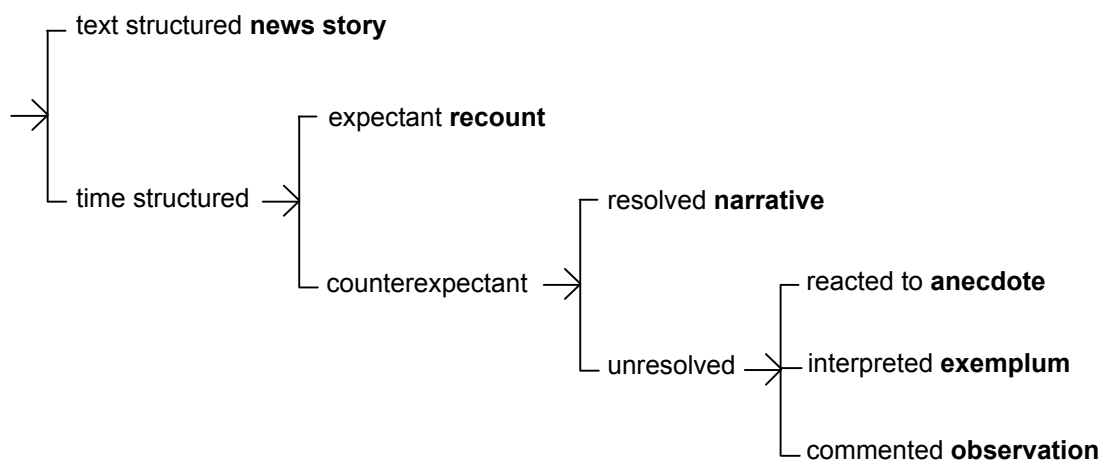
Figure 2.6 shows how the first twelve paragraphs jump forward and back, and forward again, between time periods. Paragraphs 16-23 then go back in time to tell the story of the refugees rescue in three temporal steps, and conclude with their “hanging around” on the ship late yesterday. Paragraphs without explicit temporal markers are not included here.

As it turned out, Captain Rinnan eventually defied the Howard government and entered the waters of Christmas Island, forcing the government to take the refugees off the Tampa, and becoming an international hero in the process. Nevertheless, Howard shamelessly manipulated the event to foster racial fears in the midst of an election campaign which he went on to win. We return to these events from the perspective of history genres in Chapter 3 below.

## 2.7 A system of story genres

We are now in a position to sum up the types of stories we have surveyed, as a system network in Figure 2.7. Firstly, in the previous section we saw that news stories are opposed to other types, in that they privilege textual organisation over temporal sequence; we might say they are text structured rather than time structured. Within the other time structured stories, recounts are then opposed to other types which involve a disruption to an expected course of events; that is recounts record an expectant sequence of events, while the others involve a counterexpectant stage. Within counterexpectant stories, narratives are then opposed to those that terminate with an attitudinal response (whereas counterexpectancy is resolved in narratives, following its evaluation). Finally, stories that terminate with a response are distinguished by the type of evaluation: anecdotes involve an emotional reaction, exemplums involve a moral interpretation, and observations involve a personal comment appreciating the events.

Figure 2.7: System of story genres



## 2.8 Story phases - another perspective

We have been focusing so far on patterns that distinguish types of stories, including their generic staging, their evaluations, and their broad social functions. Here we will adjust our focus to show how the story family shares a common set of resources for moving sequences forward and engaging readers, which we'll refer to as phases. From a segmental perspective, phases consist of one or more messages,<sup>29</sup> and one or more phases constitute a generic stage. While the stages of a genre are relatively stable components of its organisation, that we can recognise in some form in text after text of the genre, phases within each stage are much more variable, and may



be unique to the particular text. Stages unfold in highly predictable sequences, but phases may or may not occur within any stage, and in variable sequences.

Related work on discourse phases includes Gregory & Malcolm (1981), for whom phases “characterize stretches of discourse in which there is a significant measure of consistency and congruity”, Hoey (1983) who describes patterns of problem-solution phases in stories, Jordan (1984) who extends problem-solution phases to all manner of texts, and Macken-Horarik (1996, 1998, 2003) and Martin (1996) on phases in literary narrative. Our perspective on story phases here goes beyond Gregory & Malcolm’s work on criteria for delineating phases in general, by identifying specific types of phases characteristic of stories. And it extends Hoey’s and Jordan’s work which is centred on problem-solution patterns.

Here we describe some common types of phases that are used to construct the stages of stories. We have found these phase types in a wide range of oral and literate stories in English and other languages. Each phase type performs a certain function to engage the listener/reader as the story unfolds, by construing its field of activities, people, things and places, by evoking emotional responses, or by linking it to common experiences and interpretations of life. These functions are summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Common story phases

<b>phase types</b>	<b>engagement functions</b>
setting	presenting context (identities, activities, locations)
description	evoking context (sensual imagery)
events	succeeding events
effect	material outcome
reaction	behavioural/attitudinal outcome
problem	counterexpectant creating tension
solution	counterexpectant releasing tension
comment	intruding narrator’s comments
reflection	intruding participants’ thoughts

While some of the terms for story phases resemble those used to denote genre stages, we distinguish stages with Initial Capitals and phases with lower case. Importantly, these are general terms for phase types, but any phase may be labelled more specifically according to its function in a particular story sequence, and there are undoubtedly other general phase types we have not covered here.

In terms of Halliday’s 2004 model of logicosemantic relations, setting and description phases elaborate the story line, by presenting or describing identities, locations or activities. Event phases succeed in time (‘then’), without the implication of consequence or concession. Effects and reactions are consequences of preceding phases (‘so’): effects are material outcomes; reactions are participants’ behaviour or attitudes in response to preceding phases. Problems and solutions are counterexpectant (‘but’): problems create tension by countering a positive expectancy; solutions release tension by countering the negative expectancy created by problems. The relation of comment and reflection phases to the story is more like projection, as saying projects locutions and thinking projects ideas. Comments

suspend the flow of activity to intrude the narrator's comments, while reflections intrude the thoughts of participants.

Shifts from one phase to the next are typically signalled to the listener by a significant change in the starting point of a clause, its Theme. This most commonly includes a switch in the major identity presented as Theme, and sometimes involves a shift in time or other circumstance, as in the marked Themes we have noted above, and conjunctions can also help to signal phase shifts, particularly concessive 'but'. These thematic variations are indicative of shifts in field and tenor from one phase to the next. But these register shifts themselves are realised by lexical changes, in the activity, the people, places and so on, and also by appraisals in the case of evaluative phases (reactions, comments, reflections). In the presentations below, Themes are underlined up to the first participant, to show their roles in signalling transitions from phase to phase.

These patterns are illustrated in [2:16], the opening narrative from the Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, in which King Shantenu falls in love with a woman who marries him but then throws all their children into a river.<sup>30</sup> The story is translated from an oral version in the south Indian language Kodava (see Rose 2005c for more detailed analysis). As for the Pitjantjatjara story [2:12] above, the original discourse patterns are maintained as closely as possible in this translation.

#### [2:16] Shantenu Raaje

##### Orientation

setting	<u>Once upon a time, the king of Hastinapura, called Shantenu,</u> went to the riverside to hunt. <u>While hunting, he</u> saw a very beautiful woman.
reaction	<u>Having seen that woman, he</u> fell in love. <u>It was her he</u> wished to make a wife.
problem	<u>But she</u> said "I will become your woman, but you may never ask me any question."
solution	<u>He</u> then married her, and to him a child was born.

##### Complication

problem	<u>However the child</u> she threw into the river. <u>In the same way, his next six children</u> she threw into the river, <u>and the seventh child</u> she also threw into the river.
reaction	<u>When she was going to throw the eighth child into the river, he</u> asked why she was throwing the child.
problem	<u>Then she</u> said "Because you have put the word to me after all, "I am going to leave you, and that child I will also take."

##### Evaluation

reaction	<u>Shantenu the king</u> was very sad in the palace.
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##### Resolution

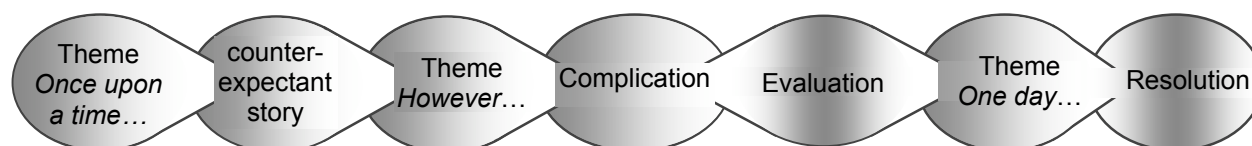
setting	<u>One day he</u> went hunting again.
problem	<u>There he</u> caught sight of a small boy. <u>That boy</u> knew who the king was <u>but the king</u> didn't know that it was his son.
solution	<u>Just then his wife</u> arrived there. <u>She</u> said "That is your son and you may take him to the palace." <u>Having said this she</u> disappeared.

Baumgartner in Ebert 1996

The narrative staging is quite clear in [2:16]: the story genre is signalled by the marked Theme *Once upon a time*, and the Complication is signalled by the concessive conjunction *However*. As illustrated in Figure 2.4 above, Shantenu's intense sadness both evaluates the Complication and expects the Resolution, which is signalled by the time Theme *One day...* The key organising principle in this

narrative sequence is **expectancy**: falling in love, marrying and having a child expect an ongoing series of happy events. Countering this expectancy with shocking behaviour, such as throwing the children in a river, creates tension that engages the listener. However the Complication is not entirely unexpected: the listener already knows that the story will involve countexpectancy, because the genre is flagged from the opening phrase *Once upon a time*, so that concessive *However* signals to us that a disruption is imminent. What we don't initially know is what form the disruption will take, and what kind of counterexpectant story to expect: the complicating problems create a trajectory of bad news that may or may not be resolved. A Resolution must thus counter this gloomy expectancy. But like the Complication, it is not entirely unexpected; a Resolution is flagged by the Evaluation, so that the marked Theme *One day* signals it for us. This sequence is diagrammed as pulses of expectancy in Figure 2.8. *Once upon a time* expects the genre, which together with *However* expects the Complication. The Evaluation both appraises the Complication, and together with *One day* expects the Resolution.

Figure 2.8: Pulses of expectancy in narrative



This pattern of expectancy is repeated at the smaller scale of phases within each stage. Minimally each generic stage consists of just one phase, so that *Shantenu Raaje* would still be a narrative as follows:

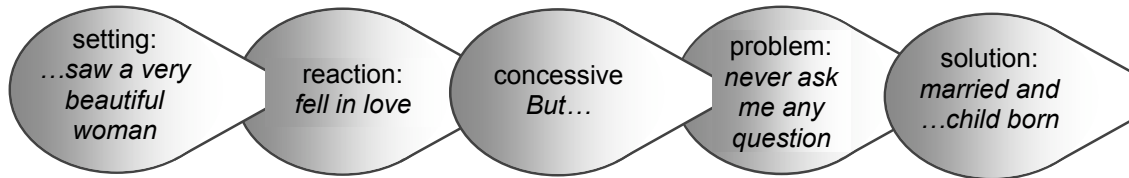
[2:16'] **Shantenu Raaje**

Orientation	Once upon a time the king of Hastinapura, called Shantenu, saw a very beautiful woman, fell in love, then married her, and a child was born.
Complication	However she said "I am going to leave you, and that child I will also take."
Evaluation	Shantenu the king was very sad in the palace.
Resolution	One day he caught sight of a small boy. His wife arrived and said "That is your son and you may take him to the palace."

However such a narrative is hardly engaging. Instead the narrator manipulates expectancy more subtly through a series of phases in each stage. As we said above, the shift from one phase to another is often signalled by a switch in identity, and sometimes also by conjunctions or marked Themes. But these are merely signals; the narrative is carried forward by swings in expectancy from phase to phase. The Orientation begins with a setting phase involving Shantenu in two activities, hunting by the river and seeing a woman. This setting already expects a probable range of events, which Shantenu's reaction of falling in love narrows and intensifies. This happy expectancy is momentarily countered by a problem, signalled by counterexpectant *But*, the woman's odd proviso to never ask any question. This cannot be the story's Complication as the potential disruption is immediately countered by marrying and have a child. By mildly disrupting the happy course of events, the overall effect is to intensify expectancy for an idyllic outcome, while paradoxically encouraging the seed of doubt. These pulses of expectancy are

illustrated in Figure 2.9. The setting expects Shantenu's reaction, which expects marriage, but this is countered by the problem of the woman's proviso, signalled by *But*. This negative trajectory is then countered by the solution of marriage and child.

Figure 2.9: Phases as pulses of expectancy



Likewise, the Complication involves two problems, and Shantenu's reaction to the first problem, by asking his wife the prohibited question, gives rise to the second problem of her leaving him. This chain of events invites us to identify with Shantenu's predicament and empathise with his *very sad* reaction. The listener thus expects and desires a Resolution, but tension is further strung out in the Resolution stage, by the problem of not recognising his son, making the final solution an even more satisfying release. There is thus a kind of fractal relation between narrative stages and phases, each a mirror of the other at different scales, in both form and function. As [2:16] shows, settings, problems, reactions and solutions may occur in any stage.

Within Complications, problem-reaction patterns are commonly repeated, with the problems getting worse, and the reactions more intense, building up tension in a story. These patterns are illustrated in [2:17], from short story by Australian children's author Paul Jennings. At this point in the story, two boys are trapped in a rubbish tip at midnight, which they have heard is haunted by a ghost.

#### [2:18] A Good Tip for Ghosts

...

##### Complication

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| problem1    | <u>A little way off behind some old rusting car bodies,</u> I thought I heard a noise. <u>Pete</u> was looking in the same direction.  |
| reaction    | I was too terrified to move. I wanted to run but my legs just wouldn't work. I opened my mouth to scream but nothing came out. <u>Pete</u> stood staring as if he was bolted to the ground.  |
| problem2    | <u>It</u> was a rustling tapping noise. <u>It</u> sounded like someone digging around in the junk, turning things over. <u>It</u> was coming in our direction.   |
| reaction    | I just stood there pretending to be a dead tree or post. I wished the moon would go in and stop shining on my white face.  |
| problem3    | <u>The tapping</u> grew louder. <u>It</u> was coming closer.   |
| description | <u>And then we</u> saw it. Or him. Or whatever it was. An old man, with a battered hat. <u>He</u> was poking the ground with a bent stick. <u>He</u> was rustling in the rubbish. <u>He</u> came on slowly. <u>He</u> was limping. <u>He</u> was bent and seemed to be holding his old, dirty trousers up with one hand. <u>He</u> came towards us. With a terrible shuffle. |
| problem4    | <u>Pete and I</u> both noticed it at the same time. <u>His</u> feet weren't touching the ground. <u>He</u> was moving across the rubbish about 30 centimetres above the surface. <u>It</u> was the ghost of Old Man Chompers.  |

##### Evaluation

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| reaction | <u>We</u> both screeched the same word at exactly the same moment. "Run!" <u>And did we</u> run. <u>We</u> tore through the waist-high rubbish. Scrambling. Screaming. Scrabbling. Not noticing the waves of silent rats slithering out of our way. Not feeling the scratches of dumped junk. Not daring to turn and snatch a stare at the horrible spectre who hobbled behind us. |
|----------|--|

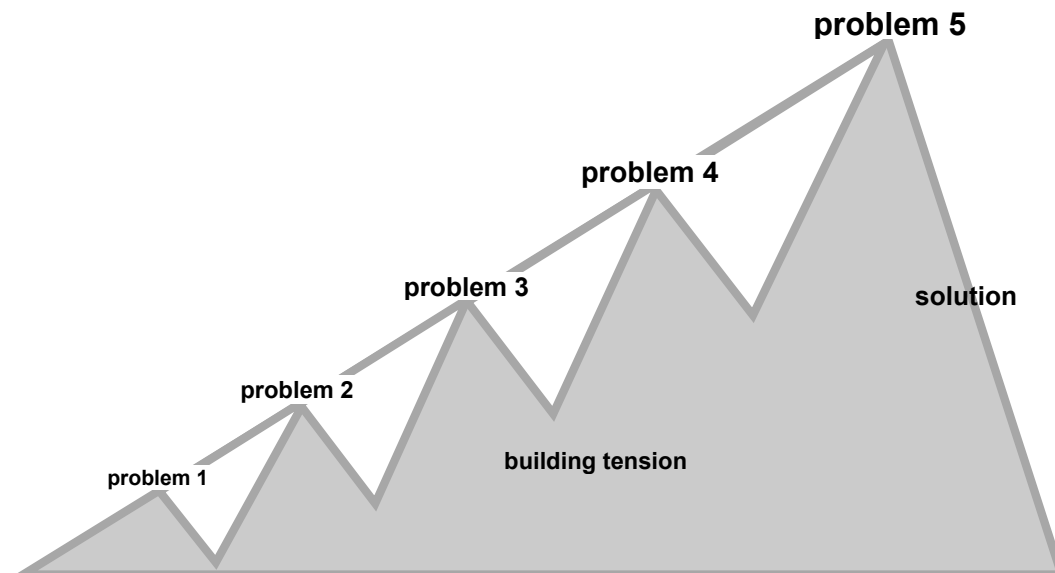
**Resolution**

solution Finally, with bursting lungs, we crawled into the back of an old car.  
 problem It had no doors or windows  
 reaction so we crouched low, not breathing, not looking, not even hoping.

Jennings 1997:53

In this extract the Complication and Resolution stages are strongly signalled by marked Themes. But within the Complication, Jennings expertly manipulates a series of worsening problems and intensifying reactions, to build tension that reaches a crescendo in the Evaluation, before release in the Resolution. While the sequence of problems and reactions carries the action forwards, Jennings also uses a description phase here, suspending the action and so contributing to the build up of tension. Description phases are common in longer stories; like settings, they elaborate the story line by evoking images of people, things or locations. This pattern of mounting tension is illustrated in Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: Building tension within a Complication



We can reiterate here that shifts from one story phase to another are realised by lexical changes, in the activity, the people, places and so on, and often by appraisals in evaluative phases; but types of phases are not determined by grammatical categories. For example, reactions may take many forms, including attitudinal attributes: *I was too terrified to move*, by ideas and locutions: *I wished the moon would go in, we both screeched... "Run!"*, or by actions *We tore through the waist-high rubbish*. Likewise, settings, problems and solutions may be realised by actions: *Pete was looking, we crawled into the back*, by locutions or ideas: *Pete and I both noticed it*, or by attributes *It was a rustling tapping noise*. Dialogue may be pressed into the service of any type of story phase, as [2:16] illustrates; indeed long sequences of activity may be carried forward in the form of dialogue, realising one phase after another.

The problem-reaction series in [2:17] also further illustrates the potential for fractal relations between patterns of phases and genre stages. The short story of which this is an extract is a serial narrative with five Complications that build in intensity, and as

the intensity builds, so too do the Evaluations, as do the problems and reactions in this extract, which is the fourth of these Complications. Resolutions release the tension following each Complication, but like the one here they are only temporary until the last. Series of Complications and temporary Resolutions were illustrated above in the myths [2:12] and [2:13], and are typical of literary narratives, described by Rothery and Stenglin 1994. This phenomenon may also be found on the larger scale of whole novels, as we suggested above for the novel *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*. The term **macro-genre** is used to refer to such large scale texts, further discussed in Chapter 4. Here we will briefly return to *Rabbit-Proof Fence* to illustrate how series of problems, descriptions and reactions can be subtly deployed in literary fiction.

#### [2:4'] Rabbit-Proof Fence anecdote

##### Orientation

events Molly and Gracie finished their breakfast and decided to take all their dirty clothes and wash them in the soak further down the river. They returned to the camp looking clean and refreshed and joined the rest of the family in the shade for lunch of tinned corned beef, damper and tea.

##### Remarkable Event

problem The family had just finished eating when all the camp dogs began barking, making a terrible din. "Shut up," yelled their owners, throwing stones at them. The dogs whined and skulked away.

Then all eyes turned to the cause of the commotion.

description A tall, rugged white man stood on the bank above them. He could easily have been mistaken for a pastoralist or a grazier with his tanned complexion except that he was wearing khaki clothing.

reaction Fear and anxiety swept over them when they realised that the fateful day they had been dreading had come at last. They always knew that it would only be a matter of time before the government would track them down.

description When Constable Riggs, Protector of Aborigines, finally spoke his voice was full of authority and purpose.

reaction They knew without a doubt that he was the one who took children in broad daylight - not like the evil spirits who came into their camps at night.

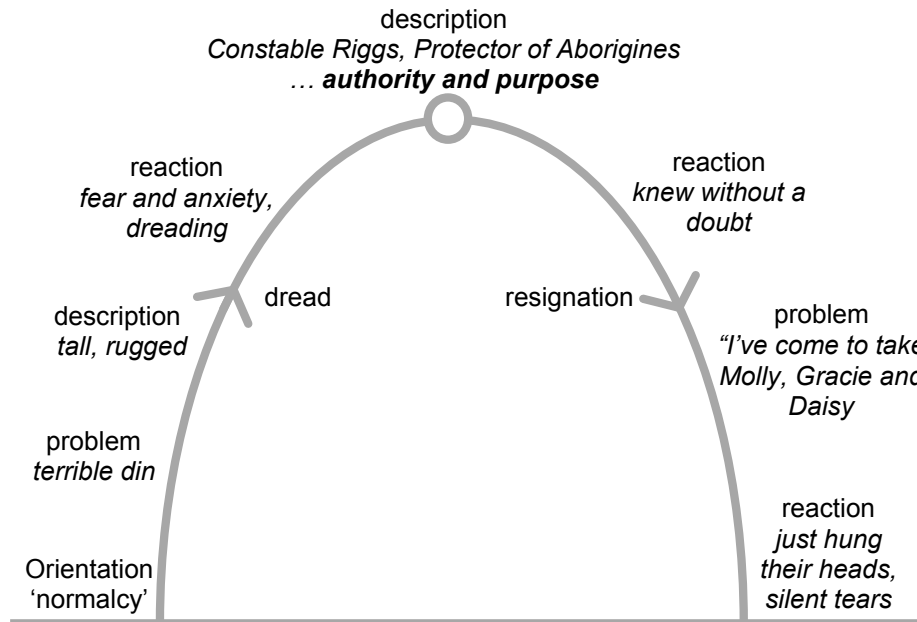
problem "I've come to take Molly, Gracie and Daisy, the three half-caste girls, with me to Moore Rive Native Settlement," he informed the family.

reaction The old man nodded to show that he understood what Riggs was saying. The rest of the family just hung their heads, refusing to face the man who was taking their daughters away from them. Silent tears welled in their eyes and trickled down their cheeks.

The Orientation here consists not of a setting phase, but a series of events. The peace of the Orientation is disrupted by the ominous portent of dogs barking, so that the following description of an anonymous white man expects the family's reaction of *fear and anxiety*. The description of Constable Riggs' identity and authority expects their reaction of certainty *without a doubt*, and then his intention to take the girls expects their reaction of *silent tears*. The author manages appraisal through these phases to account for the family's resignation to the abduction of their children. First there is a surge of attitude at the dogs barking, which then pauses to appreciate the white man as *tall* and *rugged*, but affect surges again in the family's reaction to recognising him. The next description is strongly marked by the circumstantial Theme *When Constable Riggs, Protector of Aborigines, finally spoke*. The judgement of his voice with *authority and purpose* thus serves as a pivot, from the family's fearful reaction, to resigned acceptance. Their next reactions go from certainty *without a doubt*, to resignation *just hung their heads*, to passive sorrow in *silent tears*. The

appraisals chart a parabolic rise to the first reaction and descent to the last, diagrammed in Figure 2.11.

Figure 2.11: Patterns of appraisal and phases in [2:4]



Within the overall anecdote pattern of Event<sup>^</sup> Reaction, the author thus leads the reader's emotions through a seesaw of problems and reactions, to induce us to identify with the feelings of the family, and so to empathise with their resignation to the invader's final act of barbarity.

While the phases discussed so far elaborate or enhance the sequence of activities in a story, the relation of comment and reflection phases to the story is more like projection. In comments, the narrator intrudes their thoughts into the activity sequence to comment on the events or participants. Fiona's recount includes three instances: the first two interrupt the sequence of events in the Record stage, commenting on her mother's feelings from the perspectives of past events and present experience, while the third reorients the last events with later knowledge.

#### [2:1"] Fiona's recount

##### Orientation

setting      1936 it was. I would have been five. We went visiting Ernabella the day the police came. Our great-uncle Sid was leasing Ernabella from the government at that time so we went there.

**Record**

- setting We had been playing all together, just a happy community
- problem and the air was filled with screams because the police came and mothers tried to hide their children and blacken their children's faces and tried to hide them in caves.
- events We three, Essie, Brenda and me together with our three cousins ... the six of us were put on an old truck and taken to Oodnadatta which was hundreds of miles away and then we got there in the darkness. My mother had to come with us.
- comment1 She had already lost her eldest daughter down to the Children's Hospital because she had infantile paralysis, polio, and now there was the prospect of losing her three other children, all the children she had.
- events I remember that she came in the truck with us curled up in the foetal position.
- comment2 Who can understand that, the trauma of knowing that you're going to lose all your children? We talk about it from the point of view of our trauma but - our mother - to understand what she went through, I don't think anyone can really understand that.
- events It was 1936 and we went to the United Aborigines Mission in Oodnadatta. We got there in the dark and then we didn't see our mother again. She just kind of disappeared into the darkness.

**Reorientation**

- comment3 I've since found out in the intervening years that there was a place they called the natives' camp and obviously my mother would have been whisked to the natives' camp. There was no time given to us to say goodbye to our mothers.

While Fiona does not use marked Themes to signal stage shifts, the transition from Orientation to Record is marked by a shift in time, from simple past *we went*, to past-in-past *we had been playing*, signalling that the events are about to commence; and phase shifts are signalled by identity switches. The awful deeds recounted here are analysed as events phases rather than problems because they are expected by the story line established in the initial problem, rather than being counterexpectant. Fiona comments on the events but does not treat them as a coherent incident to interpret, so the genre remains a recount, despite her comments.

In contrast to comments, reflections intrude the participants' thoughts, either as dialogue, or as 'inner speech'; they are a pervasive feature of literary fiction, but are less common in oral stories and children's fiction. Here for example are the opening paragraphs from Grahame Greene's novel *The Quiet American* [2:19]. This segment of the novel is presented as a dispassionate recount. Like much literary fiction it begins without an Orientation, as though the reader is already familiar with the setting.

**[2:19] The Quiet American****Record**

- events After dinner I waited for Pyle in my room over the Rue Catinat; he had said 'I'll be with you at the latest by ten,' and when midnight struck I couldn't stay quiet any longer and went down into the street.
- description A lot of old women in black trousers squatted on the landing: it was February and I suppose too hot for them in bed. One trishaw driver pedalled slowly by towards the riverfront and I could see lamps burning where they had disembarked the new American planes. There was no sign of Pyle anywhere in the street.
- reflection Of course, I told myself, he might have been detained for some reason at the American Legation, but surely in that case he would have telephoned to the restaurant - he was very meticulous about small courtesies.

Greene 1955/73:11

As this example illustrates, reflections tend to be on the meaning of activities; the activity is construed as a token, and its value is given by the reflection. Although this example is in first person, reflections are equally common in third person. The



following example [2:20] is from a short story that has been used for subject English examinations in Australian secondary schools.

[2:20] **The Weapon** (extract)

Orientation

setting	The room was quiet in the dimness of early evening. Dr James Graham, key scientist of a very important project, sat in his favorite chair, thinking. It was so still that he could hear the turning of pages in the next room as his son leafed through a picture book.
comment	Often Graham did his best work, his most creative thinking, under these circumstances, sitting alone in an unlighted room in his own apartment after the day's regular work.
problem	But tonight his mind would not work constructively. Mostly he thought about his mentally arrested son - his only son - in the next room.
reflection	The thoughts were loving thoughts, not the bitter anguish he had felt years ago when he had first learned of the boy's condition. The boy was happy; wasn't that the main thing? And to how many men is given a child who will always be a child, who will not grow up to leave him? Certainly that was a rationalization, but what is wrong with rationalization when it...

This example displays the contrast between a narrator's comments on a field of activity, and a protagonist's reflection on its meaning. This story is used in Martin 1996 to illustrate another level of phase analysis, in which two or more fields are woven into a literary narrative (see also Macken-Horarik 1999, 2003, Rothery & Macken 1991, Rothery & Stenglin 1994). While the phase types we have described here are used, as in other stories, to carry the story forward and engage the reader, they also realise multiple fields in the story that are continually interrupted to manipulate expectancy. In the above example these include the field of Dr Graham's academic work, which is interrupted by the domestic field of reflections on his son, a disruption that is explicitly signalled by concessive *But*. As we noted at the beginning of this section, phases may be specific to the field of a particular story, and this is illustrated by the shifts in field in this literary narrative. The following extract shows both levels of phase analysis, along with narrative staging. Each expected course, that is frustrated by the interruption, is also given in brackets.

[2:20'] **The Weapon** (extract)

Orientation

work activity

setting	The room was quiet in the dimness of early evening. Dr James Graham, key scientist of a very important project, sat in his favorite chair, thinking. It was so still that he could hear the turning of pages in the next room as his son leafed through a picture book.
comment	Often Graham did his best work, his most creative thinking, under these circumstances, sitting alone in an unlighted room in his own apartment after the day's regular work.
[EXPECTING:	and tonight he was working on a particularly interesting problem...]

interrupted by domestic activity

problem	But tonight his mind would not work constructively. Mostly he thought about his mentally arrested son - his only son - in the next room.
reflection	The thoughts were loving thoughts, not the bitter anguish he had felt years ago when he had first learned of the boy's condition. The boy was happy; wasn't that the main thing? And to how many men is given a child who will always be a child, who will not grow up to leave him? Certainly that was a rationalization, but what is wrong with rationalization when it...

[EXPECTING: ...makes it possible to live with something that would be otherwise unbearable...]

**Complication****interrupted by service activity**

events	- The doorbell rang. Graham rose and turned on lights in the almost-dark room before he went through the hallway to the door.
reaction	He was not annoyed; tonight, at this moment, almost any interruption to his thoughts was welcome.
events	He opened the door. A stranger stood there: he said, 'Dr Graham? My name is Niemand; I'd like to talk to you. May I come in a moment?'
description	Graham looked at him. He was a small man, nondescript, obviously harmless - possibly a reporter or an insurance agent.
reaction	But it didn't matter what he was. Graham found himself saying, 'Of course. Come in, Mr Niemand.' A few minutes of conversation, he justified himself by thinking, might divert his thoughts and clear his mind.
events	'Sit down,' he said, in the living room. 'Care for a drink?' Niemand said, 'No. thank you.' He sat in the chair; Graham sat on the sofa. The small man interlocked his fingers; he leaned forward. He said, ...
[EXPECTING:	'Dr Graham, it's a pleasure to be here this evening. Thank-you very much for agreeing to talk with me...]

**interrupted by political activity**

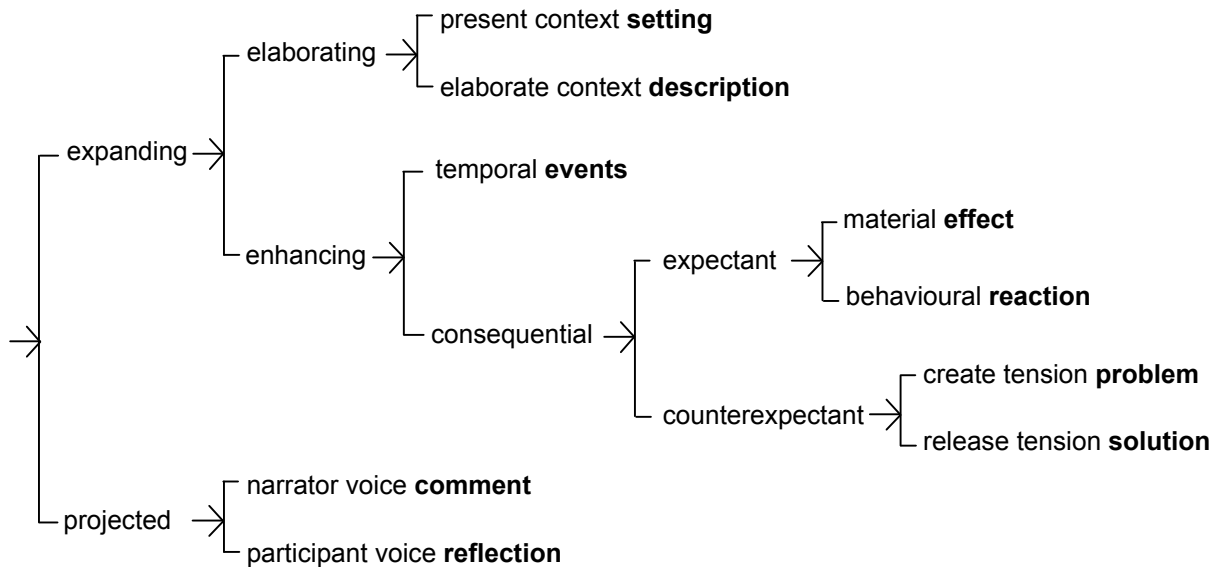
problem	...'Dr Graham, you are the man whose scientific work is more likely than that of any other man to end the human race's chance for survival.'
reaction	A crackpot, Graham thought. Too late now he realized that he should have asked the man's business before admitting him. It would be an embarrassing interview - he disliked being rude, yet only rudeness was effective...

Brown 1984

This extract also illustrates a contrast between reflections on an activity's meaning, and reactions that entail a change in participants' disposition (realised by attitude, thought, locution or action). But the larger phases labelled in boxes here are significant shifts in field. Martin 1996 describes how appraisals are woven through each such shift in field to realise the underlying 'theme' of the story, so that successful students are able to read this modernist narrative as a token for an ideological message. This is a more elaborate critical literary analysis than we have attempted in this chapter, but see Macken-Horarik 1999, 2003.

These are a few brief examples of the application of story phase analysis, although many more are possible. The types of story phases we have described are set out in Figure 2.12. They are grouped according to their logical relation to the preceding phase in the story sequence, using the logicosemantic categories of expansion and projection. They are distinguished firstly on whether they expand the activity sequence or are projected by it, secondly whether the type of expansion is enhancing or elaborating, and thirdly whether the type of enhancement is time or consequence. Within these groupings, each phase type is specified by its particular function.

Figure 2.12: Options in story phases



Elaborating phases establish and expand contexts and characters, while enhancing phases carry the story forward in time. Events phases do so without an implication of consequence or concession. On the other hand, reactions are behavioural/attitudinal consequences that are expected by preceding phases, and effect phases are material consequences (less common in stories and not exemplified above). Problems counter positive expectancy, while solutions counter negative expectancy created by problems.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to these expansions on the story line, projecting phases intrude into the sequence of activities, interrupting its flow to comment or reflect. While most story phases are equally common in oral and written stories, reflection often dominates in literary fiction, where the focus is on inner development of characters. These include 'thematic narratives', which embed an underlying 'message' or 'theme' in the story (Macken-Horarik 1999, 2003, Rothery & Macken 1991, Rothery & Stenglin 1994).

## 2.9 Response genres - evaluating stories

A major demand of the English curriculum in Australian schools is for students to evaluate the stories they read or view in 'text responses'. Four general types of response genre are described by Rothery & Stenglin 1994: **personal response**, **review**, **interpretation** and **critical response**. We will illustrate these genres here with responses from the media to the movie adaptation *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*. Firstly, personal responses express one's feelings about a text. The following [2:20] is from a movie chat site on the internet, with attitudes highlighted:

### [2:20] Personal response to Rabbit-Proof Fence

i **felt so much pain** for Gracie when she was taken again. I **felt like** rescuing her. I **felt like bursting into tears** when she **cried** "i **wanna** take the train to mummy!" The whole situation is **hard to take in...** but the fact that no matter what they did they were driven back to that **horrible** moore river place. It **broke my heart** when she had the disagreement with molly because she was **desperate** to see her mother again. It was **so hard for her**, having a different mother to both the other girls, knowing she was only a while away.

"Come on, we've got to go"

"But Molly, Mummy at wiluna. I **want** mummy."

In the real event, Gracie fields did get to Wiluna, but was discovered and taken the next day. she never made it to Jigalong

it **just teared me apart...** does anyone else **feel that???**

sweetprincess 2004

Although students are often encouraged in class to say and even write how they feel about a text, personal responses are actually the least valued response type in formal examinations, a cruel if unintentional duplicity that denies many students the keys to success in subject English (Rothery & Macken 1991, Macken-Horarik 1996, 1998, in press). More highly valued in school English are reviews and interpretations, which are also common genres in entertainment pages of the media, while critical responses are associated with literacy criticism. Reviews typically summarise selected features of a story, such as its key incidents, characters and relationships, and evaluate these. According to Rothery & Stenglin their staging begins with the Context of the story, followed by a text Description and finally a Judgement, exemplified in [2:21] with a web review of the book:

#### [2:21] Review of Rabbit-Proof Fence

##### Context

This book is about one of the dark chapters of Aboriginal Australian history: The "Stolen Generations". The "Aboriginal Protection Act" of 1897 allowed the authorities "to cause every Aboriginal within any district [...] to be removed to, and kept within the limits of, any reserve". In addition, article 31 allowed them to provide "for the care, custody, and education of the children of Aboriginals" and prescribed "the conditions

##### Description

This is the political background, the setting which must be comprehended before the story's full tragedy can be understood. Three girls, Molly, Gracie and Daisy, are "half-caste" Aboriginal youngsters living together with their family of the Mardu people at Jigalong, Western Australia. One day a constable, a "Protector" in the sense of the Act, comes to take the three girls with him. They are placed in the Moore River Native Settlement north of Perth, some 1,600 kilometres away. Most children this was done to never saw their parents again. Thousands are still trying to find them.

This story is different. The three girls manage to escape from the torturing and authoritarian rule of the settlement's head. Guided by the rabbit-proof fence, which, at that time ran from north to south through Western Australia, they walk the long distance back to their family.

##### Judgement

The authors are not professional writers which you'll notice while you read. But despite occasional stylistic flaws, the book has one advantage over novels: it's authentic. And this makes the story even more remarkable and the reader more and more concerned and shocked about the circumstances of that time. In the end you'll be as happy as the Mardu people when the girls come home, but your understanding of Australian history may have changed.

Korff 2004

Mastery of the interpretation genre demonstrates "that one is able to 'read' the message of the text and hence is able to respond to the cultural values presented in the narrative" (Rothery & Stenglin 1994:156). Staging of interpretations include text Evaluation which presents the 'message' of the text, a Synopsis that selects certain elements of the story to illustrate the message, and Reaffirmation of the evaluation, elaborating the message. These stages are illustrated in [2:22] with an interpretation of the film *Rabbit Proof Fence*, from a newspaper reviewer:

**[2:22] Interpretation of Rabbit Proof Fence**

## Evaluation

Phil Noyce has been brewing this devastating tale for some years now, gathering bits of skill from Hollywood and a lot of local knowledge. And now it arrives, one of the most powerful Australian movies, a film fit for the sunburnt country, encapsulating much of the pain and glory that is part of its history.

## Synopsis

Rabbit Proof Fence is based on a true story, but Noyce wisely took his script a lot further than the basic tale of three young girls snatched from their families in the 1930s who escape from the 'settlement' where they have been forcibly placed, imbuing it with a greater power and weight. He does this with an eye for the landscape and an ear for the girls: this is not the red desert, the warm heart of Australia, the sun-bronzed country. This is a bleak and inclement land, a land where no one is meant to survive.

The girls -- Molly (Everlyn Sampi), Gracie (Laura Monaghan) and Daisy (Tianna Sansbury) -- head towards their homes 2000km away, guided mainly by the wire fence that reminds us of another hopeless transplant: a ragged idea trying to keep European rabbits out of the countryside. But looming over the girls is the other great misplaced European transplant: the Chief Protector of Aborigines, A. O. Neville (Kenneth Branagh). His duty, as he sees it, is to rule: "In spite of himself, the native must be helped." The attitude is pure Victorian, and it's a tribute to Branagh that we see the inner conflict in this ironbark man as he chases the three frightened little girls intended for domestic slavery to 'help' them back into the white man's world. The other great player in this drama is the ace Aboriginal tracker (David Gulpilil) who is doing his job as well, but is confused by the antics of the runaway children.

## Reaffirmation

This sad story is also uplifting; Noyce realises that telling a good story sometimes means sugaring the pill. There has not been a better film about race in Australia. This has it all: the reality and the polish that an experienced filmmaker can bring to the event. And it has more. Its stars are the three girls, and it is their faces that haunt us at the end of the film. Move over, Hollywood: this is a real Australian story with an Australian voice that soars.

Lepetit 2002

The film's message interpreted by this writer is a nationalist one of a great Australian story, in which racism and injustice are balanced against landscape and humanity, the 'pain and glory that is part of its history'. On the other hand critical responses go beyond interpreting, to challenge the message of a text. Following an outline by Rothery 1994, their staging may begin with a text Evaluation that suggests the possibility of challenge, followed by text Deconstruction that reveals how the message is constructed, and finally the Challenge which denaturalises the message. The following critical response [2:23] reveals how Noyce's film absolves Australian audiences by treating the story as a triumphal narrative, leaving out the unresolved realities, and deflecting our guilt onto the very English villain. The message identified in Lepetit's review [2:22] as an 'uplifting' Australian story is then challenged as a panacea for middle class guilt.

**[2:23] Critical response to Rabbit Proof Fence**

## Evaluation

*Rabbit Proof Fence*, directed by Philip Noyce, is a moving film about three young Aboriginal girls, aged 8, 11 and 14, who are stolen from their families at Jigalong and taken to a native settlement north of Perth. The girls, Daisy, Gracie and Molly escape from the settlement and begin a 1600 kilometre trek along a rabbit proof fence they know will lead them back home. Daisy and Molly make it home, with Gracie falling back into the hands of white authorities along the way. Noyce's narrative is a familiar one, with unjustly treated Aussie battlers drawing on mateship and courage to overcome adversity, embodied here by A O Neville (a wicked English overlord played by Kenneth Branagh), Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia at the time. The effect of the narrative is to position viewers to sympathise with the brave girls and celebrate their eventual liberation from white

authorities. However, the actual contribution made by a modernist narrative of this kind to reconciliation is open to question.

#### Deconstruction

Early on the film sets us up to sympathise with the girls by showing them being dragged from their family's arms, a horrifying scenario to say the least. Noyce then introduces us to the sterility of institutional life at Moore River Native Settlement, including the genocidal practice of sorting the children for adoption by the lightness of the colour of their skin. As the girls trek home we can't help cheering for them every step of the way, mesmerised by their courage and resourcefulness, and fearful of the challenges along the way. Viewers not in tears of joy by the time Molly leads Daisy home to their family will surely be so when Noyce introduces the real Molly and Daisy at the end of his film, as elders at home in Jigalong - surviving still.

However the absences from Noyce's film are more important than the things he does include. Noyce doesn't film what happened to Daisy and Molly after they reached home; or what happened to Gracie who was left along the way (not to mention the dozens of children they left behind at Moore Rover, and the tens of thousands of Aboriginal children like them). Molly for example married, had two daughters, and ended up incarcerated in Moore Rover Native Settlement with them again in 1940. Learning of the death of relatives in Jigalong, she undertook her long trek home once more, this time carrying her 18 month old daughter, Annabelle. Three years later Annabelle was removed and sent to Sister Kate's Children's Home; Molly never saw her again. So much for battlers overcoming adversity! Molly indeed survived, as did her daughter Doris who lived to tell this tale; but would we have cheered quite so loudly in the film had we known the fate that awaited Molly and Annabelle, who suffered the remorseless cruelty of our fellow white Australians?

Noyce's characterisation of Neville, the Chief Protector, is also open to question. Noyce portrays Neville as a personification of evil; a one dimensional character, his motives are not explored, nor do we end up with a deeper understanding of how the white authorities could have behaved this way. Even more troubling is the potential deflection of responsibility for what is going on onto his Englishness, thereby absolving the Australians involved in these crimes against humanity (a familiar motif of blame in Australian cinema, from movies such as Gallipoli and Breaker Morant). We know however that stealing indigenous children from their parents was not the triumph of evil over goodness, but rather a widespread institutional practice enjoying considerable political support - and Noyce's film tells us next to nothing about how Australians came to believe that forced removal was in the best interests of the stolen children.

#### Challenge

Noyce's message seems to be that the traditional Australian values of courage, perseverance and mateship will triumph over evil. But Indigenous history in Australia tells us this is wrong, however accomplished the modernist narratives assuring us it's true. Is Noyce's film any more in fact than a feel-good film for middle class liberals, who feel guilty about the past, and enjoy seeing two young Indigenous Australians win out against the odds? Will they simply use Noyce's film to feel they've made a contribution to reconciliation, when all they've done is cheer two exceptional Aussie battlers on? Will they take anything at all away from the film which will help them deal productively with Indigenous Australians in post-colonial Australia, in the face of a federal government hostile to reconciliation which gets re-elected over and over again? Perhaps not, but as they say in Hollywood, that's entertainment. Australia needed more from Noyce; perhaps he's been in Hollywood too long.

Jim wrote this critical response [2:23] based on a model designed by Rothery 1994, in order to make the functions and strategies of the genre explicit. Its purpose is explicitly political, to challenge the ideology promoted in a text; and its strategy is to deconstruct the narrative devices used to influence an audience. Although a critical response is often touted as the ideal response genre in secondary school English curricula, Rothery & Macken (1991) and Macken-Horarik (1996, 1998, in press) report that it was rarely produced by students. It can be difficult enough to recognise and interpret the messages layered into literary stories, but it requires considerably more sophistication to challenge such artfully constructed messages. Recent changes to the NSW secondary school English curriculum make it more likely that a

significant body of critical responses informed by cultural studies and focusing on texts from popular culture will be produced; but we have not yet had the opportunity to study this genre as it emerges in students' examination writing in the noughts.

Comparable sophistication is displayed in a critical response to the film by Evan Williams, film reviewer with *The Australian* newspaper [2:24]. Williams' deconstruction and challenge have a very different political purpose to ours in [2:19]; he also deconstructs Noyce's 'manipulative' positioning of the audience, but he finds the story itself hard to believe. His technique is to first woo the liberal reader by praising the film, before critiquing its narrative ploys.

#### [2:24] Conservative critique of Rabbit Proof Fence

##### Evaluation

IMPORTANCE is not something filmmakers should strive for. But some films -- a very few -- have importance thrust upon them. When Peter Watkins made *The War Game*, his horrific mock-documentary about a nuclear attack on Britain, Kenneth Tynan called it "the most important film ever made". Who knows? I think *The Grapes of Wrath* was important (as well as a masterpiece); like Marcel Ophüls' great documentary about the French resistance, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, it told us things, or reminded us of things, we didn't want to know or would rather forget. It's possible that Phillip Noyce's *Rabbit-Proof Fence* belongs in this precious company. This is the first film about the stolen generations and it's important in the best sense of the word.

That doesn't mean that it's a very good film, still less a complete success. I wish it were. But it carries an overwhelming sense of conviction. And what makes much of it compelling is its lack of self-important flourishes. The story is slight, the direction understated, the cast largely untried. In one respect it reminded me of *Schindler's List*. At the end of that film, Spielberg tacked on a little epilogue in which the characters appeared as themselves, old and worn, but somehow recognisable. Noyce uses the same device. Molly and Daisy, two of the girls in the story, are seen at the end as elderly women. And after all they have endured the effect is oddly comforting. Here, it seems, is proof of their survival, proof that their story is real, proof, if you like, that their spirit lives on.

At the risk of being misunderstood, I should say that I still find the story difficult to believe. It's not that I doubt anyone's good faith. The screenplay was written by Doris Pilkington, whose mother Molly was one of three Aboriginal children forcibly separated from their families on the orders of O.A. Neville, Western Australia's protector of Aborigines, in 1931. Transported to the Moore River Native Settlement, the girls found their way back home to Jigalong, 2400km to the south, by following a rabbit-proof fence. It's an amazing tale, though sceptics may prefer to see it as a fabric of childhood memories, embellished by repeated embroidering. But even if it were wholly invented it would have the power to stir us: *Rabbit-Proof Fence* has been made with such transparent humanity and idealism it scarcely seems to matter whether the story is true or not.

##### Deconstruction

The early scenes with the girls -- Molly (Everlyn Sampi), her little sister Daisy (Tianna Sansbury) and their cousin Gracie (Laura Monaghan) -- were for me the least successful. For a start, I would have liked more of them. When Neville's functionaries arrive to take the children away we have seen so little of the girls with their families that the wrenching horror of their separation is blunted for us.

Many, I know, disagree: Who could be unmoved by the sight of screaming children being dragged from the arms of their loved ones and bundled into cars? But the scene would be more moving, and less manipulative, if we knew the characters better. And the thumping, doom-struck music on the soundtrack at this point might not have been needed to sharpen our responses.

Neville is played with flinty bureaucratic rectitude by Kenneth Branagh. His objective is to rid the Aboriginal population of so-called half-castes and their fairer-skinned variants by selective breeding. Children are paraded before him to have their skin colour solemnly assessed: the paler ones will go to school, the rest will find work as labourers or servants.

It's not so much a brutal regime, more one of numbing and demeaning helplessness, more chilling for the air of self-satisfied benevolence exuded by Neville and his staff. In this world of dusty dormitories, well-meaning matrons and unfamiliar religious teaching, hints of serious abuse are played down. Is this lonely, sobbing boy merely homesick or has he suffered something worse? No wonder the girls run away.

Perhaps it's because we're so used to car and helicopter chases that the scenes of pursuit feel less gripping than they should. Or is it that the police, led by a prickly Roy Billing as Chief Inspector Sellinger, and the ageing tracker (David Gulpilil) seem strangely half-hearted in their efforts to recapture the absconders? The children, we notice, seemed unscathed by their ordeal. Old clothes and food are scrounged along the way - miraculously, it sometimes seems - and the weather is remarkably benign.

I kept wishing in these scenes that Noyce had let the children speak their own language, especially since their subtitled speech (heard at the start) sounds so lovely, and something is made of Neville's insistence on the use of English at the settlement. "None of that jabber here!" the girls are told: in some ways it's the worst indignity they suffer.

The children perform with artless grace and candour. They are the film's luminous heart. But their reunion at the end, like their separation, seems strangely flat: the waiting mother and the grandmother are little more than patient faces, characters waiting to be drawn.

#### Challenge

Neville seems real enough - every story needs a villain - though anyone who has read Pat Jacobs's scrupulously fair and sensitive biography of this unhappy man, published in 1990, will know that villains can have honourable and compassionate motives. I hope Noyce will read this book, just as I hope people will see his film. It tells us something of the beauty and tragedy of the Aboriginal story; and, for all its faults, it tells it more eloquently than any film before it.

Williams 2002

It seems unlikely that Williams would describe his craft in terms such as critical deconstructionism, but he is keenly aware of the manipulative potential of narrative devices, and artfully persuades us that Noyce uses them to position his audience. After deconstructing and depreciating instance after instance, he contrasts Noyce's narrative trick of exaggerating Neville's villainy with a 'scrupulously fair and sensitive biography'. To avoid alienating liberal readers he leaves his challenge largely implied: that just as *Rabbit-Proof Fence* is 'difficult to believe', so too the whole story of the stolen generations may be little more than 'a fabric of childhood memories', or at the very least it unfairly ignores the 'honourable and compassionate motives' of its alleged perpetrators. Whereas our critique in [2:19] complains that Noyce's film lets us off the hook, Williams' complains that it hangs us too high, a sentiment that would certainly be endorsed by the Howard conservatives. Despite the left liberal ideals of much critical theory, its favoured genre of critical response may be pressed into the service of any ideology.

<sup>20</sup> Labov's deficit model of narrative variation resonates ironically with his construal of Basil Bernstein's theory of coding orientation in deficit terms.

<sup>21</sup> Philip Noyce's film *Rabbit Proof Fence* (based on Doris Pilkington's novel *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*) introduces an international audience to the genocide.

<sup>22</sup> Indigenous humour is also a counterpoint to jokes exploiting racist stereotypes that were a distinctive feature of Anglo-Australian culture for generations, but are thankfully becoming less and less acceptable.

<sup>23</sup> Of course Uncle Mick's joke is ultimately on the absurdity of certain religious beliefs about divine intervention.



<sup>24</sup> The grave of King Togee is to be found 29 km west of Coolah on the left-hand side of the Neilrex Rd, just past the 'Langdon' homestead. There is little to see other than a weather-worn sandstone headstone surrounded by four white posts with a sign overhead reading: 'TOGEE KING OF THE BUTHEROE TRIBE'. King Togee was friendly with the early settlers but was speared to death by a young man named Cuttabush who later became the king of a Coonabarabran sub-tribe.

<sup>25</sup> Nganyintja and husband Charlie Ilyatjari adopted David as a son when he first came to work for their community in the early 1980s.

<sup>26</sup> The English translation of the *Piltati* myth here is not a 'free translation', rather there are consistent careful steps in translating it from the Pitjantjatjara. Firstly, most word groups realising an experiential or interpersonal function are directly translatable from Pitjantjatjara to English. These are then arranged in each clause rank translation to reflect the textual structure of the original, and finally re-interpreted in relation to discourse patterns beyond the clause. For example:

3      wati kutjara pula      a-nu      malu-ku  
        man two they          go-did      kangaroo-for  
        *Those two men went hunting for kangaroos.*

4      kuka kanyila-ku      tati-nu      puli-ngka  
        game wallaby-for      climb-did      hill-on  
        *For wallabies, that is, they climbed up in the hills.*

In general languages seem to differ most at lower levels of phonology and morphology, less at higher ranks in grammar, and less still in discourse semantics patterns, depending on genre and register. See Rose 2001a&b, 2005a for further discussion of these principles.

<sup>27</sup> Serpent killing origin heroes are a common trope in Indo-European mythology, from *Indra* the Aryan killer of the Indus serpent *Vithrahan*, to *Apollo* killing the *Python* of Delphi, *St George* slaying the 'dragon' of Silene in Libya, and Norse *Beowulf's* destruction of the 'great worm' *Grendel*. They are often associated with the conquest of serpent worshipping farmers by Indo-European pastoralist invaders, such as the Aryans in India or the Hellenes in Greece (Dumezil 1968, Graves 1955). Zeus' defeat of Typhon in Thrace and Sicily may encode the Hellenic conquests of these peoples. Semitic origin myths also demonise serpents and their worshippers. Egypt's cattle-herding founder hero *Osiris* was temporarily defeated by the Nile serpent *Set*, Babylonian *Marduk* slew the sea-serpent *Tiamat*, and in current missionary bible translations in central Australia, *Jehovah's* enemy *Lucifer* is explicitly described as a *wanampi* serpent (Rose 2001a).

<sup>28</sup> Kipling was himself of course bastardising Middle Eastern, South Asian and African cultures, as an agent of British colonialism and its race driven prejudice.

<sup>29</sup> A message is defined as a unit of discourse realised by an independent clause, or by a dominant clause together with its non-finite dependent clauses, or by a projecting clause together with its projected clauses.

<sup>30</sup> The river is in fact the Ganges, and the woman is the goddess Ganga. This is the first half of the *Shantenu Raaje* myth. In the second half of the story Shantenu falls in love with the daughter of a fishmonger, who refuses to let her marry him as he already has a son who will inherit his kingdom. Accordingly his son selflessly leaves home and becomes a great religious sage *Bishma*. This episode commences the *Mahabharata* epic.

<sup>31</sup> This analysis differs from those of Hoey (1983) and Jordan (1984), who interpret the problem-solution relation on the model of grammatical relations of cause and effect. However problems are rarely the cause of solutions, which are more often fortuitous, i.e. counterexpectant. On the other hand, reactions are expectant consequences of preceding phases, for example a problem may engender fear or flight, or a setting, description or solution may engender a positive attitude.

## Chapter 3 Histories

### 3.0 From stories to histories

In the previous chapter we looked at the family of story genres, which reconstruct real or imagined events and evaluate them in terms which enact bonds of solidarity among participating interlocutors. We suggested that key social functions of stories include maintaining and shaping social relationships, particularly at the level of local communities and kin, through evaluation of events and behaviour. In this chapter we turn to another family of event-oriented genres that have evolved to construct and maintain social order on the wider scale of peoples and their institutions, that is historical genres. We begin with biographical genres, which are closely related to the personal recounts reviewed in Chapter 2, but which move beyond the series of events that we have seen in stories, to a series of episodes that make up a person's life history. Then we explore history genres which manage time, cause and value in complementary ways, to recount historical episodes and to explain the reasons they occurred, from one or more angles. And finally we examine genres that explicitly argue for or against interpretations of history.

In terms of the SFL model of register and genre we introduced in Chapter 1, our focus of organisation will now shift from genre towards field. Whereas the subject matter of story genres is wide open, we are now considering relations among genres from the perspective of one of our academic disciplines – as constituting discourses of history. That is, we consider this family of genres to have evolved within the institutional contexts of recording, explaining and debating the past. While our criteria for distinguishing story genres was first and foremost their staging, our focus on history genres is on how time is manipulated to order past events, how cause is used to explain them, and how appraisal is used to value one or another interpretation. Ultimately, from a theoretical perspective we will also shift our strategy for relating genres to one another from typology, as a hierarchy of groupings, to topology, as regions of commonality between genres. This then enables us to propose a learner pathway for students apprenticing into this family of genres, particularly oriented to secondary school curricula.

As far as the subject matter of our texts is concerned, we will continue our interest in Indigenous concerns and points of view on Australian history (cf Rose to appear a), but we will also introduce another topic of deep current concern to many Australians, the movement of refugees from conflicts to our north, and the responses of Australian governments.

### 3.1 Biographical recounts - telling life histories

We'll begin with an autobiographical recount, in this case a spoken recount from Lavina Gray, who is a senior Aboriginal child care worker in Sydney. In this recount Lavina begins by introducing herself and her family and telling us where they are from. She then moves on to recount some of the significant stages of her life, from the central NSW town of Wellington, to the Aboriginal child care centre of Murrawina in Redfern, Sydney, up to her graduation as a teacher.<sup>32</sup> To scaffold these life stages for the listener, Lavina has mostly used temporal conjunctions (*then, first*), supported

by the ordinal modifier *first* (*my first job*). These features are highlighted in the text in bold.

### [3.1] Lavina Gray's autobiography

My name is Lavina Gray. I grew up in Wellington NSW. My tribal area is the Wiradjuri tribe, which goes from Wellington around to the Riverina area. I went to school at Wellington Public School. There was a lot of racism there as well, in the school. I come from a family of 15 children, 9 boys and 6 girls. It was a bit chaotic then as a child. But it was fun. It was a big family, so it was good.

I went to Wellington High. I left school at 14. I had to leave school because there were too many children in the family so I had to help my mother.

I **then** came to Sydney and stayed with my brother and sister-in-law and their children.

I **then** worked in factories wherever I could.

**Then** I became a defacto at 17. I was with him until the birth of my first child.

I **then** went back home to Wellington to my mother, cause I needed to be near my mother. Every girl needs to be near their mother with their first child. A very dramatic thing.

**My first job** in the education sector was AEA. AEA stands for Aboriginal Educated Assistant. I went to Sydney University for that course. An AEA job allows you to work in any schools where there's Aboriginal children or Aboriginal students. It can be primary, pre-school, long day or high school. It doesn't really matter.

I **then** stayed at Murrawina after graduation. Murrawina means 'black women' because black women started Murrawina. It was, it's a long day-care centre that caters for Aboriginal children.

The College of Advanced Education came to Murrawina and asked if any of us would like to go to do the course - the teaching course. So three of us applied.

I first began the course, there was thirteen of us. I'm the only one that graduated in that course. So graduating as an Aboriginal teacher was really a big boost for me. I got the biggest applause. I was nearly in tears. And I was wearing my Aboriginal sash down here, the black, yellow and red sash that represented my country, my culture. ... [AMES Wanyarri (video) 1977]

So phases of biographical recounts tend to be whole episodes in a person's life, although they may be signalled by similar means as the phases of story genres, such as temporal conjunctions. In addition a key episode, when Lavina's education begins, is signalled by a switch in thematic identity from the narrator's *I* to *The College of Advanced Education*. We could also note that cause and effect is already beginning to emerge as a feature of history telling, even in this spoken recount, to explain some events (**so I had to help my mother, so three of us applied, so graduating as an Aboriginal teacher was really a big boost for me**).

Lavina's recount features an ongoing prosody of evaluation through three phases of her life, first contrasting the racism in her home town with the fun-filled chaos of a large family, followed by the tightrope of possibilities and obligations which shaped her personal and professional life, and culminating with her pride in graduating as an Aboriginal teacher.

... There was **a lot of racism** there as well, in the school... It was **a bit chaotic** then as a child. But it was **fun**. It was a big family, so it was **good**.

... I **had to** leave school because there were **too many** children in the family so I had to help my mother.

... I then worked in factories wherever I **could**.

... I **needed to be near** my mother. Every girl **needs to be near** their mother with their first child. A **very dramatic** thing.

... An AEA job allows you to work in **any schools** where there's Aboriginal children or Aboriginal students. It can be primary, pre-school, long day or high school. **It doesn't really matter**.

The College of Advanced Education came to Murrawina and asked if **any of us would like** to go to do the course –

... I'm the **only** one that graduated in that course. So graduating as an Aboriginal teacher was **really a big boost** for me. I got **the biggest applause**. I was **nearly in tears**. And I was wearing my Aboriginal sash down here, the black, yellow and red sash that represented my country, my culture. ...

Where Lavina Grey tells her own history (virtually face to face for those with access to the video recording), the next biography is of Nganyintja, the Pitjantjatjara elder who narrated the *Piltati* narrative in Chapter 2. It was written by David in order to record and celebrate her life achievements, and is published for the first time here.<sup>33</sup> At this point we shift modes, from spoken to written, and from first person to third person, in other words from spoken autobiography to written biography. There is also a significant shift in the way time is managed since this biographical recount depends on circumstances of exact location in time rather than conjunctions to move events along. This circumstantial scaffolding is strongly associated with initial position (Theme) in each clause, highlighted in bold face in the text below.

### [3.2] Nganyintja AM

Nganyintja is an elder of the Pitjantjatjara people of central Australia, renowned internationally as an educator and cultural ambassador.

She was born **in 1930** in the Mann Ranges, South Australia. Her early years were spent travelling through her family's traditional lands, living by hunting and gathering, and **until the age of nine** she had not seen a European.

**At that time** her family moved to the newly established mission at Ernabella, 300km to the east of the family homeland. They were **soon** followed by most of the Pitjantjatjara people, as they were forced to abandon their Western Desert lands during the drought **of the 1940s**.

At the mission, Nganyintja excelled at school, becoming its first Indigenous teacher. She married Charlie Ilyatjari and began a family that would include four daughters, two sons, eighteen grandchildren and ever more great-grandchildren.

**In the early 1960s** the family moved to the new government settlement of Amata, 100km east of their traditional lands, which they visited with camels each summer holiday, renewing their ties to the land and educating their children in their traditions.

Then **in 1979** they were able to buy an old truck and blaze a track through the bush to re-establish a permanent family community at Nganyintja's homeland of Angatja.

**In those years** the tragedy of teenage petrol sniffing began to engulf the Pitjantjatjara people. Nganyintja and Ilyatjari established a youth cultural and training program at Angatja, and worked for many years to get young people out of the settlements in the region and educate them, both in their cultural traditions and in community development skills. In addition, Nganyintja became a widely respected leader and spokesperson for her people.

**During the 1980s** Nganyintja and Ilyatjari hosted many visits from students and organisations interested in learning about Indigenous Australian culture. **In 1989** they established a cultural tourism venture known as Desert Tracks, that has brought hundreds of Australian and international visitors to

Angatja, and provided income and employment to many Pitjantjatjara people, as well as winning major tourism awards.

In 1993 Nganyintja was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for her services to the community.

In Lavina's spoken recount, cause and effect were signalled explicitly by *so*, but in this written biography causal relations tend to be left implicit, for the reader to infer:

...the Pitjantjatjara people...were forced to abandon their Western Desert lands  
(**because of**) the drought of the 1940s.

...teenage petrol sniffing began to engulf the Pitjantjatjara people.  
(**so**) Nganyintja and Ilyatjari established a youth cultural and training program

Nganyintja and Ilyatjari hosted many visits from students and organisations interested in learning about Indigenous Australian culture.

(**so**) In 1989 they established a cultural tourism venture

And in writing, cause also comes to be expressed within clauses:

Nganyintja was awarded the Order of Australia Medal  
**for** her services to the community

Here the reason for Nganyintja's award is realised as a circumstance, in which her activities in serving her community are nominalised as *services*. In a more spoken paraphrase, this reason might be expressed as a complete clause linked by a conjunction, 'because she served the community well'. Nganyintja's biography also features an ongoing prosody of evaluation focusing on her achievements, which are sometimes set against the deprivations of her people.

[3.2'] ... **renowned internationally as an educator and cultural ambassador.**

... the Pitjantjatjara people, as they were **forced to abandon** their Western Desert lands

... Nganyintja **excelled at school, becoming its first Indigenous teacher.**

... they were **able to buy** an old truck and **blaze a track** through the bush

... **the tragedy of teenage petrol sniffing began to engulf** the Pitjantjatjara people.

... worked for **many years**

... hosted **many visits**

... brought **hundreds of Australian and international visitors**

... Nganyintja became **a widely respected leader and spokesperson** for her people.

... **winning major tourism awards.**

... Nganyintja **was awarded the Order of Australia Medal** for her services to the community.

Compared with the story genres presented in Chapter 2, these biographical recounts differ with respect to both time and evaluation. Temporally, they focus on a lifetime of experience rather than a few successive events. This means that we hop through time, from one significant phase to the next, rather than moving successively through the events of one activity sequence or another. Serial time gives way to episodic time, as experience is packaged into phases. A key resource for managing temporal packaging of this kind is circumstances of location in time, realised as Theme in the first clause of each episode – a pattern which is stronger in the written biography than in the spoken autobiography, whose time management through conjunctions is more like that of story genres. These developments in time management, from personal recounts to spoken autobiography to written biography are illustrated in

Table 3.1. The personal recount, *Greg's story* from Chapter 2, records a series of events within a single tragic episode of his life, and the events in this sequence are mainly added one to the next with the conjunction *and*. The biographies record a series of episodes, with the spoken text primarily using temporal conjunctions to scaffold the sequence, and the written one primarily using temporal circumstances. These trends are shown in the table, from spoken to written, from first to third person, from serial to episodic time, and from adding events to dating episodes.

Table 3.1: Organising time in stories and biographies

personal recount		autobiographical recount	biographical recount
first person		third person	
serial time	episodic time		
<p>...I went off to school in the morning  <b>and</b> I was sitting in the classroom  <b>and</b> there was only one room...  <b>and</b> there was a knock at the door,            which the schoolmaster answered.  <b>After</b> a conversation he had with somebody at the door, he came to get me.            He took me by the hand  <b>and</b> took me to the door.            I was physically grabbed...            I was taken to a motor bike  <b>and</b> held by the officer  <b>and</b> driven to the airstrip  <b>and</b> flown off the Island.</p>	<p>I grew up in Wellington NSW...            I went to Wellington High.            I left school at 14...  <b>I then</b> came to Sydney...  <b>I then</b> worked in factories wherever I could.  <b>Then</b> I became a defacto at 17...until the birth of my first child.  <b>I then</b> went back home to Wellington to my mother...  <b>My first job</b> in the education sector was AEA...  <b>I then</b> stayed at Murrawina after graduation...            The College of Advanced Education came to Murrawina...So three of us applied.</p>	<p>She was born <b>in 1930</b> in the Mann Ranges, South Australia...  <b>until the age of nine</b> she had not seen a European.  <b>At that time</b> her family moved to the newly established mission...  <b>At the mission</b>, Nganyintja excelled...  <b>In the early 1960s</b> the family moved to the new government settlement...            Then <b>in 1979</b> they were able to...re-establish a family community...  <b>In those years</b> the tragedy of teenage petrol sniffing began...  <b>During the 1980s</b> Nganyintja and Ilyatjari hosted many visits...  <b>In 1989</b> they established a cultural tourism venture...  <b>In 1993</b> Nganyintja was awarded the Order of Australia Medal...</p>	
added with <i>and</i>	sequenced with <i>then</i>	dated with circumstances	

As far as evaluation is concerned, the biographical recounts differ from stories, in that they are less concerned with putting us in touch with the feelings of Lavina Grey and Nganyintja as they experience the events of everyday life, and more concerned with the achievements that made them respected elders in their communities. The focus of the recounts in other words is on Lavina Grey and Nganyintja as public figures, not private ones – on why they matter to more than their family and friends. Once again this is more true of the written biography than the spoken autobiography, which shows us that stories and histories are related families of genres. We'll return to this point in our discussion of topology and learner pathways below.

In summary then, as we move from story to history, temporal organization shifts from sequence in time to setting in time, and evaluation shifts from personal reactions to public significance. This changing texture is further reinforced as we move from biography to the historical recounts in section 2 below.

### 3.2 Historical recounts - recording public histories

Historical recounts construct public records of people and the agents and agencies that mediate their fate. As with public discourse in general, these are interested accounts, which construct the past in terms that suit the history makers and the communities they want to align (Martin & Wodak 2003). We'll begin with a text written by Frank Brennan, a prominent Australian human rights activist and Jesuit priest, who is writing here about asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia. This is an extract from Brennan's book ... which he wrote as part of his work to alleviate the plight of asylum seekers kept indefinitely in detention camps by the Howard government. His purpose in this extract is to contrast earlier Australian governments' humanitarian responses to waves of Vietnamese refugees, with the draconian approach of Howard's government.

As with the biographical recount [3.2], historical recounts involve episodic rather than serial time, and episodes are scaffolded by circumstances of location in time<sup>34</sup> (highlighted in the text), together with ordinal and comparative modifiers (*first boatload*, *another two boats*, *third Vietnamese boat*, underlined in the text).

[3.3]

**The first wave** of 2,077 Indochinese boat people came to Australia in 54 boats **between 1976 and 1981**. **In that time**, Australia was to resettle another 56,000 Indochinese through regular migration channels. The first boatload of asylum seekers arrived in Darwin harbour **on 28 July 1976**. The five Vietnamese had made the 6,500-kilometre journey in a small boat. **At the end of that year another two boats** arrived carrying 106 people who were screened for health reasons and then flown to Wacol migrant hostel outside Brisbane. **When the third Vietnamese boat of the first wave arrived**, there was some media agitation about the threatened invasion by boat people. One Melbourne newspaper reported that 'today's trickle of unannounced visitors to our lonely northern coastline could well become a tide of human flotsam'. The paper asked how the nation would respond to 'the coming invasion of its far north by hundreds, thousands and even tens of thousands of Asian refugees'. The invasion never occurred.

**In 1978** the Communist government in Vietnam outlawed private business ventures. Tens of thousands, mainly ethnic Chinese, then fled by boat. The outflow of Vietnamese boat people throughout the region gave rise to great moral dilemmas in the implementation of government policies. Countries such as Malaysia would periodically declare that their camps were full and they could take no more boat people. They would even threaten to shoot new arrivals on sight. Alternatively, they would provide them with food, fuel and repairs so they could set off for another country. Meanwhile Vietnamese officials were profiting by charging the boat people high departure fees.

Camps were filling around Southeast Asia. There was no let-up in the departures from Vietnam. **In the end** there was a negotiated agreement involving Vietnam, the countries of first asylum such as Thailand and Malaysia, and the resettlement countries, chiefly the United States, Canada and Australia. **In 1982** the Australian government announced that the Vietnamese government had agreed to an Orderly Departure Program. Australian immigration ministers Michael MacKellar and Ian MacPhee were able to set up procedures for the reception of Vietnamese from camps in Southeast Asia as well as those coming directly from Vietnam under a special migration program. With careful management, they were able to have the public accept up to 15,000 Vietnamese refugees a year when the annual migration intake was as low as 70,000.

**In 1978** the government set up a Determination of Refugee Status (DORS) Committee which would determine onshore refugee claims. A UNHCR representative joined this committee of public servants from the key departments. The committee made only recommendations to the minister. If it rejected an application, it could still recommend that the applicant be given temporary or permanent residence 'on

humanitarian or strong compassionate grounds'. **In the early 1980s** the committee considered fewer than 200 applications a year, with less than a one third approval rating.

**In 1982** the government decided that even offshore cases would be decided on a case by case basis. It would no longer accept the UNHCR's blanket determination that anyone from Indochina was a refugee. **It was now seven years** since the end of the Vietnam War and it was more likely that some of those departing Vietnamese were economic migrants unimpressed by their economic prospects under a communist regime rather than refugees who were fleeing in fear of persecution. **At the same time** the government set up a Special Humanitarian Program to complement the offshore refugee program. **In the first year**, there were 20,216 offshore refugees and 1,701 applicants approved for migration to Australia under the Special Humanitarian Program. **Within eight years** there were only 1,537 under the offshore refugee category and 10,411 under the Special Humanitarian Program. Onshore, it was also possible for persons to gain residence on humanitarian or compassionate grounds. **Initially** it was assumed that there would be only a few hundred of such onshore cases a year. That all changed when the courts got involved.

**In 1985** the High Court by the narrowest of margins (3 to 2) decided that ministerial decisions rejecting the grant or extension of an entry permit on the grounds that the applicant was not a refugee were reviewable by the courts. Also the failed applicant would be entitled to a written statement of reasons for the minister's rejection. From now on, refugee status was to be a matter of law rather than unreviewable ministerial or bureaucratic decisions rejecting people's humanitarian claims. Neither parliament nor the government had foreseen such court intervention.

Brennan 2003: 29-31

Beyond the episodes signalled by these temporal circumstances is another broader layer of time in this chapter of Brennan's book. As *the first wave* at the beginning of [3.3] indicates, there are more waves to come; text [3.3] is in fact Brennan's recount of the first of four waves of boat people around which he organises a chapter titled 'Four waves, Tampa and a firebreak':

"**The first wave** of 2,077 Indochinese boat people came to Australia in 54 boats between 1976 and 1981 [p 29]... **The second wave** of boat people commenced with the arrival of a Cambodian boat at Pender Bay near Broome on 25 November 1989 [p 32]... **The third wave** of boat people arrived between 1994 and 1998... These Vietnamese and Chinese boat people were the last victims of the Comprehensive Plan of Action which proposed the compulsory repatriation back to Vietnam of those left in the camps around Asia [p 40]... **The fourth and biggest wave** of boat people in modern Australian history could not be so readily categorised as non-refugees or as refugees who had their claims determined elsewhere. In late 1999 boat people started arriving from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran via Indonesia [p 40]."

These waves are significant for Brennan because they "heightened the concerns of government and the public that Australian borders are not secure" [2003: 29]. In 2000, at the height of an Australian election campaign, the Norwegian container vessel MV Tampa became involved in the fourth wave when it picked up 433 asylum seekers from a boat in distress on the high seas, and attempted to bring them to the Australian territory of Christmas Island. Brennan refers to the Howard government's vote-catching response to this incident as a 'firebreak', as it legislated to exclude all offshore islands from its international obligations to accept refugees, thus creating a legal no-mans-land between the Australian mainland and an imagined 'bushfire' of asylum seekers streaming in from Middle Eastern conflicts. The aim was to stop refugees getting to the jurisdiction of Australian courts, thus circumventing the 1985 High Court decision.

For Brennan, then, what happened is packaged as unauthorised arrivals by boat, leading to the legislative clampdown; the arrivals themselves are divided into four



waves; and each wave is itself phased into episodes through paragraphing, temporal circumstances and comparative identification. These layers of time are illustrated in Figure 3.1. The episodes are nested within the four waves, and the waves and episodes follow each other in succession (indicated by arrows).

Figure 3.1: Waves of episodes in an historical recount



Further analysis would reveal additional layers of temporal phasing within this structure, which readers are invited to pursue. Not that this pursuit would be without its indeterminacies, presumably since Brennan is not definitively concerned with partitioning time at this level of detail. The important point as far as historical recounts are concerned is that time is phased into an indefinite number of layers, and this elasticity can be deployed to develop long chronicles, time upon time.

Alongside this layered phasing of events, historical recounts are also organised by the groups and agencies participating in the events. In Brennan's recount [3.3], the major players include the boat people/refugees, the governments of south-east Asia and Australia, and the High Court. As we saw for stories, switching from one to another participant in the Theme of clauses, alongside new settings in time, can signal new phases of the text, displayed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Participants in three phases of text [3.3]

	thematic participants	groups of people	public agents	public agencies
1	The first wave of <b>2,077 Indochinese boat people</b>	56,000 Indochinese; asylum seekers; the five Vietnamese; 106 people; boat people; unannounced visitors; Asian refugees		Australia; migration channels; one Melbourne newspaper; the paper; the nation
2	In 1978 <b>the Communist government in Vietnam</b>	tens of thousands; mainly ethnic Chinese; Vietnamese boat people; boat people; new arrivals...them...they; the boat people	Vietnamese officials	countries such as Malaysia... they...they;
3	In 1978 <b>the [Australian] government</b>	Vietnamese...those; 15,000 Vietnamese refugees	Australian immigration ministers Michael MacKellar and Ian MacPhee...	Vietnam; the countries...such as Thailand and Malaysia; resettlement countries...the United States, Canada and Australia; the Australian government; the Vietnamese government; the public
4	In 1985 <b>the High Court</b>	the applicant		parliament nor the government

As Table 3.2 reveals for the four phases of text [3.3], people generally appear in groups (e.g. *56,000 Indochinese, unannounced visitors*). On three occasions lexical metaphors are used to evaluatively quantify their numbers:

the first **wave of** 2,077 Indochinese boat people  
today's **trickle of** unannounced visitors  
a **tide of** human flotsam

The exception to this pattern is individuals acting in institutionally defined roles (*ministers Michael MacKellar and Ian MacPhee*), and generic individuals (*the applicant*). Alongside people, a range of agencies are noted, including nations (*Australia*), governments (*the Communist government in Vietnam*), public institutions (*the High Court*), and the media (*one Melbourne newspaper*).

While the global function of historical recounts is recording rather than explaining history, there is a growing use of implicit cause to connect events, for example:

...the Communist government in Vietnam outlawed private business ventures.  
(so) Tens of thousands, mainly ethnic Chinese, then fled by boat.

Countries such as Malaysia would periodically declare that their camps were full and (so) they could take no more boat people...

Camps were filling around Southeast Asia. There was no let-up in the departures from Vietnam.  
(so) In the end there was a negotiated agreement...

It was now seven years since the end of the Vietnam War and (so) it was more likely that some of those departing Vietnamese were economic migrants...

Nominalisation is also used to explain (e.g. *106 people who were screened for health reasons*), and to reason within the clause:

**The outflow** of Vietnamese boat people throughout the region

gave rise to

great moral dilemmas in **the implementation** of government policies

In addition, historical recounts are generally more abstract than biographies. Brennan uses nominalisation to construe several abstract participants, as highlighted below:

regular **migration** channels

some media **agitation** about the **threatened invasion** by boat people

the **coming invasion** of its far north by ... of Asian refugees'

The **invasion**

high **departure** fees

no **let-up** in the **departures**

the **resettlement** countries

**procedures** for the **reception** of Vietnamese

a special **migration** program

the annual **migration** intake

Of all the history genres we are considering here, the historical recount is arguably the most important, since it can be episodically expanded as outlined above to scaffold the organization of sections, chapters, books and multi-volume chronicles – the 'grand narratives' of modernist history (as Lyotard 1984 has referred to them). Where necessary of course, serially unfolding recounts can be included within these. Brennan takes up this option in [3.4] below in order to focus precisely on the contested sequence of events in which Captain Rinnan of the *Tampa* found himself embroiled in August 2001. Here one episode of Brennan's fourth wave of boat people is expanded as events sequenced in time, with individuals as actors and speakers (in bold), but without the additive and temporal conjunctions characteristic of spoken recounts.

[3.4]

On 29 August the *Tampa* entered into Australian territorial waters approaching Christmas Island. **The prime minister** told parliament that **the captain** had decided on this course of action because **a spokesman for the asylum seekers** 'had indicated that they would begin jumping overboard if medical assistance was not provided quickly'. **Captain Rinnan** gave a different reason for this decision: 'We weren't seaworthy to sail to Indonesia. There were lifejackets for only 40 people. The sanitary conditions were terrible.' **The SAS** came aboard and took over *Tampa*. **An Australian Defence Force doctor** was given 43 minutes to make a medical assessment of the 433 asylum seekers. **He** reported, 'Four persons required IV (2 urgent including 1 woman 8 months pregnant).' **Captain Rinnan** was surprised at the prompt medical assessment, because **his crew** had already identified ten people who were barely conscious lying in the sun on the deck of the ship. **The prime minister** then made a finely timed ministerial statement to parliament insisting that 'nobody – and I repeat nobody – has presented as being in need of urgent medical assistance as would require their removal to the Australian mainland or to Christmas Island'. **One hundred and thirty-one fortunate asylum seekers** were granted **immediate asylum** by the New Zealand government. **The rest**, having been transported to Nauru, waited processing under the evolving Pacific Solution. [Brennan 2003: 42-43]

Brennan's purpose here is to exemplify an aspect of the spin doctored mendacity and shameless inhumanity which became the hallmark of Prime Minister Howard's neo-con regime, and its effects on hapless refugees (cf. Marr & Wilkinson 2003). So whereas the events involve specific actors and speakers, the episode concludes with its outcomes for groups of asylum seekers. Brennan uses the recount genre to let the events speak for themselves, but within this neutral arena manages appraisal contrasts to guide the reader towards a judgement, from *conditions were terrible*, *surprised at the prompt medical assessment*, *people who were barely conscious*, to

Howard's *finely timed ministerial statement*, and *fortunate* asylum seekers granted *immediate* asylum, while the rest...waited.

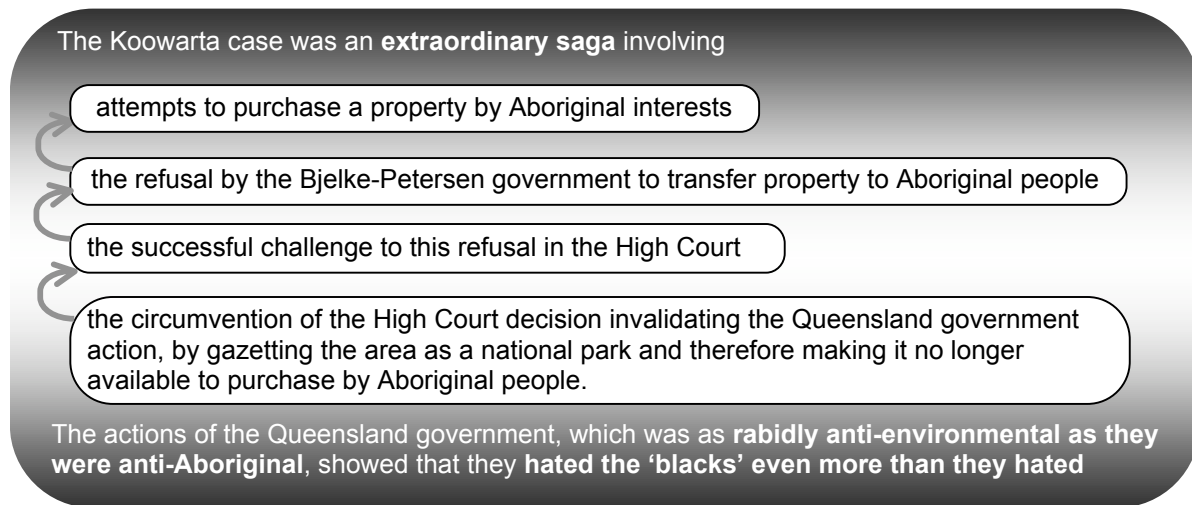
Moving in the opposite direction, elasticity of time can be exploited to condense potentially layered events into a single clause. In [3.5] below, Robert Tickner, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs in the Labor governments that preceded Howard's, recounts the events surrounding the 'Koowarta case', in which a conservative state government in Queensland attempted to prevent an Aboriginal community from acquiring a pastoral property, motivated purely by racial hatred. Tickner packs the Koowarta case into a series of nominal groups, representing four episodes (in bold), before evaluating the Queensland government's actions.

[3.5]

The Koowarta case was an extraordinary saga involving **attempts to purchase a property** by Aboriginal interests, **the refusal by the Bjelke-Petersen government** to transfer property to Aboriginal people, **the successful challenge** to this refusal in the High Court, and finally **the circumvention of the High Court decision** invalidating the Queensland government action, by gazetting the area as a national park and therefore making it no longer available to purchase by Aboriginal people. The actions of the Queensland government, which was as rabidly anti-environmental as they were anti-Aboriginal, showed that they hated the 'blacks' even more than they hated the 'greens'. [Tickner 2001: 20]

As we have seen, episodic time reconstrues serial time as phases of activity; and once phased, these packages of time can be named (e.g. *waves of boatpeople*, *the actions of the Queensland government*). Events become things. And these 'things' can be used to preface or sum up events. This motif of 'looking forward and looking back' is crucial to the presentation and interpretation of history, and is intimately linked with the ways that events and agents are valued. Appraisals tend to be relatively intense in previews, validated by events or arguments, and further intensified in reviews. For example, Tickner's recount begins by appreciating the case as an *extraordinary saga*, and ends by interpreting what it showed about the negative feelings held by Bjelke-Petersen's government for blacks and greens. Both the appreciation and the affect are strongly amplified (*extraordinary*, *rabidly*, *hated*). The patterns of episodes and values are illustrated in Figure 3.x. The intense appreciation of the preview, and even more intense judgement of the review scope over the intervening episodes, indicated by shading in the diagram.

Figure 3.2: Nominalised episodes and scope of values



One further dimension of temporal scaffolding we should mention here is the use of 'time lines' to provide a synoptic overview of key events. Tickner provides a 13 page time line at the beginning of his book, a small part of which is exemplified in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: from Tickner's 'Time line of events' [2001: xx]

...	
<b>March 1993</b>	McArthur River mine issue begins to surface in public debate
<b>21 March 1993</b>	Joint Australian business community statement in support of protection of existing titles
<b>22 March 1993</b>	Lois O'Donoghue, ATSIC Chairperson, writes to Prime Minister in opposition to any suspension of Racial Discrimination Act
<b>24 March 1993</b>	Office of Indigenous Affairs established in Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
<b>6 April 1993</b>	Mabo Ministerial Committee meets industry representatives and Prime Minister later addresses Evatt Foundation dinner
<b>18 April 1993</b>	WA pastoralist warns of civil war over Mabo
<b>27 April 1993</b>	Mabo Ministerial Committee meets Aboriginal representatives and receives Peace Plan
...	

These time lines have a strong field focus, and support readers in keeping track of significant events in the sequence in which they occurred. But they are not history – not just because they are so cryptic, but more importantly because they do not necessarily match up with interpretations of the past which phase it into evaluated chunks of activity. For this task we have history discourse proper, as exemplified in the historical recount developed by Tickner around the intervention by Lois O'Donoghue, then Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, in proposals to erode Australia's Racial Discrimination Act in order to limit Indigenous claims to pastoral lands.

[3.6]

**On 22 March 1993**, Lois O'Donoghue wrote to the Prime Minister, formally alerting him to ATSIC concerns about any attempt to erode the operation of the RDA (Racial Discrimination Act) to validate titles. She enclosed a copy of a pre-election statement of ATSIC's preliminary response to the Commonwealth consultation, which argued for extensive government action and included:

- proposals to support the RDA;
- revival of native title following the expiration of a finite grant of an interest in land;
- land rights legislation to address the position of dispossessed people;
- the establishment of a specialist tribunal to adjudicate on native title claims;
- the concept of representative bodies for indigenous people that would lodge claims and conduct negotiations;
- royalty payments;
- a public education program to explain the effect and importance of the Mabo decision; and
- a proposal for an international convention on the rights of indigenous people

In hindsight it is quite remarkable that with one or two exceptions this agenda of indigenous aspirations was to be acted on by the Labor government.

**On March 29** the new Minister for Resources, Michael Lee, moved to hose down the concerns of the oil industry by emphasising in a speech to the annual conference of the Australian Petroleum Exploration Association that 'advice to the Government suggests that the offshore petroleum legislation and its administration do not contravene the Racial Discrimination Act' and that 'there is no evidence to suggest that the Mabo decision has major implications in terms of management of petroleum exploration activity in Commonwealth waters'. Tim Fisher, for his part, suggested to the conference that 'Mabo has the potential to threaten the sovereignty of a great deal more land – and sea'.

**The next day** Patrick Dodson wrote to the Prime Minister raising broader issues that needed to be addressed in any government response and calling for national discussions with indigenous people leading to meetings between COAG (Council of Australian Governments) and representatives of the broader indigenous community. Moves to reform the Canadian Constitution in the early 1980s had led to comparable negotiations between representatives of Canada's indigenous peoples and the leaders of the Canadian national and provincial governments. But Australia, or more specifically its state and territory governments at this time, lacked the maturity and respect for indigenous people displayed by their Canadian counterparts. [Tickner 2001: 109-110]

Note in passing the use of nominalisation in O'Donoghue's bullet point agenda of indigenous aspirations to envision future time – the phases of activity which ATSIC wanted the government to enact and most of which Tickner suggests his government turned into real history during their term in office.

- **proposals** to support the RDA;
- **revival** of native title following the **expiration** of a finite grant of an interest in land;
- land rights legislation to address the position of **dispossessed** people;
- the **establishment** of a specialist tribunal to adjudicate on native title claims;
- the concept of representative bodies for indigenous people that would lodge claims and conduct **negotiations**;
- royalty payments;
- a public education program to explain the **effect** and **importance** of the Mabo **decision**; and
- a **proposal** for an international convention on the rights of indigenous people

### 3.3 Historical accounts and explanations - explaining the past

Alongside packaging the past into phases of activity, historians undertake to explain it – to say why one episode arose from another. We have already seen a few examples of this in biographical recounts, and a few more in the historical recounts, both of which foreground time over cause. But we refer to texts that foreground cause over time as historical accounts. Tickner's description of the beginning of the land rights movement in Australia provides a relatively clear example of an historical account. Here reasons and consequences are highlighted, including circumstantial and verbal realisations.

[3.7]

In another part of Australia, Aboriginal people were themselves acting to assert their rights. On 23 August 1966 Vincent Lingiari, a Gurindji elder, led his people off the cattle station operated by the giant Vestey's pastoral organisation **in protest against their wages and conditions**. Their calls for **Commonwealth involvement** also strongly argued the case for land to establish their own cattle station. They subsequently sent a petition to the Governor-General, **with no immediate result**. Their stand against injustice, however, **attracted national publicity** for Aboriginal land rights grievances. The strike developed into a seven-year campaign by the Gurindji **for the return of their traditional lands** and became a *cause célèbre* across Australia. The campaign was strongly supported by the trade union movement and **sparked a campaign** for human rights, including land rights, by many Aboriginal people. It was a cry **for Commonwealth leadership** that would not be acted upon until the election of the Whitlam government. [

Tickner 2001:8

There is only one explicitly temporal relation, signalled by the conjunction *subsequently*. Otherwise Tickner draws on various clause internal resources to explain what led to what. Causal circumstances are used to explain why Lingiari led his people off (*in protest against their wages and conditions, for the return of their traditional lands*), and what the Gurindji were appealing for (*for Commonwealth involvement...leadership*). These nominalised appeals are verbally connected (*argued, acted*) to further abstractions (*the case, the election*), and processes are also used to causally connect the Gurindji walk-off to a burgeoning land rights movement (*attracted national publicity, sparked a campaign*).

Realising cause inside the clause enables historians to fine tune causality by deploying verbs which elsewhere literally construe material and verbal activity (*argue, act, attract, spark*) but here enact finely differentiated types of cause and effect relations. This indefinitely enhances historians' resources for explaining how one event affects another and is one important sense in which written language elaborates the meaning potential of a language.

Nominal, prepositional and verbal realisations of cause inside the clause are typical of historical accounts (and of explanations as we shall see below). Manne begins text [3.8] in just these terms...

The Howard government's **unwillingness** to apologise determined

the nature of its **response** to other recommendations contained in *Bringing them home*.

...before unpacking what he means in clauses connected by causal conjunctions (highlighted below):

[3.8]

The Howard government's unwillingness to apologise **determined** the nature of its response to other recommendations contained in *Bringing them home*. **Because** it refused to consider the present generation of Australians legally or morally responsible for the mistakes of the past, it refused altogether *Bringing them home's* recommendation for financial compensation for members of the stolen generations. **Because** it thought the policies of child removal had been lawful and well-intentioned, it treated almost with contempt the arguments in *Bringing them home* which suggested that in removing Aboriginal children from their families by force previous Australian governments had committed serious violations of the human rights treaties they had signed or even acts of genocide. **Because**, nonetheless, it accepted that the Aboriginal children who had been taken from their families has suffered serious harm it was willing to allocate modest sums to assist members of the stolen generations with psychological counselling, family reunion, cultural projects, oral histories and so on.

Manne 2001: 76

In effect what we have here is an account which moves from a more written nominalised approach to reasoning to a more spoken active one. This move from more written to more spoken textures is a familiar trope in history discourse as historians use less nominalised language to 'substantiate' more abstract interpretations. As readers we experience the shift to 'spoken' texture as evidential.

As we can see in [3.8] cause is becoming multi-dimensional rather than linear. We don't simply have one thing leading to another but three dimensions of a political position giving rise to different effects. The inevitable monoglossing linearity of grand narratives has to be arrested so that different factors can be brought into play. Because of this historians have evolved a pair of complementarity genres which stop time as it were and deal with complex inputs to and outputs from events. Texts which focus on multiple factors leading to some event have been termed factorial explanations; those which focus on multiple outcomes of events are known as consequential explanations.

In [3.9], Brennan uses a factorial explanation to outline three reasons why asylum seekers would travel to Australia by boat. He signals these as *three distinct advantages*, then numbers them as *first, second, third*, and makes explicit that they are conditioning factors with the conjunction *if*.

[3.9]

The government faced three problems. Or to put it another way, there were **three distinct advantages** that asylum seekers and people smugglers saw in making the perilous journey by boat to Australia.

- **First, if** you made it to Australia, there was a good chance that the Australian authorities would find that you were a refugee. The Immigration Minister, Philip Ruddock, was fond of quoting the statistic that 84 per cent of boat people were being found to be refugees whereas only 14 per cent of the contingent from the same countries of flight and who were presented at the UNHCR office in Indonesia were found to be refugees. Ever since its election in 1996, the Howard government had wanted to reduce the involvement of the courts in reviewing refugee cases, as it thought that the judges were being too soft on applicants and were being too cavalier in their willingness to expand the categories for refugee status under the convention.
- **Second, if** you were found to be a refugee after you have landed in Australia, you were guaranteed residence in Australia. If you had waited in a camp in Pakistan or in a transit city such as Jakarta awaiting a UNHCR determination, you not only had less chance of being found to be a refugee, you also had no guarantee of being resettled in a country where you would feel secure, let alone one in which you could avail yourself of the benefits of life in a first-world, democratic country.
- **Third, if** you were granted permanent residence in Australia, you would over time be able to bring your family to join you and they would be able to travel safely and legally by commercial aircraft. [44-45]

In [3.10] Noel Pearson, an Indigenous leader prominent in the campaign for recognition of native land title, uses a consequential explanation to reflect on the outcomes of legislation which required pastoralists to pay Aboriginal workers equal wages, which resulted in most of them being sacked and whole communities removed from stations to become refugees camping on the fringes of outback towns. Again he signals these as *tragic consequences*, and numbers them as *first, second, third*.

[3.10]



In retrospect, the removal of Aboriginal people from the pastoral industry was a monumental policy failure. The dilemma facing policy makers at the time the equal wage case was being debated was this: on the one hand, Aboriginal stock workers were being discriminated against in relation to their wages and conditions and this could not continue, but on the other hand, it was clear to everyone that the institution of equal wages would result in the whole-scale removal of Aboriginal people from cattle station work to social security on the settlements – and the latter path was chosen.

Of course, with hindsight this choice has had **tragic consequences**.

**First**, the cultural impact of the removal of families from their traditional lands in pastoral properties was obviously massive and today inestimable.

**Second**, there are the social results of the removal of Aboriginal families from work on stations to no work on settlements.

**Third**, we would not have had the difficulties in relation to the Wik case and the issue of coexistence of native title on pastoral leases had Aboriginal groups remained on those properties. [Pearson 2000: 167]

As with Tickner's Koowarta case recount [3.5], Pearson previews his outcomes with intense negative appreciation (*monumental policy failure, tragic consequences*).

Pearson's outcomes are listed in point form; but each of course could have been developed into a paragraph (or more). In Tickner's consequential explanation, [3.11] below, various outcomes of the High Court's validation of native land title, in the famous Mabo case, are elaborated in more detail. Instead of numbering the outcomes, they are signalled as *key consequences of the [High Court's] decision*, and then enumerated as legal principles that are either clear and unambiguous or open to question. Each such consequence is signalled as clause Themes (highlighted below). In addition, unambiguous consequences are emphasised by polar appraisals like *no, any, all, always* or *whatever* (in bold italic).

[3.11]

**Some key consequences of the decision** need to be emphasised. **The Mabo judgment** did *not* challenge *any* of the legal rights and interests of non-Aboriginal Australians. **Its effect** was to recognise that native title *may* continue to exist in those parts of Australia where Aboriginal people still occupied or had sufficient continuing association with their traditional lands, *but in no case could the rights of any other landholder be eroded*. **Furthermore**, *any* hope indigenous people had of challenging the sovereignty or supreme law-making power of the parliaments was **unambiguously buried for all time** by the court.

**The court made clear in its judgement** that governments acting within their powers could extinguish *any* native title by granting the land to non-native title holders in a manner that was inconsistent with native title, and that they had done so over much of the continent, for example wherever there had been a grant of freehold interests. **The question to be asked** in the case of each type of crown grant or crown dealing with the land was whether native title rights could continue to exist over the land after the grant, as it could, for example, in the case of crown land being converted to a national park or following the grant of an exploration licence.

**A key question that was left up in the air** was whether grant of a leasehold interest, such as pastoral lease, extinguished native title. This was the issue that the High Court was subsequently to consider in the Wik case when it ruled in favour of Aboriginal people. **But it was clear from the Mabo decision** itself that *whatever* interest Aboriginal people might continue to have in such land, it would *always* be subject to and overridden by *any* valid interest held by non-indigenous Australians. Thus *not one* square centimetre of land held by non-indigenous Australians was put at risk by the Mabo decision. **Viewed in this context, the Mabo decision** is *by no means* radical, but it did bring

Australia to a position of basic recognition of the concept of indigenous title to land, and it had huge symbolic value as well as practical consequences.

**Another principle flowed from the decision** that was crucial to the protection of indigenous rights and to the need for a national response to Mabo. Even after Mabo, Commonwealth, state and territory governments could legislate to take away the native title rights recognised by the High Court, provided they acted within the limits of their law-making power. There is no constitutional constraint that requires a state government to pay fair compensation when acquiring the property of citizens. States and territories are, however, bound by the provisions of the RDA (Racial Discrimination Act), which requires them to treat indigenous people no less favourably than others in the community. [87-88]

### 3.4 Expositions, discussions and challenges - debating the past

The recounts, accounts and explanations we have reviewed to this point all deal with unfolding time. In recounts one event follows another, in accounts one event leads to another, and in explanations more than one event causes another or some event leads to more than one other. At this point we turn from genres organised around events as they unfold in the world to genres which unfold upon themselves; we turn in other words from field time to text time – from genres of recounting, accounting and explaining to genres of argumentation.

Perhaps the best known of these is exposition, in which some thesis is expounded and argued for. Argumentation is required since the historian sees what s/he wants to say as in some sense contestable, and requiring motivation if it is to be accepted by a wider readership. The last twenty years has seen liberal Australian historians successfully contest the hitherto dominant construction of European colonisation as a peaceful occupation of a largely empty land. This revision of history has supported Indigenous Australians to successfully sue for recognition of their native title, such as Eddie Mabo's 1992 High Court win. However in the subsequent reactionary climate of the Howard government, neo-conservative writers have been encouraged to challenge what they and Howard refer to as the 'black arm-band' view of Australian history, which they characterise as foisted on the Australian public by unscholarly and ideologically driven liberals (Manne 2001). Prominent among these neo-conservatives is historian Keith Windschuttle, who published his notorious *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* in December 2002, denying the well-documented 19<sup>th</sup> century genocide of Aboriginal Tasmanians.

The exposition [3.12] below is from one of a number of replies of liberal historians attacked by Windschuttle, that are published in Manne (2003). Here James Boyce motivates his thesis that Windschuttle has relied too much on official government records at the expense of other primary sources. In broad outline, Boyce presents two arguments in favour of his position. The first is that there are enormous gaps in the Tasmanian government's record keeping, and the second is that later on, documentation proliferated as a kind of smoke screen for violent dispossession. He scaffolds his exposition with conjunctions (*first, therefore, and, by*), metadiscourse (*reasons, problem*), and reiterations of his position (all highlighted in the text below). And Boyce reiterates his thesis twice, once after each argument, to drive home his position (underlined below). On the basis of this scaffolding, the stages of his exposition can be labelled as Thesis~Argument1~Argument2~Reiteration of Thesis (inserted as headings below).

[3.12]

### Thesis

The over-reliance on the government's own records grossly distorts Windschuttle's understanding of the realities of frontier life **for two reasons**.

#### Argument1

**First**, despite *Fabrication's* claim that 'except for a handful of gaps, there are good records of the activities of almost the entire colonial population from 1803 to the 1840s,' it was not until 1824 that Governor Arthur instituted a comprehensive system of public record-keeping. The preceding two decades of government records have enormous gaps. So few records of Governor Collin's time (1804-10) survive that in 1925 his burial cask was re-opened in a search for long-lost documents. In 1820, Commissioner Bigge heard many excuses about this topic. Governor Davey (1813-17) claimed he had sent most of the many documents missing from his term of office to the Earl of Harrowby. One senior civil servant gave the excuse to the commissioner that 'very considerable difficulties arise from the insufficiency of stationery.' Another claimed that 'about a year ago a case containing all my papers was stolen.'

Government record keeping improves somewhat with the arrival of Sorrell in 1817, except in relation to documents pertaining to Aborigines. Sorrell virtually never mentions Aborigines in his dispatches to London and ignores them altogether in his lengthy hand-over report to Arthur in 1824. Even the meticulous Arthur largely followed the same practice of keeping London out of the Aboriginal issue until 1827. Quite simply, like any good administrator, neither Sorrell nor Arthur actively sought information in those areas they would rather not know about, let alone apprised a meddling London of the uncomfortable facts. Only when the level of killing became such a prominent public issue from 1827 onwards, with such a dramatic impact on profit, colonisation and the operation of the penal system, did Arthur change tack.

Relying for the most part on the official government record for information on the Aborigines before 1827 is **therefore grossly inadequate**. *Fabrication's* claim that 'Few colonial encounters anywhere in the world are as well documented as those of Van Dieman's Land' is only true for the years 1827 to 1832.

#### Argument2

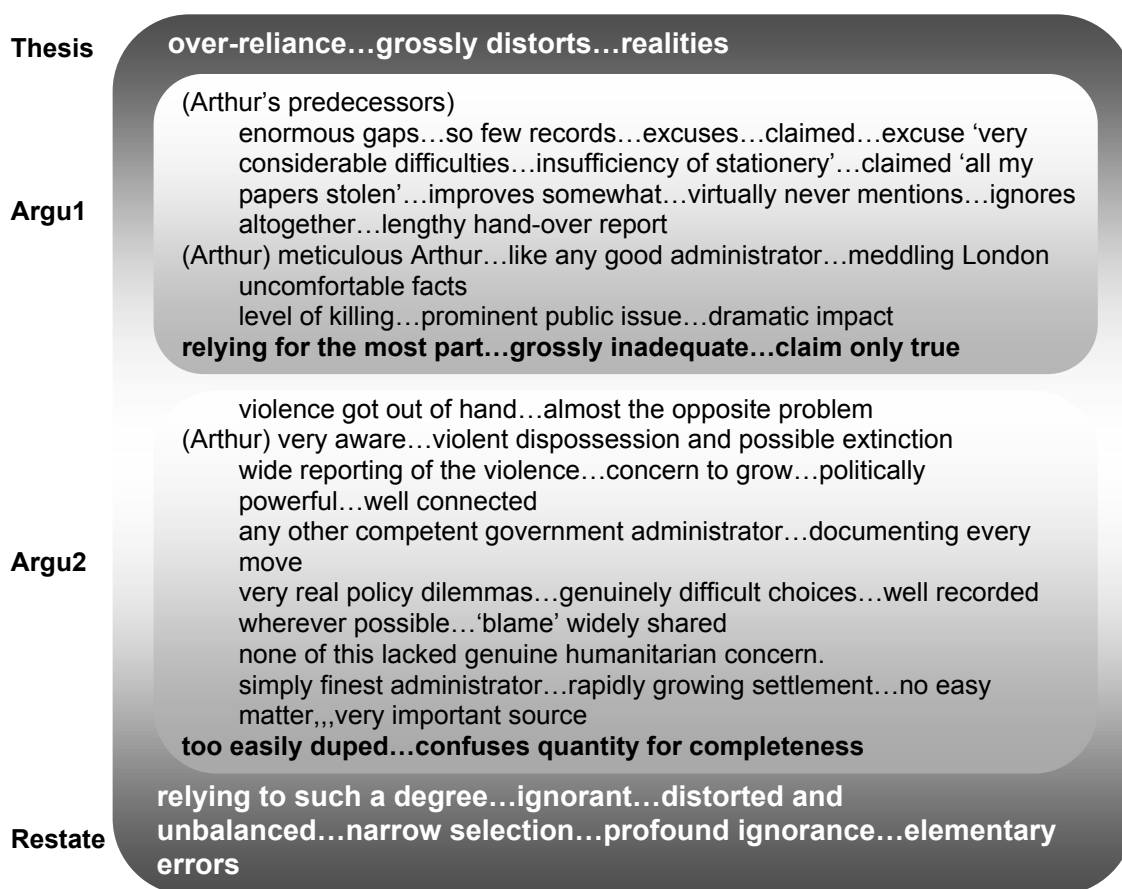
**And** once the violence got out of hand, **almost the opposite problem** faces the historian. Arthur was very aware of the political implications of the violent dispossession and possible extinction of the Aborigines. The wide reporting of the violence had caused concern to grow among the politically powerful missionary societies in Britain, who were well connected to the House of Commons and other seats of power. Arthur – once again like any other competent government administrator – now set out to cover his own and the government's back by sharing the responsibility for actions and policies and documenting every move. The government's very real policy dilemmas, and its genuinely difficult choices, are thus well recorded at this time. Committees were set up wherever possible, and settler input sought, to ensure that 'blame' was widely shared. None of this is to imply that Arthur lacked a genuine humanitarian concern. It is simply to point out that this governor was the finest administrator of the Van Diemonian era, that running a large penal colony doubling as a rapidly growing settlement on another people's land was no easy matter, and that it was not by chance that he was one of the two governors on Van Dieman's Land before 1850 to leave the posting with career prospects enhanced and his official reputation intact. Such hidden considerations do not mean the 17 volumes of official records are not a very important source. Windschuttle, however, is too easily duped when he confuses quantity for completeness. The fact that Arthur covered himself so well does not mean that he revealed – or even knew – every aspect of the conflict.

### Reiteration of Thesis

By relying to such a degree on the government record of the time, Windschuttle remains ignorant of the period until 1827 and inherits a distorted and unbalanced perspective on the height of the war years. This is true not only of the direct conflict with the Aborigines but also of the realities of European life outside the main settlements. The narrow selection of sources results in a profound ignorance of the basics of Van Diemanian economy, society and politics, which in turn leads to a series of elementary errors. [Boyce 2003: 27-29]

Of course Boyce presents values judiciously, from his Thesis that *over-reliance on government records grossly distorts Windschuttle's understanding of the realities*, to an intense series of condemnations in the Reiteration stage. In between he continually piles praise on Tasmania's founder hero Governor Arthur, in contrast to his dissembling predecessors, and excuses Arthur's manipulation of record keeping to cover himself. He thus avoids antagonising his readers' loyalties, while concluding each Argument with Windschuttle's foolishness. These patterns are displayed in the extract of the text's appraisals in Figure 3.x. The diagram illustrates how judgements of Windschuttle (in bold) in the Thesis and Reiteration scope forward and backward over the text (indicated by shading), while judgements of him in the conclusion of each Argument scope backward over the Argument.

Figure 3.3: Values in stages of an exposition



Expositions in general vary with respect to the number of arguments included to motivate a thesis, although three arguments is a common rhetorical trope. They also vary with respect to reiterations of the thesis, generally favour a single reiteration following the arguments. In these terms, Boyce has one argument less and one reiteration more than many of the expositions we have encountered (cf. Martin & Rose 2003). But this flexibility is of course built into the telos of the genre, allowing it to be fine tuned to the issue to hand.

Complementing exposition is the discussion genre, in which more than one position on an issue is explicitly tendered. In text [3.13] below Peter Mares relays the views of

Philip Ruddock, then Minister for immigration, as he outlines three competing visions for population management in Australia.

[3.13]

At the Knox auditorium Mr Ruddock's performance is polished and professional, if perhaps a little tepid. He begins by... The minister moves on to outline **three competing visions** for Australia's population in the century ahead. **The first scenario** is the high-immigration model favoured by some business groups, which call for Australia's net migration intake to be set at 1 per cent of existing population per year. The red line on the graph trends alarmingly upwards, predicting an 'inevitably rising' population, which would hit 65 million in the year 2007. According to the minister, the business groups' goal of 1 per cent net migration betrays 'a certain lack of realism'. **The second scenario** is net zero migration, the model pushed by sections of the environmental movement and by groups such as One Nation, which say that Australia should take just enough migrants to replace the number of people who permanently depart the country each year. With falling birthrates, this would see Australia's population slump from 20 million to 14 million within the next century. The green line on the graph sags in a depressing downward arc, heading inevitably towards zero. **The minister's final forecast** is reassuring – according to him, if we hold fast to the current government policy, Australia's population will increase gradually for the next forty years before settling comfortably at around 23 million. This favourable outlook is represented on the graph by a blue line, which rises gently and unthreateningly before charting a stable course between the extremes of green and red. [Mares, P 2001 *Borderline: Australia's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers*. Sydney: UNSW Press (Reportage Series) 141-142]

So where expositions are organised around arguments for a single position, discussions are scaffolded around competing positions. Typically, one of these will be promoted and the others undermined, so that the discussion resolves in the direction of a single position; the genre is thus not as even handed as its multi-voicing might imply. This is clear from the appraisal choices in [3.13]. As Ruddock's graphs reveal, Goldilocks tries the business position, which is too fast, then the green position, which is too slow, and then the government position, which is just right:

The first scenario ...

The red line on the graph trends **alarmingly** upwards  
...**betrays 'a certain lack of realism'**.

The second scenario ...

The green line on the graph **sags** in a **depressing** downward arc...

The minister's final forecast

is **reassuring** ... This **favourable** outlook is represented  
on the graph by a blue line, which rises **gently** and **unthreateningly**...

It's democracy in action – we're told what to think!

Complementing these promotional genres is the challenge, which sets out to demolish an established position. Challenges are in effect anti-expositions – their mission is to rebut arguments which might be offered in support of a position and proffer counter-arguments. In [3.14] Father Brennan returns to attack the Howard government over the rationality of its mandatory detention policy for asylum seeking boat people. He uses metadiscourse (*rationality*, *objection*, *case*) to position arguments for and against mandatory detention (in bold below), and uses negation to deny potential counterarguments (underlined).

[3.14]

During the firebreak period, the government made an example of the Afghans, the Iraqis and the Iranians in detention. If they had been released into the community while their cases were being

determined, they could have commenced their orientation to life in the community, given that most of them would be staying at least three years on a temporary protection visa. The modest number whose claims were rejected could have been treated in the same way as all other onshore asylum seekers. Their numbers would not contribute significantly to the 60,000 overstayers in the community.

There can be no objection to detention while a person is awaiting removal from the country once a decision on refugee status is made. There is no case for detaining one particular group before a decision is made when that group is known historically to contain a much higher percentage of refugees than all other groups. There is no case for detaining them further while their appeals are processed, especially when it is known that they are at least six times more likely than other asylum seekers to succeed on appeal. The injustice of this discriminatory detention would be heightened if, as is likely, the detention in remote places were contributing to more regular bad decision making at the primary stage.

If the government's chief concern was to limit the number of unlawful overstayers in the community, the savings from not holding unlawful arrivals in protracted detention during the processing stage could be devoted to increased surveillance of all overstayers in the community. This would facilitate the orderly departure from Australia of overstayers, regardless of their racial, national or religious identity. Though there are 60,000 overstayers a year, our government locates only about 15,000 of them a year. The Australian public's fixation with boat people is highlighted when you consider that only 308 unauthorised boat arrivals were removed from Australia in 2001-2002, while another 10,894 persons who had no authority to be in Australia were removed. Where were the other 49,000? Would it really have mattered if those 308 boat people had been in the community rather than in detention at taxpayers expense? There is no coherent rationale for keeping all unauthorised asylum seekers in detention during the second stage of their processing. After ten years of such detention, there is no proof that it operates as a deterrent. With the fourth wave of boat people, mandatory detention was imposed on a group of whom 90 per cent were proved to be refugees. [Brennan 2003: 112-113]

Overall Brennan's challenge is organised around implicit concession – the government might think so, but in fact they are wrong. After three rounds of this repartee, the challenge concludes that its opposition is wrong (i.e. there is no coherent rationale for mandatory detention). This concessional rhetoric is outlined below:

During the firebreak period, the government made an example of the Afghans, the Iraqis and the Iranians in detention.

**(but in fact)**

If they had been released into the community...they could have commenced their orientation to life in the community...

There can be no objection to detention while a person is awaiting removal from the country...

**(but in fact)**

There is no case for detaining one particular group before a decision is made...

(If) the government's chief concern was to limit the number of unlawful overstayers in the community,

**(but in fact)**

the savings from not holding unlawful arrivals...could be devoted to increased surveillance of all overstayers...

**(so)**

There is no coherent rationale for keeping all unauthorised asylum seekers in detention...

Like historical accounts and explanations, expositions, discussion and challenges rely heavily on nominalisation to construe events as things and explain how one thing leads on to another. Examples from [3.12] and [3:14] above illustrate the use of explicitly causal verbs connecting events inside the clause:

The wide reporting of the violence

had caused  
concern to grow among the politically powerful missionary societies in Britain

The narrow selection of sources  
results in  
a profound ignorance of the basics of Van Diemanian economy, society and politics,

which in turn  
leads  
to a series of elementary errors.

The wide reporting of the violence  
had caused  
concern to grow among the politically powerful missionary societies in Britain

Boyce pushes this one step further, nominalising the causal connection as *impact* in *Only when the level of killing became such a prominent public issue from 1827 onwards, with such a dramatic impact on profit, colonisation and the operation of the penal system, did Arthur change tack* (cf. *the level of killing impacted on profit etc.*):

the level of killing ...from 1827 onwards  
with such a dramatic impact on  
profit, colonisation and the operation of the penal system

And both Boyce and Brennan 'borrow' action verbs into the same agentive structure to increase their causal repertoire:

The over-reliance on the government's own records  
grossly distorts  
Windschuttle's understanding of the realities of frontier life for two reasons.

'very considerable difficulties  
arise from  
the insufficiency of stationery'.

Government record keeping  
improves somewhat  
with the arrival of Sorrell in 1817

the detention in remote places  
were contributing to  
more regular bad decision making at the primary stage

the savings from not holding unlawful arrivals in protracted detention...  
could be devoted to  
increased surveillance of all overstayers in the community

This (= increased surveillance of all overstayers in the community)  
would facilitate  
the orderly departure from Australia of overstayers

Nominalisation of this order also facilitates evaluation, as we shall see in the next section.

### 3.5 Packaging value - what history means

Alongside explaining, history involves interpretation – giving value to the past. It's not just about what happened and why, but in addition what it means. So to understand how history genres are organised, we need to look more carefully at how they evaluate what's gone on. Across genres we have seen that historians are disposed to both preview and review events, factors/consequences and arguments with intensified evaluations by way of interpreting them. Nominalisation of events obviously plays an important role in this since resources for construing and grading attitude are richest in English nominal group structures:

a monumental policy failure  
 tragic consequences  
 (Relying...on the...government record) is ... grossly inadequate<sup>35</sup>  
 a distorted and unbalanced perspective  
 a profound ignorance

To see how this works in longer texts, we'll consider another historical recount from Brennan [3:15] in which he condemns the Howard government's failure to protect children it has incarcerated in mandatory detention for the crime of fleeing to Australia. He exemplifies the government's behaviour with an autobiographical recount from the mother of a 7-year-old child injured by a guard in the notorious Woomera detention centre. The mother's recount is low on appraisal, but in both the preview and review stages, Brennan's voice is explicitly judgemental. He previews her testimony with his own autobiographical recount, in which he documents his dealings with authorities over this matter. He begins this by explicitly condemning their *incapacity...to deal credibly*, and then lets their behaviour speak for itself, which he interprets as a *single-minded objective of denying*. Finally he reviews her dispassionate testimony with a series of intense condemnations of these *obscene...political spin-doctors*.

[3.15]

Let me give one example of the **incapacity** of the Canberra bureaucracy to **deal credibly** with reports of child abuse and neglect in detention because of **their need to pursue a hot political agenda**. I communicated information about injuries to children at Woomera to the Minister and to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) on 4 April 2002. Some of this information, including the claim that a seven-year-old boy was hit with a baton and exposed to tear gas, was then published in the *Canberra Times* on 18 April 2002. **Within six hours** DIMIA had publicly refuted the claim on its website, saying, 'This department has no record of injuries to a 7-year-old sustained during the disturbance at Woomera detention facility on Good Friday... If Father Brennan has information or evidence of mistreatment of detainees he should report it to the appropriate authorities for investigation.' I had seen the bruises **with my own eyes**. I had heard reports of tear gas hitting children **even from the ACM** (Australian Correctional Management Pty Ltd) manager at Woomera. I lodged a complaint about the department's **spin doctoring**. It took the secretary of the department **more than three months** to conduct the inquiry. The department **could strenuously deny** allegations **within six hours**, then take **more than three months** to acknowledge **their error**. The acting secretary of the department explained that their public misinformation occurred because 'a number of communication problems in the Department allowed the matter to escalate to the stage where Mr Foster [Director, Public Affairs, DIMIA] posted **inaccurate information**.' According to the departmental inquiry, this escalation took place over four days. The public rebuttal was issued **within six hours** of the publication of my remarks – **hardly any time at all** for communication problems or escalation to impede the **single-minded objective of denying** that there had been injury to children.



Mr Ruddock's own chief of staff had referred the matter to the South Australian Family and Youth Services on 29 April 2002 once a new search of medical records revealed there was a problem. On 10 July 2002 the mother reported to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission:

My son was with me in Oscar compound during the disturbance in the early hours of Saturday 30 March 2002. He and I were both hit by tear gas even though we were not trying to escape. I was blinded for about a minute and I took my son to my chest and embraced him to protect him. I started to move away from the scene with my son. Then an ACM guard came and bowed over me and struck my son with a baton.

On Tuesday 2 April, I told my story to Father Brennan and the lawyers at Woomera. I then went to the doctor on Wednesday 3 April 2002. The doctor made a report which I attach to this letter. I asked the lawyers to make a complaint.

One and a half months later two policemen came to see me. I told them what happened to my son. They said they would return with an interpreter from Adelaide and with Federal Police and someone from Children's Services and with a camera for an interview with my son. Then about one week later, and before the United Nations came to visit Woomera, I was interviewed by Geoff Cardwell of the South Australian Police about the incident. He said he was the boss of the other police who had come. He said it was not the responsibility of Federal Police because they would come only for damage to property. He said Child Service would not come because their responsibility was child abuse and relationships between children and parents. He gave me a card with the reference PIR/02/966813. He recorded our conversation. He was interested only in the events which occurred on the evening of Friday 29 March 2002. He told me that the doctor and ACM had not made any report of my son's injury to Children's Services. I asked him about my rights. He told me, 'You can't do anything because you are captive in here and when you get out and get your visa, you can continue your protest and maybe you can get your rights.' He asked whether I saw who hit my son. I said I did not see because the guard was wearing a mask. He said, 'We can't catch him because you didn't see him.' I said, 'It's **not important** who hit my son, just it is **important** that ACM action that they hit children, because it is their habit in our compound.'

I **trusted** the government to protect my son. I **hope** my complaint can help other mothers and children. I am only a single mother in detention who **wants** the government to care for us.

On 22 August 2002 Mr Ruddock advised, 'I understand that South Australian police investigations are continuing. Meanwhile, the Department is examining an ACM report into the matter, received on 5 August 2002 to determine what action, if any, is required.' The mother of the boy **never** received a report on her complaint. On 3 February 2003 the Minister wrote again, advising that 'the matter was referred to the AFP' who 'determined that there was **insufficient** evidence relating to the identity of the alleged offender.' Who does investigate assaults in detention centres? The Australian Federal Police (AFP) or the state police? Or **nobody**?

The **cursory and dilatory nature** of DIMIA's inquiry invokes **no public confidence** that there will not be a recurrence of **cover-ups** or **neglect of credible claims** of injury to children in detention, where they are being used as a means to an end. In this instance, the Commonwealth department was **guilty of a negligent or wilful cover-up** regarding the investigation of child abuse in detention centres. If children are to be held in detention with their parents, they should be held in facilities where there is ready access to state Children's Services departments. The policy parameters of their detention should be **sufficiently humane** to win the support of both the federal government and the state governments, regardless of which party is in power. It is **obscene** that **defenceless children** are used as **political footballs** by **political spin-doctors**. [Brennan 2003: 101-104]

Like *Greg's story* in Chapter 2, the mother's recount here has very little ongoing evaluation, and is undoubtedly also a piece of testimony, transcribed as part of a

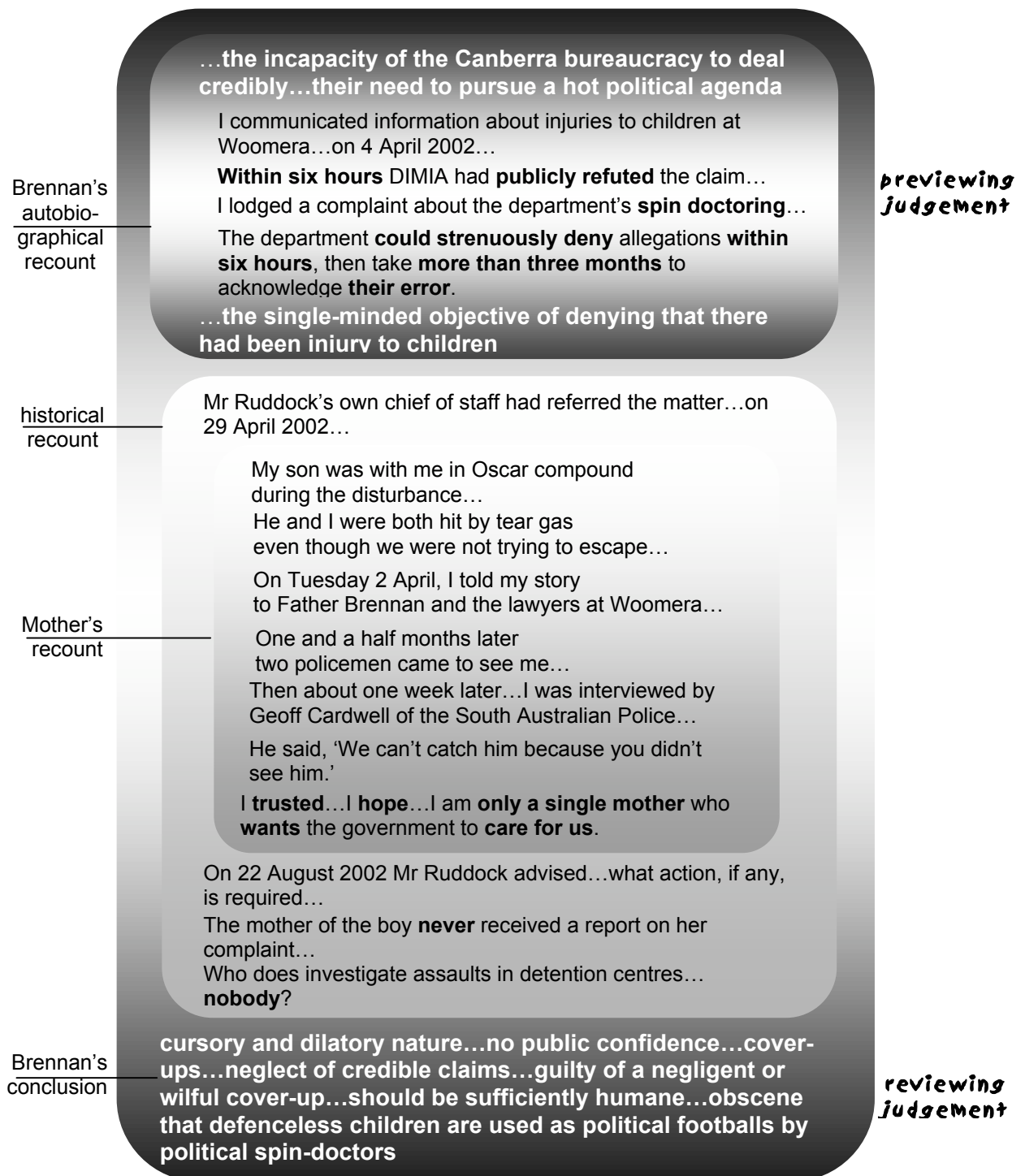
report to the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. As such it presents itself as factual evidence, reporting what people said but not what the mother feels – until the last paragraph that is, where her affectual disposition in making her complaint is finally made explicit:

I **trusted** the government to protect my son. I **hope** my complaint can help other mothers and children. I am only a single mother in detention who **wants** the government to care for us.

The voice of the text appears to us to shift here – from documentation to emotional appeal; from an audience of judicial commissioners in fact to a range of interested observers, including perhaps the media and their readership at large. By the same token, in spite of the inhumanity of the events to hand, the text expresses affect, not judgement; as with *Greg's story*, there is no explicit moral indictment by the mother of what has been done to her son.

Brennan's whole text begins with an explicit judgement of Canberra's incapacity, which he exemplifies with his own autobiographical recount, follows up with his historical recount (which includes the mother's autobiographical recount), and concludes with a damning judgement of a negligent or wilful cover-up amounting in his terms to an obscenity. The patterns of both text staging and values are diagrammed in Figure 3.4. Intensity of appraisals and their scope over text stages are indicated by shading. These include the judgements that open and conclude Brennan's recount, the affect that concludes the mother's recount, while the intense judgements in Brennan's recount and conclusion scope over the whole text.

Figure 3.4: Pattern of recounts within recounts within history texts



The ways in which these genres are stitched together is indicative of the way in which genres participate in macro-genres, a topic we'll return to in Chapter 4 below.

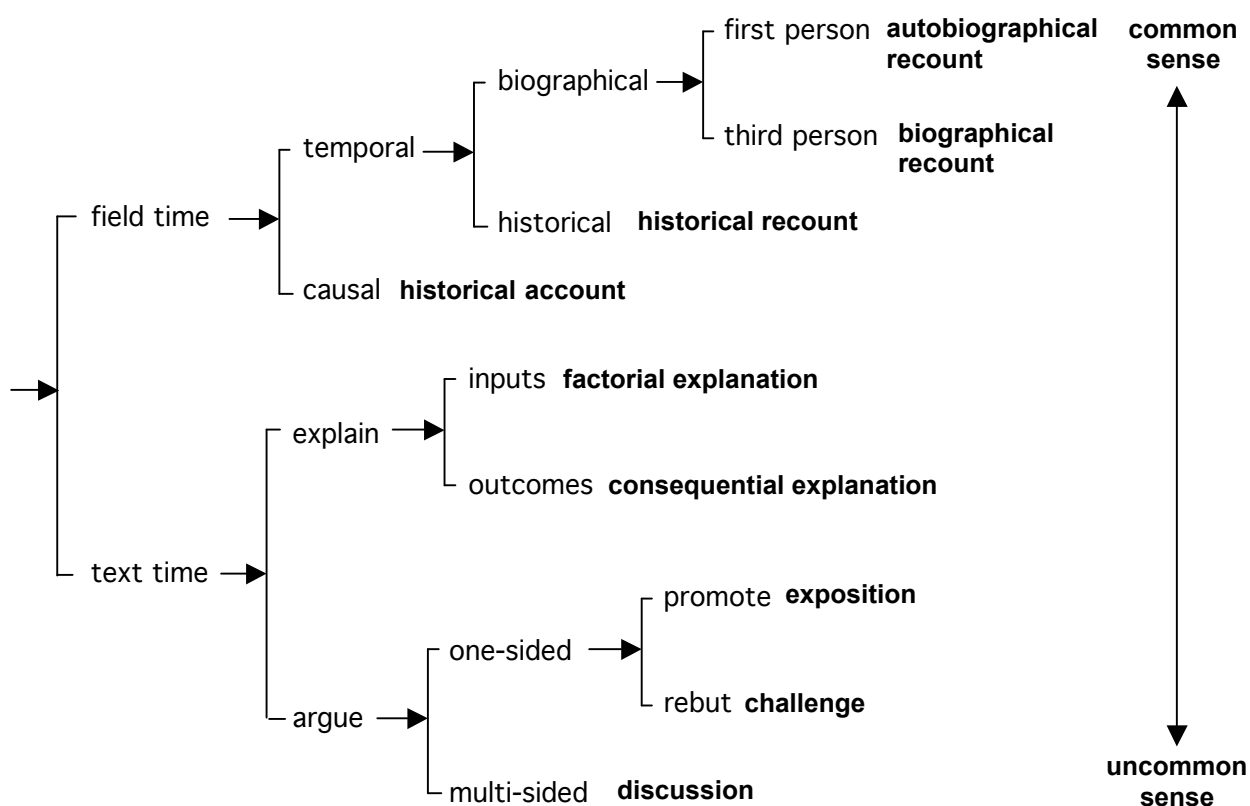
Discussion to this point puts us in position to note some important correlations in history discourse, recurring across genres. On the one hand we have an association of previews and reviews with explicit evaluation and nominalisation; and on the other we have an association of the body of text with more factual, less nominalised textures. Rhetorically speaking, this constructs the factual, concrete bodies of texts

as evidence for their more value laden, more abstract, prospective and retrospective conclusions. What we experience as serial time, we read as historical waves – of interpretation, grounded in memories, interpreted again, and grounded, and so on – the past breaking upon the present, time upon time.

### 3.6 Typology - classifying difference

In this section we will arrange our history genres as we did for stories in Chapter 2, as a system network in Figure 3.5. This is fundamentally a taxonomic exercise, classifying genres as a typology, and this means privileging one dimension of texture over another as more or less critical for categorisation. In Figure 3.5 we've privileged the opposition of field time to text time, separating texts which unfold chronologically from those which unfold rhetorically (basically recounts and accounts vs the others). Following on from this, the network opposes texts foregrounding temporal connections (recounts) to those foregrounding causal ones (accounts). The recounts are then divided into those focussing on individuals (autobiography and biography depending on person) and those focussing on groups (historical recounts). Turning to rhetorically organised genres, the network distinguishes those organised around external cause (explanations) from those organised around internal cause (arguments). Arguments are then divided into organised around one position or more (expositions and challenges vs discussions), with expositions promoting a position and challenges rebutting one.

Figure 3.5: A typological perspective on relations between history genres



Typology creates categorical distinctions, where thinking about things as ranged along a cline might be more productive. For example it forces us to distinguish

between recounts and accounts as distinct categories, when from another perspective what we have is texts unfolding through time, some of which create more causal connections than others. In our experience, historical accounts are the least 'categorical' of the genres reviewed above, emerging now and again from historical recounts; but they are in some sense less 'institutionalised' than recounts, explanations and the arguing genres. One implication of this is that we would expect to find many more texts straddling the border of recount and account than across the boundaries of other genres.

Another set of oppositions that might be better treated as a cline is the exposition, challenge and discussion group. From the perspective of appraisal theory what distinguishes these genres is the degree of heteroglossia as far as alternative positions is concerned. Expositions efface alternatives, challenges deface them and discussions include but deprecate them.

As an alternative to Figure 3.5 we might have promoted temporality vs causality as our first cut, thereby opposing recounts to accounts, explanations and arguments at primary delicacy. The important point is that because the network is a hierarchy, privileging has consequences for the categorisation as a whole. In choosing to organise our system in this way, we have brought out one cline that is significant for the learner pathway discussed in the following section. This is a cline of abstraction, from the discourse patterns of autobiographical recounts that most closely resemble those of everyday commonsense, to those of written argument genres that are most remote from the unfolding event time of everyday experience.

### **3.7 Topology - proximating likeness**

The alternative to taxonomising of the kind displayed in Figure 3.5 is topology, which allows us to relate genres as more or less like one another, from as many angles as we wish. We'll illustrate topological analysis of history genres here from the perspective of pedagogic discourse (Bernstein 2000), drawing on work by Coffin 1997. The basic question we are asking here is how best to apprentice students into the discourses of history reviewed above. In Bernstein's terms we want to build a stairway of recontextualisation, from everyday discourse to academic history.

#### **3.7.1 Recount genres**

We start with the assumption that the closest relevant 'domestic' genre for secondary school students is the personal recount introduced in Chapter 2 – because this genre reconstructs what happened as events unfolding through time. The first move which students have to make in moving from personal recounts to history is to learn to manage episodic time alongside serial time. And this means organising texts around phases of activity scaffolded by clause initial circumstances of location in time – the move from 'and then' to 'later on in another period of time' (from 'sequence in time' to 'setting in time' in Gleason's terms<sup>36</sup>).

Of course as we have seen above in [3.4], and this is where topology is important, history genres do deploy serial time where required – to focus step by step on a sequence of events. In our experience this happens more often in autobiography than biography, and less often in historical recounts than in either of these genres.

This has partly to do with access to detail, and partly to do with the focus of historical recounts – which is to package time into phases, which might in turn be nominalised (and possibly named; e.g. the Depression, the Cold War).

Alongside this move from serial to episodic time, students need to shift from 1<sup>st</sup> person reference to 3<sup>rd</sup> person, and from specific participants to generic ones. Once again these are not categorical distinctions. Personal and autobiographical recounts do feature 1<sup>st</sup> person reference, especially as Theme; but the narrator interacts with other participants as the texts unfold. Similarly, personal, autobiographical and biographical recounts feature individuals, although reference is made to groups of people as well; historical recounts on the other hand foreground groups of people over individuals, although the ‘grand narratives’ of modernist history include specific reference to great men (sic) by way of enacting their patriarchal reading of the past. A summary of these time management and participant identification variables is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Key features of four recount genres

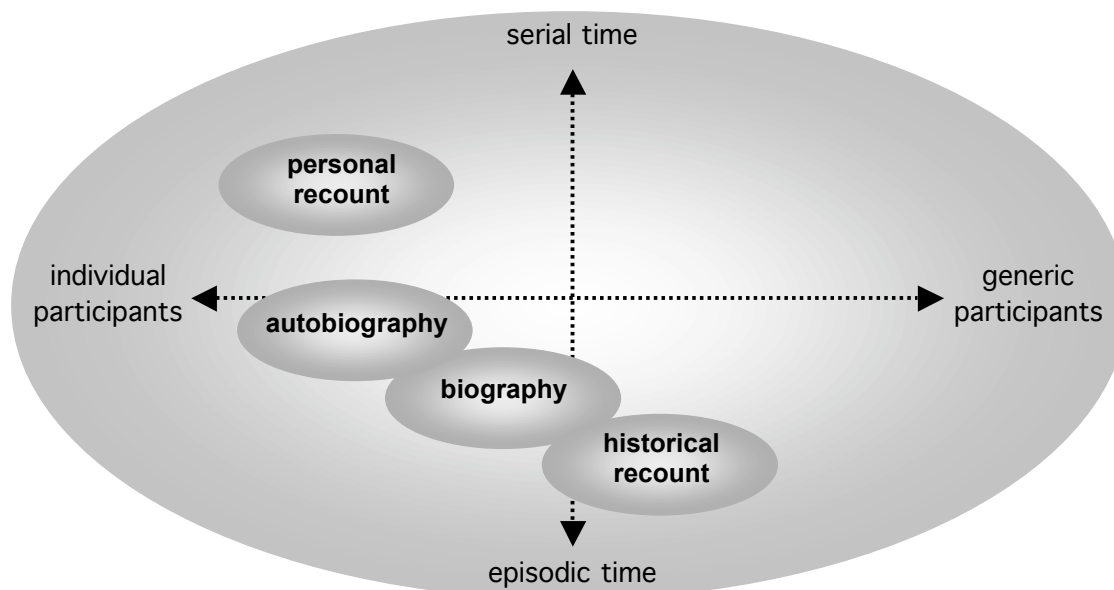
GENRE [staging]	INFORMAL DESCRIPTION	KEY LINGUISTIC FEATURES (Halliday 1994, Martin 1992)
personal recount [Orientation^Record]	agnate to story genres; what happened to me	serial time; 1st person (& 3rd); specific participants
autobiographical recount [Orientation^Record]	the story of my life [oral history]	episodic time; 1st person (& 3 <sup>rd</sup> ); specific participants
biographical recount [Orientation^Record]	the story of someone else's life	episodic time; 3rd person (specific); other specific & generic participants
historical recount; [Background^Record]	establishing the time line of the grand narrative	episodic time; 3rd person; mainly generic participants (but specific ‘great men’)

Because we are dealing with clines rather than categorical distinctions, and because more than one variable is relevant, topological analysis is a useful tool for modelling relations among the recount genres. Although topology is theoretically multidimensional, it is difficult to clearly diagram more than two dimensions at a time<sup>37</sup> – so we’ll set aside person and restrict ourselves to individual vs generic reference and serial vs episodic time here. Figure 3.6 below plays these vectors off against one another to create a space in which recounts can be mapped as more or less focussed on individuals or groups and as unfolding more or less through serialised events or phases. In these terms, personal recounts are relatively serial and individual, compared with historical recounts which are relatively generic and episodic. Autobiography and biography come somewhere in between, with autobiography leaning towards personal recount, and biography towards historical recount.

The precise positioning of these genres in the landscape is not at issue here, and would have to be pursued on the basis of quantitative analysis of a corpus of the relevant genres in any case. Our purpose at this point is simply to signal the complementarity of typological and topological perspectives on genre relations. Topology is of course a useful tool for exploring the fit between specific texts and the

genre they realise. For example, a personal recount which includes several phases of sequenced events would move down the time variable in Figure 3.6 towards autobiography (more setting in time); by the same token, an autobiography which expands detailed sequences of events within phases would move up towards personal recount (more sequence in time). The elasticity of discourse and the attendant facility with which texts adapt to their context means that now and again we'll come across texts which are difficult to categorise as one genre or another (i.e. texts that 'blend' genres). At the same time, the metastability of culture as a predictable system of genres means that we regularly recognise and participate in texts as enacting one genre or another.<sup>38</sup>

Figure 3.6: A topological perspective on recount genres



### 3.7.2 Historical accounts and explanations

The next move students need to make is from recounts to accounts, and this involves moving from temporal to causal connections between events. Cause can of course be realised between clauses through conjunctions (e.g. the factorial explanation [3:8] above), but as we have indicated, in accounts it tends to be realised inside the clause through nouns, verbs and prepositions. For this to happen one or both of the events being connected have to be nominalised in order to have them functioning inside the clause as participants or circumstances. Accordingly, historical accounts draw on grammatical metaphor much more heavily than recounts (although for time packaging reasons historical recounts are already moving in this direction). Since grammatical metaphor is a resource for reading and writing that develops after puberty in secondary school, the move from recounts to accounts is a very significant one in the development of apprentice historians.

Factorial and consequential explanations share this predilection for realising cause inside the clause. They differ from recounts and accounts in that chronology is not used to organise texts. Rather, explanations are organised rhetorically, beginning with the event being explained and then unfolding through a set of relevant factors or consequences. Since these factors and consequences are not ordered in time with

respect to one another, students have to learn to put them into a sequence appropriate to the explanation. In other words they have to organise text time independently of field time, since texture is no longer determined by chronology.

Although sequence becomes a matter of texture, causality remains a matter of what caused what in the world. In a sense, explanations are simply complicated accounts in which more than one thing leads on to or on from another. Relations among recounts, historical accounts and explanations are approximated in Figure 3.7.

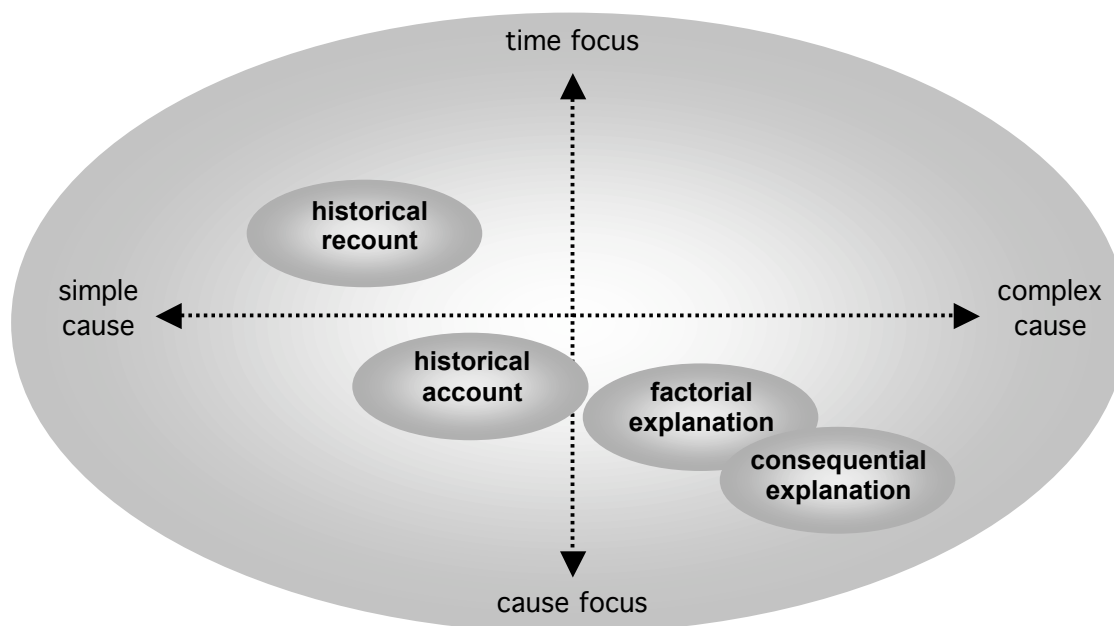
Because learning to manage cause inside the clause and sequence texts rhetorically is fundamental to the apprenticeship of young historians, accounts and explanations are highly favoured examination genres in Australian secondary schools. Students who cannot deploy the key features of these genres, outlined in Table 3.5, will fare poorly in test situations – however well they know what happened. What happened is not history; it's story. For history, understanding why things happened is critical. And for understanding students need accounts and explanations and control of the linguistic resources which realise them.

Table 3.5: Key features of historical accounts and explanations

GENRE [staging]	INFORMAL DESCRIPTION	KEY LINGUISTIC FEATURES (Halliday 1994, Martin 1992)
historical account; [Background^Account]	naturalising linearisation rendering the grand narrative inevitable	text unfolding through cause and effect; cause within clause; 3rd person; mainly generic & nominalised participants
factorial explanation [Outcome ^ Factors]	complexifying notion of what leads on to what	text internal organisation of factors; factors externally linked to outcome; cause within clause; 3rd person; mainly generic & nominalised participants
consequential explanation [Input ^ Consequences]	complexifying notion of what leads on from what	text internal organisation of consequences; consequences externally linked to input; cause within clause; 3rd person; mainly generic & nominalised participants



Figure 3.7: A topological perspective on explanatory genres



### 3.7.3 Exposition, challenge and discussion

Beyond chronicling and explanation we move to history at risk – the task of motivating interpretations. As with explanations, these genres unfold rhetorically rather than chronologically; unlike explanations, their notion of cause is also rhetorical. They are concerned with why a contestable reading of the past is motivated, not simply with what caused what. In Halliday and Hasan's 1976 terms this means that consequential links are internal rather than external – why I'm arguing that 'x', as opposed to why 'x' happened.

Thus Pearson, in [3:10] above, treats it as uncontroversial that the equal pay decision was a monumental policy failure with tragic consequences; he treats this as given, and presents the decision's outcomes. Boyce on the other hand, in [3.12] above treats Windschuttle's over-reliance on government sources as controversial. He's not explaining why Windschuttle did what he did or what its effects were; rather he moves on to prove his point, arguing that relevant government records were scarce early on and later on plentiful but misleading. Although there is a tendency for contestable positions in explanations to be less heavily evaluative than contestable ones in arguments, what is more critical is how historians position us with respect to appraised events: are they explaining what happened, or convincing us they're right?

Topologically speaking we will encounter texts which blur this distinction, as in the following factorial explanation cum exposition by Evans (1997), with which he concludes his biography of Deng Xiaoping. The text starts out as if it is listing factors which will impede the growth of political and cultural freedom in China; but it concludes by taking these as the basis for arguing that freedom is a long way away. This kind of slippage between how a text begins and how it ends is an important aspect of the dynamism of texture, taking advantage here of the topological affinity of explanations and expositions just reviewed.

[3.16]

The experience of other developing countries, not least the countries which underwent the profoundest changes in the nineteenth century, suggests very strongly that rising levels of prosperity and education lead to pressure for wider political and cultural freedom. There is plenty of evidence, not least the democracy movements of 1986 and 1989, that this is also true in China. In China, however, there are **factors** which could both modify the degree of pressure and increase resistance to it. One such factor is that the state has been an ideological state throughout China's history as a unified country. The state has been the custodian and propagator of a complete ideology and of an associated morality and not just an apparatus for control by an individual, a class or an interest. This tradition is still strong. Another factor is that Chinese society's experience of open competition for political power has been wholly unfavourable, from the days of corrupt parliamentary democracy in the early years of the Republic to the Cultural Revolution. It is not difficult for those who are dedicated to party leadership to obtain an echo when they argue that renewed competition would lead to social and political chaos.

A third factor which could retard the development of political freedom is that the degree of economic and cultural freedom enjoyed by most Chinese had increased greatly during the past twenty years, and is still increasing. The law is still harsh – and arbitrary; political dissent outside very narrow limits is still not tolerated; and large numbers of political and other prisoners still live and work in worse than spartan conditions. But for all the Chinese who keep out of political and other trouble, life is no longer rigidly controlled, or even narrowly circumscribed. This is clear from the behaviour of Chinese to one another – in markets, on trains and buses, and in parks and other public places – and also from their reaction to foreigners. They no longer try to avoid public contact with foreigners and are often ready to be seen answering foreigners' questions. It is also clear from the nightlife of the cities, the way in which the urban young dress, and the extent to which they know about developments in the youth culture of the rest of the world.

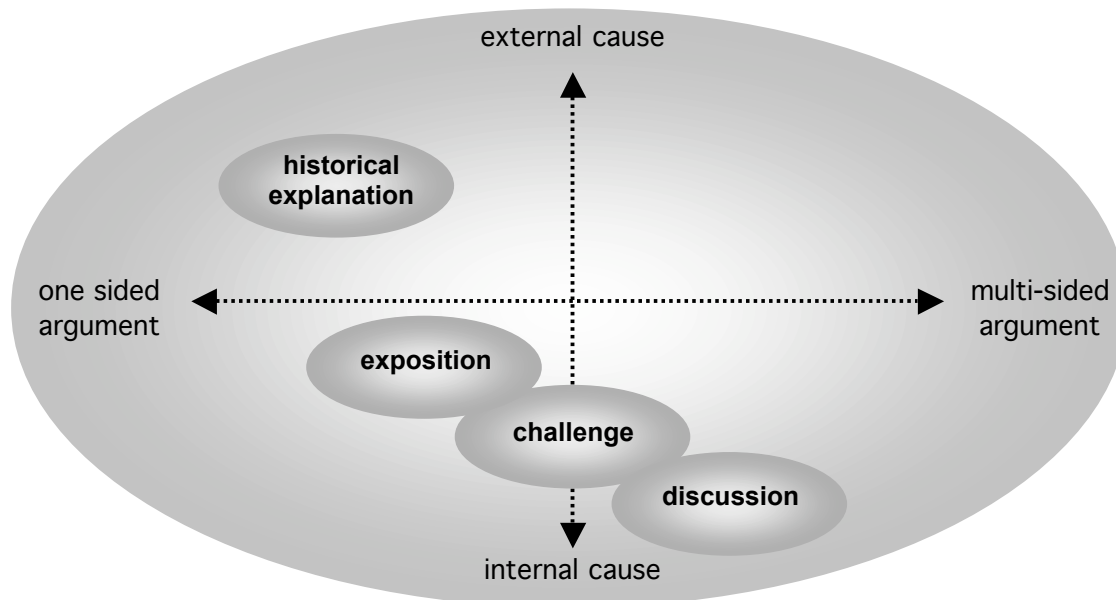
It may **therefore** be quite a long time before political freedom breaks out in China. Meanwhile, the world will continue to wonder that a country boy with a sketchy education could have left his stamp so strongly, and on the whole to their taste, on the people of the world's most populous country. [Evans 1997: 331-2]

Challenges may have a similar organization to expositions, with an introductory 'anti'-thesis subsequently undermined by the arguments why it is wrong (e.g. Tutu's challenge discussed in Martin 2003). Alternatively, specific aspects of the general position being attacked may be introduced and rebutted piece by piece, as with Brennan's challenge (3:14 above). Discussions involve additional organisational decisions about the number of positions around an issue to be canvassed and how certain positions will be negatively evaluated and another positively viewed. Space precludes consideration of the finer points of internal conjunction, appraisal and hierarchy of periodicity in arguing genres here. A few key parameters are outlined in Table 3.6, and diagrammed in Figure 3.7.

Table 3.6: Key features of exposition, challenge and discussion

GENRE [staging]	INFORMAL DESCRIPTION	KEY LINGUISTIC FEATURES (Halliday 1994, Martin 1992)
exposition - one sided; promote [Thesis^Arguments]	problematic interpretation that needs justifying	internal conjunction keying on thesis
challenge <sup>39</sup> - one sided; rebut [Position^Rebuttal]	someone else's problematic interpretation that needs demolishing	internal conjunction keying on thesis
discussion - multi-sided; adjudicate [Issue^Sides^Resolution]	more than one interpretation considered	internal conjunction keying on thesis; & internal organisation of points of view

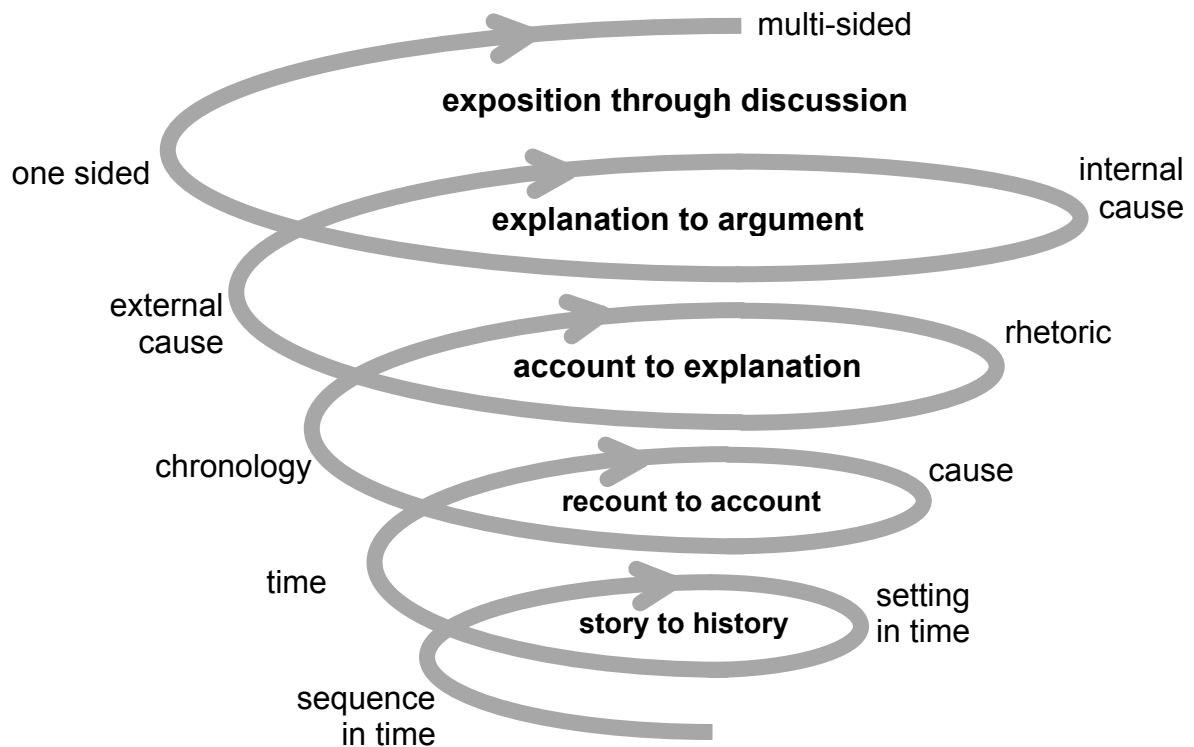
Figure 3.7: A topological perspective on argument genres



### 3.7.4 Learner pathways through history genres

From the textures outlined in Tables 3.3 through 3.5, a spiral curriculum can be developed that leads learners through the genres of history, and the linguistic hurdles each one presents, illustrated in Figure 3.7 (based on Coffin 1997).

Figure 3.7: A spiral curriculum for history genres



The basic idea here is to come up with an ontogenetically sensitive topology which can facilitate apprenticeship into history genres. An outline of this learner pathway is presented in Table 3.7, with the genres discussed above arranged on a cline from those most like personal recounts to those furthest away. Major linguistic hurdles have been included in column three, by way of signalling significant stages in genre development:

Table 3.7: Learner pathway and linguistic hurdles for history genres

GENRE [staging]	INFORMAL DESCRIPTION	HURDLES
personal recount [Orientation^Record]	agnate to story genres; what happened to me	<i>sequence in time...</i>
autobiographical recount [Orientation^Record]	the story of my life [oral history]	<i>...to setting in time</i>
biographical recount [Orientation^Record]	the story of someone else's life	
historical recount; [Background^Record]	establishing the time line of 'grand narrative'	<i>temporal connections &amp; concrete participants...</i>
historical account; [Background^Account]	naturalising linearisation of 'grand narrative'	<i>...to causal connections &amp; abstract participants...</i>
factorial explanation [Outcome ^ Factors]	complexifying notion of what leads on to what	<i>...to complex causal relations...</i>
consequential explanation [Input ^ Consequences]	complexifying notion of what follows on from what	
exposition - one sided; promote [Thesis^Arguments]	problematic interpretation that needs justifying	<i>...to complex rhetorical relations</i>
challenge - one sided; rebut [Position^Rebuttal]	problematic interpretation that needs demolishing	<i>one side-ed argument....</i>
discussion - multi-sided; adjudicate [Issue^Sides^Resolution]	more than one interpretation considered	<i>...to multi-sided adjudication</i>

We're not of course arguing here that stages cannot be skipped along a learner pathway of this kind. But we would predict that jumping hurdles will require extra cycles of deconstruction and joint construction of exemplars for students to latch onto the additional linguistic demands. Jumping from oral history directly to exposition for example would entail involving students in the shifts from time to cause, from chronology to rhetoric and from explanation to motivation noted above – in short a leap from everyday orality to institutionalised literacy. This is a lot of language learning for students to handle in a single go.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Lavina Gray's recount was recorded by the NSW AMES as part of their Wanyarri project, which was developed to encourage migrants in Australia to learn about Indigenous cultures as part of their ESL program (Wanyarri 1997). It appears here as it was transcribed by Jim from the Wanyarri video (an alternative version is found in the Wanyarri teacher's resource book, p 102). In these materials a number of Indigenous Australians<sup>32</sup> tell their life stories. For a comparable set of autobiographical recounts from the Western Desert see *Stories from Lajamanu* 1985.

<sup>33</sup> The episodes in her biography were told to David by Nganyintja and her family, or were shared by David in the years he lived and worked with her.

<sup>34</sup> Including one adverbial clause which has a closely related function (*when the third Vietnamese boat of the first wave arrived*).

<sup>35</sup> Following Halliday 1994 we are treating adjectival groups as a kind of nominal group, functioning as Head of the Attribute here.

<sup>36</sup> The distinction was formulated in unpublished material; cf Gleason 1968.

<sup>37</sup> Introducing our third variable, person, would result in a 3 dimensional model, which we can certainly visualise (and imagine constructing, materially or electronically); conceptually speaking however, we

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know that genre topology is much more complicated – involving multi-dimensionality we can conceive (but not literally perceive).

<sup>38</sup> It is important not to confuse texts such as those imagined here, which blend one genre with another, with texts that combine genres one after another and/or one including another (e.g. 3.15 above).

<sup>39</sup> For reasons of space the challenge genre has not been illustrated here; it constitutes a counter-argument to a prevailing thesis (a rebuttal).

<sup>40</sup> History programs foregrounding oral history and post-colonial critique may well require literacy leaps of this magnitude, at the same time as their irreverent approach to grand narratives expunges historical recounts, accounts and explanations from the curriculum; for discussion of post-colonial history discourse see Martin 2003.