

# Making history

## Grammar for interpretation

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### Past in present

In this chapter I review some of the key linguistic resources used to record and interpret the past. My general orientation is that of the so-called ‘Sydney School’ of functional linguistics, the theoretical orientation and research methodology of which is introduced in Unsworth (1999). In particular, I draw on work on the discourse semantics of secondary school history, as reported in Eggins et al. (1993), Martin (1993a, b), Coffin (1996, 1997) and Veel and Coffin (1996). Although my focus is on English discourse, a wide range of resources are considered – including both more and less abstract ways of talking about the past. As indicated by the papers in this volume, these resources have relevance to languages other than English – but both the range of resources involved and the ways in which they are implemented by historians is something that obviously requires further investigation across languages and the cultures they inscribe.

### Whose history?

In a post-colonial world the key issue, of course, is “whose history?” Who speaks about the past and in what terms? Paul Kelly, for example, writes the dedication for his Indigenous Australian land rights anthem ‘From Little Things Big Things Grow’ as follows:

(1) "From Little Things Big Things Grow" is dedicated to Vincent Lingiari, the Gurindji stockmen and their families who walked off Lord Vestey's cattle station in 1966 thus initiating a land claim that lasted eight years. The Whitlam government handed back much of the Gurindji country in 1974, Gough Whitlam himself pouring dirt into Vincent Lingiari's cupped hands in a ceremony symbolizing the legal restoration of their lands. From this simple action of walking off in 1966 many consequences flowed. (Kelly 1991)

Kelly is a prominent musician and song writer in Australia, who has worked closely over the years with Indigenous musicians and involved himself in issues of reconciliation. The song he dedicates to Lingiari was written with Kev Carmody, an Indigenous musician, and tells the story of the landmark Gurindji walk-off:

(2) ... They picked up their swags and started off walking

At Wattie Creek they sat themselves down

Now it don't sound like much but it sure got tongues talking

Back at the homestead and then in the town.

Vestey man said I'll double your wages

Seven quid a week you'll have in your hand

Vincent said uhh we're not talking about wages

We're sitting right here till we get our land

Vestey man roared and Vestey man thundered

You don't stand a chance of a cinder in snow

Vincent said if we fall others are rising

(From little things big things grow ...)

Then Vincent Lingiari boarded an aeroplane

Landed in Sydney, big city of lights

And daily he went round softly speaking his story

To all kinds of men from all walks of life

And Vincent sat down with big politicians

This affair they told him is a matter of state

Let us sort it out, your people are hungry

Vincent said no thanks, we know how to wait

The Vincent Lingiari returned in an aeroplane

Back to his country once more to sit down

And he told his people let the stars keep on turning

We have friends in the south, in the cities and towns

Eight years went by, eight long years of waiting  
Till one day a tall stranger appeared in the land  
And he came with lawyers and he came with great ceremony  
And through Vincent's fingers poured a handful of sand. ...

(Kelly 1999: 107-8)

Thus Kelly and Carmody render history as a story, crafted round a much-loved Australian theme ("Aussie battler winning through against the odds"), and design some compelling musical accompaniment to carry their message home – for a mass following in Australian popular culture, most of whom probably first learned about Vincent Lingiari through the song. Vincent's own recount, in Aboriginal English (as scribed by Frank Hardy in 1968), would be much less well known:

(3) I am Vincent Lingiari from Wave Hill. That's my proper aboriginal name. Tom Pisher and that Bestey mob called me Tommy Vincent. My people are Gurindji. Who live in Wave Hill area. That Me country ...

The manager of Wave Hill was Tom Pisher. Bestey man, Tom Pisher. Always when big plant start to go out from station when mustering start, they go out two, maybe three month. Aboriginal men out in bush all time. White ringers come back to station ebery Friday night. That not right. I think to mesel' about that longa time. And think them Bestey mob don't treat Aboriginal native people right way. Some them white fellas play bloody hell with black gin women, leave Aborigine natives out in bush for that ...

...and there was no proper money for Aborigine people. Maybe six dollar a week, but not ebery week. Two months, maybe three months got 'em money. All gone in store. Maybe a few quid for races or walkabout time and no chilendownmen money.

We get sick and tired of Tom Pisher. So we walk out when Dexter come. We very happy for Dexter to come. He did right for we ...

(Hardy 1968:71-72)

And alongside this oral history we have the written recounts of numerous journalists, historians and public figures, like that of Robert Tickner, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Affairs in Paul Keating's Labor government:

(4) 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)

Obviously things happen – events unfold materially in the world. But it is language that makes history, as these texts reveal. Sure the Gurindji walked off, but how do we construe this? In Aboriginal English or colloquial Australian English? In spoken or written English? If spoken, how transcribed? In first person or third? In language, or in a multimodal text combining linguistic resources with music and song? Each choice of course affects our reading of what went on:

– **Aboriginal English, spoken, transcribed, first person ...**

We get sick and tired of Tom Pisher. So we walk out when Dexter come. We very happy for Dexter to come. He did right for we ...

– **colloquial Australian English, words & music, third person ...**

They picked up their swags and started off walking

At Wattie Creek they sat themselves down

Now it don't sound like much but it sure got tongues talking

Back at the homestead and then in the town.

Beyond these choices there is the crucial issue of interpretation. How do we explain what happened? How do we value it? And what kind of abstractions do we use to do so? For Tickner, Lingiari is an agent, leading his people off (*Lingiari ... led his people*); for Lingiari and Kelly/Carmody, Lingiari is just part of the mob who walk out together (*we walk out, they ... started off walking*). Lingiari talks about emotions, how the mob felt (*sick and tired, very happy*); Kelly/Carmody and Tickner take a moral stand (*sure got tongues talking, stand against injustice*). Unlike Lingiari and Kelly/Carmody, who have people doing things, sometimes to other people and things (*we walk out, they picked*

*up their swags*), Tickner uses abstract language, full of nominalisations (*their stand against injustice ... attracted national publicity for Aboriginal land rights grievances*):

– **formal Australian English, written, agentive, nominalised ...**

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 stand against injustice, however, attracted national publicity for Aboriginal land rights grievances.

Linguistic choices, in other words, construct different histories. And we need a framework for mapping choices and interpreting the syndromes which enact the different readings of the past. Including readings which are themselves designed to be deconstructive of modernist syndromes, especially the interested grand narratives of western history. I return to the issue of post-colonial discourse in Section 8 below.

### Marking time

To begin, I look briefly at resources for dealing with time. For relatively short time scales, what matters is how events unfold in relation to one another – one after the other or at the same time. Connections of this kind are typically managed by conjunctions (*and, then, so, but*), especially in oral history. The following personal recount from the *Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Children from Their Families* exemplifies this strategy (*Bringing Them Home* 1997:2).

(5) So the next thing I remember was that they took us from there; and we went to the hospital. I kept asking where we were going – because the children were screaming and the little brothers and sisters were just babies of course, and I couldn't move as they were all around me, around my neck and legs, yelling and screaming. I was all upset and I didn't know what to do and I didn't know where we were going. I just thought: "Well, they're police, they must know what they're doing." I thought I had got to go with them, because they were taking me to see Mum. You know that is what I honestly thought. They kept us in hospital for three days and I kept asking, 'When are we going to see Mum?' And no-one told us at this time. And I think on the third or fourth day they piled us in the car and I said,

'Where are we going?' And they said, 'We are going to see your mother.' But then we turned left to go to the airport and I got a bit panicky about where we were going. They got hold of me and they put us on the plane. And they still told us we were going to see Mum. So I thought she must be wherever they're taking us. (Confidential submission 318, Tasmania; removal from Cape Barren Island, Tasmania, of 8 siblings in the 1960s. The children were fostered separately.)

In personal recounts of this kind (Martin 1997a), temporal relations are often left implicit since they are inferable from the chaining of events. Explicit conjunctive links in Text 5 are highlighted below, with temporal connections filled in (italicised) where they would be inferred:

– **sequence in time** (personal recount)

So the next thing I remember was that they took us from there; and [*then*] we went to the hospital.  
 [*while*] I kept asking where we were going –  
 because the children were screaming  
 and the little brothers and sisters were just babies of course,  
 and I couldn't move  
 as they were all around me, around my neck and legs,  
 [*while*] yelling and screaming.  
 I was all upset  
 and I didn't know what to do  
 and I didn't know where we were going.  
 I just thought: "Well, they're police, they must know what they're doing."  
 I thought I had got to go with them,  
 because they were taking me to see Mum.  
 You know that is what I honestly thought.  
 [*then*] They kept us in hospital for three days  
 and [*meanwhile*] I kept asking, 'When are we going to see Mum?'  
 And [*then*] no-one told us at this time.  
 And I think on the third or fourth day they piled us in the car  
 and [*then*] I said, 'Where are we going?'  
 And [*then*] they said, 'We are going to see your mother.'  
 But *then* we turned left to go to the airport  
 and [*then*] I got a bit panicky about where we were going.  
 [*then*] They got hold of me  
 and [*then*] they put us on the plane.

And [*then*] they still told us we were going to see Mum.  
 So I thought she must be wherever they're taking us.

The events recounted in Text 5 unfolded over three or four days. For longer periods of time a complementary strategy is used to phase events. This involves prepositional phrases rather than conjunctions, typically in clause initial position (as marked Themes, after Halliday 1994). The effect is to move us from one setting in time to another; we hop through the past instead of walking through each event one after another. Text 6 unfolds through circumstances of location in time in this way over a period of six years, 1964–1970 (as highlighted with underlining below). This was in fact the strategy used to move us from the hospital to the airport in Text 5 above (*on the third or fourth day*).

– **setting in time** (autobiographical recount)

(6) ... I was born in May 1964. My Mother and I lived together within an inner suburb of Melbourne. At the age of five and a half months, both my Mother and I became ill. My Mother took me to the Royal Children's Hospital, where I was admitted.

Upon my recovery, the Social Welfare Department of the Royal Children's Hospital persuaded my Mother to board me into St. Gabriel's Babies' Home in Balwyn ... just until Mum regained her health. If only Mum could've known the secret, deceitful agenda of the State welfare system that was about to be put into motion – eighteen years of forced separation between a loving mother and her son.

Early in 1965, I was made a ward of the State. The reason given by the State was that, 'Mother is unable to provide adequate care for her son.'

In February 1967, the County Court of Victoria dispensed with my Mother's consent to adoption. This decision, made under section 67(d) of the *Child Welfare Act 1958*, was purportedly based on an 'inability to locate mother'. Only paltry attempts had been made to locate her. For example, no attempt was made to find her address through the Aboriginal Welfare Board.

I was immediately transferred to Blackburn South Cottages to be assessed for 'suitable adoptive placement'. When my Mother came for one of her visits, she found an empty cot. With the stroke of a pen, my Mother's Heart and Spirit has been shattered. Later, she was to describe this to me as one of the 'darkest days of her life'.

Repeated requests about my whereabouts were rejected. All her cries for help fell on deaf ears by a Government who had stolen her son, and who had decided 'they' knew what was best for this so-called part-

Aboriginal boy.

In October 1967 I was placed with a family for adoption. This placement was a dismal failure, lasting only seven months. This family rejected me, and requested my removal, claiming in their words I was unresponsive, dull, and that my so-called deficiencies were unacceptable. In the Medical Officer's report on my file there is a comment that Ms. A 'compared him unfavourably with her friends' children and finds his deficiencies an embarrassment, eg, at coffee parties'.

Upon removal, I was placed at the Gables Orphanage in Kew, where I was institutionalised for a further two years. Within this two years, I can clearly remember being withdrawn and frightened, and remember not talking to anyone for days on end. ... (Bird 1998: 19–21)

As illustrated in Text 7 below, resetting in time is equally important for phasing events in historical recounts, which are written in the third person, focus on agents, agencies and institutions, and move beyond individuals to make generalisations about groups of people and things (e.g. *indigenous people, employers, compound families, curable diseases, cattle stations*):

– **setting in time** (historical recount)

(7) The *Aborigines Ordinance 1918* extended the Chief Protector's control over indigenous people even further. ...

During the 1920s the pace of forcible removals increased, leading to severe overcrowding in Kahlin Compound and The Bungalow. The Methodist Missionary Society indicated it was prepared to take the mixed descent children from the Kahlin Compound, where they still had some contact with their family, to its mission on Goulburn Island.

This proposal threatened the availability of cheap domestic labour from the Compound and was opposed by Darwin residents. To accommodate employers a government house just outside the Compound was taken over in 1924 for the girls and the younger boys and became known as the Half-Caste Home. Compound families were thereby separated.

By 1928 overcrowding at the Half-Caste Home had reached a critical level with 76 inmates living in 'house large enough for only one family' (Cummings 1990: 20). In 1931 the boys were moved to Pine Creek to relieve the pressure on the Home.

At the Bungalow in the 1920s about 50 children and 10 adults lived in the three exposed sheds, crowding together on the floor to sleep at night, eating the meagre meals provided on the ground. ...

Yet for some mothers with their children, confinement in The Bun-

galow at least offered the chance of survival. From 1924 to 1929 central Australia suffered one of the worst droughts on record. Aboriginal people in search of food who came to close to land controlled by non-Indigenous people were liable to be shot. Curable diseases caused blindness, misery and death.

The Commonwealth Government cast about for measures to relieve the overcrowding in the institutions and to remove mixed descent children more completely from Indigenous influence. ...

The conditions at the Bungalow reached crisis point in 1928. It was decided to move the 45 children (37 of whom were under the age of 12) to a temporary 'home' at Jay Creek, 45 kilometres west of Alice Springs. Another 90 living with their families and on cattle stations were targeted for removal to a new home if they had not been 'too long with nomadic blacks to be desirable inmates' (quoted by Australian Labor Party submission 840 on page 16).

At Jay Creek the superintendent and the matron lived in two tents while the children were housed in a corrugated iron shed where they suffered from a severe shortage of water, extreme cold in winter and lack of protection from the rain when it came. In 1932 The Bungalow children at Jay Creek were moved yet again, on foot, to the cheaply refurbished former telegraph station at Tempe Bar, 11 kilometres from Alice Springs. In 1933 they were joined in Central Australia by most of the boys from Pine Creek in the Top End. By 1935 132 children lived at The Bungalow.

(*Bringing Them Home* 1997: 133–135)

Historians often package several phases of this kind into periods of time. Text 7 for example is titled '1918 Ordinance' in *Bringing Them Home*, and as such forms 1 of 7 periods which are in turn packaged together under the heading 'Protection and segregation – 1890–1937':

– **packaging time** (Chapter 9 of *Bringing Them Home*)

Occupation of the Territory

Protection and segregation – 1890–1937

Legislation 1910, 1911

Spencer Report

Kahlin Compound and The Bungalow

➤ 1918 Ordinance

Bleakley report

Chief Protector Cook 1927–1939

Missions

## Assimilation – 1937–1973

- McEwen's new Deal
- WWII and its aftermath
- Retta Dixon Home
- 'The welfare'
- Self-management
- Evie

'Protection and segregation – 1890–1937' is in turn 1 of 5 sections constituting 'Chapter 9 Northern Territory' of 'Part 2 Tracing the History' of the report. Clearly this process of packaging phases into periods is an unbounded one, responsive simply to the depth of the part/whole structure a historian is mapping onto time. In Chapter 9, government institutions, agents and agencies, and policies figure as headings for groups of phases; the next layer of organisation depends on nominalisations (*Occupation, Protection, Segregation, Assimilation, Self-management*). Establishing periods of course involves interpretation – the historian selects aspects of governmentality she thinks mattered, and places boundaries where she thinks shifts in governance reflected a change in attitude towards Indigenous peoples on the part of non-Indigenous Australians (1863–1890, 1890–1937, 1937–1973, 1973–1997).

Overall what we are looking at here is a move from personal oral history to institutional written history which involves a shift from sequencing events in time through setting them in phases to naming them as periods. In the process, the dynamism of unfolding events is crystallised as a superstructure of parts in wholes... time after time becomes time within time. Flow changes into parts.

**Abstraction**

To fully appreciate the compartmentalisation of time factor just introduced, we need to look more closely at the language responsible for turning activity into things (Halliday 1998). As named above, *protection* and *segregation* are nominal groups as far as grammar is concerned; this period of Australian history is construed as things. But semantically we know, as mature readers, that 'Protection and segregation' refers to activities, involving many thousands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians over 47 years. The grammar of *protection and segregation* is in a sense out of step with its meaning. Why does the institutional historian prefer two levels of meaning, in tension with one another, where one meaning might do?

We can explore this further by comparing Kelly/Carmody's song with Tickner's history (Texts 2 and 4 above). In Kelly/Carmody's recount, participants are realised as nouns, qualities as adjectives, processes as verbs and logical relations as conjunctions. This means we can read the meaning quite directly off the wording – the discourse is very concrete.

**participant as Thing (noun)**

they, their swags, Wattie Creek, the homestead, the town, Vestey man,  
I ...

**quality as Epithet (adjective)**

big, hungry, tall, great

**process as Process (verb)**

picked up, started off walking, sat, don't sound, got talking, said ...

**logical relation as Textual Theme (conjunction)**

and, now, but, till, then ...

For Tickner on the other hand, the relationship between meaning and wording is more often than not indirect. Processes are regularly nominalised:

**process as a Thing (noun)**

in protest against their wages cf. they protested against their wages  
their calls for ... cf. they called for ...  
a cry for ... cf. they cried for ...

And one effect of this is that participants appear as modifiers of these nominalisations instead of acting as heads of nominal groups in their own right:

**participant as Modifier**

Commonwealth involvement cf. the Commonwealth involved itself  
Aboriginal land rights grievances cf. Aborigines complained about ...

We also find examples of qualities, logical relations and modal assessments realised as nouns, as part of a general drift towards the reification of activity as thing:

**quality as a Thing (noun)**

injustice cf. unjust

**logical relation as Thing (noun)**

no immediate result cf. but didn't immediately

### assessment as a Thing (noun)

their rights cf. what they should have

Realising more than one event inside the clause means that agency (Halliday 1994) can be used to explore cause and effect. When Ticker reasons that the Gurindji walk-off drew national attention to lands rights issues, he uses a clause to do so – one in which one nominalisation acts on another ('their stand ...' acting on 'national publicity ...'):

*Agent* Their stand against injustice, however,  
*Process* attracted  
*Medium* national publicity for Aboriginal land rights grievances.

Similarly, instead of people demanding land, we have 'calls ... arguing the case'; and instead of people asking leaders to act, we have 'a cry ... that would not be acted on':

Their calls for Commonwealth involvement also strongly argued the case for land to establish their own cattle station.  
 a cry for Commonwealth leadership that would not be acted upon

Halliday (1994) refers to the indirect coding of meaning in grammar as grammatical metaphor, since there are two meanings instead of one (the grammatical one and the semantic one) and the grammatical meaning in some sense symbolises the semantic one (grammatical 'figure' to semantic 'ground'). A crude map of this inter-stratal tension is presented in Figure 1, which alongside the drift towards nominalisation allows for verbal realisations of logical connections such as those just introduced.

Halliday (1998) summarises the pay-off of this skewed coding for the evolution of scientific discourse. The pay-off for historians is that alongside resources for packaging time as periods they can draw on clause based resources for construing causality. Kelly illustrates both aspects of this in the dedication of his song (Text 1). The Gurindji strike is packaged as a thing (*this simple action of walking off*) which had a number of effects (*many consequences flowed*). Whereas Kelly sings a story, he writes history – a complementarity of spoken and written modes of texture which brings us to the central issue of how historians explain.

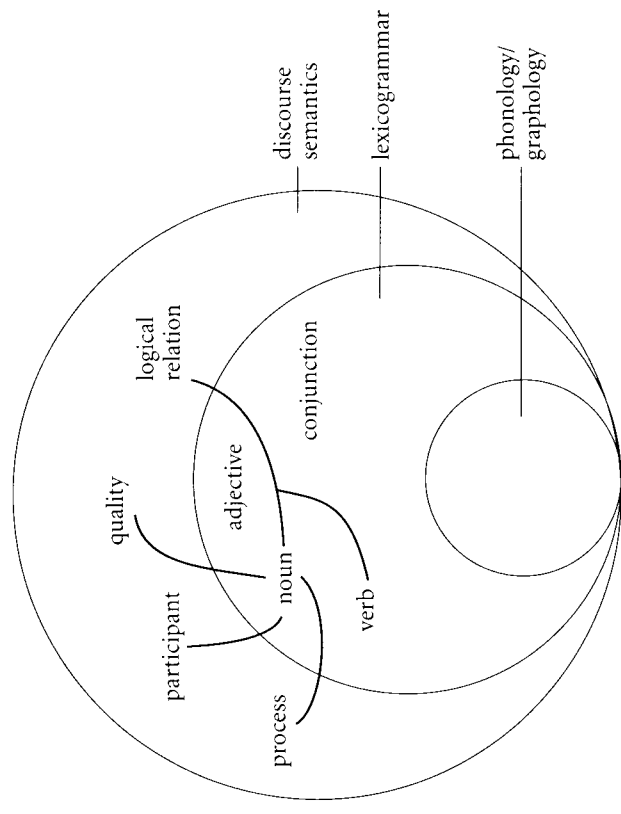


Figure 1. Tension across meaning and wording in abstract discourse

### Cause

For some readings of the past, recording when things happened is not enough. It's more a matter of why things happened as they did. For a text which foregrounds causal as opposed to temporal connections, consider 8 below, which exemplifies historical account as opposed to historical recount genre (not simply one event after another but one event giving rise to another).

- (8) This revolutionary consciousness was the product of centuries of local revolts which finally evolved into a national movement – the Philippine Revolution of 1896. The material factors that generated the people's developing struggles and the evolution of a national consciousness also induced the economic growth of a native elite which in the late nineteenth century emerged as the political and cultural product of Spanish colonialism and of Philippine participation in world capitalist trade.

This local elite contributed to the growing intellectual ferment and for a time gave direction to the movement for nationhood. But because of their predisposition to compromise and their capitulationist tendencies dictated by their material aspirations, they ultimately became an impediment to the national struggle. The Philippine Revolution was the result of

the conjuncture of the unarticulated strivings of the people and the articulations of the ideologues of the emerging elite. The Revolution represented a temporary amalgam of the particular interests of the elite and the general demands of the masses which eventually broke down into its respective components during and after the attainment of a national state and the subsequent incorporation of this new state into the American colonial empire.  
(Constantino & Constantino 1978:1-2)

It is important to note that causality is typically realised within rather than between clauses in abstract history of this kind. The only causal conjunction deployed in Text 8 is *but*, which counters expectations about the effect of the contributions of the indigenous elite. Complementing this, within the clause, we find cause realised through a preposition:

But because of their predisposition to compromise and their capitulationist tendencies dictated by their material aspirations, they ultimately became an impediment to the national struggle.

And through a nominal group:

The Philippine Revolution was the result of the conjuncture of the unarticulated strivings of the people and the articulations of the ideologues of the emerging elite.

To these explicit lexicalisations of cause, we need to add *product*, which is used twice:

This revolutionary consciousness was the product of centuries of local revolts which finally evolved into a national movement – the Philippine Revolution of 1896.

the economic growth of a native elite which in the late nineteenth century emerged as the political and cultural product of Spanish colonialism and of Philippine participation in world capitalist trade.

And probably *impediment*, which can be read as negative causality – the local elite is characterised as counter-productive:

they ultimately became an impediment to the national struggle.

Beyond this, agency is regularly deployed (as outlined for Text 4 above) to manage cause and effect – with human agents affecting nominalised abstractions:

This local elite contributed to the growing intellectual ferment and for a time gave direction to the movement for nationhood.

And abstractions affecting abstractions:

The material factors that generated the people's developing struggles and the evolution of a national consciousness ...

The material factors that ... also induced the economic growth of a native elite ...

... and their capitulationist tendencies dictated by their material aspirations,

Clause structures of this kind make available a very large range of processes for developing a fine grained explanation of why things happened as they did. Alongside the very limited range of causal meanings afforded by conjunctions (Martin 1992; Halliday 1994), we now have available the open system lexis of material (e.g. *contribute, generate, attract*) and verbal (e.g. *dictate, argue*) processes – which gives historians the resources they need to delicately explain how one thing (and I mean 'thing') led to another.

Alongside historical accounts, we need to consider genres which are both permeated with these abstract causal motifs and are in addition globally structured around phases of cause and effect – consequential and factorial explanations. These are the genres required when the reductive linearity of the grand narrative (Lyotard 1984) construed by historical recounts and accounts is arrested in order to focus on simultaneous causes or effects. Complex causes and effects are always around of course, if we choose to look at them; but in grand narratives they are elided and submerged, to give a naturalised trajectory of inevitability to readings of the past.

Consequential explanations consider the multiple effects of some event; factorial explanations consider the multiple factors leading to some event. These are two of the genres favoured by secondary school examiners in Australia where students regularly encounter questions like *What were the effects of the Treaty of Versailles?* or *What were the causes of WWI?* How many of us have escaped old chestnuts such as these?

Text 9, a consequential explanation, exemplifies a concern with simultaneous effects as Pearson outlines the negative consequences of equal wages for Indigenous stock workers:

(9) 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 institutions 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)

Text 10, the complementary factorial explanation genre, focuses on the reasons for the success of Mao's Long March.

(10) Why Did the Long March Succeed?

This question has often been raised by historians, and a number of factors have been suggested to explain the success of the Long March.

1. One of these is the leadership of Mao Zedong. The success of his guerrilla tactics after Zunyi revived the confidence of a demoralized army at a crucial stage.
2. He also had the benefit of the brilliant army commanders such as Zhu De and Peng Duhai, who were able to implement his guerrilla strategies.
3. The courage and toughness of the young members of the Red Army, many of whom were teenagers, also contributed to its success.
4. The discipline of the Red Army, which won the confidence and support of the peasant population, contrasted with the disunity of the enemy. For example the warload of Yunnan province, Long Yun, was more concerned about Chiang Kai-shek taking over his province than he was about smashing the Communists. (Buggy 1988: 257)

Both texts have the potential for development into longer essays by elaborating the consequences and factors into paragraphs developing each cause and effect (as Text 10 begins to illustrate through exemplification for factor 4). The global reasoning in texts of this kind is internal rather than external (Halliday & Hasan 1976; Martin 1992) – more rhetorical than factual, in other words. The causes and effects listed are the reasons why Pearson is saying equal pay had tragic consequences and by means of which Buggy is explaining the success of the Long March. As with historical accounts, external cause is generally handled

within the clause – taking advantage of the fine tuned causality the 'borrowed' processes afford when pressed into service to connect abstractions:

<i>Agent</i>	The success of his guerrilla tactics after Zunyi revived
<i>Process</i>	the confidence of a demoralized army at a crucial stage.
<i>Medium</i>	the benefit of the brilliant army commanders . . . , who were able to implement his guerrilla strategies.
<i>Agent</i>	The courage and toughness of the young members of the Red Army . . .
<i>Process</i>	also contributed to its success.
<i>Medium</i>	The discipline of the Red Army, which won
<i>Agent</i>	the confidence and support of the peasant population
<i>Process</i>	
<i>Medium</i>	

### Value

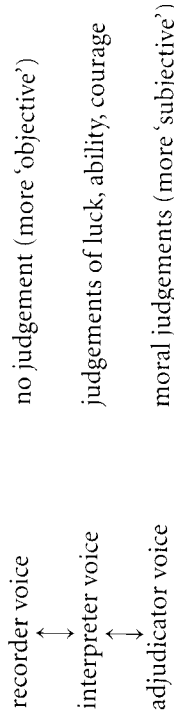
Beyond chronicling, then, there is explaining; and beyond explaining there is interpretation – because saying why things happened as they did necessarily involves a stance – an evaluative orientation to what is going on (Martin 2000). This raises the issue of subjectivity and objectivity in history, and how texts present themselves along this cline. Coffin (1997) suggests a three term stance system, involving recorder, interpreter and adjudicator positions (cf. Iedema et al. 1994; White 1997 on media discourse). In recorder stance, texts present themselves as factual chronicles and avoid inscribing attitude. Text 11 exemplifies this voice, which maintains its 'objectivity' in the face of heart-wrenching experiences – there is no explicitly attitudinal lexis.

- (11) "The Journey of Healing" Yesterday I went into the library and we talked about Aboriginal people. When they were little someone took them to another place. When they grew up they couldn't find their families.

(Year 1, Vietnamese student)

For interpreter stance, texts focus explicitly on judgements of behaviour; for historians, the whimsy of fortune, along with the abilities and courage of pro-

tagonists are favourite themes. Adjudicator stance is rarer, and involves historians making moral judgements about truthfulness and ethics.



Part of the rhetoric of history is shifting from one stance to another as the past unfolds. *Bringing Them Home*, for example, deploys a full range of stances, leading off with interpreter voice in a Frontispiece which explicitly pays tribute to the strength of Indigenous people:

(12) This report is a tribute to the strength and struggles of many thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by forcible removal. We acknowledge the hardships they endured and the sacrifices they made. We remember and lament all the children who will never come home.

We dedicate this report with thanks and admiration to those who found the strength to tell their stories to the Inquiry and to the generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people separated from their families and communities. (*Bringing Them Home* 1997: Frontispiece)

This stance is sustained in the opening paragraphs of the report, which explicitly acknowledge tenacity and courage:

Grief and loss are the predominant themes of this report. Tenacity and survival are also acknowledged. It is no ordinary report. Much of its subject matter is so personal and intimate that ordinarily it would not be discussed. These matters have only been discussed with the Inquiry with great difficulty and much personal distress. The suffering and the courage of those who have told their stories inspire sensitivity and respect. (*Bringing Them Home* 1997:1)

Then, before the factually 'objective' recorder stance takes over, the report quotes from William Deane, then Governor-General of Australia. Deane comments explicitly on the impropriety of Australia's treatment of its Indigenous people and the need for national shame to exist alongside national pride in relation to past acts and omissions – a clear adjudicating stance:

(13) It should, I think, be apparent to all well-meaning people that true reconciliation between the Australian nation and its indigenous people is not

achievable in the absence of acknowledgment of the wrongfulness of the past dispossession, oppression and degradation of the Aboriginal peoples. That is not to say that individual Australians who had no part in what was done in the past should feel or acknowledge personal guilt. It is simply to assert our identity as a nation and the basic fact that national shame, as well as national pride, can and should exist in relation to past acts and omissions, at least when done or made in the name of the community or with the authority of government ... (*Bringing Them Home* 1997:1)

The report then continues with the more predictable recorder voice, which deals with the facts of the matter, moving on from the explicit judgements just reviewed:

(14) 'Compulsion' means force or coercion (Garner 1995: 183). It encompasses both the officially authorised use of force or coercion and illegally exercised force or coercion. It clearly extends to the removal of a child by a government delegate such as a protector or police officer pursuant to legislative powers. These officers exerted 'compulsion' by virtue of their office and the power of the legislation under which they acted. The term clearly extends to the removal of a child on a court order. Indeed a court is the ultimate power which can 'compel' the removal of children from their families.

A common practice was simply to remove the child forcibly, often in the absence of the parent but sometimes even by taking the child from the mother's arms. The law firm Phillips Fox advised the Inquiry that 'one of our clients had instructed us that he was taken from his parents while his mother was in hospital having her fourth child. Another client was one of six children taken from their home by the police while the mother was in hospital having her seventh child' (Phillips Fox Melbourne submission 20 page 5, both clients named). (*Bringing Them Home* 1997:5)

To this rhetoric we must add the voice of the stolen generations which is quoted throughout the report, often by way of exemplification for recorder voice – and at the beginning and end of parts, chapters and sections of the report, by way of framing the discussion with personal experience. As illustrated in Text 5 above, these recounts are typically strongly affectual, and ground the historical voices illustrated above in the material reality of Indigenous people's lives.

In academic history, personal recounts of this kind may be completely elided – effaced as primary sources rather than presented as part of secondary interpretation. Adjudicator stance is also rare – it is perhaps felt to be 'unschool-arily'. Beyond this, taking up a moral position will tend to narrow one's read-

ership down to those who share your point of view. Solidarity is very much at risk. Interpreter stance is not as volatile, and a great deal of history discourse seems to be concerned with deploying recorder stance to convince readers of the plausibility of interpretations. In Text 10 above, for example, Buggy foregrounds the capacity and tenacity of the Red Army – an interpreter stance he has already backed up with numerous historical recounts featuring recorder voice and considerable primary source material:

the leadership of Mao Zedong, revived the confidence of a demoralized army, the brilliant army commanders, the courage and toughness of the young members of the Red Army, the discipline of the Red Army, which won the confidence and support of the peasant population, contrasted with the disunity of the enemy ...

Text 10 then continues, somewhat unusually, with a drift towards adjudication, beginning with an appreciation of the significance of the Long March, and continuing with a fairly explicit judgement of the impropriety of the treatment of Red Army heroes during the Cultural Revolution:

(10) [continued] Beside the Long March other great military exploits, such as Hannibal's crossing of the Alps or Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, pale into insignificance. Innumerable stories of heroism and military brilliance boosted Communist morale and steered the movement to endure the Japanese invasion and the continuing civil war. Like the ANZACS of Australia and New Zealand, the grizzled survivors of the Long March have become national heroes, embodying all that is strong and noble in the nation's history.

It is one of the sad ironies of history that during the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976), the Communist Party turned on its heroes. The army commander Peng Duhai was tortured and eventually killed by his Red Guard captors. He Long, a diabetic, was killed by an injection of glucose. Even the great commander, Zhe De, was attacked. His house was ransacked and his wife, who also endured the Long March, was humiliated as the consort of a 'black general'. Deng Xiaoping, whose role in the Long March was more humble, spent three years doing menial work in a school in Nanchang. In 1976 he re-emerged to wreak vengeance on his attackers. (Buggy 1988:257)

Rhetorically, concurrent shifts in evaluation and abstraction often function to ground historical interpretation. One recurrent pattern involves interpreter stance and more abstraction, followed by recorder stance with less abstrac-

tion. The more concrete and objective discourse exemplifies and at the same time justifies the interpretation. In Text 15 for example, Nelson Mandela writes about the difficulties he and his fellow prisoners had in finding out about current affairs. He begins with a general statement about this problem, then introduces the June 1976 uprising as an example, and follows this with a relatively concrete account of what happened. As the text becomes more concrete, so it becomes less explicitly evaluative – 'sketchy', 'vague', 'fanciful and improbable' reports unfold into what 'truly happened'; and 'vague reports of a great uprising' unfold into 'fifteen thousand school children gathered to protest ... police opened fire, killing thirteen-year-old Hector Pieterse and many others'. From a historian's perspective, we might gloss this drift as a move from secondary interpretation and explanation towards their basis in primary sources. The drift is represented by indentations below (note the use of marked Themes to scaffold the shifts in abstracton/evaluation):

(15) Diligent as we were in gathering news and information, our knowledge of current events was always sketchy. Happenings in the outside world were muffled by the fact that we heard of them first through rumour; only later might they be confirmed by a newspaper account or an outside visitor.

In June 1976 we began to hear vague reports of a great uprising in the country. The whispers were fanciful and improbable: the youth of Soweto had overthrown the military and the soldiers had dropped their guns and fled. It was only when the first young prisoners who had been involved in the 16 June uprising began to arrive on Robben island in August that we learned what had truly happened.

On 16 June 1976 fifteen thousand school children gathered in Soweto to protest at the government's ruling that half of all classes in secondary schools must be taught in Afrikaans. Students did not want to learn and teachers did not want to teach in the language of the oppressor. Pleadings and petitions by parents and teachers had fallen on deaf ears. A detachment of police confronted this army of earnest schoolchildren and without warning opened fire, killing thirteen-year-old Hector Pieterse and many others. The children fought with sticks and stones, and mass chaos ensued, with hundreds of children wounded and killed and two white men stoned to death. (Mandela 1995:575–576)

### Arguing

This brings us to persuasive discourse, where the rhetoric of demonstration exemplified in Text 15 above is not enough – because the judgement to hand is simply too contentious (a volatile adjudication perhaps) not to be argued for. So once again we have to move beyond recounts and accounts to texts which are globally structured – but this time as arguments rather than explanations. Note that the motivation for moving to global reasoning this time round is more interpersonal than ideational; it has to do with forming community around shared values. With factorial and consequential explanations on the other hand the motivation for global structure was more ideational; there it had to do with acknowledging the complexity of the causal relations (i.e. multiple causes and effects).

Genres of argument – exposition, challenge and discussion – can focus either on a macro-proposition (why readers should believe something) or on a macro-proposal (why readers should do something). We focus on macro-propositions here; for discussion of hortatory arguments see Martin (1985/1989, 1995a, 2001).

Text 16 below sits fairly snugly on the border between explanation and education in China will lead to pressure for wider political and cultural freedom. Three factors mitigating this pressure are then explored.

(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)

In a sense 16 could be taken as a prognostic factorial explanation, listing factors that could affect the degree of pressure and increase resistance to it. The uncertainty of the 'thesis' (*could*) and the way in which it is graded (*modify the degree, increase*), however, distinguish this text from canonical explanation genres which focus on *fait accompli*.

In China, however, there are factors which could both modify the degree of pressure and increase resistance to it.

And the way in which the text concludes leaves me with the sense that I've been positioned to believe something contentious about the prospects for political freedom in China:

It may therefore be quite a long time before political freedom breaks out in China.

Text 17 is a rather more canonical instance of the exposition genre. It has a clear, controversial thesis dealing with the propriety of giving amnesty through the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Tutu then presents three arguments in favour of the thesis (paragraphs 2, 3/4, and 5), in order to persuade us that justice has indeed been done.

(17) So is amnesty being given at the cost of justice being done? This is not a frivolous question, but a very serious issue, one which challenges the integrity of the entire Truth and Reconciliation process.

The Act required that where the offence is a gross violation of human rights – defined as an abduction, killing torture or severe ill-treatment – the application should be dealt with in a public hearing unless such a hearing was likely to lead to a miscarriage of justice (for instance, where witnesses were too intimidated to testify in open session). In fact, virtually all the important applications to the Commission have been considered in public in the full glare of television lights. Thus there is the penalty of public exposure and humiliation for the perpetrator. Many of those in the security forces who have come forward had previously been regarded as respectable members of their communities. It was often the very first time that their communities and even sometimes their families heard that these people were, for instance, actually members of death squads of regular torturers of detainees in their custody. For some it has been so traumatic that marriages have broken up. That is quite a price to pay . . .

It is also not true that the granting of amnesty encourages impunity in the sense that perpetrators can escape completely the consequences of their actions, because amnesty is only given to those who plead guilty, who accept responsibility for what they have done. Amnesty is not given to innocent people or to those who claim to be innocent. It was on precisely this point that amnesty was refused to the police officers who applied for it for their part in the death of Steve Biko. They denied that they had committed a crime, claiming that they had assaulted him only in retaliation for his inexplicable conduct in attacking them.

Thus the process in fact encourages accountability rather than the opposite. It supports the new culture of respect for human rights and acknowledgement of responsibility and accountability by which the new democracy wishes to be characterised. It is important to note too that the amnesty provision is an ad hoc arrangement meant for this specific purpose. This is not how justice is to be administered in South Africa for ever. It is for a limited and definite period and purpose.

Further, retributive justice – in which an impersonal state hands down punishment with little consideration for victims and hardly any for the perpetrator – is not the only form of justice. I contend that there is another kind of justice, restorative justice, which is characteristic of traditional African jurisprudence. Here the central concern is not retribution or punishment but, in the spirit of *ubuntu*, the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships. This kind of justice

seeks to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he or she has injured by his or her offence. This is a far more personal approach, which sees the offence as something that has happened to people and whose consequence is a rupture in relationships. Thus we would claim that justice, restorative justice, is being served when efforts are being made to work for healing, for forgiveness and for reconciliation. (Tutu 1999: 48–52)

Whereas Tutu is promoting his own thesis in 17, in 18 he switches to rebuttal mode in order to challenge a recurring criticism of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process. Tutu presents the criticism that morally speaking it is up to victims, not a government commission, to deliberate on amnesty, punishment and reparation. He counters this by arguing that many of the delinquents involved in the transition to the new republic were in fact themselves victims of apartheid, and that opinion polls and voting patterns indicate strong endorsement of the reconciliation process.

(18) In January 1999 I described the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process to a large gathering in a synagogue in Jerusalem. There, as in most other such meetings, I was accosted by someone who spoke very passionately about the moral requirement of justice which our process had seemed to undermine. He was strongly of the opinion (shared, I suspect, by many there and elsewhere) that morally speaking such an arrangement could really only be entered into by the victims themselves and not by others, however lofty their motives.

I was, I hope, able to satisfy him on that point by my response. And it is this: those who negotiated our reasonably peaceful transition included in their delegations on the liberation movement's side those who were themselves victims of the viciousness of apartheid. Many had been detained, harassed, imprisoned, tortured and exiled, and before all this had happened to them had been victims in various ways of the injustice and oppression of apartheid. They could all speak of it from personal experience. Almost all of them, for instance, were disenfranchised until that memorable day in April 1994: they had never voted in the land of their birth until that day. They had suffered the humiliations of the iniquitous pass laws and had seen people uprooted and dumped as if they were rubbish in the massive forced population removal schemes that had traumatised so many from that community. I was thus able to reassure my Jewish questioner that the negotiators had not acted presumptuously, for they were speaking about what they and their loved ones had lived through.

When the election results came in, far from these negotiators being

repudiated for not reflecting the views and the attitudes of their constituencies, they were massively endorsed in a landslide election victory that brought the ANC to the helm of a government of National Unity. It was these selfsame, now elected, representatives who gave us our new constitution and who, in accordance with its provisions, passed the Act that brought the Truth and Reconciliation Commission into being. It was not the work of some idealistic upstarts but the product of hard-nosed politicians, who usually have an eye on the next election and would not normally be caught doing anything that was likely to alienate the voters who put them into office. These politicians have operated under the leadership of Nelson Mandela and his successor, Thabo Mbeki. Had what they did in the Act been at variance with the feelings of their constituency, that would have been reflected in their ratings in opinion polls. After three years of the Truth and Reconciliation process, and many controversial amnesty decisions, Nelson Mandela scored nearly eight out of ten, and Mr. Mbeki nearly seven, in the popularity stakes as leaders. (Their closest rival trailed at a disturbing three.) This seemed to indicate that, despite the electorate's natural disillusionment with the first post-oppression government, and its unfulfilled promises and deficits in fulfilling expectations, the ANC was still being endorsed. More recently, the political parties which supported the establishment of the Commission received the support of about 90 per cent of voters in the 1999 election. In a memorable turn of phrase used by one of my teachers at King's College, London, 'it would not be unreasonable to assert' that those who had negotiated and who produced the Truth and Reconciliation Commission did in fact have the credentials to speak on behalf of the victims, and have been heartily endorsed in so doing.

(Tutu 1999: 53–4)

In Bakhtin's terms, Texts 16, 17 and 18 are all transparently dialogic. Arguments are mounted in the face of alternative points of view, which are more or less explicitly acknowledged (least so in 16, more so in 17 and 18, and especially so in 18, the challenge). But none of these texts give an 'equal' voice to the opposition, and they are certainly not globally structured around alternative perspectives as they would be in discussion genre (for examples of texts which are globally organised around different positions see Knapp & Callaghan 1989; Feez & Joyce 1998; Martin 2002b).

## Mapping histories

At this point it is perhaps appropriate to develop an overview of the discourses of modernity we have been reviewing to portray history as we've known it. A summary outline is presented as Table 1, organised by genre along its central row. Along this row an attempt has been made to grade genres along a cline from oral history to institutional history (for related work see Coffin 1997; Martin 2001, 2001c).

Major shifts in the configuration of linguistic resources involved are represented by solid lines around closely related genres, which representation reinforces the categorical nature of genre classification. Note however that individual texts may straddle boundaries, as we have seen for the explanation/exposition distinction discussed in relation to Text 16 above. For further discussion of typological and topological perspectives on genre agnation see (Martin 2001, 2002a).

Above and below these genres, six key factors are outlined, differentiating them from one another. Using Halliday's (e.g. 1994) notion of interpersonal, ideational and textual meaning, the genre relations can be unpacked, factor by factor, as follows ('...' represents a boundary from the table):

- i. **interpersonal meaning:** ongoing reaction to what went on (prosodic appraisal) ... clusters of evaluation of what went on (periodic appraisal) ... formulate thesis around appraisal of what went on

**Table 1.** A topological perspective on history genres  
History topology

1	prosodic appraisal	periodic appraisal				thesis appraisal
2	proposition					proposition/ proposal
3	tell	record	explain	probe	argue	
	auto/ biographical recount [later]	historical recount [in/during]	historical account [external cause, incongruent]	factual & consequential explanation [internal cause]	exposition/ challenge	
4	individual focus	group (+ hero) focus				discussion
5	text time = field time					text time ≠ field time
6	episodic unfolding in time	causal unfolding				internal unfolding

- ii. **interpersonal meaning**; give information (proposition) ... justify an interpretation about what happened or what should be (proposition/proposal)
- iii. **ideational meaning**; tell what happened to an individual (tell) ... record what happened to groups (record) ... explain what led on to what (reveal) ... probe a set of factors leading to or from some event (probe) ... present arguments around an interpretation of what happened (argue)
- iv. **textual meaning**; largely specific reference (individual focus) ... largely generic reference, except for great 'men' (group + 'hero' focus)
- v. **textual meaning**; relatively congruent (text time follows field time) ... relatively grammatically metaphorical (text time differs from field time)
- vi. **textual meaning**; external temporal (episodic unfolding in time) ... external metaphorical consequential (causal unfolding) ... internal' conjunctive organisation (rhetorical unfolding)

### Deconstructing history

As an overview, Table 1 gives us some sense of how grand narratives are formed, and naturalised as interested readings of the past. A history for modernity, some might say. But what about post-modernity – the post-colonial world we inhabit now? How does it make history, in ways that deconstruct the naturalisations we've just explored?

To explore this let's consider another example from the Philippines, this time by the post-colonial historian Rafael (as opposed to the Marxist account by Constantino and Constantino we touched on in Text 8 above). Rafael is exploring the role of discourse in the religious conversion of the Tagalogs to Catholicism and their concurrent colonisation during the early period of Spanish rule (1580–1705). In this passage he is focussing in particular on confession, in the third part of his Chapter 3:

#### 3. Conversion and the Demands of Confession

The "inadequacies" of Tagalog Conversion  
 Reducing Native Bodies  
 Confession and the Logic of Conversion

- (19) ... This internalisation of an exterior hierarchy consists of two inter-related procedures: the accounting of past events and the reproduction of the discourse of interrogation contained in the confession manuals.

First, the process of accounting. All confession manuals contain the unconditional demand that all sins be revealed...

The Spanish demand is that nothing be held back in confession. One is to expend all that memory can hold in a discourse that will bring together both the self that recalls and that which is recalled. The present self that confronts the priest in confession is thus expected to have managed to control his or her past – to reduce it, as it were, to discursive submission. Whereas the examination of conscience requires the division of the self into one that knows the Law and seeks out the other self that deviates from it, a "good confession" insists on the presentation of a self in total control of its past. It is in this sense that confessional discourse imposes on the individual penitent what Roland Barthes called a "totalitarian economy" involving the complete recuperation and submission of the past to the present, and by extension of the penitent to the priest (Barthes 1976: 39–75).

Yet insofar as the ideal of a perfect accounting of sins also necessitated their recounting in a narrative, it was condemned to become a potentially infinite task. Given the limitations of memory, accounting "engenders its own errors." And the errors created by faulty accounting become further sins that have to be added to the original list. The very possibility of a correct accounting engenders an erroneous accounting, just as remembering one's sins would make no sense unless there existed the possibility of forgetting them. It is thus the guarantee of a faulty accounting of sins that makes conceivable the imperative for total recall. Barthes puts it more succinctly: "Accountancy has a mechanical advantage: for being the language of a language, it is able to support an infinite circularity of errors and of their accounting" (Barthes 1976: 70).

There is a sense, then, in which the demand for a total recollection of sins results in the unlimited extensions of discourse purporting to extract and convey one's successes and failures in accounting for past acts and desires. Accounting thus allows confession to become a self-sustaining machine for the reproduction not only of God's gifts of mercy but of "sin" as well. For God's continued patronage – the signs of His mercy – requires a narrative of sins to act upon. The confessor who sits in lieu of an absent Father needs the penitent's stories, without which there can be no possibility of asserting and reasserting the economy of divine mercy. Without the lure of sin, the structure of authority implicit in this economy would never emerge. Confession was crucial because it produced a divided subject who was then made to internalise the Law's language. The penitent became "the speaking subject who is also the subject of the statement" (Foucault 1980: 1–61). But confession was also important because it made for

the ceaseless multiplication of narratives of sin through their ever-faulty accounting. In introducing the category of “sin”, confession converted the past into a discourse that was bound to the Law and its agents. In this way the accounting and recounting of the past generated the complicitous movement between sin and grace.

These considerations bring us to the second moment in the interiorisation of hierarchy prescribed by confession: the reproduction of the discourse of interrogation .... (Rafael 1988: 101–103)

In some respects this is not altogether unfamiliar ground. For starters, Rafael deploys a well-scaffolded hierarchy of periodicity, with higher level discourse Themes anticipating lower level ones (Martin 1992, 1993a):

... This internalisation of an exterior hierarchy consists of two interrelated procedures: the accounting of past events and the reproduction of the discourse of interrogation contained in the confession manuals.

First, the process of accounting ...

These considerations bring us to the second moment in the interiorisation of hierarchy prescribed by confession: the reproduction of the discourse of interrogation ...

And there is a good deal of abstraction (highlighted below) alongside the occasional concrete participant (i.e. *manuals*, *the priest*, *the penitent*):

... This internalisation of an exterior hierarchy consists of two interrelated procedures: the accounting of past events and the reproduction of the discourse of interrogation contained in the confession manuals.

First, the process of accounting. All confession manuals contain the unconditional demand that all sins be revealed ...

Since we’re talking about Catholicism, there’s a representation of religious lexis, including the focus of discussion, *confession*:

[confession] & sins, priest, penitent, penitent, priest, sins, sins, sins, sins, God’s gifts of mercy, “sin”, God’s, His mercy, sins, Father, penitent’s, divine mercy, lure of sin, penitent, sin, “sin”, sin, grace

And since the church as a colonising institution is at issue here, administrative lexis as well:

exterior hierarchy, two interrelated procedures, unconditional, manuals, process, manuals, submission, the Law’s, Law, individual, “totalitarian economy”, submission, guarantee, original list, patronage, structure of authority, Law, agents, hierarchy, prescribed

But intriguingly, there’s a sizeable list of terms we might refer to as psychoanalytic – after Lacan:

internalisation, memory, the self, the present self, recalls, recalled, conscience, the division of the self, the other self, a self in total control, the limitations of memory, remembering, forgetting, conceivable, total recall, total recollection, desires, a divided subject, internalise, “the subject who is also the subject of the ...”, interiorisation

And a much longer list of terms having to do with discourse – after Foucault (and we might well have included *confession* in this list).

accounting, discourse, interrogation, accounting, demand, revealed, demand, discourse, discursive, discourse, accounting, recounting, narrative, accounting, accounting, accounting, accounting, accounting, imperative, accounting, language, language, accounting, demand, discourse, accounting, accounting, signs, narrative, stories, asserting, reasserting, language, speaking, statement, narratives, accounting, introducing, discourse, accounting, recounting, considerations, discourse, interrogation, & [confession]

Clearly the ‘discursive turn’ of post-modern humanities and social science is reflected in Text 19, which seems to take the abstractions of modernity (religious, administrative and psychoanalytic) as a starting point and move on to discourse on this discourse in post-modern terms.

As part of this, grammatical metaphor is taken over, since it is the resource modernity has used to construct its abstractions and organise its texts (Martin 1993a, b). The last sentence of 19 illustrates the deployment of grammatical metaphor for both ideational purposes and textual ends:

These considerations bring us to the second moment in the interiorisation of hierarchy prescribed by confession ...

Psychoanalysis, administration and religion are each represented (*interiorisation*, *hierarchy prescribed* and *confession* respectively). *These considerations* names and points back to the first internalisation procedure, as *the second moment* names and points forward to the next – explicitly fulfilling the text’s higher level Theme (... *two interrelated procedures* ...). Note that this scaffold-



Table 2

Pre-modification	Head	Post-modification
the	demand	for a total recollection of sins
	discourse	purporting to extract and convey one's successes and failures in accounting for past acts and desires
a perfect	accounting	of sins

ing is highly metaphorical – with thoughts bringing readers to another time, meaning 'now that we have considered the first procedure, we can move on to the second'. Modernist readers are accustomed to grammatical metaphors which name discourse in order to organise it in just such ways.

But this is post-modernity, and so it is not just discourse that is treated in this way. In addition, the 'material' abstractions of modernity, out of which it has constructed its institutions and disciplines, are themselves reconstrued as discourse – so that not only do we have discourse managing discourse, we have discourse affecting discourse as the heart of the explanation and interpretation of the past. Take the following examples:

*Agent* the demand for a total recollection of sins

*Process* results in

*Medium* the unlimited extensions of discourse purporting to extract and convey one's successes and failures in accounting for past acts and desires.

*Agent* the ideal of a perfect accounting of sins

*Process* necessitated

*Medium* their recounting in a narrative,

In the first a demand leads to more discourse; in the second accounting leads to narrative. So where modernity had abstractions acting on abstractions, in post-modernity we find discourse acting on discourse. In Text 19 the key participants are discursive Agents and Mediums, with the abstractions of modernity sidelined as modifiers in nominal groups (Table 2).

Thus discourse produces divided subjects:

it [= confession]

produced

a divided subject who was then made to internalise the Law's language.

Discourse produces errors:

accounting

"engenders  
its own errors."

the errors

created by  
faulty accounting

The very possibility of a correct accounting

engenders

an erroneous accounting,

it [= accountancy]

is able to support

an infinite circularity of errors and of their accounting"

Discourse produces abstractions elaborating modernity:

the accounting and recounting of the past

generated

the complicitous movement between sin and grace.

Discourse produces more discourse:

it [= confession]

made for

the ceaseless multiplication of narratives of sin through their ever-faulty accounting.

... the guarantee of a faulty accounting of sins ...

makes conceivable

the imperative for total recall.

And discourse transforms discourse into abstractions:

Accounting

allows ... to become

confession

a self-sustaining machine for the reproduction not only of

God's gifts of mercy but of "sin" as well.

it [= the ideal of a perfect accounting of sins]

was condemned to become

a potentially infinite task.

And changes abstractions into discourse:

confession  
converted  
the past

into a discourse that was bound to the Law and its agents.

The effects of this on the explanation and interpretation are of course multiple. To take just one example from 19, as part of reconstructing religion as discourse, we reconstrue sin as error – and this reworks confession as interrogation – a test of correct and incorrect accounting. Instead of a priest acting on a (penitent's) soul, we have the Law surveilling text – a new reading of one aspect of Christian conversion in the Philippines – the Tagalogs, contracting colonialism, as interpellated (split) subjects of Catholic discourse.

This brief excursion into post-colonial history unveils a new kind of meta-discourse, which both subsumes and extends the history discourse of modernity – much as modernist history subsumes and extends the personal recounting of everyday life. An outline of these orders of contemporary discourse, configured as complementary meaning potentials, is presented as Figure 2. Note that reading and valuing this as evolution is a modernist conceit.

Seen in these terms, post-colonial discourse can be read as a new platform from which to launch critique, and as playing a key role in deconstructing the processes whereby modernity has naturalised its social order. One of the key points I would like to reinforce here is that critique of this kind is itself a discourse – it does not, and in its own terms could not, stand outside of discourse. There can be no moral high ground which is not itself subsumed. And if such critique is what we want when we are urging critical literacy for history students, then we have our work cut out for us. We have to teach the discourses of

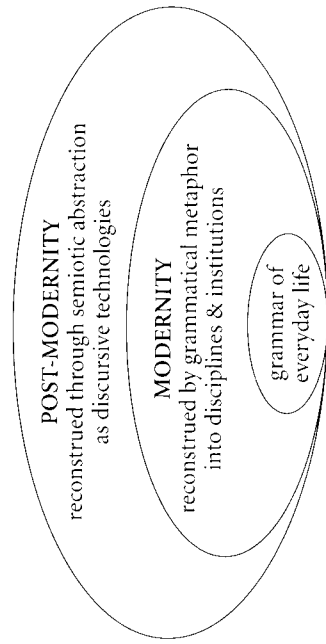


Figure 2. Orders of discourse for construal of the past

modernity and as well the post-colonial discursive turn subsuming modernist history and expanding it. How do we set about this challenging task? For useful suggestions at the secondary level see (Coffin 1996; Morgan 1997). Walton (1996) and Malcolm (1999) are of special relevance to indigenous education in post-colonial Australia.

### More to history

There's more to history than has met our eye. More genres – for example report and description (as discussed in Martin 1993a). More discourse – the whole issue of primary and secondary sources has scarcely been touched upon (Buggy 1988; Brook et al. 1996). Which in turn raises the issue of more modalities – since primary sources typically include images that have to be viewed (Kress & Van Leeuwen 1992; Lemke 1998). And more text – since the genres reviewed here are typically configured into macro-genres as textbooks and student projects (Martin 1995b, 2002a). Chapter 9 of (Buggy 1988), from which we took Text 10 above, for example, is a macro-recount of the Long March which unfolds as follows:

#### [Outline]

#### Introduction

The Breakout: 16 October to 25 November

Battle of Xiang River: 25 November to 3 December

The Capture of Zunyi: January 1935

Zunyi Conference: 15–18 January 1935

The Golden Sands River Crossing: 29 April to 8 May

The Luding Bridge Crossing: 29 May 1935

The Great Snowy Mountains: July 1935

The High Grasslands: August 1935

Lazikou Pass: 16 September

How did the Long March Contribute to the Eventual Communist Victory?

[(The Long March Legend and Reality = 16 pp scaffolded primary sources)]

Why did the Long March Succeed?

[Structured Question, Problems and Issues, Role Play, Empathy Exercises]

[Bibliography]

Alongside an Outline, Bibliography and interactive sections (Structured Question etc.), and 16 pages of primary sources, it consists of 10 historical recounts unfolding through time, a consequential explanation (Text 10 above) and one

factorial explanation. In Buggy's chapter these genres are clearly separated into discrete sections. In other textbooks boundaries may not be so clearly marked, nor even so clear. Readers have to learn to navigate the change of gears, including cases where transitions involve one genre phasing gradually out of another. To this we have to add a concern with so-called 'mixed genres', a misnomer if ever there was one – since to mix genres we have to have genres to mix, and this implies recognisable typologies. Perhaps more appropriate here is the notion of mixed texts, drawing on more than one genre, in various ways. Martin (2002a) considers renovation, hybridisation, multimodality and macro-generic assemblages in secondary school geography – all very different ways of 'combining' genres. Other possibilities include embedding, where one genre functions as a stage in another (Martin 1995b), and contextual metaphor, where one genre stands in for another (e.g. children's stories as scientific explanations; Martin 1990, 1997b). The range of variation<sup>2</sup> reflects the diversity of social factors at play; to study change we need a rich model of multifunctional texts, not a reductive one.

These elaborations of the work presented here aside, it is important to re-emphasise here the uncommon-sense construals of time enacted by historians – the ways in which abstraction is used to package time, to explain causal connections, to value events and to argue for interpretations; and beyond this the ways in which these resources are recontextualised by metadiscourse in post-structuralist writing. This array of grammatical technology enables the meanings through which we make sense of our past. We make different histories – true. But we use comparable resources to naturalise a point of view, and to resist and subvert alternative readings. The technology of history engenders this power; and we need to remember that its status comes from its power, not the other way round.

## Notes

1. For internal vs. external conjunction see Martin (1992, 1993a).
2. The range of variation will come as no surprise to functional grammarians, who deal regularly with renovation (*Don't disappear that overhead!*), blends (*It is stocky, muscled body, short legs and massive chest make the jaguar a powerful and efficient hunter.*), multimodality (*3 of them went POW!*), clause complexing (*Yes, but Anna will probably always be a bit shorter than you, 'cos Anna's Mummy and Daddy are much shorter than Mummy and Daddy, so Anna will probably never be as tall as you even when she's grown up.*), embedding (*Factors [[favourable to the development of the true tropical rainforest]] are annual rainfall amounts in excess of 1500mm.*) and grammatical metaphor (*The effects of industrialisation and the*

*need of more land due to the growth of population seriously affected wildlife and still is today*) (Halliday 1994; Matthiesen 1995; Martin et al. 1997).

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