

Chapter 2

Types of Structure: Deconstructing Notions of Constituency in Clause and Text

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Clause and Text

In this paper I will present arguments in favour of a view of text structure in which constituency is not privileged, but deconstructed as just one way of looking at text organisation. This view of text structure has been developed in Australia in dialogue with Halliday's (e.g., 1994) and Mathiessen's (e.g., in press) work on English clause grammar. Consequently I will begin with an overview of their clause analysis before moving on to argue the main point of my paper—namely that constituency is a semantically biased and reductive form of representation for text structure (i.e. that a text is not a tree).

1. Modes of Meaning at the Clause Level

In Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) interpretations of semiotic systems are organised with respect to metafunctions—highly generalised semantic components which shape paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. Halliday (e.g., 1974, 1978, 1985) refers to these metafunctions as the ideational (including logical and experiential subcomponents), the interpersonal and the textual. Ideational resources construe experience as if it was natural reality; interpersonal resources construe social relations as intersubjective reality; and textual resources organise text/process (Martin 1985)—the semiotic reality which comes into being by way of construing ideational and interpersonal meaning. In SFL, this intrinsic functionality (Martin 1991), is projected onto context in register analysis in the proportions ideational to field, interpersonal to tenor and textual to mode. This tripartite model of intrinsic and extrinsic language function is outlined in Table 1.

Halliday (1979a) suggests that metafunctions organise syntagmatic relations as well as paradigmatic ones, and associates different types of structure with ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. In his view ideational meaning uses *particulate* structuring principles, interpersonal meaning uses *prosodic* principles, and textual meaning *periodic* ones.

Table 1. Metafunctions and orders of 'reality'

| generalised semiotic function | metafunction (organisation of language; intrinsic functionality) | register (organisation of context; projected extrinsic functionality) |
|--|---|--|
| Language for constructing the social <u>as intersubjective reality</u> | interpersonal meaning | tenor |
| Language for constructing experience <u>as if 'natural' reality</u> | ideational meaning | field |
| Language for organising text/process as semiotic reality | textual meaning | mode |

Particulate structures are segmental. Experientially they divide bounded wholes into parts (as in constituency representation); logically they relate part to parts in potentially unbounded series (as in dependency representation). Prosodic structures are suprasegmental; they map over a range of segments, as with intonation and long components in phonology (cf. Palmer 1970, especially Waterson). Periodic structures are wave-like; they establish rhythmic peaks of prominence that bound units, as with Consonant Vowel Consonant, salient/nonsalient syllable, or tonic/antonic foot alternations in phonology (Halliday 1967, 1985a). These correlations are summarised in Figure 1.

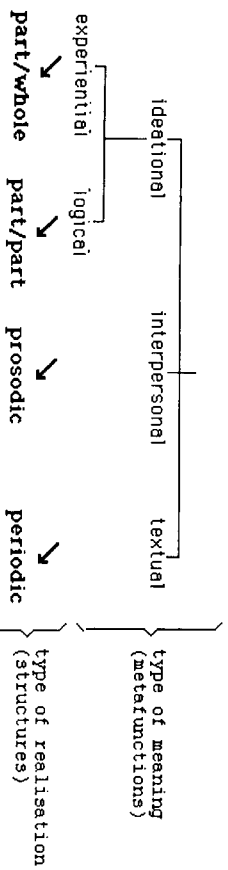


Figure 1. Types of meaning (metafunctions: at top) and types of structure (realisations: at bottom), after (Halliday 1979a) and (Mathiessen 1988)

Halliday is of course not alone in suggesting that constituency and dependency theory provide a very limited view of structuring principles. In articulating his principles, Halliday acknowledges the analogous perspectives recognised by Pike (1982) in tagmemic analysis. Pike's particle and wave correlate closely with

Halliday's conception, but field is closer to Halliday's system than his Firthian influenced notion of prosody. Rich interpretations of structure of this kind contrast most sharply with the formal syntax originating in or reacting to MIT research, where constituency representation is fundamental.

Within tagmemic theory there is an assertion that at least three perspectives are utilized by Homo sapiens. On the one hand, he often acts as if he were cutting up sequences into chunks—into segments or *particles*... On the other hand, he often senses things as somehow flowing together as ripples on the tide, merging into one another in the form of a hierarchy of little waves of experiences on still bigger waves. These two perspectives, in turn, are supplemented by a third—the concept of *field* in which intersecting properties of experience cluster into bundles of simultaneous characteristics which together make up the patterns of his experience. (Pike 1982:12-13).

Mathiessen 1988 comments insightfully on the representational lag in SFL between the theory outlined above and the forms of representation which have evolved to implement the theory in language description. For example, Halliday (1985a) develops a distinct form of representation for logical meaning, clearly opposing interdependency to constituency (and thus logical construals of experience to experiential ones). But distinctive representations are not developed for prosodic and periodic patterns, which are expressed rather in constituent terms. In Halliday's (1981b,c) terms, logical part/part relations are expressed as univariate structures (structures employing a single iterated variable), while experiential part/whole structures, interpersonal prosodic structures and textual wave structures are all represented in multivariate terms (i.e., using a fixed number of distinct variables). This representational problem is outlined in Figure 2.

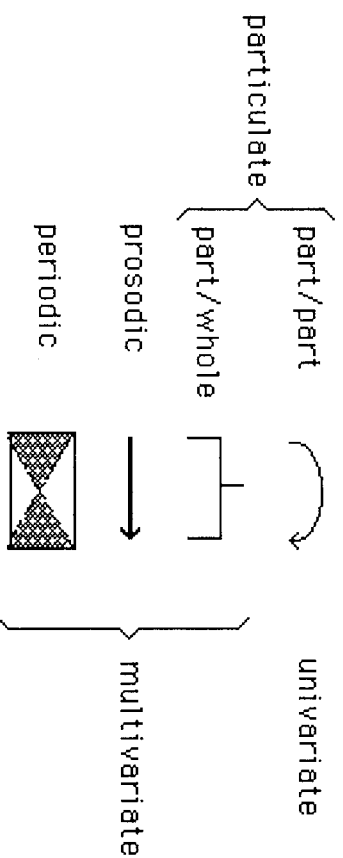


Figure 2. Types of structure and representational notations, from (Halliday 1985a)

By way of illustrating this representational strategy, consider Figure 3, which displays Halliday's multi-tiered analysis of an English clause (for univariate structure see Section 2.2.2). The same particulate form of representation is used for experiential meaning (Value Process Token), interpersonal meaning (Mood Residue) and for textual meaning (Theme Rheme). This facilitates mapping one tier onto another for purposes of text analysis and interpretation. But it does not really do justice to the prosodic impact of Mood over Residue (cf. Section 2.1), or the informational prominence of Theme over Rheme (cf. Section 2.3) in the English clause.

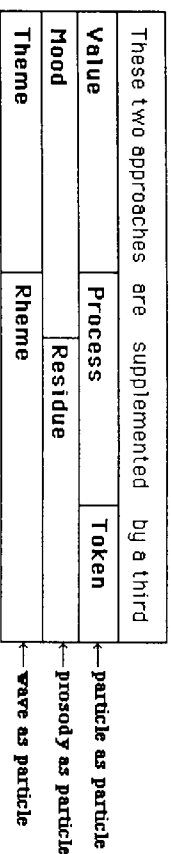


Figure 3. Halliday's multivariate renderings of particle, prosody and wave

It is suggested below that when analysing texts, oppositions among particulate, prosodic and periodic structure are just as significant as they are in clause analysis—and that accordingly, discourse models need to be developed which acknowledge these distinct structuring principles and provide forms of representation which accommodate them.

2. Types of Meaning and Realisation at the Clause Level

2.1 Interpersonal Meaning – Prosodic Realisation

A clear exemplification of prosodic clause structure is provided by English polarity. This is perhaps most striking in dialects which use *no* rather than *any* for indefinite deixis under the scope of negation; but the principle of realisation is the same across speakers (Fishman 1990).

"If you don't get no publicity you don't get no people at the fight," ... "If you don't get no bums on seats you don't get paid... Anyway I enjoy it."

(cf. standard *If you don't get any publicity for any fights in any papers from anyone ...*)

In examples such as these, negative polarity has been selected, established in the Mood element through the structural function Finite (*don't*), and then realised again across the Residue wherever indefinite deixis appears. As linguists have

taken pains to point out to prescriptive school grammarians, negative clauses of this kind select once for polarity, and then map this meaning across the clause as opportunity presents itself. Thus the non-standard *no*'s illustrated above do not cancel each other out; they simply reinforce the negative polarity ranging over the clause. Prosodic realisation of this kind in a sense naturalises the fact that polarity is a feature of the clause as a whole, not the particular clause segment which establishes it. Along these lines prosodic structure lends itself to interpersonal meanings (cf. McGregor 1990 on what he calls scopal relations). A representation for interpersonal structure of this kind is suggested in Figure 4.

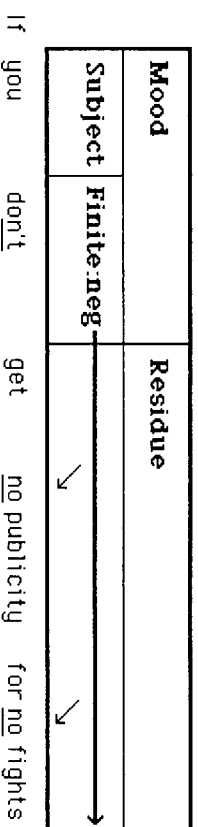


Figure 4. Interpersonal meaning realised as a prosody—polarity

Opportunistic realisation of this kind (cf. vowel harmony prosodies in Palmer 1970) represents one strategy deployed by languages for mapping prosodies onto experientially segmented structure. An alternative strategy is to structurally demarcate the scope of interpersonal meaning through dependency structure. Tagalog (Martin 1990) makes use of this strategy to establish the domain of modal meanings, among others. This is illustrated below, where the linking particle *-ng* is used to construct the modal *sigurado* as head of the clause, with its domain dependent on it:

sigurado -ng u-uwi kang bahay ngayon hapon
 certain Ik¹ go home you-3sg house today afternoon

'You'll certainly go home to your house this afternoon.'

2.2 Ideational Meaning – Particulate Realisation

2.2.1 Experiential – Part/Whole or Nucleus/Satellite?

English transitivity provides a clear example of experiential construals of reality along particulate lines. Halliday (1985) proposes an ergative Agent-Process-Medium-Circumstance analysis for the activity realised in clauses such as *Early in*

¹ The 'Ik' stands for linker, Tagalog's hypotaxis marker; see Martin (1995).

this century the Norwegians introduced explosive harpoons. An analysis of this kind takes the activity in question as a bounded whole, and divides it into four distinct parts, each playing a different role. The analysis is represented in constituent terms in Figure 5.

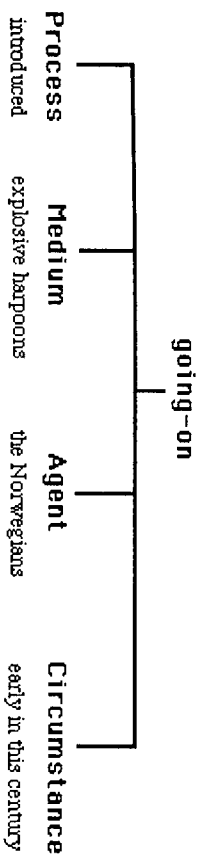


Figure 5. Clause rank experiential meaning as a part/whole configuration

Analysis and representation of this kind focusses attention on the part/whole nature of the particulate structure here. However, it backgrounds nucleus/satellite aspects of the construal. For example, as Halliday (1985a) reveals, the Process/Medium complex is fundamental to the description. It is the basis for the classification of processes into material, mental and relational classes; and the Medium is the one participant which regularly² appears without a preposition across process types. Agents on the other hand are optional and regularly appear with or without prepositions:

- The Norwegians introduced explosive harpoons.
- Explosive harpoons were introduced (by the Norwegians).

Circumstances are more peripheral still. Where absent, they are not necessarily implied (as with agentless passives); they regularly appear with a preposition; and they cannot be realised as Subject in effective³ clauses (**This century was introduced explosive harpoons by the Norwegians*). In an alternative form of particulate representation, taking these phenomena into account, appears in Figure 6. Here the Process/Medium configuration is constructed as nucleus of the clause, with the Agent as an inner satellite and the Circumstance in outer orbit.

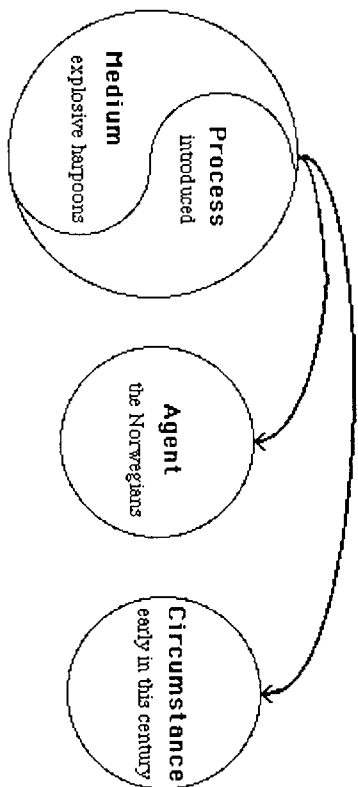


Figure 6. Clause rank experiential meaning as orbit: a nucleus with satellites

In Figure 7, an attempt is made to integrate the two perspectives, part/whole and nucleus/satellite. There, at clause rank, a constituency tree is deployed to relate parts to whole, and concentric ovals to capture peripherality patterns. The constituency perspective construes activity as a bounded whole and segments it; the orbital perspective focusses on a centre of activity, and then maps associated phenomena. It is suggested below that the orbital perspective is the one which can be most easily generalised across clause and text structure.

Part/whole construals of semiotic phenomena have widely deployed in 20th century linguistics. In grammar, clause segmentation of the kind discussed above have been regularly extended to lower ranks—through groups/phrases to words to morphemes. This limited extension of constituency is outlined in Figure 7, for the level of grammar.

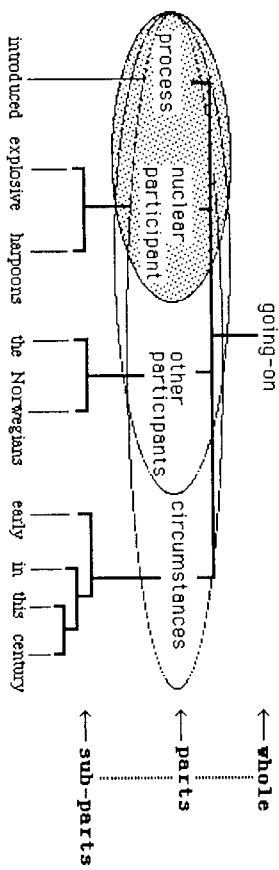


Figure 7. Nuclearity and constituency as two facets of transitivity structure (with extension of part-whole segmentation to lower ranks)

2 The only apparent exception to this principle in English relates to the substitution of disjunctive processes: *What did the Norwegians do to/ do with the harpoons?*
 3 Some circumstances do have a restricted Subject potential in middle clauses: *This path's never been run on.*

Early structuralist models in America pushed the metaphor even further, to describe the relationship between morphemes and phonemes. And linguists still write as if phonemes (and indeed lexemes) were composed of features; and as if

texts were made up of clauses (e.g., Longacre 1976, 1979, Pike & Pike 1983). This constituency metaphor is urgently in need of deconstruction, including consideration of its bias towards experiential meaning, and of the influence of alphabetic forms of graphology which display texts as made up of paragraphs, which are made up of sentences, of words, of letters. The constituency card has almost certainly been dramatically overplayed, and that the price has been the marginalisation of logical, interpersonal and textual construals of reality.

Before turning to logical structure, it is perhaps important to clarify the sense in which the term embedding is deployed in this chapter. Here embedding will be used to refer to expansions of experiential meaning potential whereby a unit that has already been segmented reappears in decomposition. In *What the Norwegians did was introduce explosive harpoons*, for example, the clause is initially segmented into a Value-Process-Token structure. But instead of being filled by nominal groups, both Value and Token are realised by embedded clauses, which require a case segmentation of their own (Range-Actor-Process and Process-Goal respectively). Note that in SFL, embedding of this kind is distinguished from hypotaxis (cf Section 2.2.2).

2.2.2 Logical Meaning—Part/Part or Multi-Nuclear?

English projection can be used to illustrate logical construals of reality in interdependency terms. The system is recursive, and verbal and mental processes project locutions and ideas respectively. Figure 8 contains an example of hypotactic projection, where a verbal process of saying projects a locution of thinking which projected an idea of wanting which projects the idea that whaling should stop. In structures of this kind, one segment gives rise to another, in an open ended interdependency series. In contrast to experiential meaning the 'parts' do not presume a bounded whole and each plays the same kind of role.

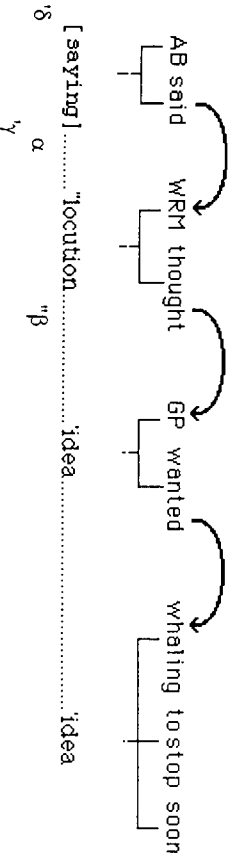
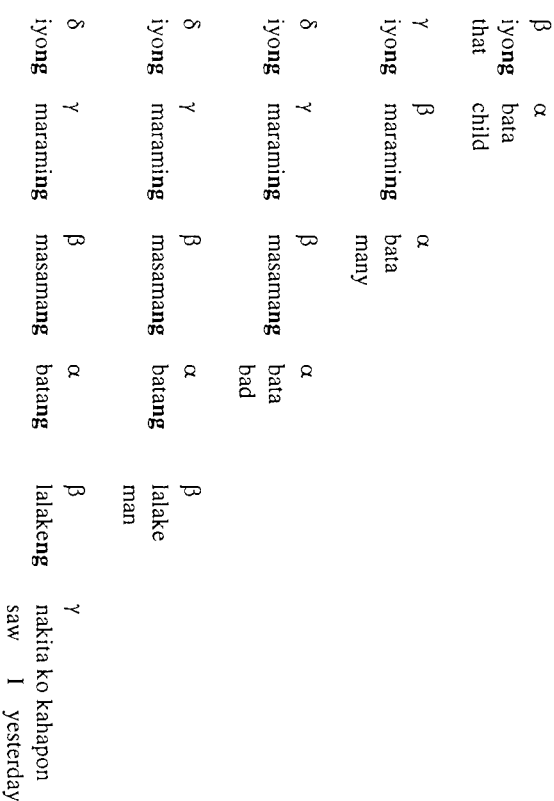


Figure 8. Logical meaning as interdependency in the context of projection

This structure can be further illustrated from Tagalog, a language which makes interdependency explicit through the hypotaxis marker *-ng/na* (appropriated by the language for prosodic purposes in the example below Figure 4; for discussion see Martin 1995). The structure for the meaning 'those naughty boys I saw yesterday'

can be built up as follows, with *-ng* marking the dependence of one segment on another:



A structure of this kind has been developed regressively, leftwards from the head, *bata* 'child', and progressively to its right. Tagalog prefers deixis, numeration and description as premodifiers and classification and qualification as postmodifiers in nominal groups. A representation for this logical construal of meaning is offered in Figure 9.

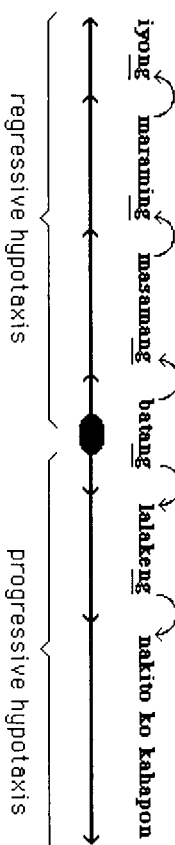


Figure 9. Nominal interdependency in Tagalog

Note that if an orbital perspective on experiential construals of reality is preferred over a part/whole one, then logical structures might be better referred to as serial rather than as part/part (the term *part* is a misnomer in any case for a structure not implying a whole). In these 'solar system' terms, the difference between experiential and logical structures is that experiential structures are mono-nuclear (i.e., one nucleus and one or more satellites) while logical structures are

multi-nuclear (i.e., each satellite is itself a nucleus). From this point in the paper, particulate structures will be referred to as *orbital* (experiential) or *serial* (logical) along these lines.

The distinction between experiential and logical construals of experience has proven an important one in register analysis, particularly with respect to canonical differences between spoken and written discourse. Halliday (e.g., 1979b, 1985b) attributes part of the complexity of writing to experiential recursion (i.e. embedding as discussed above); this complexity is complemented in speaking by logical recursion (i.e., long series of interdependent clauses). Beaman (1984) and Biber (1988) accumulate evidence in favour of this distinction. Their research indicates that construing complexity simply in constituency terms under the label subordination provides a one-sided view of recursive structure that needs to be balanced by the interdependency perspective.

2.3 Textual Meaning—Periodic Realisation

English systems of theme and information exemplify the textual organisation of semiotic reality into periodic patterns. Halliday (1985) suggests that first and last position in the English clause are constructed as complementary peaks of textual prominence. First position realises the function Theme, which specifies a text's orientation to its field (its angle on its subject matter); last position, where it is associated with the major pitch movement in the clause, realises the function New, which presents relatively newsworthy information from the field. These complementary peaks of textual prominence are outlined in Figure 10.

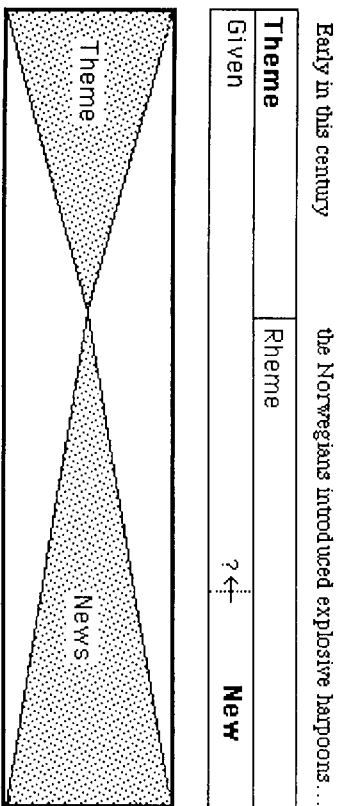


Figure 10. Clause rank textual meaning as a wave (pulses of prominence)

By definition, textual functions like Theme and New have no meaning apart from the role they play in contextualising text. Theme has meaning with respect to a pattern of Themes; New has meaning with respect to a pattern of News; Theme

and New have meaning in complementary relation to each other, as part of these complementary patterns (Martin 1992b,c). In some texts, this complementarity may be foregrounded to the extent that attendant ideational and interpersonal meanings are elided (the relevant part of the text is in boldface below):

For one thousand years, whales have been of commercial interest for meat, oil, meal and whalebone. About 1000 A.D., whaling started with the Basques using sailing vessels and row boats. They concentrated on the slow-moving Right whales. As whaling spread to other countries, whaling shifted to Humpbacks, Grays, Sperms and Bowheads. **By 1500, they were whaling off Greenland; by the 1700s, off Atlantic America; and by the 1800s, in the south Pacific, Antarctic and Bering Sea.** Early in this century, the Norwegians introduced explosive harpoons, fired from guns on catcher boats, and whaling shifted to the larger and faster baleen whales. The introduction of factory ships by Japan and the USSR intensified whaling still further... (W.R. Martin 1989:1)

This foregrounded periodic structure is outlined in Table 2. Note that the Themes participate in a more global pattern of Themes which takes location in time as the principle by which the text orients readers to its field; similarly, the News participate in a more global pattern of News which takes location in space as one principle by which the text elaborates the field as news. These global patterns are further explored in Section 3.3.

Table 2. Ellipsis of other than Theme and New in the whaling recount

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| By 1500 | they | were whaling | off Greenland |
| by the 1700s | - | - | off Atlantic America |
| by the 1800s | - | - | in the South Pacific, Antarctic and Bering Sea |
| Theme [marked] | Rheme | | |
| Given | | | New |

3. Modes of Meaning and Realisation at the Text Level

In this section we explore the particulate, prosodic and periodic structuring principles in relation to text structure, following up suggestions by Halliday (1981a, 1982) about the ways in which a text is like a clause.

3.1 Prosody

A range of interpersonal meanings at the level of text is explored in (Martin 1992b). The parameter *affect* is taken up here to illustrate prosodic text structure (Martin in press, to appear). In English, *affect* is deployed to negotiate solidarity with the listener/reader. It is an invitation to empathise, which if taken up constructs intimacy and if refused constructs distance. In the following text, a sixteen-year-old secondary school student attempts to share a personal response to a short narrative with her examiner. Interestingly enough, the attempt constitutes a misreading of the examination context by the student, as the examiner's comment reveals. The mark E- constructs maximal social distance for purposes of this public evaluation.

[T]his response has attempted to give a personal reaction to the question asked. The student has concentrated on the literary style of the story but has failed to answer the question or show any understanding of the story." E-]

The author has intentionally written the ending this way to create the effect that she WANTED [frustration: desire]. I felt EERIE [insecurity: disquiet] and ISOLATED [insecurity: disquiet] after reading the ending—"like a padlock snapping open" sounded so LONELY [insecurity: disquiet] and made me feel so AFRAID [insecurity: apprehension].

I also felt very EMPTV [discord: misery] after reading the passage. It has such a DERESSING [discord: misery] ending that made me feel AFRAID [insecurity: apprehension] and SCARED [insecurity: apprehension]. The way "Click" is written by itself in a sentence and in capital letters added to the EMPTNESS [discord: misery] I can really imagine the exact sound it makes, the way it "sounded through the room." "Sounded through the room" is another example of how the author creates the feeling of ISOLATION [insecurity: disquiet] so carefully displayed. It sounds HOLLOW AND DEAD [t-insecurity: disquiet] and creates FEAR [insecurity: apprehension] in your mind.

This is what makes the passage so effective—the way the mood of the characters is portrayed so clearly. I ENJOYED [happiness: care] this passage immensely the ending was very clear and well written.

This text's key is overwhelmingly negative, with only the strangely counterpointed *I enjoyed the passage immensely* to counter the prosody of insecurity and discord. Basically the student's message is an interpersonal one, which is textured in clause final position as news (cf. Section 3.3). And the text is constructed in such a way that the negative response can be made over and over again (disquiet—5 tokens; apprehension—4 tokens; misery—3 tokens), with

respect to the story as a whole and to different aspects of its realisation. Through this affectual prosody the student is attempting to construct the examiner as a co-feeler—as someone who is emotionally sensitive to the passage in the same way she is. Unfortunately for the student, emotional solidarity of this kind is not what the examiner is looking for.

3.2 Particle (nuclearity)

At the level of text structure, we explore the orbital/serial interpretation of particulate structure introduced above. This account opposes mono-nuclear texts structures (orbital) to multi-nuclear ones (serial). In terms of representation, orbital structure lends itself to dependency notation (Figure 6), and serial structure to interdependency (Figure 8). Orbital structure is relatively synoptic; it demands that a text hang together around a given centre. Serial structure is relatively dynamic; it allows a text to flow indefinitely from one point to the next. This means that orbital structures are likely to predominate in writing, where sufficient consciousness of text as object can be brought to bear to focus the text, whereas serial structures are likely to predominate in speaking, where it is hard to predict what will happen next and tie everything to a predetermined core. For discussion of synoptic and dynamic structure in relation to literacy and oracy, see (Beaman 1984), (Martin 1985), (Halliday 1985b), (Biber 1988), (Halliday & Martin 1993). This model of particulate structure, based on the notion of nuclearity, is outlined in Figure 11.

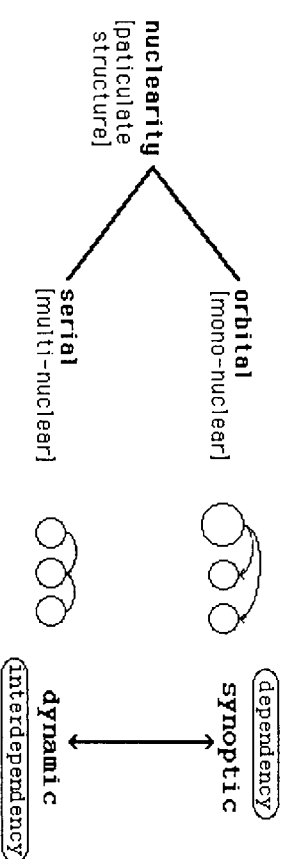


Figure 11. Nuclearity as a model of particulate (ideational) meaning

3.2.1 Nucleus/satellite (experiential metafunction)

The following news story from (Ledema et al. 1994) provides a clear example of orbital structure. The story begins with a Headline, which is elaborated in the Lead. Following this the Lead is elaborated three times, unpacking different aspects of the car crash. In interpreting this text we can treat the Headline and

Lead as nuclear, establishing the focus of the story. Lead Developments 1, 2 and 3 then function as satellites, each one elaborating the nucleus. The crucial point is that Lead Developments 2 and 3 relate to the Lead/Headline in the same way that Lead Development 1 does; Lead Development 2 does not follow on from Lead Development 1, nor does Lead Development 3 from 2. This nucleus/satellite structure is outlined in Figure 12.

Headline

School Jaunt Ends in Death Crash

Lead

A 17-year-old boy was killed instantly when a car carrying eight school friends—two in the boot—skidded on a bend and slammed into a tree yesterday.

Lead Development 1

A 16-year-old girl passenger was in critical condition last night—police said she might have her leg amputated—and a 17-year-old boy was in a serious but stable condition after the tree embedded itself in the car. Incredibly, the two girls in the boot of the V8 Holden Statesman and another girl escaped with only cuts and bruises.

Lead Development 2

The eight friends, two boys and six girls from years 11 and 12, had left Trinity Senior High School in Wagga yesterday at lunchtime, cramming into one car to go to an interschool sports carnival. But a few kilometers later the car ploughed into a tree in Captain Cook Drive. Police believe the driver lost control on a bend, skidded on a gravel shoulder and slammed into a tree on a nearby reserve. Emergency crews said that when they arrived, the uprooted tree was embedded in the car. It had been raining heavily and police believe the car might have been going too fast.

Lead Development 3

The driver, 17-year-old Nicholas Sampson, was killed instantly. Deanne McCaig, 16, from Gannain, had massive leg injuries and was trapped for more than 90 minutes. She was in a critical condition last night at Wagga Base Hospital, where police say she is in danger of having her leg amputated. Peter Morris, 17, from Coolaman, suffered multiple injuries and was in a serious but stable condition. Among the other students Paulette Scammell and Anita McRae were also in a stable condition, while Shannon Dunn, Catherine Galvin and Rochelle Little, all 16, suffered minor injuries. Police believe the friends from the Catholic high school were on their way to one of the student's homes before heading to the carnival.

[Shelley-Anne Couch, *Sydney Morning Herald* 14/8/92]

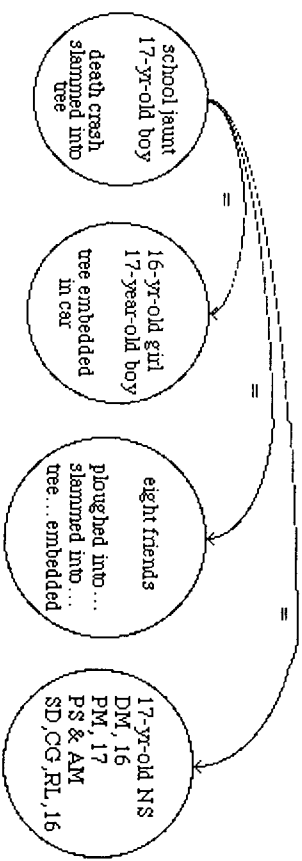


Figure 12. Orbital (mono-nuclear) structure in a news story

To confirm this analysis, the way in which information is developed in the news story can be examined in more detail. In the text, information is introduced, to be taken up later with added detail. This uptake and specification is outlined for the eight school friends:

- i. **eight school friends**
- ii. The eight friends, two boys and six girls from years 11 and 12,
 - i. A 17-year-old boy was killed instantly
 - ii. The driver, 17-year-old Nicholas Sampson, was killed instantly.
 - iii. A 16-year-old girl passenger was in critical condition last night—police said she might have her leg amputated
 - iv. Deanne McCaig, 16, from Gannain, had massive leg injuries and was trapped for more than 90 minutes.
 - v. She was in a critical condition last night at Wagga Base Hospital, where police say she is in danger of having her leg amputated.
 - vi. - and a 17-year-old boy was in a serious but stable condition
 - vii. Peter Morris, 17, from Coolaman, suffered multiple injuries and was in a serious but stable condition.
 - viii. Incredibly, the two girls in the boot of the V8 Holden Statesman and another girl escaped with only cuts and bruises.
 - ix. while Shannon Dunn, Catherine Galvin and Rochelle Little, all 16, suffered minor injuries.

- i. Among the other students Paulette Scamell and Anita McRae were also in a stable condition,

The crash itself is handled five times:

ends in death crash (x5):

- i. when a car carrying eight school friends—two in the boot—skidded on a bend and slammed into a tree yesterday.
- ii. after the tree embedded itself in the car.
- iii. But a few kilometers later the car ploughed into a tree in Captain Cook Drive.
- iv. Police believe the driver lost control on a bend, skidded on a gravel shoulder and slammed into a tree on a nearby reserve.
- v. Emergency crews said that when they arrived, the uprooted tree was embedded in the car. It had been raining heavily and police believe the car might have been going too fast.

And the school jaunt is treated twice:

school jaunt (x2):

- i. had left Trinity Senior High School in Wagga yesterday at lunchtime, cramming into one car to go to an interschool sports carnival.
- ii. Police believe the friends from the Catholic high school were on their way to one of the student's homes before heading to the carnival.

Analysis of this kind reveals the orbital nature of the text structure, with satellites experientially anchored in a Headline/Lead core. The pattern of participant identification (Martin 1992a) in the text confirms the relative independence of one satellite from another. Note that the tree which the car crashes into is introduced in the nucleus as *a tree*, picked up anaphorically in satellite 1 as *the tree*, then reintroduced in satellite 2 as *a tree*, before being picked up in the same satellite as *the uprooted tree*. Satellite 1, which expands the nucleus, treats the tree as recoverable; whereas satellite 2, which does not expand satellite 1, treats the tree as non-recoverable. Note that satellite 2 could have treated the tree as recoverable from the nucleus, but chose not to, apparently preferring to promote its independence of satellite 1 over its connectedness to the nucleus.

Orbital structures are well adapted to newspaper reporting in two main ways. Textually, they make it easier to adapt news stories to the amount of space available; satellites which are relatively independent of each other and which simply elaborate the Lead are easy to prune. Interpersonally, orbital structures

make it easier to highlight the potential impact of a story, up front, where it can grab attention; news services owned by just a few magnates depend on highlighting of this kind to attract and control a general readership (for discussion of this literacy evolution, cf. Iedema et al. 1994).

3.2.2 Multi-nuclear (logical metafunction)

Orbital structure's complement, serial structure, is illustrated in the following news bulletin, taken from the television program ZOO TV featuring U2, first broadcast in Australia in 1992. The program is based on U2's Zoo TV tour—a media focussed, multi-textured extravaganza through which U2 moved rock music into a post-modern performance space. The news bulletin was designed to deconstruct representational theories of meaning for a popular audience, and to replace them with theories based on intertextuality and reading position.

Good morning. I'm Rex Fox for ZOO News in New York. The category is athletics. Born in Czechoslovakia in 1911 from the free games card, the antibiotics arrived too late for 1000's of satisfied motorists. An all night vigil by protestors met with a year's free subscription. Call toll free for ex-government salad sandwiches with a choice of fillings. Older ladies may prefer Beaver playing 'The Decade of Dance' in a crisis currency debate. All these our stories... ZOO TV News (ZOO TV featuring U2; 1992)

Visually, the text is constructed as a news bulletin, with an announcer sitting behind a desk in a tv studio. Textually and interpersonally, the language is appropriately contextualised—the bulletin begins with a familiar greeting and identification (*Good morning, I'm Rex Fox...*) and ends with a familiar closing (*All these our stories...*); and it is both authoritative and relatively free of personal evaluation. For most readers, it would be impossible not to recognise the text as instantiating a news bulletin genre. Ideationally, however, the text challenges a mainstream reading position. Although the group and phrase rank meanings are appropriate, the text structure within and between clauses defies expectations. The links between topics are often tenuous, and have to be filled with reference to related news. Figure 13 contains an informal analysis of the text.

a good morning
 Rex Fox for Zoo TV in New York
 the category is ethics
 Brn in Czechoslovakia in 1991 from the free game card,
 the antibiotics arrived too late for 1000's of satisfied motorists.
 An all night vigil by protesters met with a year's free subscription.
 Call toll free for ex-government salad sandwiches with a choice of fillings.
 Older ladies may prefer Beaver playing 'The Decade of Dance' in a crisis currency debate
 All these our stories

Figure 13. Serial progression (via collocation) in the Zoo TV news bulletin

The most revealing way to read a text of this kind is by relating it 'laterally', phrase by phrase to relevant intertexts. The text deliberately does not construct a coherent 'underlying' message of its own; the modernist metaphor of 'depth' thus is erased, as is the duality of meaning and form. In this process, the text deconstructs the notion that meanings lie behind wordings, that news reports on what is going on, that semiosis represents reality and so on. Derrida's (e.g., 1974) transcendental signified is in a sense elided in order to emphasize the fact that all texts, not just post-modern ones, are read against the intertexts that readers from different subject positions bring to bear. In SFL terms, the message is that the ideational metafunction construes reality from the point of view of the speaker/writer in negotiation with the listener/reader. In this process the text itself is never more than a meaning potential, interpellating power (with respect to generation, gender, ethnicity and class).

From the point of view of the general issues under discussion here, the significance of this text lies in its radical foregrounding of serial structure. The text is multi-nuclear; topics are introduced one after another, with no dependent elaboration. Such text structure highlights the dynamic potential of semiotic systems to develop meanings progressively from one point to the next, without any long term regard for what meaning has been made or is yet to come.

3.3 Periodic (textual metafunction)

In light of the distinctive interpretation of periodic structure in SFL, and its relevance to discourse analysis, the personal response text introduced in Section 3.1 is reviewed here to illustrate Halliday's (1985a) analysis of *information* and

theme in English. The text, represented below, is divided into ranking clauses; ranking clauses are clauses which are not embedded, and which may or may not enter into interdependency relations⁴ with adjacent clauses (for this presentation embedded clauses have been included in double square brackets).

ranking clauses:

The author has intentionally written the ending this way to create the effect [[that she wanted]].

I felt eerie and isolated

after reading the ending—

"like a padlock snapping open" sounded so lonely and made me feel so afraid.

I also felt very empty

after reading the passage.

It has such a depressing ending

that made me feel afraid and scared.

The way ["Click" is written by itself in a sentence and in...] added to the emptiness

I can really imagine the exact sound [[it makes]], the way [[it "sounded through the room."]]

"Sounded through..." is another example of [[how the author... isolation [[so ...displayed]]]].

It sounds hollow and dead

and creates fear in your mind. This is [[what makes the passage so effective]]—

the way [[the mood of the characters...]].

I enjoyed this passage immensely

the ending was very clear and well written.

The non-ranking (i.e., embedded clauses) in the text are listed below. For purposes of theme analysis they can be usefully set aside on the grounds that one of the reasons they have been embedded is to displace them from the global thematic organisation of the text (cf. Fries 1981/1983; Martin 1992a, 1993).

embedded clauses:

the effect [[that she wanted]].

The way ["Click" is written by itself in a

sentence and in capital letters]]

the exact sound [[it makes]].

the way [[it "sounded through the room."]]

⁴ Note that ranking adverbial clauses (e.g., *after reading the ending*), whether finite or non-finite, are often grouped with embedded clauses under the heading subordination in formal grammars (cf. Berman 1984, Biber 1988, Matthiessen and Thompson 1989 on subordination).

another example of [[how the author creates... feeling of isolation [so carefully displayed]]]].
[[what makes the passage so effective]]
the way [[the mood of the characters is portrayed so clearly]].

Of the ranking clauses in the text, the following nonfinite clauses appear without explicit Subjects:

nonfinite clauses without Subjects:

() to create the effect [[that she wanted]].
after () reading the ending—
after () reading the passage.

And the following paratactically interdependent clauses also appear without explicit Subjects:

branched paratactic clauses (without Subjects):

and made me feel so afraid.
and creates fear in your mind.

For purposes of theme analysis the elided Subjects in these clauses could be filled in; here, however, we will proceed on the assumption that their Subjects have been elided in order to downplay their contribution to the thematic development of the text. This leaves us with the following ranking clauses with explicit Subjects. All these clauses are declarative, in which mood the unmarked Theme is the Subject (following Halliday 1985a); Themes underlined below).

ranking clauses with explicit Subjects:

The author has intentionally written the ending this way
I felt eerie and isolated
"like a padlock snapping open" sounded so lonely
I also felt very empty
It has such a depressing ending
that made me feel afraid and scared⁵.
The way ["Click" is written by itself in a sentence and in...] added to the emptiness
I can really imagine the exact sound [it makes], the way [it "sounded through the room."]
"Sounded through..." is another example of [how the author... isolation [so ...displayed]]].
It sounds hollow and dead
This is [[what makes the passage so effective]]—
the way [[the mood of...]]
I enjoyed this passage immensely
the ending was very clear and well written.

⁵ Taken here as an elaborating dependent clause (=b), not an embedded relative.

We are now in a position to characterise what is referred to as the *method of development* of the text (Fries 1981/1983)—the pattern of Themes that construes its perspective on its field. If we restrict our analysis to ranking clauses with explicit Subjects, then the text's angle on its field is two-fold. One aspect is the **student critic**, with subject "I...I...I...I". The other is the text itself, either references to it as a piece of semiosis, or direct quotations from it:

the text:
it (the passage)
that (the passage)
The way "Click" is written by itself in a sentence and in capital letters
this (the way the mood of the characters is portrayed so clearly)
the ending

quotations from text:

"like a padlock snapping open"
"Sounded through the room"
it ("sounded through the room")

These two motifs exhaust thematic selections in the passage, except for *the author*, which might be related to the text reference group.

The motifs associated with New in the text are quite different. For this analysis it is useful to separate ranking from embedded clauses, since ranking clauses are more likely to have their own tone group than embedded ones and so more likely to contribute relatively significant news. Ranking clauses in the text are listed below, with their final clause constituent underlined. This analysis assumes a spoken reading of the text in which the tonic syllable falls on the last salient syllable of each ranking clause; this would make at least the final constituent of the clause New (following Halliday 1967, 1970, 1985a,b).

The author has intentionally written the ending this way
I felt eerie and isolated
after reading the ending—
"like a padlock snapping open" sounded so lonely
and made me feel so afraid.
I also felt very empty
after reading the passage.
It has such a depressing ending
that made me feel afraid and scared.
The way ["Click" is written by itself...] added to the emptiness
It sounds hollow and dead
and creates fear in your mind.
I enjoyed this passage immensely
the ending was very clear and well written.

The overwhelming pattern here has to do with the writer's feelings; it is her personal response to the narrative that counts as news—technically this is the *point*

of her text (Fries 1981/1983). On a slightly more liberal reading of New, this motif could be expanded to include *fear in your mind* and *enjoyed this passage immensely*.

personal reaction:

erie and isolated
so lonely
so afraid
very empty
such a depressing ending
afraid and scared
the emptiness
hollow and dead
(fear) in your mind

Turning to the text's embedded clauses, where news is arguably less foregrounded, a rather different pattern emerges (asterisked embedded clauses are sentence final, or elaborations of sentence final embeddings, and so would count as news in most oral readings of the text):

the effect [[that she wanted]]*
The way [[["Click" is written by itself in a sentence and in capital letters]]
the exact sound [[it makes]],*
= the way [[it "sounded through the room."]]*
another example of [[how the author... the feeling of isolation [[so carefully displayed]]]].*
[[what makes the passage so effective]]—*
= the way [[the mood of the characters is portrayed so clearly]].*

Here the author's technical expertise is presented as newsworthy. Standing back a little from these selections, the global picture is one in which i. the student herself is point of departure and her feelings are news; and ii. the text is point of departure and its effectiveness is news—with the first periodic motif predominating. A synopsis of this analysis is presented in Table 3.

4. Conclusion: Types of Structure

In this paper we have followed up suggestions by Halliday about modes of meaning, types of structure, and some ways in which a text is like a clause. The main lesson is that *a text is not a tree*; no form of constituency representation, however elaborate, can respect the complementary particulate, prosodic and periodic structuring principles by which ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings are construed. Secondly, Martin's 1991 reading of Halliday's 1979

Table 3. Selections for Theme and New in the personal response

| Method of development (writer's angle)—unmarked Theme | Point (writer's news)—minimal new |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| The author | this way |
| () to | the effect... |
| [[that | wanted]] |
| I | erie and isolated |
| after () | the ending |
| "like a padlock snapping open" | so lonely, so afraid |
| I | empty |
| after() | the passage |
| it (= the passage) | a depressing ending... |
| [[that | afraid and scared]] |
| The way "CLICK" is written by itself in a sentence and in capital letters | the emptiness |
| I | the exact sound... |
| [[it (= "CLICK") | makes]] |
| () | the way... |
| [[it (= "CLICK") | through the room]] |
| "Sounded through the room" | another example of how... |
| [[how | the feeling of isolation... |
| [[()]] | so carefully displayed]] |
| it (= "Sounded through the room") | hollow and dead |
| and () | fear in your mind |
| this (= the way the mood ...) | so effective |
| [[the way | so clearly]] |

interpretation of particulate meaning was adjusted, with the segmental part/whole vs part/part reading reworked in terms of nuclearity (orbital vs serial)⁶. This revised association of types of structure with modes of meaning is summarised in Table 4.

The main difference between Halliday's position and that outlined in this paper, is that whereas Halliday appears to associate constituency representation strongly with one mode of meaning (his experiential meaning, part/whole structure association), this paper disassociates constituency representation from any one mode of meaning per se. Rather, as far as ideational meaning is concerned, serial interdependency (logical meaning) is opposed to orbital dependency (experiential

⁶ I believe that this reading is closer to Halliday 1979: 64–65, who writes "a more appropriate ordering would have a nucleus consisting of a Process plus Goal, with the other elements clustering around it, as in Fig. 6." (a nucleus-satellite diagram).

Table 4. Modes of meaning and types of structure

| Types of structure | Mode of meaning |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| particulate | ideational meaning |
| - orbital [mono-nuclear] | - experiential |
| - serial [multi-nuclear] | - logical |
| prosodic | interpersonal meaning |
| periodic | textual meaning |

meaning). This structural complementarity can be seen in the nominal group *those two old school friends there from Sydney I told you about that I wanted you to meet*. A structure of this kind foregrounds serial interdependency⁷ leftwards from the head, with each segment interpretable as classifying those to its right: *(those two (old (school friends)))*). To the right of the head however, the structure is orbital, with each segment describing the nucleus *friends: (friends (there) (from Sydney) (I told you about) (that I wanted you to meet))*.

A revision of this kind amounts to a deconstruction of constituency representation as a kind of metafunctional compromise, in which modes of meaning and complementary types of structure tend to be neutralised. What seems to be going on here in English is that a textual wave defines and gives prominence to beginning and end segments; this accounts for the bounded left to right display of constituency representation. Alongside this, experiential nuclearity promotes one segment, the process, as one centre of gravity—typically held responsible for its ensuing complementation. And in addition, in English, interpersonal meaning invests in the Subject and Finite elements, construing an additional centre of attention to the left of the process⁸. These complementary factors give shape and credibility to the constituency tree, however labelled in terms of function and class,

⁷ Note that giving a multivariate Detictic Numerative Epithet Classifier Thing Qualifier Qualifier Qualifier Qualifier interpretation to the group, alongside a univariate e d g b a b (1 2 3 4) reading (following Halliday 1985a), does not accommodate this serial/orbital opposition.

⁸ From this apparently flows the often ethnocentrically farcical search for Subjects in non-Western European languages.

and however branched. English graphology reassures linguists that this form of representation must be foundational and essentially correct, since it has steadily evolved to foreground segmentation over structure of other kinds (Halliday 1985b). While many would acknowledge that this writing system effaces textual and interpersonal meaning, it is not so readily acknowledged that the system of representation propped up by this form of transcription has exactly the same weaknesses. The representational metalanguage (constituency representation) has been shaped by the written language (English graphology) in just this way.⁹

It would seem to follow from these remarks that linguistic theory needs to metastabalise *beyond merocentrism* (i.e., theoretical obsession with segmentation), treating constituency (i.e., one kind of particulate segmentation) not as a primitive, but as a structurally reductive (and experientially biased) form of representation, the privileged status of which has to do with the evolution of writing systems, not the structure of language. This is not to argue that 21st century grammarians and discourse analysts won't find a place for multivariate representation; there are contexts in which a reductive shorthand can play a productive role (take for example the introduction of generic structure to primary school children; e.g., Christie et al. 1992). But it is to argue that linguists can be more than metascibes, and their theory more than metadescription—that a more productive metalanguage can be constructed around the notions of complementary modes of meaning (metafunctions) and of structural configurations (particulate, prosodic and periodic), and that such a linguistics will be exportable across strata, and across semiotic systems, in ways that have not been managed in simple constituency terms.

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⁹ One cannot help wondering if it is not this profound and generally unacknowledged influence of writing on theory that has overdetermined linguists' pronouncements on the priority of speech over writing, as deconstructed by Derrida (1974).

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Chapter 3

Interaction and Syntax in the Structure of Conversational Discourse: Collaboration, Overlap, and Syntactic Dissociation

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1. Introduction

In this paper we investigate the relationship between interaction and syntax. Using a database of conversational American English, we show how what has traditionally been taken as ‘syntax’ is intimately involved in the interactional organization of conversational discourse, and we propose a way of thinking about syntax which allows us to integrate the production of syntactic units with interactional structure. We suggest that conversational structure is dependent on a dynamic, interactional notion of syntax. We suggest that examining how syntax works in actual interaction can lead us to a clearer understanding of what syntax is. We hope that an examination of linguistic production in conversation, the most mundane form of linguistic activity, will illuminate the way linguistic resources are exploited in actual production, and that it will further show us how syntactic structures are organized.

There is a growing body of research on the relationship between interaction and syntax. Some of this research has arisen directly within, or has been strongly influenced by, research in the tradition of conversation analysis. Schegloff (1979), in a seminal paper considering the syntactic regularities of repairs, was perhaps the first to propose a ‘syntax-for-conversation,’ on the grounds that “conversation is the most common and, it would appear, the most fundamental condition of ‘language use’ or ‘discourse’” (p. 283). Goodwin (1979, 1980, 1981) has called attention to the way in which speakers construct, extend, or redesign a sentence in response to interactional demands. Lerner (1987, 1989, 1991, in progress, and to appear) shows how collaborative turn sequences, that is, turn units co-produced by two or more speakers, provide evidence for structures which are projected beyond the first point of syntactic completion, such as contrasts, conditionals, and three-part lists, and Ferrara (1992, 1994) examines collaborative sequences in therapeutic interactions. Fox (1987) shows how interactional factors defining ‘adjacency pairs’ influence the discourse units that speakers jointly construct within which anaphora operates. Goodwin (1981: chap. 6), Fox and Jasperson (to