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English in Australia

2016

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English in Australia

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Editorial

BERYL EXLEY, GARRY COLLINS, KAY BISHOP & LINDA-DIANNE WILLIS

This issue of *English in Australia* is a special edition drawn from presentations made at the 2015 Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics Association (ASFLA) conference held at The University of Queensland in September 2015. The conference was co-convened by Lindsay Williams and Garry Collins. The conference theme, *Linguistics, Literature and Verbal Art: Inheritances and Developments*, was inspired primarily by the work of Professor Michael Halliday. His wife, the late Professor Ruqaiya Hasan, formerly a linguist at Macquarie University, Sydney, sadly passed away on 24 June, 2015.

This special issue of *English in Australia* is also in part a tribute to Hasan's work. This edition includes articles that demonstrate the power of her work in advancing our understanding of language as a social semi-otic system. Born in India at the time of British rule, Hasan overcame the prevailing gendered and racial prejudices to undertake university studies in English Literature. Through ability and sheer determination, Hasan was awarded a scholarship to the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1960. Here she met her future husband, Halliday. Her PhD thesis, *A linguistic study of contrasting features in the style of two contemporary English prose writers* – Angus Wilson and William Golding – completed in 1964, drew on Halliday's earlier work.

From 1968 to 1971 Hasan worked with Professor Basil Bernstein at the Sociolinguistic Research Centre where she directed the Nuffield Research Project on Sociolinguistic Aspects of Children's Stories. At this time, the Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching conducted through the Communication Research Centre, Department of General Linguistics, University College London, was directed by Halliday. Under his leadership, the teaching of reading as a social practice was advanced through the *Breakthrough to Literacy* program which engaged children in the construction of their own sentences and stories. The accompanying texts included illustrations that 'represented life from the five year old's point of view, from which each member of the family is seen to

have appropriate attention paid to him [sic]' (Mackay, Thompson, & Schaub, 1970). The blurb in a very aged copy treasured for over three decades further notes that 'the characterisation is strong and gently humorous and underlines the simple text with great skill ...' (Mackay, et al., 1970). Such texts engage and entertain both children and adults, making learning to read an experience that can be shared across generations.

As a team, Halliday and Hasan's work in advancing our understanding of language and social contexts has influenced education at all levels. This is most evident in the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (hereafter ACARA's) *Australian Curriculum: English* (ACARA, 2016), where the Language Strand has drawn extensively from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (see Derewianka, 2012; Exley, 2016). Whilst evidence of traditional Latinate grammar remains – the kind that drew cringes from those of us old enough to remember the tedium of analysis and parsing – there is now the enticement of going beyond word and sentence level grammar to explore the construction of meaning through the three metafunctions: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

For many teachers of English, the increased focus on language is a welcome addition but also a challenge. The complexity of language means there is much to discuss, debate and learn. In this special edition of *English in Australia*, teachers and researchers tackle a range of texts, demonstrating how the application of SFL enables deeper levels of knowing and aesthetic appreciation of literary and everyday texts. For students, the benefits of knowing more about choices in language enrich both receptive and productive modes of communication. In Article 1, Rosemary Huisman reminds us that 'to talk about a poem we need at least to talk about its language'. Huisman's article outlines the five dimensions of language choice made available through SFL, and the relevance of each for talking about poetic text. Huisman concludes with a substantive analysis of two poems by contemporary

Australian poets, *Open Hands*, by Geoff Lemon (2009) and *Tigers*, by Judith Beveridge (2003). No doubt some English teachers will consider that there are other important aspects to classroom discussions of poetry not addressed in Huisman's analysis, but there is interesting food for thought here. Article 2, written by Angela Thomas, hones in on the literary, narrative and linguistic resources that authors use to represent characters in narratives. Thomas introduces a detailed framework for examining what a character wants, how they go about getting it, and how characters change throughout the narrative. She demonstrates this framework in use by analysing a piece of stimulus text from the novel *Fairytales for Wilde Girls* by Near (2013). In Article 3, Louise Ravelli demonstrates the inherent complexity of multimodal texts and the necessity to move students beyond simple observation and description to critical analysis. Comparing two Australian Defence Force recruiting videos from different eras, Ravelli steps through a social-semiotic model for multimodal text analysis. Her technique and points of discussion serve as a useful resource for teachers and students undertaking a similar analysis with other well-chosen texts. In Article 4, Nathan Lowien draws attention to the Content Descriptions from the *Australian Curriculum: English* (ACARA, 2016) for teaching about value positions in multimodal texts. Lowien then demonstrates how carefully constructed semiotic systems such as the appraisal system (Martin & White, 2005) and various approaches to image analyses can be utilised in the identification and explication of a character's value position. His specific focus is on the linguistic and visual semiotic depictions of characters' value positions in the videogame, *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014).

Hasan's work was not limited to textual analysis. She also advocated that literacy was a social justice issue and those who were denied access to high levels of personal and professional literacies were denied life choices and life chances. Hasan was particularly interested in how language, social class and teacher talk interweave. The remaining five articles in this special edition continue this important agenda. In Article 5, David Rose documents a pedagogical sequence that focuses students' attention on how to read and write a range of texts for meaning. The sequence moves through scaffolded pedagogy for working with whole texts, modelled structures for writing, and language patterns in sentences. Together, these three teaching sequences draw out and build a metalanguage

for teachers' and students' intuitive knowledge about language. In Article 6, Thu Thi Bich Ngo sharpens the lens on an oft-forgotten cohort, namely gifted and talented students. She explores a single case study of teaching practices, arguing for a differentiated pedagogy for gifted and talented student writers. Her research concludes that the success or otherwise of the pedagogy was dependent upon the teacher's linguistic subject knowledge and linguistic pedagogical subject knowledge. Such findings are useful for thinking about the import of teachers' professional knowledge bases for realising the potential of gifted and talented student writers. In Article 7, Linda Willis and Beryl Exley hone in on the 'Language Variation and Change' sub-strand of the Language strand of the *Australian Curriculum: English* (ACARA, 2016) and its potential to positively contribute to the wider reconciliation and multiculturalism agendas in Australia. They posit this important sub-strand can be made more enduring by being integrated with Content Descriptions from other Language sub-strands. They also demonstrate how the pedagogical practice of metalogue allows for substantive discussion about how different languages work. Article 8, written by Mary Macken-Horarik, continues the theme of teachers' content knowledge and its effects on students' outcomes, this time considering the potential of systemic functional semiotics (SFS) for interpreting multimodal literature. Drawing on empirical data, Macken-Horarik documents how teachers help students to focus on the relations between meaning patterns of multi-semiotic texts. She concludes that a portable metalanguage enabled teachers and students to understand different forms of realisation and redundancies across different modes of presentation. Importantly, Macken-Horarik found that many of the students who participated in the intervention 'enjoyed exploiting the analogic power of systemic functional analysis'. The final article in this special edition is written by Beryl Exley, Lisa Kervin and Jessica Mantei. It too considers the implication of teachers' pedagogical practice across the years of schooling. This team of writers offers a pedagogical heuristic called 'Playing with Grammar' that transitions through three interwoven stages of (i) an introduction to the learning experience, (ii) a focus on learning, and (iii) an application of new knowledge where students read and write with grammar in mind. The article closes by documenting the affordances and challenges of this new orientation to literary text analysis.

In closing, we, the editorial team, invite readers to

re-consider the *Australian Curriculum: English* (ACARA, 2016) in light of the way the first four articles demonstrate how SFL can advance understandings of complex texts. Similarly, we hope that the final five articles encourage teachers to reflect on the different uptakes of pedagogical practice and the different points of access for our students.

Beryl Exley, Garry Collins, Kay Bishop &
Linda-Dianne Willis
Guest Editorial Team, September 2016

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RECIPIENT FOR 2016

AATE is pleased to recognise **Rita van Haren** as the recipient of life membership for 2016. The award was conferred at the AATE/ALEA National Conference in Adelaide in July 2016.

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Rita van Haren is an active leader and contributor to the English teaching community in Australia. Rita has directed her intellect and talent to shape the directions of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE), to represent the organisation in national and international forums and to design, develop and implement outstanding professional learning activities and resources for the association. Rita is highly regarded by her peers and colleagues for her diligence, integrity and passion for English teaching.

Rita has led professional learning nationally

and internationally on the teaching of reading in the middle years and advocates using balanced approaches to teaching reading, including critical literacy. Rita represented AATE on the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Reading. During this time she sought the views of state and territory English teaching associations to provide the Inquiry with a representative and balanced view of the teaching of reading.

Rita mentored colleagues through projects designed to support the development of their practice. She co-led the AATE and Australian Literacy Educators' Association's MyRead project, funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training. She helped to design and implement MyRead as an important practical resource for AATE that is freely available to teachers across the country. MyRead received the Australian Publishers Association Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing in recognition of the resource's quality, accessibility and relevance.

Rita has been a contributor to *English in Australia* as well as a number of other AATE publications. She co-wrote the chapter 'Really teaching reading: Revising a MyRead Strategy in a secondary English classroom' for the AATE publication *Teenagers and Reading*. Rita was involved in producing AATE support materials using the Learning by Design Framework for the national Becoming Asia Literate Project funded by the Asia Education Foundation. Most recently, she has contributed a chapter 'Learner Engagement' in the new AATE publication *The Artful English Teacher*.

Rita has actively participated in the AATE's research agenda and was involved in the development of the Standards for the Teaching of English Language and Literacy (STELLA) by contributing narratives to support this important AATE research work.

Rita was an active member of AATE Council as the delegate for the ACT Association for the Teaching of English (ACTATE) for nine years from 2000–2009. During this period Rita made an outstanding contribution to the management of AATE. She has held numerous executive positions with ACTATE including president, vice-president and treasurer. She is currently the ACTATE Executive Officer.

It is in recognition of these services to the Association and to the profession that AATE proudly awards life membership to Rita van Haren.

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Talking about poetry – using the model of language in Systemic Functional Linguistics to talk about poetic texts

Rosemary Huisman, University of Sydney

Abstract: Poetry is the art shaped through language; to talk about a poem we need at least to talk about its language – but what can be said will depend on the particular linguistic theory, with its particular modelling of language, which we bring to the description. This paper outlines the approach of SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics), describing in turn its five dimensions of language choice and the relevance of each to talking about poetic text. This includes ways of talking about the poem as a visual text and as a spoken text, and of relating those choices to choices of wording (grammar and vocabulary), meaning and social context. Two poems by contemporary Australian poets are discussed in detail, 'Open Hands', by Geoff Lemon and 'Tigers', by Judith Beveridge.

Introduction

Poetry is that art for which the medium of semiotic expression, the means of making meaning, is language. To talk about a poem we need at least to talk about its language – but how can we best do that? In an early paper in which he discusses the language of Yeats' poem, 'Leda and the Swan', the linguist M.A.K. Halliday writes:

Linguistics is not and will never be the whole of literary analysis, and only the literary analyst – not the linguist – can determine the place of linguistics in literary studies. But if a text is to be described at all, then it should be described properly; and this means by the theories and methods developed in linguistics, the subject whose task is precisely to show how language works. (Halliday, 1964; 2002, p. 19)

So to talk 'properly', that is consistently and coherently, about the language of a poem, we need explicitly to use the descriptive categories derived from linguistic theory. But here we confront another complication. 'Linguistic Theory' is a wide church. What can be said will depend on the particular linguistic theory, with its particular modelling of language, which we bring to the description.

In this paper, I bring the language model of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to the description of poetic language. (The linguist M.A.K. Halliday, previously quoted, was an initial developer of SFL theory.) SFL is especially suitable for this task for several reasons. First, a poem is a text, and to talk about text we need a functional theory of language, one which is interested in the functional coherence of text, as well as the structure of sentences (the latter is the primary concern of traditional grammar and formalist linguistic theories). Secondly, SFL has developed a multi-dimensional model of language which enables us to describe different varieties of poetic expression. From the creative writer's perspective, different poets/artists

have different understandings of the potential of 'language'. And from the wider social perspective, what has been classified as 'poetry' has differed at different historical periods (Huisman, 1998/2000). Thus the multi-dimensional modelling of language in SFL gives one a way of talking about poetry as both individual choice – art – and social phenomenon – social classification. This is a powerful resource for teaching. We can meaningfully describe the language of the individual poem, but we can also compare the language choices of poet and poet, or more widely still, compare the language of literary period and period. To illustrate the practical use of SFL in the description of poetic language, this paper first discusses the SFL dimensions and then employs those dimensions to make a close study of two poems by contemporary Australian poets, 'Open Hands', by Geoff Lemon and 'Tigers', by Judith Beveridge (the poems appear in full in the Appendix).

Five dimensions of language

Halliday's *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (IFG) describes five dimensions of language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 19–31; 2014, pp. 20–31)

1. structure
2. system
3. stratification
4. instantiation
5. metafunction

The numbered order above is that in IFG; below they are introduced in a slightly different sequence.

Dimension 3. Stratification

<i>extra-linguistic concept</i>	context of situation	
<i>linguistic concepts</i>	semantics: meanings	
	lexicogrammar: wordings	
	expression: speech and writing (phonology and graphology)	

Table 1. Dimension 3. of Stratification (ordering principle of realisation)

Stratification is the dimension which links the language of the poem to the non-linguistic context. As the term strata implies, this dimension has several levels, three of language (semantics, lexicogrammar, expression) and one of context. The act of construal, from perceived spoken or written language, is indicated by the upwards arrow; it represents the reading or

hearing of the poem, the act of interpretation. (The downwards arrow represents the composing of the poem, that is the act of production of the text, though poets may become interpreters of their own work in the processes of editing and rewriting.) Construal is a complex achievement. From no more than marks on the page or sounds to the ear, the interpreter construes the written or spoken expression of her/his experience of language, from that expression construes the words and grammatical structure of her/his experience, from that wording construes meanings and, in the act of interpretation, associates those meanings with a context of situation which makes sense from her/his experience of the world. (The frequent reference to 'experience' already predicts the importance of Dimension 4. Instantiation.) Construal implies an active interpreter, one who makes sense, produces a context, an understanding of experience, that is sensible for them. Thus SFL does not claim that meaning is 'in the text'.

In general, primary education has tended to focus more on the levels of expression and wording (genre pedagogy attempts to redress this focus), and secondary education on the levels of wording, semantics and context but it's a particular need in teaching English to keep an awareness of all levels of language. To repeat, the direction of construal from perceived spoken or written language implies an active interpreter, one who construes a context that is meaningful for them. All written or heard language, not just poetry, requires this active construal by the reader/hearer to make sense. But the interpretation of poetry particularly requires a continued close attention to all levels of language. (I would argue that continued awareness of all levels is also the secret of successful writing, but that's another story.)

A note on my use of the term 'construal': each dimension in the SFL model has its own 'ordering principle'. Halliday calls the principle of stratification 'realization' (spelt by him, below, with the British z):

Realization is probably the most difficult single concept in linguistics. It is the relationship of 'meaning-&-meant' which, in semiotic systems, replaces the 'cause-&-effect' relation of classical physical systems. Unlike cause, realization is not a relationship in real time. It is a two-way relationship that we can only gloss by using more than one word to describe it: to say that wordings (lexicogrammatical formations) *realize* meanings (semantic formations) means both that wordings *express* meanings and that wordings *construct* meanings.

(Halliday, 1992, p. 210)

Halliday sometimes prefers the word *construe* rather than *construct*, which he glosses as ‘*construed* – that is, constructed in the semiotic sense’, so I have used ‘construed’ in this account of interpretation.

Dimension 1. Structure

Each level of language in the previous dimension of stratification (semantics; lexicogrammar; expression: graphology and phonology) has its own structure, as described in Table 2.

semantics / meanings	
text	
lexicogrammar / wordings	
clause	
group or phrase	
word	
morpheme	
expression	
graphology (written language)	phonology (spoken language)
perimeter	tone group
block	foot (rhythm group)
line	syllable
character	phoneme

Table 2. Dimension 1. of structure (ordering principle of rank)

The ordering principle of structure is that of rank; a rank hierarchy is made up of units of structure, as indicated in Table 2. The level of semantics/meanings has only one unit, that of the text. The level of lexicogrammar/wordings has a rank hierarchy of units of clause, group or phrase, word (and morpheme, not discussed further). The level of expression is divided into graphology, for written language, and phonology, for spoken language, each with its own hierarchy of units of structure, later discussed. In the simplest structure, units of higher rank are made up of those below (as the term ‘hierarchy’ implies). For example, clauses are made up of groups or phrases; groups or phrases are made up of words (sometimes just one word), as in the following clause from Lemon’s poem:

clause: *The city / is / restless* = group 1 + group 2 + group 3
 group 1: *The / city* = word 1 + word 2 (groups 2 and 3 contain one word only)

More complex structures can complicate this simple rank order, as in the last two lines of Lemon’s poem:

group 1: *the + groans + of* (group 2: *a house / [[quietly tearing itself down.]]*)

Group 2 functions within a prepositional phrase. The structure enclosed in [[...]] is a clause (with non-finite verb *tearing*) but it is rank-shifted, that is lower in rank, as it is embedded within a group.

The study of grammatical structure has been central to most approaches to linguistics, as well as to traditional accounts of rhetoric. In SFL it is also a detailed area of study but more rewarding in that SFL enables the explicit linking of structure, meaning and context through the dimension of stratification. Paying close attention to the wording (the lexicogrammar) of the text is an essential part of interpreting a poem, but learning to work with the units of grammatical structure, as a reader or a writer, is an important part of English education in general.

The structure of expression is particularly important in the study of poetry. If this were an historical account of poetry, it would make sense to discuss phonology first, as spoken poetry existed in oral cultures long before the advent of written texts. However, a contemporary reader typically meets the poem first as a visual text, printed or on-screen. So I begin with graphology, the study of written or printed language. A caveat: my account of graphology is different from that in IFG; it is what I have found both necessary and adequate for discussing poems.

Dimension 1. Structure: Level of Expression Graphology

perimeter (e.g. page / screen)	highest
block	
line	
character	↓ lowest

Table 3. Dimension 1. of structure: expression – graphology (ordering principle of rank)

For graphology, the rank hierarchy of units of structure is perimeter, block, line, character. The perimeter signifies the outer limit of the language space: the page of a book, the screen of a computer or mobile phone, a block of stone for a memorial plaque, the display area of a billboard. The lower units descend in spatial dimensions: two dimensional, the block; one dimensional, the line; a point, the character. Structure is syntagmatic or sequential or chain-like, as units of one kind are put together – thus characters are put together in a line of poetry, lines are put together in a block of type, blocks are put together to fill the page.

These units of graphic structure are relevant to all written texts but poets have made particular use of them: the vernacular sense of a poem is a text

'written in lines'. (My book, *The Written Poem, Semiotic Conventions from Old to Modern English*, is a historical account of graphic realisation in English poetry, and was motivated by the original simple question: why do we expect the visual display of poems to be in lines? Huisman, 1998, 2000.) A poem is often printed in blocks, called stanzas or strophes. Within each stanza, lines are of a certain length. Lines may be indented and are variously justified – the typical justification for poems is alignment on the left margin only, with the lines ending unevenly on the right. Within each line, the type of characters may be in different fonts eg roman or italic; there may be punctuation or no punctuation. Within the line a space is a character, and several spaces may separate some words in the line. The poet is limited only by the technology of language production available: thus for the contemporary poet, the word processing programs for the computer give a greater range of fonts and line alignment than earlier methods of production. And the poet may use double-page spreads, may include images, the latter especially deployed in texts for children. (This paper does not discuss image/language analysis.)

Consider the graphic display of the two poems (in the Appendix). Before reading, a first glance at the visual shape of Lemon's poem tells the reader there are five blocks / stanzas of text, while a first glance at Beveridge's poem shows a less predictable graphic structure, with some blocks of only one line. It is interesting to compare the alignment of units of graphic structure with those of lexicogrammatical structure. In the poem, 'Open Hands', for the most part, the end of the graphic line co-incides with the end of a grammatical clause (or clause complex, more than one clause). This conventional pattern is broken only in the last stanza – in which there are only two clauses over the nine lines (later discussed). In contrast, Beveridge's poem, 'Tigers' is disruptive from the first line: the graphic blocks and the lineation do not correspond to units of grammatical structure. To an attentive reader, these different choices – to which we later return – contribute to the construal of each poem.

Dimension 1. Structure: Level of Expression

Phonology

tone group	highest
foot (rhythm group)	
syllable	
phoneme	lowest

Table 4. Dimension of structure: expression – phonology (ordering principle of rank)

Whereas phonetics is the study of sounds actually produced, phonology is the study of how a particular language, such as English, structures sound. Again, the principle for ordering the units of structure is that of rank from highest to lowest unit; for SFL, the rank scale of phonological units is: tone group, foot, syllable, phoneme. In a little book, *A course in spoken English: intonation*, published in 1970, Halliday includes several analyses of spoken poems, using the following key:

// indicates a **tone group boundary** (a pause and sometimes a tone change). It will be followed by a new foot, which often begins with a caret.

/ precedes the **stressed syllable** (the beginning of a **foot**).

^ **caret** – indicates a foot with an **unvocalised stress/beat**, *i.e.* a foot in which only unstressed syllables are vocalised (similar to a rest in music). Nonetheless the caret marks a beat in the rhythmic pacing of the line.

For example, analysing my spoken reading of the second stanza of Lemon's poem:

^The /city is /restless.//
 /All /night it has /sent its /men
 to /creak along his /rafters.//
 /Now it /sleeps /fitfully.//
 ^He /leaves its /villains where they /stand.//
 /goes /out into the /steel-grey /morning.//

A reading is always of a particular interpretation (a reader stresses what she/he considers significant); thus, another reader may not stress 'all' in line 2. The line would then be analysed: ^All /night it has /sent its /men.

Previously, we compared the alignment of the graphic and lexicogrammatical structures. Now, compare the alignment of the graphic and phonological structures with the lexicogrammatical: in the stanza above, with the exception of line 2, the graphic lines end with a tone group boundary (//) and each of those lines realise an independent clause. In contrast, my reading voice continues uninterrupted from line 2 into line 3, and line 3 is a dependent clause. In traditional poetics, this unbroken reading from one line into the next is known as 'enjambement' (sometimes spelt 'enjambment').

The foot is a particularly important unit in English poetry. From the twelfth century, responding to the influence of French speech, English poetry began to count syllables (and to use rhyme more frequently); by Shakespeare's time, a foot was a unit of metre,

described as a pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. For example, the iamb is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable; penta is Greek for five so iambic pentameter is a line of five iambs. However, in natural English speech (as in my analysis of Lemon's poem above), the foot is the unit of rhythm, that is, a temporal beat. English speakers perceive that the foot contains one stressed syllable (this perception may be more psychological than objectively measurable). In the one rhythmic foot, the stressed syllable can be associated with a varied number of unstressed syllables (or none); roughly, when there are more unstressed syllables, the English speaker speeds up, keeping a rhythmic pace from stress to stress. Since the late nineteenth century, English poets have increasingly used the natural stress-based rhythm of spoken English rather than the stress-syllable based traditional metres. (In fact, the original English poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, before the French influence brought with the Norman conquest in the eleventh century, used natural English stress patterns.)

The distinction between metre and rhythm has not always been understood in studies of English poetry; abstract metres, like iambic pentameter, describe the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables but the rhythmic foot, based on the one stress, can have a variable number of unstressed syllables. Consider how several lines of a Shakespearean play may all be in iambic pentameter yet different actors can speak the same lines differently, that is give different rhythmic emphasis and pacing according to their different interpretations. Rhythm is always in the particular speaking of poetic language, dependent on the speaker's construal of its context, a particular interpretation. Here is my reading of the last lines of Lemon's poem:

^He will /hear only /three /things://
 ^the /click of a /clock /hand on its /dial, //
 ^the /punctu/ation of a /lover's /face, //
 ^and the /groans of a /house//
 /quietly /tearing itself /down.//

In line 3 I've given the word *punctuation* an unusual double lexical stress, that is I've stressed two syllables in the one word. This emphatic reading gives the line a parallel rhythmic structure with the previous line. The usual reading with one word stress, *punctu/ation*, gives no parallelism. How this rhythmic reading is related to my overall interpretation is returned to later.

Traditional metres based on syllable counting often went with stanzas with some kind of rhyme scheme.

Rhyme is a patterning of the lowest unit of phonological structure, the phoneme. Other phonemic patterns are common in poetry, such as alliteration, repetition of the initial consonant. For English, alliteration naturally links words (the grammatical unit of structure word) as in many English words the spoken stress falls on the first syllable. In the opening and closing lines of the poem 'Tigers', we hear an alliterative link in the repetition of the phoneme [f] in stressed syllables:

^What I want from the /forest /floor //
 ...
 ^Their /furtive /light//
 ^gives /sense to the /foliage.//

Dimension 4. Instantiation

To be discussed as a more general literary phenomenon, the individual poem needs to be considered in a wider environment.

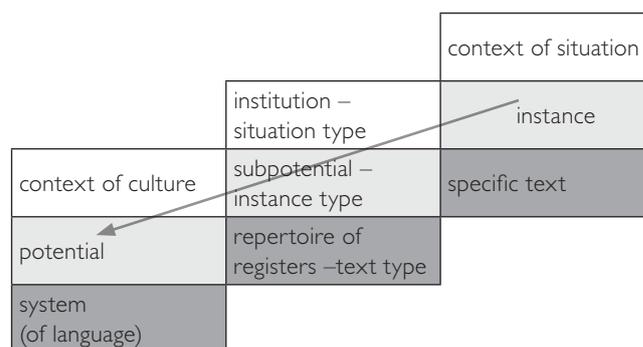


Table 5. Dimension 4. Instantiation (ordering principle: the cline of instantiation)

The column on the right represents the instance, the actual occurrence: a particular poem, a particular context of situation construed from it. The column on the left represents the full potential, what is fully available. On this dimension, a poem instantiates the context of culture in its context of situation, and instantiates the system of language in its text. However this view of instantiation is very panoramic; the central column on this diagram represents a closer view of the particular text or situation, relating it now to other similar texts or situations, that is to text-types and situation types. This intermediate potential is where we can place poetic conventions. Thus, already, from the graphic and phonic displays of the two poems, we recognise that Lemon and Beveridge's poems are examples of what is now labelled 'free verse' (that is, the poems do not use a traditional syllable-counting metre, with regular stanza and rhyme scheme). Most contemporary poetry is free verse, although some

Australian poets continue to use traditionally recognised structures (for example, Stephen Edgar).

Dimension 5. Metafunction

Semantic Metafunctions (meaning)	IDEATIONAL Experiential and Logical	INTER-PERSONAL	TEXTUAL
evolution from human purposes	to talk about happenings	to interact and express attitudes	to speak coherently

Table 7. Dimension 5. of Metafunction (ordering principle: language is as it is because of the functions in which it has evolved in the human species)

In SFL, function (purpose/use) is equated with meaning. From linguistic evidence, Halliday concluded that language evolved from three major human purposes: to talk about happenings, to interact and express attitudes, and to speak coherently. From each of these major purposes evolved three major semantic metafunctions: ideational meaning to talk about happenings; interpersonal meaning for interaction and to express attitudes; textual meaning to speak coherently. Thus, as Halliday put it, the ordering principle of metafunction is that: ‘language is as it is because of the functions in which it has evolved in the human species’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 31).

From these three metafunctions, Halliday inferred three parameters of the context of situation, as in Table 8, following:

Context of situation	FIELD of social action	TENOR of situation	MODE of message
<i>Semantic Metafunctions (meaning)</i>	IDEATIONAL Experiential and Logical	INTER-PERSONAL	TEXTUAL
<i>lexicogrammar (wording)</i>			
<i>expression: phonology or graphology</i>			

Table 8. Dimensions 3. Stratification (vertical) and 5. Metafunction (horizontal)

From the semantic level the reader/hearer of a poem construes a context of situation, one which makes sense to her/him. Each semantic metafunction construes a different aspect of the context of situation.

- Ideational meaning realises the field of social action, through which the reader understands:
 - the first order field as that of the poetic persona telling the poem;

–the second order field, that which is brought into being by the telling, as that which is the subject-matter of the poem.

- Interpersonal meaning realises the tenor of the context through which the reader/hearer of the poem understands:
 - the kind of relation the poetic persona has with the reader;
 - the persona’s attitudes to the subject-matter.
- Textual meaning realises the mode, which is about the kind of message the poem is, and the kind of coherence associated with that kind of message.

In interpreting an individual poem, the reader construes a field, tenor and mode from the language choices of the text. However, readers vary in the textual and cultural experience they bring to that construal; Dimension 4. Instantiation describes the wider context which can be relevant, as the following table illustrates.

		immediate context of situation field = subject-matter + tenor = poet/reader relations /attitudes + mode = organisation/ coherence
	literary institution – situation type recognised classification as a literary poetic ‘genre’: epic, lyric, sonnet, pantoun, blank verse, free verse, haiku, tanka etc etc	specific instance
context of culture	subpotential – instance type	specific poem/text register of this text: its configuration of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings; its lexicogrammatical and expression structures.
potential	text type poetic discourse: repertoire of registers – text types framed by their deployment of language	
system of language		

Table 9. Dimensions 4. Instantiation, 3. Stratification and 5. Metafunction

Poetry as a literary institution (a socially identified site of practices) has had its own recognised choices of language, so-called poetic ‘genres’ with names traditional and modern, well-known and more obscure – epic, lyric, sonnet, pantoun, g(h)azal, blank verse, free verse, haiku, tanka ... – and with their discrimination based on a melange of features. A register is the linguistic configuration realising a field, tenor and mode, so a text instantiating the linguistic deployment of a literary text-type can be construed – by the informed or accepting reader – as a poem, a socially recognised linguistic object. (For example, the literary ‘genre’ sonnet is construed from a text of 14 lines, with regular syllabic metre and recognised rhyme scheme.) ‘Poetry wars’ have been fought on the framing of new poetic text types being admitted to the classification of ‘poetry’; in Australia, for example, see arguments involving the so-called ‘generation of 68’ (McCooey, 2000, pp. 158–164). The terms ‘classification’ for the social recognition of a text as a poem, and ‘framing’ for the controlled realisation of a genre, are transferred from Basil Bernstein’s use in his description of pedagogy (Huisman, 1998 and 2000, pp. 33–40).

So a poet or a reader construes the context of situation of field, tenor and mode within their previous cultural experience of poetry as a social practice. Thus, for me, Beveridge’s poem ‘Tigers’ instantiates the potential of a familiar poetic field, perhaps most well-known as realised in William Blake’s poem, *Tyger, tyger burning bright*. If you google ‘tiger in poetry’ you find there are many poems about tigers! The word *tiger* may be construed, in the immediate context of situation, as a particular animal, but in the wider context of literary culture that animal has an expanded potential, invoking symbolic worlds of myth and otherness. The art of this poem, as I later argue, is to actualise this wider potential in the language choices of the text.

Dimension 2. System

Dimension 2. System contributes to the naming of this particular approach to studying language as *systemic functional linguistics*. A system of meanings gives a choice of meanings, able to be realised in a particular grammatical unit. At the unit the clause, an important system is that of transitivity. Transitivity includes the choices of process meaning realised in the verb: choices of doing, sensing, relating, saying, existing and behaving. The choice of process meaning then determines the kinds of participant meaning roles available for noun groups: for example, with a Material process of

doing, the participant could be an Actor or a Goal, whereas with a Mental process of sensing, the participant could be a Senser or a Phenomenon. Optionally, the clause may also realise meanings of circumstances, such as those of time, place and manner.

Each system is associated with a particular metafunction (dimension 5). The meaning choices of transitivity, those of processes, participants and circumstances in one clause, are choices of ideational meaning, or more specifically, choices of experiential meaning. From these choices, the reader construes the field of the text, its subject-matter, what it’s about. Ideational meaning also includes logical meaning, such as the meanings of conjunctions which link clauses together in complex structures, from which more complex understandings of the field, the experience of the subject-matter, can be construed.

The ordering principle for system is that of delicacy; a grammar can be made more and more delicate as the system networks of meaning choices are described more and more fully. In effect, the grammar can be made more and more detailed for primary, secondary and tertiary education.

The next two sections, both ‘Talking about poetry’, comment on the language choices in each poem and the contribution those choices make to my construal of each poem.

Talking about poetry: ‘Open Hands’.

First Stanza: clause structure and transitivity choices of experiential meaning:

He tells himself // that he should eat a full breakfast, //
knows full well // he won’t. //
 Says he // wishes // it were different, //
knows // it’s not. //
 There is nothing like the curve of your lover’s face
 [[smacking hard against your open palm]] //
 to emphasise finality.

Key

- // clause boundaries for independent and dependent clauses
- underline process meaning in the clause
 (The full verbal group is underlined though strictly the process meaning is realised in the final verb, for example ‘eat’ in should eat.)
- bold** participant meanings in the clause
- italic* circumstances in the clause

[[...]] clause boundary for embedded clause, rank-shifted as part of a group (In this stanza, the embedded clause is part of the full group *nothing like the curve of your lover's face smacking hard against your open palm*. The full group realises the one participant.)

The first four lines have several process meanings in both independent and dependent clauses. In independent clauses, the process meaning is Verbal (*tell, say*) or Mental (*knows*). The poem begins with the participant *he* – a third person pronoun – and in relation to the types of process chosen, this participant can be a Sayer or Senser but not an Actor. Moreover, that same participant is Receiver to the Verbal process (*he tells himself*). The dependent clauses are all logically projected by the Verbal and Mental processes (*that he should eat a full breakfast; [that] he won't; and a double projection: [that] he wishes [that] it were different*). From the language of these first lines I construe a field with a poetic persona who is alone but divided in himself. (*Persona* is from the Latin 'mask'; a poetic persona usually refers to the poet's use of first person pronouns but in this poem I suggest the third person is a deliberate displacement or mask behind which the poetic persona is attempting to efface itself.) This persona, *he*, is unable to act but enclosed in his own repetitive thoughts; the 'saying' processes here appear to be about talking to himself.

In contrast, the last sentence of the stanza does not include the *he* participant; the existential 'There is' clause packs its one participant with experiential meaning in the full noun group (*nothing like the curve of your lover's face [[smacking hard against your open palm]]*). The reader can now construe the event over which the poetic persona obsesses, even while the language has erased that participant as an individual fully present. The presence of individuals has been reduced to body parts: *face, palm*. In a further displacement (from the third person poetic persona), the text now 'solicits' the reader's identification with *your, you* as the less formal indefinite pronoun, equivalent of *one, 'anyone'*. Finally, the non-finite clause of cause/result in the last line (*to emphasise finality*) is, in terms of textual meaning, the focus, the new information of the whole stanza. Mode is the organisation of the message, and the message of the poem has led us to this punchline, in which the field, the subject-matter, that the poetic persona has been trying to evade, is made plain. The relationship is over.

The phonological structure of 'Open Hands' can also contribute to the reader's construal of the poem. The regularity of lines is not the repetition of a traditional stanza but rather a movement within a temporal 'space', a rhythmic limit of five feet with four vocalised stresses (that is, 4+; the plus indicates a foot with unvoiced stress). The first two stanzas are rhythmically limited in this way. for example stanza 1:

^He /tells himself that he should /eat a /full	
/breakfast, //	4+
/knows /full /well he /won't.//	4
/Says he /wishes it were /different,//	3
/knows it's /not.//	2
^There is /nothing like the /curve of your /	
lover's /face	4+
/smacking /hard against your /open /palm	4
to /emphasise finality.//	2

Key: as previously described for the dimension of structure: expression – phonology.

(**Note:** // is here used to mark tone group boundaries; in grammatical analysis // is used to mark clause boundaries; the two boundaries often, but not necessarily, co-incide.)

In the third stanza, in my reading, the poem breaks out of this phonological limitation, with rhythmically longer lines of seven or even eight feet (6++ and 6+).

^He will not /lie another /night be/sieged	
by them./	3+
^To/night,// ^he'll /come /home /long enough	
to /feed the /dog,//	6++
/prop open the /gate,//	2
^then /leave the /empty /house to /	
tear itself a/part if it should /wish.//	6+

This phonological expansion is paired with a change in transitivity choices (// for clause boundaries here).

He will not lie another night besieged by them. //
Tonight, he'll come home long enough [[to feed the dog]], //
prop open the gate, //
then leave the empty house [[to tear itself apart //
if it should wish.]] //

(In the last line, the embedded clause complex [[*to tear itself apart // if it should wish*]] falls within the full noun group which begins *the empty house*.)

All verbs (except *wish*) realise Material processes of doing. In line 1, the participant *he* refuses (*will not*) the role of acted upon participant (Goal or Medium) in

relation to the passive verb group *lie besieged* (by them has the role of Actor or Agent). In lines 2, 3 and 4, the participant *he* is Actor in relation to Material processes. This is a noticeable change from its inactive roles in the first stanza, just as the lines rhythmically go beyond their previous limits. The persona can be construed as breaking free? However, in lines 1 and 2, the future tense with *will* / 'll may be construed only as the modal of intention to act, rather than a prediction of action. The following stanza confirms this pessimism: the lines return to the more contracted rhythmic limit of five feet and only non-human things (*bricks, beams, this place*) act.

^It will not /happen /all at /once.// 3+
 ^But as/bricks /crumble like /teeth between the /
 struts;// 4+
 ^as /beams /twist with the /elegance of /torture;// 4+
 ^this /place will /crawl to its un/doing//. 3+
It will not happen *all at once.*// line 1
 But {as **bricks** crumble *like teeth between*
the struts; // line 2
 as **beams** twist *with the elegance of torture;*} // line 3
this place will crawl *to its undoing.* line 4

(Ideationally, line 1 is an independent clause linked logically by *But* to the whole clause complex in lines 2 to 4. Internally, lines 2 and 3 contain another clause complex (within {...}) with two clauses of equal status, both dependently linked by *as* to the final independent clause of line 4.)

The last stanza of the poem (except for line 2) continues within this rhythmic contraction. However, the structural and metafunctional choices are noticeably different from the preceding stanzas. The graphic lines of this poem have previously, typically, corresponded to a grammatical clause. Now the last stanza is the longest, yet it contains only two independent clauses:

Many months later,
with the scratch-thin cotton of motel sheets against his
skin
the sound of the wind outside will mean
precisely nothing. //
He will hear only three things:
the click of a clock hand on its dial,
the punctuation of a lover's face,
and the groans of a house
 [[*quietly* tearing itself down]].

(The last line is an embedded non-finite clause so the final participant is realised by the full noun group *the*

groans of a house quietly tearing itself down;)

The first independent clause begins with two circumstances: a Theme (that is, in initial position) of time (*many months later* – has anything changed?), followed by a circumstance of manner (how is he? which internally also conveys where he is: *motel sheets*). In line 3 a phenomenon of the external world which might be sensed (*the sound of the wind outside*) is realised in a clause with no Mental process; the human participant who might sense is elided but implicit in the clause: *the sound of the wind outside means precisely nothing [to him]*. In the final independent clause of the last five lines, the *he* participant is Senser to the Mental process *hear*, with a compounding of phenomena, of things sensed. But these aural phenomena are construed in different worlds of experience: the first in his physical context of situation (*the click of a clock hand on its dial*), the second in his memory of the physical event and its significance (the *punctuation* of the smack), the third in an imagined personification (*the groans of a house*) in which the persona displaces human emotions (*groans*) and reflexive action (*tearing itself down*) onto an inanimate participant. The repetitive structure of these lines is insistent – so much so that I displaced my usual pronunciation of *punctuation*, as described in the earlier discussion of phonology. Moreover, at the phonemic level, the double repetition of the plosive [k] in *click* and *clock* echoes the final plosive in 'smack', which appears in the first stanza (*smacking*) but not here. The punctuation 'heard' by the persona is that of a 'full stop'. If this phrase were used in the poem, again a final plosive [p] would echo that of *smack*, and *full stop* would also meaningfully echo *finality* in the first stanza. But the word *punctuation* is used instead of *full stop*. Its use evades the echoed finality – in both meaning and sound – of 'full stop'. Yet, at the same time, the word *punctuation* is unexpected in this context (lexically, an unusual collocation), and so potentially more noticeable; its construal makes more demands on the reader.

For this reader, in the construal of this poem, phonology plays a significant part: the spoken sound of the poem is both thematic (the sound of the smack) and symbolic (the trapped persona). Like the enclosed rhythm of most lines, and the insistent phonemic repetition in the last stanzas, the poetic persona *he* is enclosed within a repeated mental return to the incident of 'open hands' – a title which is both a literal description of physical smacking and an ironic antonym of the persona's enclosed mental state.

Talking about poetry: 'Tigers'.

The artistry of this poem is noticeably crafted through unusual choices of graphic expression. The first stanza of two lines ends with a full stop, the character conventionally signifying the end of a so-called sentence. A written sentence usually corresponds to a grammatical clause or clause complex – but in this poem the second stanza, after the full stop, continues the grammatical structure ... and the third stanza continues the structure again, in full: *What I want from the forest floor is the smell of tigers so close – that when I hear their warm rank breath panted in to the sun I freeze to a shadow.* In terms of dimension 2. System, the Transitivity choice is of a Relational identifying process of being: X is Y. X = *what I want from the forest floor*; Y = everything after *is*. However the choice from the System of Theme complicates matters.

In English clauses, the textual meaning of Theme comes first: 'the speaker chooses the Theme as his or her point of departure to guide the addressee in developing an interpretation of the message' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 89). The sentence above begins with a 'pseudo-cleft structure' called a 'thematic equative' (Thompson, p. 153; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 69). The WH- word *what* in X is equated in meaning with Y; rewriting this structure as a clause with a simple Theme could give, for example: *From the forest floor I want the smell of tigers so close – that when I hear their warm rank breath panted in to the sun I freeze to a shadow.* In this reconstructed clause, the central process meaning is the Mental process, *want*. Thompson compares the use of the WH- Theme in thematic equative clauses with its usual use in interrogative clauses, and comments that, 'this link with questions helps us to understand why a speaker might use a thematic equative. In a sense, the starting point in a thematic equative is often a question that the speaker imagines the hearer might want to ask at this stage in the text' (p. 154). So, from the opening line of this poem, a reader may construe the tenor of a personal relation with the first person poetic persona – one who answers the reader's question: *What do you want?* (Compare this with a construed distance from the third person poetic persona of 'Open Hands'.)

In the transitivity analysis of this first clause, *I want the smell of tigers ...*, *want* realises a Mental process, the desiderative type of sensing process (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 208; 2014, p. 256), with the participants *I* as senser and *the smell of tigers ...* as phenomenon. The noun *smell* is also a Mental process (incongruently – grammatical metaphor – as

a noun), but a sensing process, of the perceptive type. At this stage of the poem, the poetic persona cannot be construed as in a context of situation where that perception is directly possible, but progressively the language choices efface this realist assumption.

In the second stanza – a continuation of the grammatical first clause – a graphically new sentence begins, and in the *that* clause of the second line, a perceptive sensing process is congruently realised as the verb *hear*.

So close –
that when I hear
their warm rank breath
panted in to the sun

The participant *I* can now at least be construed in a context of situation where perception is possible. The tiger is closer in textual presence. Note the grammatical conflation of the physical senses, that is, what can be perceived: *warm* is a quality you feel, *rank* is a quality you smell, *panted* is a process you hear, but textually all constitute the phenomenon you *hear*, as the one participant realised by the full noun group *their warm rank breath* [[*panted in to the sun*]].

The third stanza is *I freeze to a shadow*. Graphically, it follows a one line feed, and is a block of one line; visually separate it looks like a simple clause. The verb *freeze* realises a Material process of doing, so the *I* participant can now function as Actor. Yet grammatically it's still a continuation of the first sentence and functions within a complicated structure of embedding:

the smell of tigers so close [[that {when I hear
their warm rank breath
[[panted in to the sun]] // I freeze to a shadow.}]]

(*panted in to the sun* is an embedded non-finite clause within the noun group *their warm rank breath panted into the sun*. The clause *when I hear their warm rank breath panted in to the sun* is dependent, logically linked by *when* to the independent clause *I freeze to a shadow*. The complete clause complex (indicated above within {...}) is introduced by *that* and embedded as postmodifying *close* – an adjective which itself is contained within the full noun group which begins *the smell of tigers*.)

In summary, both the perceptive sensing process of *hear* and the material doing process of *freeze* are subordinated to the original desiderative sensing process of *want*. The *I* participant is still constrained ... but, graphically, breaking free. After a one line feed, stanza 4 (of three lines) begins with the graphic illusion of visual parallelism with stanza 3:

one line stanza 3: *I freeze to a shadow*
 first line of stanza 4: *I hold my breath,*

I hold my breath is an independent clause, the first new clause since the beginning of the poem. The verb *hold* is a Material process of doing, the participant *I* an Actor. The next two lines are co-ordinate clauses, with Material and Behavioural processes (*breathe, watch*) with an Actor/Behaver participant. In this stanza, the poetic persona can be construed as at last sharing in the same context of situation as the *tiger*, transported in language to direct experience of the world of the imagination.

In the earlier discussion of instantiation, I mentioned the mythic and symbolic construal of *tiger* in the wider potential of the literary context. From this point of the poem, tiger and poetic persona can exist in the same context of situation, the mythical associations being evoked in figurative language, such as *Only tigers let the light out / of the shadows*. Such poetic discourse can reconstruct the relation of transitivity to context of situation: thus Material processes do not necessarily construe the experience of a physical world but can take the reader into an expanded world of consciousness, that congruently associated with mental processes (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, 172; 2014, 216). In realising this imaginatively construed world of experience, lexical items can acquire new collocations: a 'prayer' can have an 'odour' (*odour of an enlightened prayer*).

Though the graphic and grammatical structures have not been aligned, though the usual construal of lexical items and metafunctional choices is progressively disrupted, the phonology of the poem contributes strongly to its coherence. In my reading of 'Tigers', the spoken rhythm and the graphic display are usually aligned: the graphic lines tend to two fully vocalised feet – of two stresses (or a three stress line adjacent to a one stress line). In phonological structure, the first two lines and the last two lines are tied together, repeating the basic two-stress pattern, with the repeated phonemic link with alliteration on [f]:

^What I want from the /forest /floor //
 ^is the /smell of /tigers.

^Their /furtive /light//
 ^gives /sense to the /foliage.

I read the line *I cannot live without them* as the climax of the poem, with a condensed intensity of linguistic choice.

Graphically, it is one block of one line. Phonologically, it has one stress only (/ live). Grammatically, it is one independent clause. Metafunctionally, it is the modal negation (*cannot*) of the most general Relational process (*live*, that is *continue to be*) associated with the participant *I*. Contextually – why can't the poet live without *them/ tigers*?

Judith Beveridge is one of the most highly regarded poets in Australia today. In this poem, she crafts the progressive choices of the transitivity system, transforming the interpretative possibilities of each clause as the grammar is recontextualised in graphic display and phonic link. These choices of language disrupt conventional patterns of realisation; accumulatively, this disruption enables a transformation in the construal of context. This transformation is an interpretative movement into the 'metaphor' (Greek) or 'translation' (Latin) of figurative language; in this poem it is a movement from the physical world to the world of the poet's imagination. Contextually, the poet's awareness of 'tigers' has enabled the transformation of construing from the perceptions of the physical world (as in the sense of smell in *warm rank breath*) to the expanded understanding (*enlightenment*) of an intangible world of inner speech (*prayer*), as if it too can be vividly perceived through the senses (as in the *odour of an enlightened prayer*). As the poem's last two lines suggest, it is this expanded context for imaginative transformation which 'gives sense' to the poet's experience of the world. For me, this poem both enacts the art of poetry – the conscious crafting of language – and describes what, to this poet, is essential to practising that art: the intense transformation of the outer to the inner world of the poet.

Conclusion

In the quote which began this paper, M.A.K. Halliday allowed that 'Linguistics is not and never will be the whole of literary analysis, and only the literary analyst – not the linguist – can determine the place of linguistics in literary studies'. The study of poetry in English literature will include many topics not here discussed, such as literary theory, literary history, authorial and period studies, traditional rhetoric and poetics (Preminger & Brogan, 1993). Similarly, the teaching of English will include many approaches to the relevance of the text in addition to the description of its language (Macken-Horarik, 2014). But this paper does attempt to be exhaustive in its account of how poetic language can be described 'properly, that

is consistently and coherently' by the theories and methods developed in systemic functional linguistics, exemplifying how language, as the medium for art, can be shaped by choices in any of its dimensions.

Having described those choices in a particular text, how we then interpret – contextualise, make sense of – that text may vary (I do not suggest that my understanding of 'Tigers' is 'the meaning' of that poem), but we can offer evidence from the textual choices to support our interpretation. Similarly, just what choices we find most relevant to focus on will vary from poem to poem (for example, I found phonology particularly relevant to my interpretation of 'Open Hands', but graphology more relevant to my interpretation of 'Tigers'). To end as this paper began: poetry is that art for which the medium of semiotic expression, the means of making meaning, is language and the five dimensions of SFL give us a consistent and coherent way of describing that means of meaning-making.

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Appendix

Open Hands

He tells himself that he should eat a full breakfast,
knows full well he won't.
Says he wishes it were different,
knows it's not.
There is nothing like the curve of your lover's face
smacking hard against your open palm
to emphasise finality.

The city is restless.
All night it has sent its men
to creak along his rafters.
Now it sleeps fitfully.
He leaves its villains where they stand,
goes out into the steel-grey morning.

He will not lie another night be sieged by them.
To night, he'll come home long enough to feed the dog,
prop open the gate,
then leave the empty house to tear itself a part if it
should wish.

It will not happen all at once.
But as bricks crumble like teeth between the struts;
as beams twist with the elegance of torture;
this place will crawl to its undoing.

Many months later,
with the scratch-thin cotton of motel sheets against his
skin
the sound of the wind out side will mean
precisely nothing.
He will hear only three things:
the click of a clock hand on its dial,
the punctuation of a lover's face,
and the groans of a house
quietly tearing itself down.

– Geoff Lemon

Tigers

What I want from the forest floor
is the smell of tigers.

So close –
that when I hear
their warm rank breath
panted in to the sun

I freeze to a shadow.

I hold my breath
then breathe without camouflage
and watch their stripes fill the darkness.

Only tigers let the light out
of the shadows. Only tigers

move into the wind
with the stealth
and odour of an enlightened prayer.

I cannot live without them.

Their furtive light
gives sense to the foliage.

– Judith Beveridge

Enhancing understandings of the literary element of character using elements from Systemic Functional Linguistics

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Abstract: According to Peha (2016), fiction is all about character. What a character wants, how they go about getting it, and how they change throughout the trajectory of the narrative are key factors that drive a story and make it meaningful. This paper integrates strategies from both narratology (Nikolajeva, 2002; 2005; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002) and linguistics (Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005) to analyse the representation of character in the novel *Fairytales for Wilde Girls* (Near, 2013). A framework for classroom work on the textual concept of character will be drawn from the analysis and teaching implications and strategies will be discussed.

Introduction

According to Peha (2016), fiction is all about character. What a character wants, how they go about getting it, and how they change throughout the trajectory of the narrative are key factors that drive a story and make it meaningful. Character is represented consistently across the English outcomes in the Australian Curriculum: English (ACARA, 2015) and is included as one of the textual concepts identified as core knowledge in the teaching of English (State of New South Wales Department of Education, 2016). Teachers are expected to teach students how to identify the literary, narrative and linguistic resources that authors use to represent characters. This paper integrates the narrative strategies used by authors to portray character (Nikolajeva, 2002; 2005; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002) with particular linguistic resources (Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005), and uses this to analyse the construction of character in the novel *Fairytales for Wilde Girls* (Near, 2013). A framework for examining characterisation in written texts will be drawn from this analysis.

The significance of character

Character is a fundamental element of narrative, and the concept of character as it applies to this paper will be drawn from the definition offered by Prince (2003): 'An existent endowed with anthropomorphic traits and engaged in anthropomorphic actions' (p. 12). Similarly, Abbot (2002) defines character as a 'human or humanlike entity ... involved in the action that have agency' (p. 188). A character can be used to drive action, to serve a particular role in the narrative (such as protagonist or antagonist) and to represent the theme of a narrative (such as good always overcomes evil). As a representation of a real person, a character

can offer insights into human experience and position a reader to consider issues of identity, belonging, society and culture. Furthermore, characters can invite 'personal identification and judgements about the [their] morality and value to their society ... [which] can contribute to shaping children's sense of a moral and ethical self and so becoming a way of enculturation' (State of NSW Department of Education, 2016, 'Character'). Making judgements about a character in a text is a higher order interpretive skill, and involves evaluating the character's adequacy, validity, appropriateness, worth, desirability and acceptability (Gamble, 2013, p. 45).

A significant role for English teachers is to teach students about the constructedness of texts. Constructedness refers to the ways in which any form of textual representation is not neutral, but inherently underpinned with ideology: the attitudes, beliefs and values of culture. These may be conscious or unconscious on the part of the author. When exploring the constructedness of character, teachers might consider the narrative strategies used by the author to represent the character, the techniques that are used to position the reader to make judgements about a character, and the ways in which the representation might be limited. Critical analysis and interpretation of the representation and constructedness of a character help students understand how texts position them to 'respond to the world in different ways' (State of NSW Department of Education, 2016, 'Representation'). This is particularly significant in the lives of young people who are establishing their identities and learning about ways to exist and belong in the world.

Narratological representation of character

According to Rimmon-Kenan (2002), a character is represented in narrative through a network of character traits, and there are two central branches to this network: direct definition, and indirect presentation. Direct definition takes the form of description, and may be provided by the narrator, the character (describing themselves), or it may be how other characters express comments and attitudes. Nikolajeva (2005) remarks that 'the explicit detailing of one's external representation, is perhaps the least complex but at the same time most valuable device for initially acquainting oneself with a character' (p. 163). Typically description is realised through adjectives (such as 'thin', 'beautiful') and nouns (such as 'a charity-child', 'a liar'). Sometimes the descriptions of external qualities of a character also

reflect their inner qualities, such as 'bright eyes' signifying not only what the character's eyes look like, but an inner brightness or cleverness. Another common technique is to use descriptions which include intertextual allusions, such as 'Barbie-thin ankles' to reference not just a character's appearance but a particular set of cultural references.

A second branch of character traits is represented through 'indirect presentation' (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002), using the narrative strategies of action, speech, interior monologue and analogy, that is, more implicit and intertextual references (Nikolajeva, 2002). Rimmon-Kenan explains that there are several patterns of actions that can be attributed to a character: their habitual actions which establish the everyday world of the character, and 'one-time actions' (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002, p. 61) which contrast with her previous habitual actions. Rimmon-Kenan argues that 'one-time actions tend to evoke the dynamic aspect of the character, often playing a part in a turning point of the narrative' (p. 61). Through dialogue — what a character says, the manner in which they interact with others and the relationships they are able to sustain throughout a narrative — the reader becomes aware of further social and ethical dimensions.

Nikolajeva (2005) points out that 'we expect psychological dimension in literary characters', and this is represented through the narrative strategy of interior monologue. Interior monologue represents the inner life and consciousness of a character and may take the form of an actual soliloquy, or may be non-verbal thoughts, feelings and impressions, or a stream of consciousness. As Nikolajeva explains,

internal, or mental, representation is the most sophisticated characterisation device. It allows us to penetrate the characters' minds, to take part in their innermost thoughts and mental states. Characters become fully transparent, in a way that real people can never be. (p. 163)

Furthermore, shifts in interior monologue can reflect dynamism of character, the narrative arc of the character, moments of self-reflection and/or self-awareness, and possible growth and maturity.

Intertextuality and symbolism are other narrative strategies to build character. This may be as simple as showing a reader what the character is reading, listening to, watching, playing (their books, music, television shows, games), or it may extend to allusions in description (such as 'Barbie-thin ankles' as mentioned previously), or to tropes, themes, cultural norms

and ideologies within particular contexts. Nikolajeva (2005) explains this further: 'We can treat characters from a sociohistorical viewpoint, as representatives of their time and social group, or even as representatives of nationhood ... [w]e can also see characters as bearers of ideas, as mouthpieces for ideologies and beliefs' (p. 147). Characterisation through these narrative strategies is not neutral, it is carefully constructed to convey physical, social, emotional, and ethical qualities of a character, both within the diegetic world of the existing narrative, but also beyond to the reader's world, culture and histories.

A final point about character is that of the character arc. Throughout the trajectory of a narrative the character is typically expected to demonstrate growth, maturity and insight. This is true for Young Adult (YA) fiction, which often falls into the category of 'Bildungsroman', that is, 'growth of human potential through active engagement with the world' (McCarthy, 2008, p. 41), whereby growth includes the development of intellectual, emotional, spiritual, ethical and social qualities. A character that undergoes such changes is also termed 'dynamic' (as opposed to static), particularly if the changes are social and ethical, and permanent changes to character. Nikolajeva (2005) explains that characters can fall anywhere along the cline of static/dynamic, but that a dynamic character is manifested in 'profound changes' (p. 158) to the character's personality. The character arc is often used to represent the theme of the text.

Defining linguistic resources significant in the study of character

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is a branch of the study of language that has, at its heart, the notion that all language functions in social contexts. First developed by linguist Michael Halliday, SFL is widely used in education (Butt, et al., 2012; Derewianka, 2011; Humphrey, Droga & Feez, 2012; Rossbridge & Rushton, 2015). The SFL branch of linguistics is also one of the theoretical underpinnings of the Australian Curriculum: English (ACARA, 2015). One of the most highly influential linguists for educators has been Jim Martin, whose work with Peter White (Martin & White, 2005) and David Rose (Martin & Rose, 2007) is of particular relevance to the methodology used in this paper. Whilst the theory applies to all contexts and uses of language, I intend to draw connections between some elements of the linguistic theory of how language works, to show how it can operate in the construction

of character and be used alongside theories of narratology to enrich classroom practice.

Martin and White (2005) propose a framework for studying language as it occurs in contexts of use, drawn from the Hallidayan principle of 'stratification', and which is called 'the strata of language' (p. 5). This framework identifies four strata or levels of language: Phonology and graphology (patterns of letters), grammar (patterns of words), discourse (patterns of meanings) and social context (patterns of social practices in culture). They extend this further when considering the dimension of language related to how a reader might make connections to a text at an interpersonal level. For the purposes of this paper, I have adapted this framework to illuminate just those linguistic resources I will focus on to discuss character, and this is represented in Figure 1. An integrated model of language strata is a fluid way to link words in a text to discourse meanings to ideology, and offers a rich and comprehensive framework for studying the textual concept of character. In this paper I will concentrate on the discourse and social context levels in the strata, beginning with a description of discourse semantics and its relation to social context, followed by a discussion on how this can enrich examinations of character.

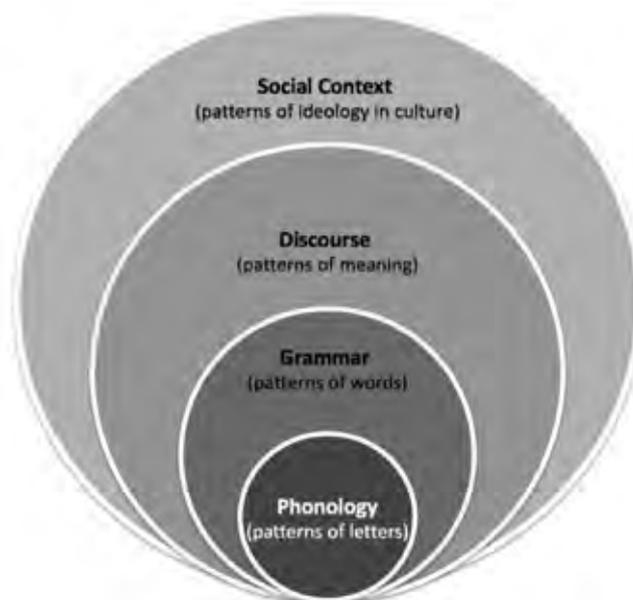


Figure 1. The language strata model adapted from Martin and Rose (2007)

Discourse and social context

In any text, the SFL model of language suggests that words (grammar) are used to create discourse, and discourse is used to shape culture. Whilst each of the layers in the strata in Figure 1 are multifaceted, I will

only be discussing the ways in which a reader is positioned to interpret the meanings of a text as they relate to the evaluations a reader makes of character. For that reason, I have identified elements of the appraisal system within the discourse layer of the language strata. According to Martin and Rose,

Appraisal is concerned with evaluation – the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers are aligned. Appraisals are interpersonal kinds of meanings, which realise variations in the tenor of social interactions enacted in a text. (2007, p. 17)

Appraisal is concerned with the use of evaluative language to communicate feelings, to judge behaviours, and to assess non-human phenomena positively and/or negatively. As explained by Martin and White (2005), appraisal can be used to show how speakers and writers ‘approve or disprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and criticise, and [how they] position their listeners/readers to do likewise’ (p. 1). It is represented as three interrelated systems: engagement, attitude and graduation.

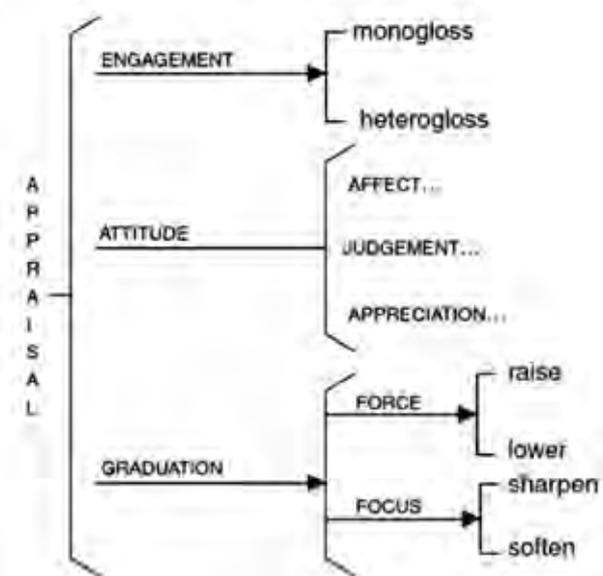


Figure 2. An overview of appraisal resources (from Martin and White, 2005, p. 38)

Whilst all elements of each system could be used in an analysis of literary texts, the two elements that I have selected to focus on for the purpose of analysing character are judgement and heterogloss.

Judgement

Martin and White (2005) explain, ‘judgement is concerned with resources for assessing behaviour according to

various normative principles ... Engagement deals with sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse’ (pp. 35–36). Since characterisation often denotes qualities that are deemed good or bad, respected, valued, unsociable, immoral or moral, the system of judgement within appraisal is significant. The way a reader is positioned to judge a character also conveys ideological positions which in turn reflect social and cultural values. The system of judgement is concerned with the way language can be used to praise or condemn a human individual or group. It applies to a human’s actions, behaviour, beliefs and morality, and falls into two overarching concepts: the social dimensions, and the ethical dimensions of a person.

Furthermore, judgement can be explicit or implicit. Judgement is realised explicitly when the actual words that invoke judgement are written in the text. These explicit words position a reader to assess the fictional character: what they are, do, say or believe according to both the reader’s cultural or institutional values and the storyworld values for a fictional character. For example, in the phrase ‘Voldemort is evil’, the word ‘evil’ is an explicit word which invokes a negative judgement. More specifically, it realises a social sanction of Voldemort’s propriety, or lack of ethical character. In Figure 3 a framework adapted from Martin and White (2005, p. 53) is presented, and this illustrates how to analyse a text using the system of judgement, offering examples of explicit words that invoke the various dimensions of the judgement. In children’s literature, it is common for the reader to be told (either by the narrator or by the characters themselves) quite explicitly that a character is ‘good’ or ‘evil’ through the narrative technique of description. However it is also through the narrative strategies of indirect presentation that the personal and moral qualities of a character unfold over the trajectory of the text. This leads the reader to form judgements more implicitly.

Judgement is realised implicitly through descriptions of the character’s actions, dialogue, interior monologue and intertextual references which the reader will associate with social and cultural attitudes that evoke judgement. Phrases or sentences in the text can evoke judgement without using explicit lexis, but judgement is through reader interpretation of meanings associated with both the reader’s cultural or institutional values and the storyworld values for a fictional character. Implicit judgement is also often recognised through other explicit examples of attitude leading up to and following a particular moment in the text. An

JUDGEMENT (explicit)			
		+ve (admire)	-ve (criticise)
social esteem (personal)	normality (how special?)	lucky, fortunate, normal, stable, cool, fashionable, celebrated, natural,	unfortunate, odd, weird, unlucky, daggy, erratic, hapless, star-crossed
	capacity (how capable?)	powerful, vigorous, successful, productive, accomplished, expert, sensible, intelligent, skilled, balanced, together, gifted	weak, insane, stupid, sick, immature, dull, dreary, naïve, unsuccessful, uneducated, flaky, neurotic
	tenacity (how dependable?)	brave, plucky, tireless, patient, careful, dependable, loyal, faithful, constant, meticulous	rash, cowardly, gutless, impatient, capricious, undependable, disloyal, stubborn
		+ve (praise)	-ve (condemn)
social sanction (moral)	veracity (truth) (how honest?)	truthful, honest, credible, candid, direct, discrete, tactful	dishonest, deceitful, manipulative, blabbermouth,
	propriety (ethics) (how far beyond reproach?)	good, kind, moral, ethical, fair, sensitive, modest, polite, altruistic, generous, charitable	immoral, corrupt, evil, cruel, vain, snobby, arrogant, rude, selfish, greedy, avaricious
JUDGEMENT (implicit)			
		+ve (admire or praise)	-ve (criticise or condemn)
Examples		'Hagrid fed me scraps from the table' = +ve social sanction (propriety) = Hagrid is a good, kind man	'I have come to ask you for Branza's hand' = -ve social sanction (propriety) = Ramstrong is morally reprehensible

Figure 3. A framework for analysing judgement (adapted from Martin and White, 2005, p. 53)

example of implicit judgement is evident in Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, in the phrase, 'Hagrid fed me scraps from the table', positioning the reader to consider Hagrid as kind. This is because the 'me' in the phrase is Aragog, the spider Hagrid was keeping and caring for as a pet when he was a young boy, and the spider would not have survived without the food Hagrid offered. Within this storyworld, what Hagrid has done is protect a living creature. No words invoke explicit judgement. The word 'kind' is not used here for example. In fact had the speaker of this phrase been an orphan from *Oliver Twist* the idea of feeding somebody 'scraps' would invoke a negative judgement. But in this context, the reader combines their knowledge of the storyworld with cultural associations of caring for animals. This evokes a positive judgement of Hagrid: he is a morally good person. Similarly, the line 'I have come to ask you for Branza's hand' spoken by Ramstrong to Liga in *Tender Morsels* (Lanagan, 2009, p. 473) would be judged differently in different social, historical or cultural contexts.

In traditional Western culture, a man asking for a woman's hand in marriage may have been considered 'normal'. But in the context of this storyworld the reader is shocked viscerally with Ramstrong's cruelty, given that the novel has been focalised through Liga's eyes, and she is in love with Ramstrong and is expecting him

to ask her to marry him. So this seemingly innocuous line leads the reader to judge Ramstrong, aligned with Liga, in that moment, with those words, as reprehensible. In fiction, there are two factors at play to position a reader to judge a character – both the fictional storyworld, and the reader's cultural and social values at the particular time of reading the narrative. The links between discourse semantics and social context levels of language strata are more layered in fiction as a result.

Heterogloss

The second linguistic element I will discuss is the notion of heterogloss from the engagement system of appraisal. Engagement refers to (in part) bringing in other voices, or heteroglossia, within a text. There are many ways that other voices may be present in a text, but one I will focus on is the literary resource of allusion. Allusion is a reference to another text beyond the narrative. Ben-Porat (1976) argued that

The literary allusion is a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts. The activation is achieved through the manipulation of a special signal: a sign (simple or complex) in a given text characterised by an additional larger 'referent'. This referent is always an independent text. The simultaneous activation of the two texts thus connected results in the formation of intertextual patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined. (p. 108)

This definition means that allusions can make meaning in two ways – one by marking very particular sets of meanings on to the current text, and one by opening the meaning up to bring in many other voices, sometimes conflicting. So in terms of the discourse level of language strata, specifically the linguistic resource of engagement, allusion works on one level to bring in voices from an external source to contract the meaning of the text. On another level it works at the social context level by activating those other texts, cultural associations and ideologies from outside the text.

An example of allusion is in the phrase ‘Barbie-thin ankles’, a phrase used to describe Isola in *Fairytales for Wilde Girls* (Near, 2013), which will be discussed in detail below. The allusion here is a direct reference to Barbie. The reader of this novel is assumed to understand that Barbie is unnaturally thin. So the use of the term Barbie-thin as an adjective to describe Isola’s ankles brings into the text that understanding, and contracts the possible meanings about what Isola’s ankles look like by marking them as not just thin, but unnaturally thin. Yet at the same time, the term ‘Barbie’ evokes for the reader a set of social and cultural understandings of the problematic and controversial nature of Barbie, representing an unnatural and unrealistic ideal of femininity for young girls, but also bringing in over 50 years of debate about Barbie from multiple voices and groups over time. So Isola as a character is not marked just with significantly thin ankles, but the reader brings those other cultural voices to bear in interpreting Isola as potentially having some kind of issue with her body as a whole. The reader is then positioned to question Isola’s character, and wonder whether to judge her as weak, for possibly falling into unhealthy eating patterns while striving to be thin, in order to reach a Barbie-like ideal version of femininity.

Analysing *Fairytales for Wilde girls*

Fairytales for Wilde Girls (Near, 2013) is a gothic fairytale for young adults. In this text, the protagonist Isola has repressed a trauma which occurred when she was ten, the suicide of her mother. The trauma manifests itself in Isola inventing a paracosm of fairy beings, which both protect and harm her. One such fairy is Isola’s ‘split’, an alter ego for Isola called Florence. The novel begins with Isola seeing Florence, who appears both dead and in ghostly form. Florence wreaks havoc on Isola’s faerie companions and tries to kill Isola. The ‘split’ causes Isola’s downward spiral into madness,

and the novel charts Isola’s journey to ultimately kill Florence so that she can become whole, and presumably healthy, once again. The text is a bildungsroman but it is constructed backwards (c.f. McGee 2010, p. 44) in that the reader only gradually becomes aware that Isola’s journey is one of uncovering the mystery of her past and the fact that she has repressed trauma. The implied reader does not immediately become aware that Florence is Isola, nor that Isola has experienced any trauma, as this is only revealed through allusions, hints and foreshadowing. Isola’s character arc shows her becoming destabilised: her subjectivity tenuous at best, and psychotic at worst. A close analysis of particular moments in the text that reveal Isola’s unfolding character follows.

Combining narratology and linguistic tools

In the opening chapters of the novel, Isola provides the reader with a descriptive insight into how she sees herself. When Isola looks at her reflection in the bathroom mirror (keeping in mind that a common fairytale trope is that mirrors reveal truth), she sees the following: ‘A girl in pieces: Barbie-thin ankles, a shaving cut on her knee; hipbones she could stab you with ... she felt like a blurred-out identity, a shadow half-glimpsed on a wall. Anonymous Wilde’ (Near 2013, p. 13). Furthermore, the chapter title is ‘No Fair’, and when Isola asks how she looks, the mirror (magically) reveals ‘teenage girls are all unfair’, also playing to the trope of magic mirrors. Then when Isola is faced with a memory of a secret, her internal monologue reveals ‘Isola knew it was written plainly on her face as though etched by the magic mirror’. This early chapter establishes Isola’s identity at the beginning of her character arc.

Using judgement analysis, many nominal groups serve to evoke negative attitude. The violence imbued in the language choices is amplified in its repetition: she is ‘in pieces’, her knee has a ‘cut’ and her hipbones could ‘stab’. Furthermore, each nominal group evokes judgement, mostly about Isola not being ‘normal’. One way we might chart this with students is to use a cline such as the one in Figure 4.

The first cline is about Isola’s social esteem. The fact that Isola feels like she is a nobody positions the reader to judge her as not being normal or special at all. The second cline relates to social sanction, that is how evil or immoral a person (or character) is. Here the text only alludes to the potential of Isola being sinister or evil – with her hipbones that could stab you. Additionally, ‘a shadow half-glimpsed on a wall’ also

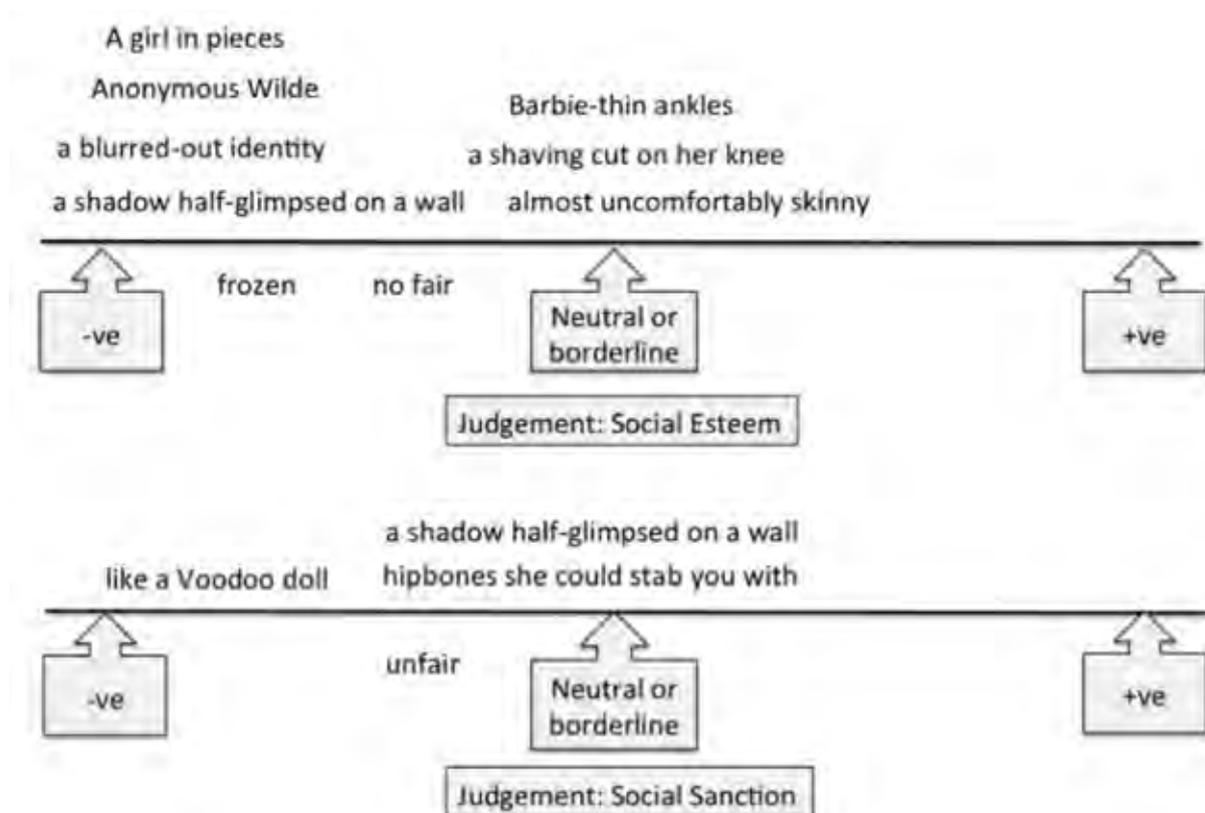


Figure 4. Clines of judgement of the qualities of Isola's character

has sinister, Gothic overtones: a person in the shadows often symbolising evil lurking in the darkness. Overall the combination and repetition of phrases work to build up a sense of unease and discomfiture in the reader – something is not quite right with Isola, and this is revealed three ways: in Isola's description of what she sees in the mirror, in the words that appeared on the mirror (which might be considered another character's point of view, one that is truth-telling) about her being 'unfair', and in Isola's interior monologue. These nominal phrases also serve as foreshadowing devices. Isola does have a fractured identity, and the reader slowly becomes aware that 'a girl in pieces' represents all of the fairy characters in the book (called her 'Brother Princes') and the ghost Florence, which are all splinters of herself. Other adjectives or nominal phrases used to describe her early in the text include: 'frozen' (p. 28), 'like a voodoo doll of a popular girl' (p. 28), and 'almost uncomfortably skinny' (p. 28). These are also represented along the cline of negative social esteem and negative social sanction.

The phrase 'hipbones she could stab you with' falls in neutral territory, because it suggests an evil potential within Isola. This too foreshadows what is to come, in two ways. First of all, each of the fairy/ghost characters

(which are really manifestations of Isola) attempts to harm her in violent ways, revealing Isola's inclination for self-harm and suicidal thoughts. The mirror reveals her self-harm at various stages, showing the reader Isola's self-inflicted bruises and cuts, as well as her increasingly thin body, suggesting anorexia. The phrase 'like a voodoo doll' has sinister overtones as well, but even more tragic when the reader comes to realise that Isola is using herself as a Voodoo doll by inflicting self-harm. Her anorexia is also hinted at from the very beginning with the phrase 'almost uncomfortably skinny'. The second way this is foreshadowing is that Isola continues to fight to stay alive, though it means engaging in a murderous killing spree, killing off the Nimue folk, her ghost mother, and her dead ghost-self Florence. She kills the ghost by using her dead mother's bones as arrows, shooting them 'right into Florence's heart' (p. 388).

Isola's body and descent into madness are intimately linked and are a focus of her characterisation, however the representation of Isola's body is problematic. A 'terrible beautiful' oxymoron pattern establishes conflicted values of judgement about Isola. Her body, for example, is described as 'pale but lovely' (p. 122), 'translucently pale' (p. 319), and even her

emaciation is described using words like 'doll' and 'seashells': 'instead of ribs ... the skeleton of an empty cage. Steel-barred, girl-shaped, like a dressmaker's doll. Half-mannequin parts'; 'her ribs protruded like seashell armour' (p. 319). Taking the first example here, which is Isola's father's description of Isola, he used the phrase 'pale but lovely' (p. 122). The use of the word 'but' in this phrase is worthy of considered discussion. In this instance, the word 'but' is acting as a contrastive, concessional conjunction. On the one hand, it makes a comparison between the two adjectives 'pale' and 'lovely', but rather than marking difference it works to mark similarity, therefore being counterexpectant. The contrast between the two adjectives 'pale' and 'lovely' creates a disconnect – the reader has been led to see that Isola is unwell and is not only thin but at all times pale. And yet here pale is not a cause for fatherly concern because despite being pale, and because of being pale, she is lovely. This brings in not only the voice of the father's appraisal of Isola, but also it opens the text to those cultural ideals built from decades of patriarchal voices equating death with beauty. In this instance 'but' works to reify the equation 'pale = lovely' in the text, and sets up a causal relationship such that Isola is lovely *because* she is pale. The word 'but' creates a paradox because it serves to turn the meaning around from frail and ill, to beautiful. Gilbert and Gubar illustrate the patriarchal view of frailty and beautiful deathly women as an '*objet d'art*' by citing poets such as Edgar Allen Poe. According to Poe, the death of a beautiful woman is 'unquestionably the most poetic topic in the world' (Poe cited in Gilbert & Gubar 1984, p. 25). In Shaw's (2006) analysis of the sublime, death 'is the ultimate sublime, the real father, striving to maintain dominion' (p. 58). The juxtaposition of death and beauty is a romanticised view of femininity which is a toxic cultural trope and relates to the pervasive notion of the sublime as described by Burke: 'beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty' (Burke cited in Shaw 2006, p. 60). Death and decay of the feminine is a motif of the text.

Literary and cultural allusions are also used to instantiate these problematic messages about the feminine ideal – judged simultaneously as negative ... *but* positive. Repeatedly, Isola's death-like body is linked to awkward social ideals of beauty. Further to this, Isola also plays at death: 'Spring brought a floaty sense of *le féminin* to Isola's wardrobe: exposed shoulders, white dresses and braided hair – she played at being a Virgin Suicide with bare feet and filly legs' (p. 268). Later,

Isola is looking through Edgar's sketches of her and sees the following: 'her face seemed ugly in that mysterious way that beauty could be – like a supermodel with dagger-ribs poking through, a flower with poison lacing its nectar' (p. 254). The body, in its decayed, death-like state and women who are frail, pale, thin, distressed and vulnerable are beautiful. Isola's other split self, Florence, is similarly described as corpse-like: 'as thin as Death on a diet' (p. 54) and with an 'emaciated body, Holocaust-thin' (p. 30), and yet she is beautifully 'lit by moonlight' (p. 53) on the windowsill of Isola's bedroom, 'a speck of Tinkerbelle light' (p. 53). Even in her emaciated, pale, bruised state at the very height of her madness, Isola's neighbour remarks to her 'prettying up death is so you' (p. 47), and her friend Edgar remarks that Isola is 'beautiful as always' (p. 339). But it is not just death-like women who are glamorised and romanticised, madness itself is also romanticised, with constant references to the ghost of Sylvia Plath, to whom Isola whispers regularly, and the beautiful, wondrous, magical creatures whose purpose is to protect Isola. Madness, in this text, makes women desirable. Using judgement clines can assist students in interpreting and challenging these contradictions.

Action is another indicator of character. Early on in the text, Isola is presented to the reader as kind and loving. During the text Isola's actions could be interpreted as being quirky, slightly strange, or possibly just as a slightly moody 'emo' Goth style girl. As noted above, Isola 'played at being a Virgin Suicide'. This can be coded grammatically in several ways: it characterises Isola as being on the borderline – somewhere between positive and negative. *The Virgin Suicides* (Eugenides, 1993) is a novel (later also adapted to film by Sofia Coppola) about a family of teenage girls who are locked inside their house and have every move monitored to prevent them from being with boys. One by one each of the girls commits suicide, in a different way. What Isola is doing here, on the one hand, is playing a tragic heroine from a book/film and could be interpreted as positive judgment (social esteem): she is clever, literary, engaging in a joyful activity and having fun. This reflects a Gothic sensibility where the character is playing at death in a romanticised way, pretending to be a tragic heroine from literature. The reader is expected to understand that *The Virgin Suicides* is about women's repression, trauma and death, so the overall impact of Isola 'playing at suicide' is one of unease and foreboding. So the foreboding comes from the intertextual meaning, and the 'Virgin Suicide' is a loaded identifier

of negative social sanction beyond just the meaning of the word 'suicide' but amplified through its connotations of that particular intertextual source.

One time actions are actions that are completely out of character that mark the dynamism of a character. The reader is shocked when Isola first announces that she is going to kill her brother-Princes, and then proceeds to do so. We learn of her intention through her dialogue with the gargoyle bunny, when she 'kills the cosmic circus. Like Ted Hughes said. I have to kill this connection ... before I pull a Sylvia Plath' (p. 291). This intertextual reference is highly complex, and requires knowledge of Ted Hughes' commentary on his wife Sylvia Plath's juvenile poetry, which he described as a 'cosmic circus'. But the notion of 'pull a Sylvia Plath' also requires the reader to know that Sylvia Plath committed suicide. So to interpret the meaning of this statement (and her subsequent murder spree), the reader needs to understand that Isola's brother-Princes represent pieces of Isola. What Isola is saying here is that she will kill the paracosm of creatures she has created to deal with her trauma, to save herself from committing suicide. Isola's splintered self has created many identities, as each of her brother-princes are manifestations of Isola. But each attempt to harm her in violent ways, revealing Isola's inclination for self-harm and suicidal thoughts, yet part of her continues to fight to stay alive, though it means engaging in a murderous killing spree, killing off the Nimue folk, her ghost mother, and her dead ghost-self Florence. It is only through the relationship between meanings inside the text and those outside the text that the reader is positioned to understand that Isola's killing spree is good, rather than evil. It is good because it represents the reclaiming of her agency and subjectivity, and overcoming her trauma. Her otherwise psychotic-seeming behaviour is actually the turning point for her character. When analysing the trope of the mad woman in literature, Gilbert and Guber (1984, p. 25) argue that 'death represents a ... secret striving for power by the powerless'. In terms of a character arc, Nikolajeva (2002) argues that a dynamic character is one whose trajectory is about the gaining of power. Isola's character arc could well have seen her madness take her to the point of suicide, but her killing spree is actually the means for her to gain power, and positions her as a dynamic character, whose actions the reader judges as necessary for her to shift from being at the negative end of the judgement cline to the positive end.

Teaching character

When working with character in the classroom, a useful strategy is to map out a character's qualities as loosely illustrated in Figure 5. A quality or characteristic might be first identified (i.e. Isola seems to be suffering from trauma), and then evidence from the text might be listed beside that quality. Next, that evidence should be considered based on the focaliser, and how reliable their information is. This is especially relevant when there is an unreliable narrator, or in Isola's case where her boyfriend Edgar is perceiving her as Cinderella-like, or her father is perceiving her as 'pale but lovely', and yet in the mirror the truth is revealed – her anorexic body is exposed, and bruises from her self-harm observed.

This juxtaposition positions the reader to empathise with Isola's secret pain. Next teachers could consider the narratology strategies such as how the information is presented – this is especially important for reminding students about concepts of representation and authority, and always understanding that characters are fictional constructs. The next column relates to social semiotics and the notion of appraisal. In particular how a reader is led to judge a character through the language in the text. Judgement (and the tool of appraisal in general) is a critical link between the text and its themes, as the way we judge a character will directly reflect the themes of the text, and draw the reader from the text to those larger cultural and social issues it is exploring. In Isola's case for example, the reader judges her as not 'normal', as not psychologically stable, and as suffering. The reader is positioned to be horrified and to condemn her for her killing spree, until by the end of the novel Isola's secret is fully understood. By the conclusion of the novel, the themes and cultural ideas come to light, and so a discussion of the way the reader judges Isola's body, her madness, and her actions can then be brought into larger discussions about trauma, anorexia, self-harm, and idealised cultural norms about the female body.

A character analysis framework for the classroom

The analysis of Isola's character demonstrates a way of approaching a character analysis in the classroom. The character analysis could be part of wider discussions about the ideological messages of the text and would form a critical part of a wider character study which might include personal responses to the character and drama techniques to explore, extend, and make inferences about the character and their role not only in

Qualities	Textual Evidence	Focaliser	Narrative Strategies	Discourse Meanings	Ideologies
Gothic sensibilities	'prettying up death is so you' 'playing at being a Virgin Suicide' Consistent references to: Sylvia Plath, Edgar Alan Poe,	Neighbour Isola Isola	habitual actions habitual actions interior monologue allusion	Judgement: borderline -ve (normality) Judgement: borderline -ve (normality) Judgement: borderline -ve social esteem (normality) Identification with cultural marker	Understandings of Gothic sub-cultures and the literary tradition of the Gothic: challenging social norms, fighting repression (as a result of church, state, societal norms)
Strangely beautiful	'her face seemed ugly in that mysterious way that beauty could be—like a supermodel with dagger-ribs poking through, a flower with poison lacing its nectar' 'pale but lovely' 'Barbie-thin ankles' 'Cinderella in biker boots' 'Her lips were frosted with sugar and faeriedust'	Isola looking at Edgar's sketches of her Isola's father narrator Edgar	interior monologue description description: allusion	Judgement: borderline social esteem -ve (normality) Judgement: borderline social esteem +ve (normality) Engagement: contract Identification with cultural marker	Complicated notions of 'the sublime' where death equates to beauty Cultural idealisation of thin, pale women – gender issues related to the female body
Inflicts self-harm through possible anorexia and cutting Disturbed, distant and suicidal	'voodoo doll' 'She was striped from the top of her thighs to her knees' 'sadder than she should have known at her age' 'Hysterical: psychologically unwell ...' 'talking to Isola was like speaking aloud to a cemetery'	Narrator The mirror (in fairy tales the mirror reflects truth) Isola's father Isola Isola's friends	description interior monologue description	Judgement: -ve (capacity)	Understanding trauma as a cause of loss of power, and these behaviours are the means young girls in our culture may go to in order to regain power Understanding trauma can cause a person to shut down emotionally

Figure 5. Mapping Isola's character in the first part of her character arc

the narrative but in realising aspects of the theme. To apply these ideas to characters in other texts, Figure 6 outlines a number of steps for teachers to use and adapt for students.

With younger students, step 7 of this framework might be very simply explored through discussion and drama. With older students, step 7 could involve a much deeper analysis using analytical frames related to power, solidarity, gender, race, class, environment (ecocriticism) and other theoretical lenses. An integrated exploration of narratology with elements of discourse can provide a rich and detailed method of

understanding how fictional characters can position readers to align with the texts ideologies.

Conclusion

Character is recognised as one of the key textual concepts that is embedded in the Australian Curriculum: English (ACARA, 2015; State of New South Wales Department of Education, 2015). Students are expected to understand the narrative resources that are used to construct a character, that characters might be judged by readers, and that interpreting a character may include knowledge and application of personal and cultural values.

A Framework for Character Analysis		
Step		
1	First Impressions	List your first impressions of the character, noting any 'text-to-self' connections you made with the character
2	Making initial judgements	Would you judge the character as special, strange, good or evil – use the judgement table for ideas to make some initial decisions about the character's qualities
3	Flat/round; static/dynamic	Determine whether the character is flat or round (many different and complex qualities) Determine whether the character is static or dynamic (qualities change over the course of a text and reflect aspects of the theme and ideologies of the text)
4	Collecting textual evidence (and visual evidence if the text is multimodal)	Identify words and phrases that provide evidence to support your judgements of the character's qualities
5	Identifying narrative strategies	Identify the words and phrases as particular narrative strategies (description, action, dialogue, interior monologue, intertextuality)
6	Identifying linguistic strategies (discourse meanings)	Analyse the ways judgement and heterogloss are used in these words and phrases. Identify which are explicit and which are implicit.
7	Critical analysis	Consider the ways in which the language positions the reader to judge a character in terms of: implicit values that reflect society and culture; ways that limit understandings about how that character (and implied readers, by extension) might exist and behave in the world. Question the ideologies and themes and use discussion, drama or writing strategies to consider alternative possibilities.

Figure 6. A framework for character analysis

The use of elements from the language strata (Martin & White, 2005) employed in this paper links these concepts together, from text to discourse to ideology, and is a powerful resource that can be used by teachers to make these connections. By combining narrative theory and linguistic theory, I have shown how using some elements of SFL can provide practical ways of exploring 'character' in prose fiction. The framework presented is a useful model for teachers to use with students to blend literary and linguistic strategies to teach not only the textual concept of character, but also the textual concepts of representation, authority and theme.

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The final issue for 2016, Vol. 51, No. 3 has a special Post-Dartmouth theme issue emerging from the 2016 AATE conference in Adelaide. Guest editors are *Trish Dowsett*, *Bill Green* and *Brenton Doecke*. Submissions for that issue are now closed.

The call for papers for the special issue Vol. 52, No. 1, 2017, is still open until 31 October, 2016. This issue will be dedicated to themes emerging from the work of two luminaries in the field of English Education: the late **Professor Annette Patterson** and the late **Paul Brock**.

The call for papers goes out to all teachers and researchers in the field of Secondary English curriculum. Their respective bodies of work cover a vast array of topics relating to the following:

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For **Paul Brock** papers could respond to: syllabus critique, literacy and standards, teacher professional standards, curriculum change and literature studies relating to secondary English curriculum and policy matters relating to literacy and language.

Articles outside this theme are still welcome, and will appear in subsequent issues in 2017.

Anita Jetnikoff

Using a model of verbal art to analyse the visual: Analysing multimodal texts in secondary English

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Abstract: Multimodal texts are now part of the curriculum for school English, but they are by their nature inherently complex, and pose many challenges for the classroom. Not least is finding a way to manage the technical complexity of accounting for these texts, as well as finding a way to move students beyond simple observation and description to critical analysis. In this paper, I show a strategy from a tertiary-level course which addresses both these problems. Using two Australian Defence Force recruiting videos from different eras, analysis is based on a social-semiotic model for multimodal texts, albeit a version of it which is 'good enough' for the task at hand. By drawing on Hasan's notions of 'verbal art', I show the steps that help to move students beyond description, towards critical analysis. While the tertiary context is different to that of schooling, the strategies can be applied at any teaching level.

Introduction

As Australian education adopts its national curriculum, the inclusion of multimodal texts poses many challenges for teachers and students. The Australian Curriculum: English mentions film as a relevant resource for English in Learning 3–6 (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016a) and refers to multimodal texts explicitly in Learning 7–10 (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016b). The Senior Secondary Curriculum: English discusses multimodal texts in relation to Learning Outcomes, and notes digital and multimodal texts in several content descriptions, including 'evaluating the impact of ... still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts' (ACEEN007, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016c).

Multimodal texts are by their nature inherently complex, and the frameworks by which to analyse and understand them can be technically overwhelming. Films, for example, combine such modes as language, image and sound to create an overall effect. How that overall effect is achieved is an issue in and of itself and can't be addressed here (but see Kress, 2005; Exley & Cottrell, 2012; Painter, Martin, & Unsworth, 2013 for concepts such as intermodal coupling). Within that overall effect, each of the components is itself multidimensional. 'Image' within a film might refer to the composition of a shot, the camera angle deployed, or the way the shot is lit. Each of these components makes a separate contribution, and has its own technical descriptions. How can teachers find a way to sensibly manage all this complexity and the technicality required to make sense of it all?

Most importantly, students are expected to do more than simply recognise and identify what's going on in a text such as a film. In the Senior Secondary curriculum, 'identifying' and 'describing' constitute achievement levels (E) and (D), while 'evaluating' and 'critically analysing' constitute achievement level (A) in relation to 'responding to oral, written and

multimodal texts', Units 1–2, Australian Curriculum: English (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016d). There is thus a dual challenge here for educators dealing with the evolving nature of school English: managing the inherent complexity of multimodal texts, and finding a way to move beyond identification and description, to critical analysis. How can such texts be accounted for as 'art', and not just a list of technical features?

In this paper, I use Hasan's 1989 study of language and its role in verbal art as a model for making the leap from observation to critical analysis. I first present an approach used to teach visual analysis which addresses these challenges. This approach has been developed in a tertiary context, and while that situation is quite different to that of secondary English, I believe the underlying principles are adaptable to any educational level. I will illustrate this approach using two videos from the Australian Defence Force, one from the 1990s and one from 2013, each used for recruitment. By using a strong technical model of analysis, albeit one which is 'good enough' for the task at hand, I will show that multimodal texts, just like any verbal text, are works of 'communicative art', and can be treated as such. The analysis focuses on the visual component of films as multimodal text, commenting on, but not analysing as such, other components such as language and music.

Teaching context

The context for this activity is a second-year university course, *ARTS2094 Visual Communication*, at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. The course is an elective offered by the Media Program, and can be taken by students from Media, general Arts courses such as English and Film, as well as by students of Fine and Design Arts. Face-to-face teaching consists of a 1.5 hour lecture and 1.5 hour tutorial each week for 13 weeks, and students are expected to be independent learners and engage in reading and assessment preparation outside of class time. The course text book is Kress and van Leeuwen's *Reading Images* (2006), and students have access to many other set and optional readings. Kress and van Leeuwen's book provides a strong framework for the analysis of a wide-range of image-based multimodal texts, and the expectation is that by the end of the course, students will have a strong technical grasp of the framework, and be able to apply it effectively to texts of their own choice, to analyse, critique and evaluate contemporary visual texts. The university context thus offers relative luxury

in terms of time and focus, as well as relatively mature learners who can work independently. While lecturers often feel the reality is somewhat different, there is no expectation in this article that secondary teachers would be able to allocate the same degree of time or focus. Nevertheless, the steps are both explicit *and* sufficiently general to be adaptable to suit different levels and different degrees of depth, as well as different kinds of multimodal texts.

Two videos for analysis

The texts for this activity are two Australian Defence Force recruiting videos, Video A is from the 1990s (ADF, 2012; it is 4.46 minutes long), and Video B from 2013 (Defence Jobs Australia, 2013; it is 2.51 minutes long). For the purposes of Fair Dealing under Australian Copyright Law, only very limited screenshots of the clips are reproduced here, so the full texts should be viewed online via YouTube.

Students watch each video once, discuss their first responses, and then we break the videos down using selected stills (made by simply freezing the video and taking screen shots). The stills are used as a way to 'freeze frame' these otherwise dynamic and fast-moving texts, and to go deeper into analysis than might otherwise be possible. A still shot is of course not the same as a full sequence of action, but can be taken to be representative of a moment of action, as Finch (2013) demonstrates and indeed as is often exemplified in Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). The videos as a whole, and in part, are watched as often as needed (Finch, 2012), so that by the end of the activity students are very familiar with the texts. Thus while the detailed analysis is undertaken in relation to the stills, these are always referred to in relation to the video as a whole.

Ideational meaning

The videos are used as part of exploring the framework for analysing *ideational* meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework is social-semiotic, that is, it relates the nature of texts to their social context, and is derived in part from systemic-functional approaches to language. In that model, meaning is seen to have three functions, relating to *material* reality (ideational meaning), *social* reality (interpersonal meaning), and *semiotic* reality (textual meaning) (Unsworth, 2001: 18; other terms can be found in the literature, such as *representational*, *interactional*, and *compositional* meanings). While these different kinds of meanings work together,

it is pedagogically helpful to begin by addressing them separately. In the university course in question, students have already explored textual and interpersonal meanings, and come to ideational meaning with some background in the overall model and how it works.

Ideational meaning is described by Kress and van Leeuwen as 'a function of representing "the world around us and inside us"' (2006, p. 15) and as 'the function of *constructing* representations of the world' (p. 228; my emphasis). It is closest to traditional senses of content: what is it? What is it about? What is happening? However importantly, it does not simply provide a mirror to reality, but as Kress and van Leeuwen say, *constructs* that reality through the representational choices which are made. Kress and van Leeuwen show that visual grammars create representational meanings through different kinds of *processes*, performed by *participants*, in certain *circumstances*. There are two fundamental process types, *narrative* and *conceptual* processes. Narrative processes are realised by the presence of vectors in the image, such as bent legs and arms which indicate a person running. Conceptual processes are realised by the absence of vectors, such as a person standing upright, with straight arms and legs, thus creating a sense of stasis in the image. One image might include both of these at the same time (for example, one person running while another stands still). This description of process types provides the 'grammar' for analysing images in relation to this aspect of meaning. The whole explanation of process types and associated participant roles is too complex to elaborate fully here, but relevant terms will be introduced and explained as the analysis unfolds. My aim is to use a grammar that is 'good enough' to get by with and which provides useful analytical tools for the students (Exley & Cottrell, 2012; Macken-Horarik, Love, & Unsworth, 2011). Further details of the visual analysis can be found in Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), and in such teaching references as Callow (2013) and de Silva Joyce and Gaudin (2007).

Phase 1: Observing and describing (Video A)

I play Video A and ask the students prompt questions such as 'What's going on here? What does it say about being in the armed forces? Why would you want to join?' No analytical framework is needed for students to answer these questions. They do of course bring their cultural, textual and digital literacy with them and certainly 'know' what these texts are saying. Video

A is fast and loud. The action unfolds rapidly, with an exciting sound track pumping in repetition behind it; some non-diegetic lyrics can be heard (that is, sounds overlaid on the action, such as the words 'Check One; Rise to the Sun'), with 'Rise to the Sun' repeated throughout. There are also other diegetic sound effects (that is, sounds that can be interpreted as coming from what is represented on screen) such as gun shots, voices talking over radio (indistinctly), and the sounds of explosions. There is shot after shot of dramatic action. There are jets soaring, boats ploughing through the water, and jeeps driving over rough terrain. Soldiers shoot, leap away from explosions, and parachute out of planes. Such dramatic scenes are interspersed with somewhat 'quieter' ones: reading maps, operating a telescope or a radio, and/or maintaining equipment. There is no overall story-line, just a series of vignettes of unfolding action in the air, on the sea, and on land. The defence forces are presented as being exciting and dramatic, multidimensional, and underpinned by strong material support.

Phase 2: Technicalising (aka bringing in the grammar – roughly!)

If students already 'know' what's going on, why go any further and why undertake analysis at all, let alone a potentially complicated one? It is because the social-semiotic model of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) makes an explicit link between the 'what' and the 'how'. Students might be able to observe that the text is 'exciting and dramatic' but struggle to explain how this is achieved. Or, they may be able to observe technical points of the video, such as the angle of the shot, but may not be able to explain what that contributes to overall meaning. Most importantly, using a strong grammar is a way of *directing* analysis: asking 'what parts of the grammar have been used here?', rather than just 'what stands out here?' Initial impressions are helpful, though are not always confirmed by analysis, and careful analysis can reveal many further details. So, knowing that there are two distinct groups of process types directs us to observe which has been used; the grammar makes us think about the options in the system, and about which options have been deployed.

Using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar, it is easy to see that virtually every frame is characterised by vectors indicating narrative processes – either visible vectors indicating *action* processes (Figure 1) or invisible vectors indicating *reaction* (looking/seeing)

processes (e.g. Figure 2, top left; bottom right). There are also a few verbal processes, indicated by such images as soldiers holding walkie-talkies, with some of their dialogue in the sound track (Figure 2, top right). Thus, we can say that action dominates the construal of meaning about the defence force: the defence force is about *doing* things.



Figure 1. Selected stills from Video A.



Figure 2. Selected stills from Video A.

Phase 3: More technicalising (more grammar!)

However Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar enables us to go much further than this. If we ask who or what the participants are (*Actors* and possible *Goals* for action processes; *Sensors* and possibly *Phenomena* for reaction processes) it is clear that many of the Actors are in fact inanimate objects, not soldiers/pilots/sailors. That is, it is as if the boats/planes/jeeps are autonomous: the jets soar through the sky, the boats plough through the water (Figure 1). When human participants do appear, they are nearly always singular, and male. There are a few shots of people in teams (sailors pulling together on a rope, for example; Figure 2, bottom left), and a few shots of women – albeit always in reaction or verbal processes, not as part of an action process (Figure 2, top and bottom right). Also, even though some individuals are represented, they are not represented as *specific* individuals (a person we might know; someone with a name) rather as people

who are homogenised and essentialised (presented in terms of standard features such as their uniform; Macken-Horarik, 2003). Interestingly, the majority of the action processes have no *Goal* (object of the action), and the reaction processes have no *Phenomenon* (object of the gaze). These may be *implied* (the soldiers are shooting at/looking at *something*) but are not actually represented.

All these representations take place under certain *circumstances*. Generalised locations of place are shown (on land, in the sky, on the water), though none of these are identifiable as a *specific* geographical location; we don't really know where these events take place. There are also generalised times shown (at night, in the daytime) although again, nothing is pinpointed to an actual date. Circumstances indicating *how* events take place (quickly, urgently ...) are in part indicated by the sound track and its pumping rhythms, as well as by the tools which human participants use to perform their processes (they shoot *with guns*, look *through telescopes*). Overall, then, this view of the Australian Defence Force is shown to be a world of actions, of machines, and (mostly) of men. It has all the features of real-world war (guns, explosions) with none of the consequences (death, injury). To join this defence force is to join something exciting and challenging, and to play on the world stage, but without taking into account the consequences of war.

Phases 1–3 (Video B)

We watch Video B and ask similar prompt questions. This video is also easy to 'read' though a little harder to pin down. Its pace is slower and more gentle. It unfolds with a strong storyline (told through images, not words) of three separate, young individuals (among others), entering defence force training, going through training, and graduating. The three key individuals are two males (one Anglo, one Asian; see Figures 3 and 4) and one female (Anglo; see Figure 5). The editing is slower and the soundtrack more gentle than in Video A; it is a song, including the lyrics 'come so far', which are repeated. The beginning of this story is characterised by various shots of the three individuals packing their suitcases, saying goodbye to their parents, stepping off the bus at the college, then lining up for their first instructions. We see them getting their uniform, making themselves at home in their dorm room and beginning their training. Training includes a variety of activities and locations: target practice at a firing range, moving heavy objects on land and in the water and

education in the classroom. We see the trainees socialising and engaging in leisure, all within the college. We see that the individuals appear as the focal point of some shots while being immersed as part of a group in other shots. As the video progresses, the trainees become more professional; their activities now take place outside the college, in real-world situations (e.g. on the open water, on a cliff) and they deal with real dangers, such as fire. Finally, we see the trainees graduating; in their dress uniforms, marching on parade with their peers in strict formation and finishing with an informal throwing of caps into the air.



Figure 3. Selected stills from Video B.



Figure 4. Selected stills from Video B.



Figure 5. Selected stills from Video B.

While the action in Video B is somewhat less dramatic than Video A, there is still plenty 'going on'. There are many narrative (action) processes, but in Video B, these are almost exclusively done by human participants (the main 'characters' of the video), as Actors, as opposed to the inanimate objects in Video A. Importantly, the actions are not directed at any specific Goal (the trainees *walk, march, play*, e.g. Figure 4, top right) or if there is a Goal, it is invariably inanimate and somewhat inconsequential (trainees lift *weights*, move *heavy objects*, eat *food*, e.g. Figure 3, top right, bottom left). Other action processes presented include *verbal* processes (trainees talk together, and with staff) and *behavioural* processes (where we see them listening to lecturers, and studying books). While many trainees and staff are shown, the key participants (the main 'characters') are individuated. They can be tracked throughout the whole video from beginning to end and each is shown as experiencing the same stages of the story: starting in their home context, arriving at and experiencing training and life at the college, and graduating. They participate in collective behaviours (training, studying, socialising) as well as being seen to be individuals engaged in their own learning and their own activities. One plays football for leisure, another does karate, the third studies a lot.

An intriguing feature of Video B is that, while it is of course always moving (it is a video), *conceptual* (static) processes are also important. For example, Figure 5, bottom right, shows the trainees at graduation, standing upright. This is a deceptively complex image. It shows conceptual elements of both a taxonomic process (individuals presented in a team context), and a symbolic process (the repetition of the uniform elements highlights these as having symbolic value), as well as also having some narrative (invisible vectors from the eyes show that they are looking ahead). Similarly, Figure 4, top right (three soldiers walking), clearly has some narrative elements: arms are bent, supporting their backpacks; we can infer that their feet are separated, indicating walking; one has his head turned towards another, presumably talking. But at the same time, the presence of the three together again suggests a conceptual: taxonomic process, showing that here is a team, doing something *together*. Such processes are also present in Video A (see Figure 2, bottom left), but infrequently, and they are particularly frequent in Video B. The symbolic processes also seem particularly prevalent in Video B, for example Figure 3, top left, putting on elements of the uniform, or Figure

4, bottom right, putting on the graduation gown. Again, narrative is present in these moments, the action of putting these garments on, but highlighted features (someone else's hand putting on the hat, the inherent symbolism of the graduation gown) point to the symbolic values in these images.

Across the whole video, the individuals can be seen to engage in a *conversion* process: each individual starts as a civilian, but through training, bonding and learning, their behaviour, appearance, and activities all change. They are shown to transform from ordinary, everyday people to qualified, functioning members of the armed forces.

All the actions take place in relation to specific circumstances. Circumstances of place include the individuals' original homes, places of training (on the field, in the swimming pool), learning (in the classroom), personal spaces (in the bedroom), shared leisure spaces (in the mess), as well as sites of real-world application of their skills (e.g. they row *on the open sea*, Figure 5, bottom left). It's nearly always daytime, and sunny! This too is meaningful, as the background circumstances of setting, accompanying the depicted action, are associated with positive connotations (see also Painter et. al. 2013 on ambience). Overall, then, the view of the Australian Defence Force provided in Video B is one of measured transformation, from the civilian world to the world of the professional armed services, a world which balances collective and individual identity, which provides a safe haven for learning, and where to join the defence force means to take on new attributes, and a new identity, while not foregoing one's individuality.

Phase 4: Focusing on foregrounded patterns (aka, Moving towards critical analysis)

The steps which characterise Phases 1–3 are captured in Table 1, and after viewing the texts and undertaking the analysis, we use this to develop the final step of analysis, reflecting on the videos, what they show and how they might be 'read' by different groups (e.g. Video A might be 'exciting' to some or 'unrealistic' to others). But how do you actually help students move from observations and general description to a reasoned critical analysis? First of all, it's relevant to say that initial impressions and observations are an extremely important starting point. Students *do* come to these texts with significant cultural knowledge; they know what's going on, even if they can't explain fully why or how. Their first impressions may or may not be fully

confirmed by analysis, but 'it is a way of beginning to note what semiotic resources are being deployed in the text, a way of exploring what might be meaningful' (Ravelli, in press). This exploration complements a form of situated learning practice, which recognises 'students' affect and overall stance towards the unit of instruction' (Pantaleo, 2014, p. 40), and within which observation and description are important stages of the learning process (Machin, 2007; Pantaleo, 2014).

But observation and description alone are likely to be random and somewhat different for each learner. The next step is to *technicalise* these observations, in terms of the specific framework being used. In this case, that means using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual processes as the reference point, going back to the grammar, and identifying which of its options have been deployed in the text. The grammar itself, then, alerts the analyst to features to identify: are the processes narrative or conceptual? If they are narrative, are they action or reaction? If they are action, are there any Goals? This step on its own, however, does not fully complete the task. The next step is to argue for which of the identified patterns contribute meaningfully to the text – they all do, of course, but what *really* stands out? Those which stand out are called *foregrounded* patterns (Halliday, 1973; Hasan, 1989). That is, these are the patterns which are functional and meaningful in terms of building up the whole text. Patterns can stand out, or be foregrounded, for a number of reasons. They can stand out in relation to all the possible choices of the underlying grammatical system: narrative action processes, for instance, may or may not have a Goal. Noticing this makes you attend to the 'why': why was this process type chosen, and not another? What is it contributing? In Video A, for example, the absence of specific Goals in the narrative action processes masks the potentially negative consequences of war. We see that soldiers shoot with guns, but not so that anyone might be hurt.

Patterns can also stand out in relation to the text as a whole, or specific stages of a text: what patterns keep recurring? What patterns disrupt the norm? In Video B, the three key trainees are shown acting both individually and collectively; these scenes are repeatedly interwoven, thus blurring the boundaries between the individual and the collective, while also retaining the distinction between them. The video could have shown the trainees arriving, and then only have them appear in their collective roles, that is, with

Table 1. Pedagogical phases and focus questions

Phase	Student role	Teacher role: general focus questions (for ideational meanings)	Focus questions (for ideational meanings in these videos)
1 Observe and Describe	Watch, respond, discuss	What is it about? What's going on here? What's happening?	What does it say about being in the armed forces? Why would you want to join?
2 Technicalise	Identify core parts of the grammar	What parts of the grammar have been used here? How do we know that?	Are there vectors indicating narrative processes? Are they visible (action process)? Invisible (reaction process)? Are there things happening with an absence of vectors? (conceptual processes).
3 Technicalise again	Identify more delicate options in the grammar	What participant roles have been taken up?	Are there Actors and Goals for action processes? Only Actors? Are there Sensors and Phenomena for reaction processes? What kind of conceptual processes have been used? Symbolic? Taxonomic? Etc.
		Who or what plays those roles?	Are Actors human or inanimate? What else characterises them?
		Have circumstances been used? What do they add?	Where/when/how/with what do processes take place?
4 Focus on foregrounded patterns	in relation to the grammar	Which parts of the grammar have been used/not used? What does that contribute?	e.g. What does it mean to have an action represented without a Goal?
	over the whole text	What stays the same over the whole text? What changes?	How could it have been done differently? What would that have changed?
	in comparison to other texts	Is this just like other texts, or different?	What similar texts do we find now? What texts might we have found in other times?

the individual being absorbed into the collective, and losing their own identity.

Patterns can also be prominent in relation to what occurs in other texts. In the examples here, it is the contrast between the two texts which provides the point of comparison. Each one is better understood because the other reveals what *could* have been done, and how. In some ways, they are about the 'same' phenomenon, however, each construes what it means to join the defence forces quite differently. Video A creates positive expectations through the promise of unrelenting action; Video B creates positive expectations through the promise of personal growth. Both suggest the individual can make important contributions, but again in different ways: Video A largely through individual control of technical equipment, Video B largely through being part of a team. And of course, these kinds of patterns are also understood in relation to context: here, the two texts differ in terms of time, representing different eras with different values. Video A comes from an earlier era where women were generally not presented as being part of this world, and where masculine stereotypes of individual

heroism dominated. Video B comes from an era where gender and ethnic diversity are more recognised as being intrinsic features of Australia's defence forces, and where a sense of individual choice and autonomy is at least as important as the collective experience. Exploring such differences provides a useful basis for interrogating the social and cultural values of each era, what has changed, and why.

Conclusion

In her 1989 book, *Linguistics, Language and Verbal Art*, Hasan focuses explicitly (as the title suggests) on language. Verbal art arises from linguistic patterns (such as the use of a particular tense in a poem) and the patterning of those patterns (such as the use of contrast between future and past). These are interpreted in terms of their semantic value, to 'make statements about the deepest level of meaning' (p. 91). Verbal art thus has 'first order meaning' – the identified patterns – which are combined into further patterns, producing a second level of 'symbolic articulation'. It is this interaction of multiple systems which gives rise to *intersemiosis*, or the 'coordination of semiosis

across different sign systems' (Ravelli, 2000, p. 508). It is through the patterning of patterns that a more critical, explanatory reading of a text can be arrived at. As Hasan explains (1989, p. 98): 'the first order meanings are like signs or symbols, which in their turn, possess a meaning – a second order, perhaps more general meaning. Theme is the deepest and most general level of meaning.' Here, 'theme' is not the grammatical sense of theme, as in the departure point of the message, but as literary sense, as in an 'underlying concern'. In these videos, the patterning of process types, participant roles, and circumstances, point to different dominating themes: excitement and action in Video A; individual growth in a collective context in B. Both share the theme that acts of war can be undertaken without consequence. Hasan's identification of the 'patterning of patterns' tells us that the task is more than just observing and noting patterns in a systematic and reasoned way, though that is an essential step, but that it is also about accounting for how the patterns interweave, for why those patterns are as they are, and to explore the purposes that the co-patterning serves. This is how a set of meaning-making resources, such as choices of process and participant, are able to come to *construct* representations of the world (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 228).

Hasan (1989) argues that language is central to the study of verbal art. Yet in contemporary multimodal texts, language is only one part of the picture, and is sometimes even ancillary. In the videos examined here, there are some lyrics in the accompanying sound tracks and some very small elements of diegetic voice (e.g. issuing commands) in Video A, as well as opening and closing titles – all of which are relevant and which could be analysed, but which are not perhaps the main point. So why use Hasan's writing about language and verbal art as a way of understanding filmic texts? It is because I make a leap from Hasan's claim that 'language is central to the study of verbal art' (p. 91) to my own claim that 'grammar is central to the study of communicative art'. All modes have a systematic grammar behind them (Exley & Cottrell, 2012), and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual images provides the basis for identifying both the patterns and the patterning of patterns which create deeper meanings in these texts.

The aim is not to produce a 'correct' reading, but a *convincing* one – one which is a reasonable interpretation given the social and cultural context. This reading needs to be based on a number of elements. Firstly,

visual analysis needs to be explicit, and more than just a running commentary. So a conclusion that one video has a lot of 'action' in it is based on the identification of visible vectors in the image. The explicit link between the interpretation and the evidence for it must be made. Secondly, patterns in the visual evidence need to be identified, or sometimes disruptions to established patterns, as it is in the interweaving of choices that significant meanings emerge. In Video B, the sense of transformation in the recruits is manifested in multiple ways: they take on a professional uniform; they learn new skills; they make themselves at home in the new environment; they move from the training ground to the real world. And after the identification of such patterns, the final stage is to use this to facilitate critical reflection on the significance of those patterns – for the meanings of the text, for meanings of context and culture. The analysis demonstrated here reveals contrasting recruitment strategies which speak volumes about the times in which they were made and the concomitant social conditions. It's also important to recognise the limitations of the analysis: we've focussed here only on visuals, and only on ideational meanings. Interpersonal and textual meanings will also have their role to play, as will the inter-modal connections between language, image and sound in videos such as these.

Nevertheless, what I hope to have demonstrated here is a strategy of analysis and interpretation which can be effectively applied to many other instances of the same types of text (videos, you tube clips ...), according to the interests and needs of the target students. Teachers can scaffold students' analytical skills by isolating key moments in the dynamic text as a way of beginning to identify the choices made in the construction of the text. These can then be reflected upon across the length of the whole text, to identify patterns, and combinations of patterns, as a way of identifying foregrounded meanings in the overall text. These are strategies which help move students from being observers, to being analysts and critics, people who have tools for understanding and evaluating the communication that is used around them every day. While a tertiary context might afford more time and depth than a primary or secondary one, these principles can be applied to any teaching context, adapted to suit the nature and purpose of the task at hand.

The status of multimodal texts in the *Australian Curriculum: English* remains ambivalent (Exley & Cottrell, 2012), yet there is no doubt that their ubiquitous

presence in everyday life makes it imperative for our students to be fully literate with and about them. Films, videos and other multimodal texts need to be understood and critiqued as much as any written text. By adopting an explicit model of visual grammar, albeit one which is 'good enough' for the task at hand, a way can be found to manage the potential complexity of these texts, and to move students from observation to critical reflection on the significance of choices – for the meanings of the text, for meanings of context and culture, for the 'art' of multimodality.

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The semiotic construction of values in the videogame *Watch Dogs*

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Abstract: The past decade has seen videogames become an important facet in the economic and cultural tapestry of the 21st century. However, while the Australian Curriculum: English (ACE) advocates the teaching of multimodal texts (ACARA, 2016), videogames have been neglected within the curriculum. Nevertheless, such a significant aspect of popular 21st century entertainment culture warrants attention by educationalists and consideration as a highly motivating curriculum resource. This paper aims to explore the linguistic and visual semiotic depictions of value positions in the videogame *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014). Despite the ubiquity and popularity of videogames, and the growing use of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) and related broader semiotic theory in educational research, limited research has been conducted on games from an SFL perspective. This paper will identify content descriptions from the ACE and how suitable videogames similar to *Watch Dogs* could be used for the teaching of these descriptions. Semiotic systems such as the appraisal system (Martin & White, 2005) and various approaches to image analyses (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Painter, Martin, & Unsworth, 2013) will be utilised in the identification and explication of game characters' value positions. The logogenetic synergy between the meaning making systems of language and image will then be canvassed in relation to their implications for Systemic Functional Semiotic accounts of inter-modal meaning-making, as well as implications for curriculum and pedagogy in the 21st century.

Introduction

Videogames are now ubiquitous cultural texts (Buckingham & Burn, 2007). Their popularity is exemplified in the economic, entertainment and socio-political tapestry of the 21st century. Economically the games industry is now out performing the Hollywood film industry. In 2012 the videogame industry earned 15.2 billion US dollars in game sales (Entertainment Software Association, 2015), while the Hollywood film industry recorded 10.8 billion US dollars from box office sales (The Economist, 2013).

Action Adventure videogames are one of the most popular selling game genres accounting for 34.2 per cent of games sold during 2015 (Entertainment Software Association, 2015). These games usually incorporate detective storylines and require players to control characters to solve puzzles, challenges and mysteries that are incorporated throughout the game's storyline (Fernandez Vara, 2009). Examples of popular selling Action Adventure games are *Grand Theft Auto V* (RockstarNorth, 2013), *Batman Arkham Asylum* (Rocksteady, 2009) and *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014).

Australians are increasingly utilising videogames as a medium of entertainment. Brand, Lorentz and Mathew (2014) reported that 65 per cent of Australians play videogames and that 47 per cent of this group identified as being female. Furthermore, 93 per cent of Australian households had a device for playing games (Brand et al., 2014) and 83 per cent of gamers

indicated that games were educational. Despite the relevance of videogames to the everyday lives of many Australians, they have been neglected within the Australian Curriculum: English (ACE) (ACARA, 2016). While the curriculum does advocate the teaching of multimodal texts, examples given in the curriculum refer principally to websites or films. The silence concerning videogames positions the ACE at odds with the literacy practices of many Australian families.

Videogames have also raised concerns regarding their representation of values, violence, sexism and racism (Barr, Noble, & Biddle, 2007; Jenkins, 2006; Leonard, 2006). This was exemplified in a socio-political debate that occurred in 2014 when the Australian retail companies Target and Kmart withdrew from sale the popular videogame *Grand Theft Auto V* (Rockstar North, 2013). The companies stated they received a petition concerned with the explicit portrayal of violence against women featured in the game (Kent, 2014).

The intent in mentioning the withdrawal of *Grand Theft Auto V* is to highlight the socio-political nature of Action Adventure videogames and the inherent represented values in these games. Given the political nature of videogames, the economic success of the games industry and the prolific use of videogames by many Australian families, more research is required into how particular values are represented in these games. This paper will aim to explicate the semiotic construction of characters' evaluative stances portrayed in the videogame *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014). Systemic Functional Semiotic (SFS) tools will be utilised to describe the language and visual meaning making resources used in the construction of the evaluative stance of the game's protagonist Aiden Pearce.

The article will initially review relevant research concerning videogame semiotic research and relevant semiotic tools required to illuminate character evaluative stances. Content descriptions from the ACE which utilise these semiotic tools will then be foregrounded and Durrant and Green's (2000) 3D model of Literacy Learning and Callow's (2005) visual interpretation of this model will be suggested as a framework which teachers could use to plan learning experiences. The videogame *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014) will then be introduced. Next, Aiden Pearce's epistemic frame and values will be explicated, followed by a description of two game scenes, which exemplify the protagonist's evaluative stance. The language and visual meaning making resources utilised to construct

Aiden's evaluative stance will then be described. The co-patterning of these meaning making resources will then be examined to show the logogenetic synergy utilised in the portrayal of Aiden's evaluative stance. Finally the implications for SFS accounts of multimodal meaning making and the possibility of a pedagogy of critical interpretive play will be canvassed.

Videogames, literacy and educational semiotic research

Gee (2003) outlines 36 learning principles utilised in well-designed videogames. In doing so the situated literacy practices involved when playing videogames are examined. Gee (2003, p. 48) argues that videogames

situate meaning in a multimodal space through embodied experiences to solve problems and reflect on the intricacies of the design of imaged worlds and the design of both real and imagined social relationships and identities in the modern world.

Gee (2003) argues that players need to comprehend different semiotic systems such as language and images and how these systems combine to create meaning within game environments. Also while in virtual environments players may be required to solve problems. If a player experiences trouble in solving these s/he may leave the environment to research information on a blog or discussion group. Using the new information the player can then re-enter the virtual environment and solve the problem. In this way Gee (2003) argues that players need to be able to understand the literacies situated around videogames such as being able to learn information from a discussion group and then apply this knowledge in game environments.

Also of interest to Gee (2003) are the identities used by players when gaming. For example, a player has her/his real world identity consisting of their name, age, gender and nationality as well as the virtual identity of the game avatar, such as the protagonist Aiden Pearce in *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014). The virtual identity in Action Adventure games is represented through an avatar that the player is required to navigate and interact with using the character's skills and abilities. Furthermore, players also take on a projected identity for their avatar. A projected identity refers to what the gamer hopes the avatar's identity will become during the unfolding of a game. In *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014) the player is able to influence the character's virtual identity by earning positive or

negative reputation points for Aiden Pearce. When Aiden is identified by citizens as having a positive reputation, they are less likely to call the police when he is spotted. However, when citizens identify Aiden as having a negative reputation they are more likely to contact the police. Positive reputation points are earned when tasks are completed which assist or protect citizens and negative points are earned when citizens are harmed. By completing these tasks a player can influence a character's projected identity. Gee (2003) states that a psychosocial moratorium is established in game environments, which lowers the real-world consequences allowing players to take risks and alternate between the requirements of these identities when playing.

Similarly, Shaffer (2006) researched epistemic games and the identities represented in these games. For example a game may require a player to complete tasks as a journalist. In this way games are designed so that players are instructed to use journalistic knowledge, skills, values and epistemologies to complete tasks and earn points in order to progress to new levels. Likewise Action Adventure games allow players enough freedom to navigate an avatar, however the simulated game world is programmed to instruct players as to which buttons to press to accomplish tasks. These buttons are linked to a set of skills or knowledge appropriate to the virtual identity of the game avatar. For example Aiden Pearce is identified as a vigilante therefore the buttons players are required to press are linked to knowledge, skills, values and epistemologies relevant to a citizen undertaking law enforcement without legal authority. Through this type of programming Action Adventure games require their players to take on the represented epistemic frames of their protagonists. If a player does not do this, the set tasks within the game cannot be played successfully. Currently there has been no research completed on the semiotic construction of evaluative stances in Action Adventure videogames. The intention of this paper is to address this gap in semiotic videogame research.

Theoretical tools

Character evaluative stances will be explicated from evidence derived from multimodal discourse analysis (Jewitt, 2014; Painter et al., 2013) investigating the linguistic and visual meaning making resources utilised in two scenes from *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014). The multimodal discourse analysis will show how language is used to portray character feelings and

judgements and how these attitudes are up for negotiation between characters. This will be achieved through utilising the appraisal system developed by Martin and White (2005) and the use of their attitude and engagement system networks.

The image analysis will demonstrate how the player is positioned in relation to the portrayed character's attitudes and their visual perspective within the game world. This will be achieved through analyses based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) interactive meaning system and the focalisation system developed by Painter, Martin and Unsworth (2013). It will be demonstrated through the logogenetic tracking of patterns between the language and image systems, how the game positions players with particular character attitudes and the kinds of attitudes that need to be adopted by the gamer to play successfully.

Appraisal system

Attitude

The attitude system network will be used to analyse the expressed attitudes of characters. The attitude network (Martin & White, 2005) is made up of three dimensions: affect, judgement and appreciation. A summary of this network and the coding used for this article is presented in table one. For example, affective attitude may describe a character's feeling of happiness, security or satisfaction. Using happiness as an example these emotions can be described in a positive or negative manner through either behaviour (e.g. chuckle/cry) or emotional dispositions (e.g. cheerful/sad).

Positive and negative judgements can be made and deal with characters' social esteem through assessing their capacity or capability of performing a task (e.g. powerful/weak), their tenacity or dependability (e.g. persevering/disloyal) and their normality (e.g. fortunate/hapless). Also, judgements of social sanction may occur through questioning the veracity or truthfulness of a claim (e.g. honest/deceitful) and propriety or the ethical nature of an action (e.g. honourable/immoral).

Appreciation deals with the positive or negative assessment of artefacts, events or phenomena and is classified as reaction, composition and valuation. Reaction is used for the emotional impact on the viewer (e.g. captivating/tedious), composition for the qualities displayed by the artefact (e.g. balanced/uneven) and valuation for meaning instantiated by the object (e.g. innovative/insignificant). Attitudes can be inscribed explicitly or invoked through inference.

Table 1. Attitude coding

Attitude Coding		
(+ve) positive	(-ve) negative	
Inscribe		Invoke
Affect	Judgement	Appreciation
Happiness	Normality	Reaction
Security	Capacity	Composition
Satisfaction	Tenacity	Valuation
	Veracity	
	Propriety	

Engagement

Martin and White’s (2005) engagement system addresses how the producer of linguistic texts can align a viewer with values through the use of different points of view, opinions and judgements. Producers of texts can either assert monoglossic or heteroglossic remarks. Monoglossic remarks are assertions that contain one viewpoint (e.g. Aiden is a vigilante), while heteroglossic remarks allow for differing opinions.

Heteroglossic remarks can expand or contract an area of discussion. Expanded remarks can either entertain a perspective (e.g. *It is possible* Aiden is a vigilante) or attribute a source of information (e.g. Chicago Police *stated* that Aiden is a vigilante). Contracted remarks can either disclaim or proclaim a point of view. Disclaiming remarks can deny a viewpoint (e.g. Aiden is *not* a vigilante) or counter a view (e.g. The vigilante is a criminal, *but he helps citizens*). Proclaiming remarks can concur with a point of view (e.g. *Obviously* the vigilante helps citizens), pronounce a viewpoint (e.g. *I assert* the vigilante is a petty criminal) or endorse a perspective (e.g. *The report demonstrated* that the vigilante reduced crime rates).

Interactive meaning and focalisation

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) applied three SFL metafunctional meanings: ideational, interpersonal and textual to a range of images to describe the visual meaning portrayed by images. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) described the different relationships formed between an image and a viewer through the use of an interpersonal or interactive meaning system network. These different interactive social relationships are shaped through different system variables, for example an image may use a close up picture to create a sense of intimacy or a long distance shot to create an impersonal feeling.

Another variable addresses the attitude created between images and their viewer, for example if the camera captures the represented participant at a frontal angle, a sense of involvement is created. If an oblique

angle is utilised, a feeling of detachment is represented. The use of a high angle creates a sense of viewer power, while a low angle is used to represent an image’s participant as powerful.

Finally, within their account of interactive meaning, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) referred to images which represented participants as making direct eye contact with viewers as a demand, and images where eye contact is absent are referred to as offers. Extending this, Painter et al. (2013) utilised a corpus of children’s picture books to develop a visual focalisation network. This network suggested that a demand be referred to as a contact image and an offer be referred to as an observe image. The network also addressed whether an image is mediated as though it is seen through a character’s eyes, along with the view of a character, or unmediated and viewed from an outside perspective.

ACE and 3D Literacy Learning Model

These outlined theoretical tools can be utilised to achieve a number of year 10 ACE content descriptions presented in Figure 1. Durrant and Green’s (2000) and Callow’s (2005) 3D model of Literacy Learning can be utilised to plan learning experiences. Halliday (1979) pioneered the beginnings of this model for the learning of language, learning through language and learning about language. This was later adapted by Durrant and Green (2000) for literacy learning with the use of digital technologies, while Callow (2005) adjusted the model for the literacy practices surrounding the visual semiotic system. A summary of the model’s dimensions has been presented in Figure 1. This article will focus on the cultural and critical dimensions of this model due to the word limitation. It is also important to note that *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014) is classified as an R18+ videogame for adult audiences. The appraisal and visual analysis conducted on the two scenes from *Watch Dogs* in the article is only an illustration of the types of learning activities and analysis with which teachers can engage their students when utilising video-game texts. Other non 18+ games such as *Batman Arkham Asylum* (Rocksteady, 2009) and *Assassins Creed II* (Ubisoft, 2009) could be used to address the ACE year 10 content descriptions.

Watch Dogs

Teachers will first need to discuss the narrative of the game and its deeper themes. *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014) is an exploration into the consequences of a surveillance state. The game is set in the city of Chicago, after

<p>ACE: Content Descriptions</p> <p>Language: Language for Interaction Engagement Understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people (ACELAI564)</p> <p>Attitude Understand that people's evaluations of texts are influenced by their value systems, the context and the purpose and mode of communication (ACELAI565)</p> <p>Language: Text structure and organisation Evaluate the impact on audiences of different choices in the representation of still and moving images (ACELAI572)</p> <p>Literature: Responding to literature Analyse and explain how text structures, language features and visual features of texts and the context in which texts are experienced may influence audience response (ACELTI641)</p> <p>Evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in texts (ACELTI812)</p>	<p>Language Halliday (1979)</p> <p>Learning of</p>	<p>Literacy and Digital Technology Durrant and Green (2000)</p> <p>Operational Refers to the use of literacy and technology knowledge needed to operate a text. For example a language's sounds and syntax. Or the action combinations needed to be pressed by a player to navigate an avatar in virtual world of a videogame.</p>	<p>Image Callow (2005)</p> <p>Affective Refers to the response between and individual and an image. A viewer may have an aesthetic appreciation for the image or other signs of engagement. What are the personal connections a viewer can draw on when relating to an image.</p>
	<p>Learning through</p>	<p>Cultural Refers to the literacy practices and the meaning made by these activities to achieve particular social and cultural purposes. For example, understand procedural inform may given in videogames to instruct the player in how the game is to be played.</p>	<p>Compositional Refers to the metalanguage used to discuss and analyse the composition of images. SFS tools such interactive meaning and focalisation may be used as a metalanguage.</p>
	<p>Learning about</p>	<p>Critical Refers to texts being a social and historical artifact, which position readers according to certain values by advocating points of view and silencing others. For example a news program may report one side of an event and neglect the other.</p>	<p>Critical Refers to how images position their viewers according to certain values. This maybe achieve in a new program by only representing one person in the event.</p>

Figure 1. 3D Literacy Learning Model and ACE Year 10 content descriptions

the 2003 North America Northeast blackout, which has been attributed to a hacker unleashing a virus. A Central Operating System (ctOS) now controls the city to prevent future cyber attacks. This operating system collects a large amount of information on citizens. It allows for the monitoring of civilians' phone calls and emails.

The ctOS has been compromised by the South Chicago Club run by the gangster Lucky Quinn, who is using data to blackmail the Chicago Mayor. The game begins with Aiden Pearce and his partner attempting to hack one of Lucky Quinn's hotels. This hack does not go to plan and Aiden is forced to terminate the operation. Lucky Quinn hires a hacker known as Badboy17 or Clara Lille to track Aiden. Aiden flees Chicago however his niece is killed in the escape attempt. This sets Aiden on a path of revenge to find those responsible for his niece's death and hold them to account. Along the way Aiden meets Clara Lille who has decided to help to make up for her part in his niece's death. Clara does not tell Aiden of her previous involvement. When Aiden discovers her secret the two have a falling out. Despite this Aiden still attempts to save Clara's life.

Watch Dogs is the first game in what the entertainment company Ubisoft hopes will become a new franchise. The game was released in 2014 and has sold 11 million copies (Ubisoft, 2016). *Watch Dogs* is designed around an open world format, which allows the players to move freely around the simulated urban environment either by walking or driving a vehicle. There are also elements of First Person Shooter game genres. Similar to *Grand Theft Auto V* (Rockstar North, 2013), *Watch Dogs* contains a high level of violence and critics have questioned the game's representation of race and female characters (Gies, 2014). The socio-political concern surrounding *Watch Dogs* makes it a significant candidate for the semiotic analysis of depicted character evaluative stances.

Epistemic frame

The values of the protagonist Aiden Pearce will then need to be discussed with students. Teachers can use Shaffer's (2006) concept of an epistemic frame. Epistemic frames are used to situate meaning in videogames and consist of a character's knowledge, skills, values, identities and epistemologies (Shaffer, 2006).

Epistemic frames create a premise where a character's 'actions, decisions, and claims are judged and justified' (Shaffer, 2006, p. 163).

The epistemic frame for Aiden Pearce consists of knowledge concerning information technologies, computer networks, hacking and surveillance. Aiden is skilled in physical combat, crafting weaponry and parkour. Aiden values family, friendship and security. He has a strong belief in protecting people against intimidation. Aiden is identified as a big brother, vigilante and a protective watchdog and draws on superhero, vigilante, IT and crime epistemologies. The complex and contradictory values and attitudes that are privileged in the alignment of a player with Aiden's epistemic frame and the extent to which these attitudes are contested between characters, and their combination with the visual depictions of the character will now be examined.

Committed meaning: attitude, negotiation and image

Teachers will then need to choose the scenes students will analyse. The following scenes were chosen for their represented character values at significant stages in the game's narrative. The two game scenes will now be analysed to highlight the explicit inscription or implicit invocation of attitudes that have been attributed to characters and how these attitudes form patterns that suggest the values endorsed by the game. Next, the engagement system will be used to describe the extent to which these suggested values are

contested or accepted. Then, how the depicted images position players in relation to the portrayed character attitudes will be discussed to illustrate Aiden's evaluative stance. The following analysis would take place within the cultural and composition dimensions of the 3D model (Callow, 2005; Durrant & Green, 2000).

Scene One: Big Brother

The first scene is titled 'Big Brother' and opens with a film cut scene where Aiden returns to his sister Nicky's house for the first time since the death of his niece Lena. Text one shows part of a conversation between Nicky and Aiden in which Nicky is worried about having Aiden around if he is still involved in criminal activities and overly protective of his family.

Nicky: This matters. You being here. I just need to make sure that things are different.
 Aiden: Things are different. You and Jacks [Jackson] are the most important people in my life. I'm not going to stop watching out for you.
 Nicky: ... Always the big brother, huh?
 [Nicky walks inside the house leaving Aiden outside.]

Attitude

The inscribed and invoked attitude resources, which suggest Aiden's role as a big brother and protective watchdog, are presented in Table 2.

These attitudes suggest the kinds of values that are endorsed in the game. Extract one is characterised by affect or feelings relating to security and judgements

Table 2 Extract One – Attitude resources

Appraising Item	Appraiser	Appraised	Inscribed	Invoked
<i>I just need to make sure that things are different.</i>	Nicky	Aiden		-ve Security
<i>Things are different.</i>	Aiden	Aiden		-ve Normality +ve Normality
You and Jackson, are the most important people in my life.	Aiden	Nicky and Jackson	+ve Normality	
<i>You and Jackson, are the most important people in my life.</i>	Aiden	Nicky and Jackson		+ve Security
<i>I'm not going to stop watching out for you.</i>	Aiden	Aiden		+ve Propriety
<i>I'm not going to stop watching out for you.</i>	Aiden	Aiden		+ve Tenacity +ve Capacity
<i>I'm not going to stop watching out for you.</i>	Aiden	Nicky and Jackson		+ve Security
... Always the big brother, huh?	Nicky	Aiden	+ve Normality	
<i>... Always the big brother, huh?</i>	Nicky	Nicky		+ve Security

Table 3. Extract One - Engagement resources

Character	Text	Engagement
Nicky	I <u>just need to make sure</u> that things are different.	Heteroglossic Contract Proclaim Pronounce
Aiden	Things are different.	Monoglossic
Aiden	You and Jacks, are the most important people in my life.	Monoglossic
Aiden	<i>I'm not going to stop watching out for you.</i>	Heteroglossic Contract Proclaim Pronounce
Nicky	... Always the big brother, huh?	Monoglossic

relating to how people are admired (social esteem) or to their ethics and truthfulness (social sanction) and have been underlined in the following examples. Nicky invokes an attitude of insecurity to caution Aiden, '*I just need to make sure that things are different*'. All other use of invoked security is positive and is used by Aiden to focus on Nicky and Jackson when asserting, 'You and Jackson, are *the most important people* in my life' and '*I'm not going to stop looking out for you*'. These statements suggest Aiden values the protection of his family, a value that is further implied by Nicky's final statement directed towards Aiden, '*Always the big brother, huh...*'.

The extract utilises attitudes of inscribed and invoked judgements. Both positive and negative normality is used when Aiden seeks to reassure Nicky that his life before and after the death of his niece is different, for example '*Things are different*'. This judgement of social esteem implies Aiden's previous criminal nature and his claim that he now has a lawful nature. Further, inscribed judgements of positive normality are utilised when Aiden asserts, 'You and Jackson, are *the most important people* in my life' and Nicky's declaration that Aiden is '*Always the big brother, huh?*'. Similar to the attitude of security, these judgements of social esteem suggest that Aiden values the protection of his family and also describe him as a big brother looking out for his family.

Invoked judgements of tenacity, capacity and propriety are utilised in the extract, while invoked attitudes of security and inscribed judgements of normality have been used to suggest Aiden's value of family protection. Likewise, judgements of positive tenacity and capacity are used by Aiden, which suggest this value, for example '*I'm not going to stop watching out for you*'. This statement also invokes a social sanction judgement of propriety further suggesting Aiden's ethical value of family protection.

Engagement

The engagement resources that describe the contested nature of these attitudes, and Aiden's suggested value of family protection, are present in Table 3.

Nicky's initial statement, '*I just need to make sure that things are different*' is concerned with the positive security of her family and implies a contrast between her position and Aiden's. In this statement Nicky proclaims her position by pronouncing she needs to be sure that things are different with Aiden, evidenced by the underlined comment clause. Nicky's pronounced position of security is not challenged by Aiden in his monoglossic reply, where he asserts that things have changed, suggesting a difference in the normality of his criminal past. This assertion of normality is also accepted and not challenged by Nicky. Aiden's monoglossic statement, 'You and Jacks, are the most important people in my life' is also not contested by Nicky. This statement proclaims a position, which advocates positive judgements concerning Aiden and a position of security for Nicky and Jackson. This position of Aiden's is not challenged by Nicky, but is accepted by her monoglossic reply, '*... Always the big brother, huh?*' which inscribes Aiden with a judgement of normality accepting his value position as a family protector and in turn invokes an attitude of security for her family.

Image

Students will then need to watch and analyse key moments in the extract as shown in Table 4. Replacement images have been used, as image copyright was unable to be obtained. These illustrate how the viewer is positioned in relation to the characters' portrayal of attitudes. Images one and two are typical of the visuals depicted during the conversation between Aiden and Nicky. These images utilise close up frames. This helps to portray an intimate social interaction between the pair. Also, the close up images of Aiden and Nicky are

Table 4. Extract One – Visual summary

	Image	Interactive meaning	Focalisation
1		Contact • Offer Social Distance • Intimate/personal Attitude – Subjective • Slightly detached • Equality	• Observe • Unmediated
2		Contact • Offer Social Distance • Intimate/personal Attitude – Subjective • Slightly detached • Equality	• Observe • Unmediated

captured at slightly oblique angles to the viewer. In these images the characters’ eyes indicate their gaze at the interlocutor in a standing position. While such images do infer that Nicky is looking at Aiden and Aiden at Nicky, the placement of the camera at an oblique angle to their line of sight would suggest that the images are viewed from an outside perspective.

Scene Two: No Turning Back Part Two

The second scene titled ‘No Turning Back Part Two’ depicts Aiden attempting to save Clara Lille. This scene is significant as it represents Aiden as a protective friend. The scene occurs after Aiden has discovered Clara was the hacker that the crime boss Lucky Quinn hired to track him, which subsequently ended in a car accident killing his niece Lena. After this discovery Aiden and Clara go their separate ways, until Aiden learns that Clara is in danger because she has refused to work for Lucky Quinn. During a gunfight Clara is killed. The extract opens with Aiden driving in an attempt to save Clara from assassins who have now been hired by Damien Brenks, one of the game’s antagonists.

[Aiden is driving to the cemetery where his niece is buried. Clara Lille is there to pay her respects. He receives a phone call from his ally T-Bone.]

T-Bone:Aiden. I’m tracking a number of club cars heading your way.

Aiden: Damien ... what did you do?

[Aiden hops out of his car and runs towards Clara.]
[Clara is placing flowers on Aiden’s niece’s grave. She does not notice a number of assassins have tracked her.]

Aiden: Clara!

[An assassin shoots Clara. A gunfight ensues between Aiden and the assassins.]

Extract 2. No Turning Back – Part Two

Attitude

The inscribed and invoked attitude resources for extract two are presented in Table 5.

The extract is characterised by the invoked attitudes of security, propriety and capacity. Aiden’s ally T-Bone first invokes an attitude of insecurity regarding Aiden

Table 5. Extract Two – Attitude resources

Appraising Item	Appraiser	Appraised	Inscribed	Invoked
Aiden. I’m tracking a number of Club cars heading your way.	T-Bone	Aiden		–ve Security
Aiden. I’m tracking a number of Club cars heading your way.	T-Bone	Club cars		+ve Capacity
Damien ... what did you do?	Aiden	Damien		+ve Capacity –ve Property

Table 6. Extract Two – Engagement resources

Character	Text	Engagement
T-Bone	Aiden. I'm tracking a number of Club cars heading your way.	Monoglossic
Aiden	Damien ... what did you do? (<i>Expanding/ rhetorical question</i>)	Expansion Entertain
Aiden	Clara!	Monoglossic

and the approaching assassins in the cars, by stating 'I'm tracking a number of Club cars heading your way'. This statement also invokes a positive judgement of the assassins' capacity. The approaching danger is also questioned by Aiden, 'Damien ... what did you do?'. This question invokes a positive judgement of social esteem concerning the antagonist's capacity to inflict harm on Aiden, while also invoking a judgement of impropriety regarding his attempt to hurt Aiden.

Engagement

The engagement resources that describe the contested nature of the above attitudes are presented in Table 6.

T-Bone opens the extract with a monoglossic assertion, 'I'm tracking a number of Club cars heading your way'. This warns Aiden of the cars and approaching dangers. The propriety of T-Bone's actions in warning Aiden infers his role as an ally. The acceptance of this assertion is inferred in Aiden's response, 'Damien ... what did you do?'. This response also entertains the possibilities of what danger is ahead of Aiden through the use of a rhetorical question. This instantiates a contending position between Aiden and his ally and the antagonist Damien. This positioning of Aiden supports the realisation of the vigilante and superhero epistemologies in his epistemic frame and positions him as the game's protagonist. Such description is also consistent with Aiden's suggested value of protection as discussed in scene one. Scene two demonstrates that Aiden also values the protection of his friends.

Image

The gunfight is a significant moment in the visual sequence of the second extract. This illustrates how the viewer is positioned in relation to Aiden's portrayed attitudes and the positioning of him as the game's protagonist. The gunfight occurs after Clara has been shot and Aiden is avenging her death. The player is positioned as Aiden and is required to fight the assassins in a first person shooter gunfight. Image three is typical of the focalisation utilised in the game's first person shooter episodes. The camera has been placed behind Aiden and is looking over his right shoulder. The background of the image represents Aiden's view creating the sense that the player is seeing along with Aiden. A long distance camera frame implies an impersonal feeling between the player and the simulated assassins s/he is shooting. Also the use of a frontal and eye-level angle helps to create involvement and an equal power relation between the player and the depicted game avatar. Also noteworthy, is the player's control over the avatar which allows Aiden to be steered to vantage points to better confront the assassins. During this game episode the player is also able to rotate the game camera in a 360 degree manner around the avatar. This means the focalisation of an image during such game play episodes can be changed.

Evaluative Stance: Big Brother and the Watch Dog

Although the discussion of the videogame *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014) has been brief due to space limitations,

Table 7, Scene Two – Visual summary

	Image	Interactive meaning	Focalisation
3		Contact Offer Social Distance Impersonal Attitude – Subjective Involvement Equality	Observe Along with character

the appraisal and various image resources used in the depiction of Aiden have been explicated. After students have analysed these extracts they will need to examine how the language and visual resources couple together to create patterns of meaning throughout the scenes. In doing so the evaluative stances of the characters can be explicated and transition the learning activity to the critical dimension of the 3D model. Scene one suggests that Aiden values his family and their protection. This is evidenced by attitudes of security (e.g. 'I'm not going to stop watching out for you') and insecurity (e.g. 'I just need to make sure that things are different') made by both Aiden and Nicky. Also positive judgements of Aiden's social esteem are made concerning his normality, capacity and tenacity and the propriety of his actions in protecting his family. The attitudes that are used to describe Aiden are endorsed by Nicky as being a part of his role as a big brother and are never contested by Aiden. The close personal images used during the conversation between Nicky and Aiden resonate with the expressed personal attitudes, while the oscillation between images of Nicky and Aiden resonates with the negotiation of differing positions presented at the start of the extract. The slight detached outside perspective used in images one and two resonates with the game's fictive world in which everything is monitored by the overarching ctOS network.

A similar evaluative stance is demonstrated in scene two by Aiden in the protection of his friend Clara. This is evidenced by the attitude resource of insecurity used by T-Bone to warn Aiden of the assassins heading in his direction. The acceptance of T-Bone's statement is inferred by Aiden's response, which entertains the possibilities of the capacity and impropriety of the antagonist Damien's actions. This coupling between the attitude and engagement resources positions Aiden, T-Bone and Clara against the antagonist Damien and the assassins.

This positioning also resonates with the scene's first person shooter gunfight illustrated in image three. The observed focalisation and equal power relations created through the use of an eye-level camera angle, allows the player to see and experience the simulated game world along with the character. However, the use of the long distance camera frame where Aiden's back is depicted in the image's foreground and the assassin's in the background creates an impersonal social distance between the player and the simulated assassins s/he is

required to shoot. Therefore, these gunfights demonstrate limited empathy towards the killed assassins. Additionally, the visual and engagement resources of the image resonate to align the player as Aiden and position him in opposition to the antagonists. Furthermore, such game episodes require the player to control and navigate Aiden in the immoral act of killing in order to protect his family and friends and to successfully complete the game scenes. In this way, behaviours of impropriety have been re-interpreted as behaviours of propriety if they are engaged in for the protection of family, friends or citizens.

Conclusion: A site for developing a pedagogy of interpretive play

This article demonstrated that an SFS approach could be used to analyse the language and visual system networks in the videogame *Watch Dogs* (Ubisoft, 2014). While the scope of the research in this article has been limited, it could be expanded to include other visual interpersonal system networks such as pathos, ambience and graduation (Painter et al., 2013) or other semiotic systems such as gesture and sound.

Additionally, SFS will need to develop a way that describes the meaning represented by the enhanced capabilities and interactivity of games. Image three from the second scene demonstrates how the interpersonal meaning depicted in a game episode can be influenced by a player's interaction and navigation of Aiden's avatar within the simulated world. For example, the player's ability to rotate the game camera allows for the default focalisation of a game to be altered.

Furthermore, this article has attempted to demonstrate how teachers can utilise the theoretical tools such as appraisal and various image analyses, their relevance to the ACE and how the 3D model of Literacy Learning (Callow, 2005; Durrant & Green, 2000) can be used in a pedagogical approach for the critical interpretation of videogames. This type of critical analysis by teachers and students could offer a productive context in which a critical interpretive play pedagogy could be developed. Also, such an approach to utilising videogames would provide a bridge between the everyday home literacy practices of students and the formalised literacy practices required to be taught in schools. Videogames would offer an engaging learning experience for students to develop some of the systemic literacy skills required for the 21st century.

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Engaging children in the pleasures of literature and verbal art

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Abstract: This paper outlines a sequence of strategies that are designed to enable every child to experience pleasure in reading narrative literature, and to achieve success in writing, both their own stories and the responses to literature expected by the school curriculum. To enable these goals, literary texts are analysed at three scales: whole literary texts, model structures for writing, and patterns of literary language in sentences. Each level of analysis is designed to bring teachers' and students' intuitive knowledge about language to consciousness, and build a shared metalanguage. The paper synthesises findings of long-term action research in genre based literacy pedagogy, to provide teachers and teacher educators with tools for engaging all their students in the pleasures of literature. While many aspects of this research have been previously reported, this paper provides a novel synthesis for this purpose.

Research background: genre based literacy pedagogy

The primary focus of the paper is on these strategies for teaching and text analysis, for the immediate benefit of teachers and teacher educators. This section first outlines the research background that has led to the development of the methodology. Since the 1980s, genre based literacy pedagogy of the 'Sydney School' (Hyon, 1996; Martin, 2016; Rose & Martin, 2012) (hereafter simply) has proven highly successful at guiding students to recognise and use the text structures and language features of written genres in the curricula of schools and further education. The pedagogy has evolved through long term, diverse action research projects involving teachers, teacher educators and educational linguists, in three broad stages. Overviews of these three stages of research are provided in Rose (2008); (2015). A description of knowledge about pedagogy and language built up through the research is provided in Rose and Martin (2012).

The first stage of research, from 1979, identified and described highly valued genres in the primary school. Texts written by primary school students were collected, analysed and classified, in terms of their social purposes and how they were organised to achieve these goals; particularly narrative, recount, report, explanation, exposition and discussion (Derewianka, 1991; Painter & Martin, 1986). A teaching strategy was devised, the 'teaching/learning cycle' or TLC, that uses well written exemplars to model appropriate text organisation, as the class jointly constructs new texts based on these models. To facilitate this practice, each genre and its component stages were given names that could be used easily by teachers and students, such as Complication and Resolution for narratives or for Classification and Description for reports. Following a decade of growing application in schools, these genres became part of the NSW K-6 English syllabus from 1994 (Board of Studies 1994), and were widely disseminated in commercial teaching materials, in Australia and internationally.

The second stage, from 1991, researched the written genres of secondary school curricula and related workplaces. A much larger range of genres were described, and correlated with curriculum fields such as English (Rothery, 1994), science (Rose, McInnes & Korner, 1992/2007), history (Coffin, 1996), geography (Humphrey, 1996), and news media (Iedema, Feez & White, 1994/2008). Key collections of this research include Cope and

Kalantzis (1993), Christie (1999) and Christie and Martin (1997). Martin (2000) provides a lively synopsis of these first two research stages.

The third stage, from 1998, focused on reading alongside writing, commencing with a project in schools servicing the *Anangu* Indigenous communities of South Australia. This action research combined the genre writing pedagogy developed in stages 1 and 2 with strategies for teaching reading developed in the Schools and Community Centre of Canberra University (Axford, Harders & Wise, 2009; Rose, Gray & Cowey, 1999). In the project's first year, students' average literacy growth was measured as equivalent to four years standard growth rates (McCrae et al., 2000), thus, attracting national attention. Over the past 15 years, this scale of literacy growth has been demonstrated repeatedly, in the context of professional learning programs for teachers of primary, secondary and tertiary students, that combines face-to-face training workshops with supported, in-school practice (Carbines, Wyatt & Robb, 2005; Culican, 2006; Rose & Acevedo, 2006; de Silva, Hood & Rose, 2007; Rose, Rose, Farrington & Page, 2008; Dell, 2011; Rose, 2011, 2015; Rose & Martin, 2013; Coffin, Acevedo & Lövestedt, 2013).

While the second stage of genre pedagogy research extended the descriptions of genres and curricula, the writing pedagogy continued from the first stage. The central activity in this teaching/learning cycle is Joint Construction, in which teachers use the staging and key language features of a model text to guide students to jointly write a new text in the target genre. This activity is first prepared by a Deconstruction activity, in which the stages and language features of the model are identified and named. It is followed by Independent Construction, in which students write their own texts, using the same staging and language features. Such sequences of teaching/learning activities have been termed 'curriculum genres' (Christie, 2002). To enable teachers to use these strategies effectively, pre-service and in-service training has been widely offered in key genres and basic functional grammar, together with a range of textbooks (e.g. Derewianka, 1998; Humphrey, Droga & Feez, 2012).

The third stage of development, known as *Reading to Learn* (or *R2L*), extends considerably teachers' options for curriculum genres. To begin with, it guides students to read explicitly for meaning, as the starting point for developing literacy skills, and treats writing as emerging from reading. Secondly, it guides students

to read the language of written texts closely, in order to comprehend them in depth and detail, and then to use this language in their writing. Thirdly, it guides students to deconstruct model texts by accomplished authors more closely, in order to appropriate their strategies for organising successful texts. Rose (2016a, in press) describes 24 curriculum genres designed in the R2L program, thus, enabling teachers to plan and teach lessons, and evaluate students' literacy growth. These include strategies for reading and writing information texts, stories, arguments, text responses, and maths, science and technology procedures, as well as for teaching beginning reading and writing, and for learners of other languages. In addition, a range of curriculum genres have been designed for teaching the knowledge about language that underpins the methodology (Rose, 2016b, in press).

The *Reading to Learn* methodology embeds these curriculum genres in a teacher professional learning program involving a series of face-to-face workshops interspersed with guided classroom practice (Rose & Acevedo, 2006; Rose, 2016a in press). Participating teachers are asked to track the literacy growth of students in the top, middle and lower achievement bands in their classes, using a writing assessment developed in the R2L program. This assessment scores 14 criteria from 0–3, at the levels of genre, register, discourse, grammar and graphic features, giving total possible scores of 42. Figures 1 and 2 show growth rates typical for the methodology, exemplified from one professional learning program involving about 400 primary and secondary teachers, representing an estimated 8,000–12,000 students (Rose, 2011, 2015; Rose & Martin, 2013).

Figure 1 shows average 'pre-scores' of top, middle and lower students, at the start of teachers' training, in each stage of school. In kindergarten (preparatory year), all results are near zero, but after a year of teaching, at the start of junior primary (Year 1–2), a wide gap has opened between top and lower students' scores. Top students are now writing coherent texts, while lower students have barely progressed. This gap is maintained through each subsequent school stage, with lower students remaining in the failing range.

Figure 2 shows average 'post-scores' after teachers have practised R2L strategies for about 6 months. (These are scores for the same students as in the top chart, approximately 6 months later.) In kindergarten, average scores for each student group are now in the top range, and the gap has halved. In other school

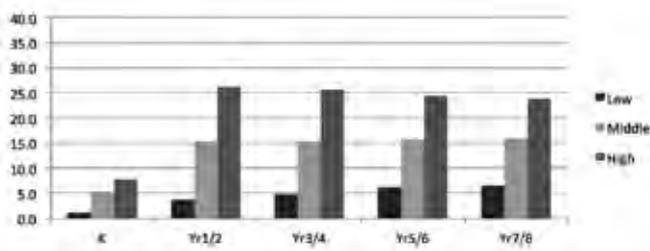


Figure 1. Pre-intervention scores show gap between student groups before R2L teaching

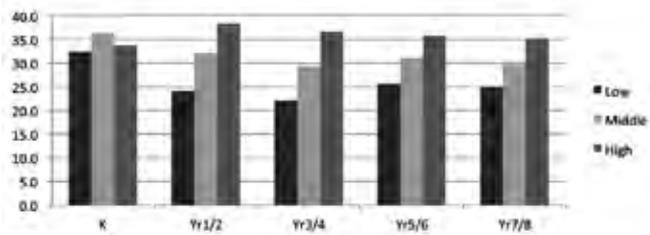


Figure 2. Post-intervention scores show growth and reduction in gap after R2L teaching

stages, lower groups are now in the average successful range, while top groups have accelerated into the top range for their school stages. These results are consistent with other evaluations of the methodology; top students typically accelerate an average of 1.5 times standard growth rates, while lower students grow at 4 times standard rates, narrowing the achievement gap while accelerating all students' learning (McRae et al., 2000; Culican, 2006; Rose, Rose, Farrington & Page, 2008; Rose, 2011; 2015; Rose & Martin, 2013; Löfstedt & Rose, to appear).

Texts 1 and 2 exemplify this pace of literacy growth. Text 1 was written at the start of secondary school, in Year 7. The task was for students to write about themselves. Text 2 was independently written by the same student one month later, following consistent implementation of R2L strategies in his subject English classes. The task was to describe and evaluate the music in a scene from the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence*.

My Name is [redacted] I live in [redacted]
 I have 2 pets and they were 4 dogs and
 2 cats my hobbies is watching anime
 I cant choy between all of the anime that
 I watch I have chaos and Fairy tail out
 one piece.

Text 1: 27/01/2016

Strategies for working with stories

This paper brings together one strand of the R2L methodology, focusing on strategies for teaching students to read and recognise the literary language resources of accomplished narrative authors, and appropriate them into their own writing. The goals of these strategies are

is used
 In the film music convey the feelings and emotion of the characters. Visual elements also add emotion. At the start music is quite subtle and almost unnoticeable. As soon as the Constable car came the music picks up piece. The family starts to run away. The music starts to speed up as drum beats starts echoing representing the beating hearts of the family. The music slows down drastically as the car blows the exit showing last hope. The Constable takes the girls. The music picks up again replicating energy and suspense as it forces the audience to question if the mum will save them. When all the girls are in the car the music slows down showing the audience that the girls hope that and heart breaking fate has been sealed. This makes the audience feel sympathy for the girls and there family and it emphasises the desperation they felt trying to escape the white people. This film successfully uses the audio elements including music seeing the feelings and emotions of the three girls and there family.

Text 2: 23/02/2016

to expand engagement in literature to all children in the school, to enable every child to experience pleasure in reading narrative literature, and to achieve success in writing, both their own stories and the responses to literature expected by the school curriculum.

To this end, the research has aimed to provide teachers with two sets of skills in analysis and design: firstly an analysis of literary texts that reveals the choices that authors make to create engaging, effective stories; and secondly an analysis of teachers' own pedagogic practices, to design lessons that can make these choices available to every one of their students. In practice, these two sets of skills are not separate; the analysis of literary texts is embedded in the design of teaching practice. The analysis is at three levels. Each is designed to bring teachers' and students' intuitive knowledge about language to consciousness, and build a shared metalanguage. This metalanguage provides a framework for classroom learning and gives students control as they become independent.

The first level draws on teachers' intuitive recognition of the structuring of stories, in order to prepare students to follow a complex plot as it is read, and then participate in discussing its key features. The second level provides a framework for teachers to analyse not only the general stages of model stories, but also the particular phases in which each story unfolds within its stages. Story phases are the basic building blocks that story tellers use to construct imaginative, engaging plots. With a little guided practice, teachers can readily identify such phases in any story, and guide their students to recognise them. This analysis enables

students to build up their literary repertoires by borrowing the plot devices of accomplished authors, as authors do themselves.

The third level focuses on the language resources that authors use to expand meanings within and between sentences. These meanings are realised in grammatical structures, but the focus of analysis is not on grammar, it is on the contributions of each element to the register of a story – its plot, settings, characters and themes. Teachers use this analysis to support their students to read challenging texts with critical understanding, and consciously, recognise the authors' language choices. Such detailed reading enables all students, not only to read with comprehension and pleasure, but also to build repertoires of these resources for their writing.

This paper introduces the strategies developed for each of these analyses. It focuses on how to identify patterns of meaning in literary texts, and apply the analyses in classroom teaching and teacher education. These strategies can be used from early years, all the way to Year 12 and beyond with literary texts. The strategies can be used with short stories and novels, as well as drama and poetry. A key is to use stories that are very well written, engaging for the students, and at a level that will challenge them. There is no need to use stories that are easy to read, because the strategies give enough support for all students to read a challenging text.

Level 1: Preparing students to follow the plot

The first level of analysis is designed, first of all, to engage all students in the pleasure of reading narrative literature, and secondly, to show them how accomplished authors write. These are orientations to literature that children in highly literate families (typically tertiary educated) tend to develop through parent/child reading (Rose, 2010; Williams, 1995). Such experience enables children to recognise general patterns of meanings that are common to written stories, but often differ from patterns of oral stories. These children are prepared to attend to the unfolding meanings in each episode, to expect what may happen next, and respond appropriately. Hence, both interest and emotion engage them in the pleasure of reading. In contrast, children without this experience of parent/child reading may struggle to recognise what is happening in written stories, and to follow the plot. If they are struggling at this interpretive level of comprehension, they may be unable to attend to the words of the story, and lose interest and engagement. Preparing for

Reading is designed to overcome this problem.

In Preparing for Reading, before the teacher reads the whole story, or novel chapter to the class, they first prepares all students to listen with understanding, by giving them any background knowledge they need, and a step-by-step summary of what happens in the text. This summary enables all students to recognise what is happening as the story unfolds. Teachers sometimes worry that telling students what happens in the story will spoil it for them. But previewing simply makes it easier for all students to follow a complex story. If the story ends with a twist, most of it can be summarised, and then followed with 'let's see what happens'. Preparing also involves telling students the key meanings they need to pay attention to as the story is read. However, it is essential not to overdo preparing; it should only take a few minutes before reading, otherwise, the task become listening to the teacher. It is also possible to stop and briefly explain or discuss key elements as the story is read.

Knowing what to tell students requires teachers to look carefully at the text before reading, and to make notes about the background knowledge students will need, and the sequence in which the text unfolds. Such close reading for lesson planning also tells teachers what needs to be included in a lesson unit. The background knowledge may be part of the lesson unit that includes the text, but equally, the content of the unit is informed by the content of the chosen texts. Preparing before Reading can be used with any texts that students have to read, because it both prepares students to be able to read for themselves, and motivates them to want to read.

Preparing for reading *Fantastic Mr Fox*

Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl (2007) is a novel written for middle primary age children. But, it is such brilliant writing that it can also be used with older students. In particular it contains passages that can be used as models to guide students to write sophisticated stories. It also contains illustrations that can be used when preparing for reading.

Preparing for reading a novel involves an overview of the whole story, and then previewing and reading each chapter, followed by discussion and other activities. Text 3 shows examples of possible previews of the first three chapters of *Fantastic Mr Fox*. These examples are designed for young children, and use the illustrations in the book as a scaffold for previewing the events, however, the same principle can be applied for any age group, whether or not images are available.

The examples are presented as transcripts, in order to illustrate careful structuring of conversation that invites and supports all students to recognise and engage with the text's elements. Crucially, the teacher first gives students information about the text, and then invites them to recognise and evaluate certain elements. Questions are designed so that all students can always answer successfully and be affirmed. This is critical to engaging less confident students and less experienced readers. The plot is well outside the experience of most students. It starts, not with the main protagonist Mr Fox or a setting, as less experienced readers may expect, but with a description of his enemies, the three farmers.

Text 3: Previewing novel chapters

Chapter 1: *The first chapter is about the farmers. Here is Farmer Boggis. He eats two whole chickens every breakfast, lunch and dinner. That's why he is so fat. Can you see his buttons bursting? Can you see his poor wife bringing him another chicken? Here is Farmer Bunce. He is so short he has to stand on a chair to eat his breakfast, which is doughnuts stuffed with goose livers. Isn't that disgusting? Here is Farmer Bean who is long and skinny. Can you see what kind of birds he raises? That's right, turkeys. He also grows apples which he makes into cider and drinks, so he is drunk all the time. [The chapter is read aloud and discussed.]*

Chapter 2: *In this chapter, Mr Fox goes off to steal some birds from the farmers. Here he is standing in front of his hole under the big tree. Mrs Fox is telling him what kind of birds she would like for dinner. Can you see the four small foxes looking out of their hole under the tree? In this picture Mr Fox is creeping out from his hole to go and steal some birds. Can you see what time of day it is? That's right he goes out at night. What he doesn't know is that the farmers have found out where his hole is, and are planning to get him. Here is Farmer Bean telling the others where the hole is. Can you see what they are holding? Yes double barrelled shot guns. [Again the chapter is read aloud and discussed.]*

Chapter 3: *In this chapter, Mr Fox heads off to steal some birds again. Here he is saying goodbye to Mrs Fox. She is telling him to be careful because the farmers are out to get him, but he says he is always careful. He very carefully creeps out from his hole, but then he hears a noise like a foot moving. He stops and listens, but he hears nothing more and keeps coming out. He can see the moon shining and the wood is very dark. Then he see sees something shining behind a tree, and just as realises that its the barrel of a gun, the farmers all shoot at him. [This chapter will be used for modelling writing, as follows.]*

Level 2: Joint Construction of story texts

Joint Construction of stories follows the structures of a model text written by an accomplished author. This is a more detailed approach to Joint Construction than traditional genre writing that uses models to exemplify ideal staging and certain language features of a genre (research stages 1 and 2 above). The goal of the R2L approach is for students to appropriate the narrative techniques used by particular authors in particular texts. Through repeated Joint Constructions, students learn to recognise and appropriate the techniques of a variety of authors, gradually incorporating them into their own repertoires. Narrative authors and successful students do this more or less intuitively. The R2L approach to Joint Construction shows all students how to do this consciously, so that the skills of both top and lower students accelerate.

In the preceding Deconstruction activity, the model text is projected so that the class can see it, and the teacher can point to each of its elements as they are discussed. Each student also has a copy of the model text. As each stage and phase is identified, the teacher writes a name for it on the projected text, and the students write the name on their copies.

Text 4 is an extract from *Fantastic Mr Fox* (Dahl, 2007, pp. 18–20). This passage is an excellent narrative model, with Orientation, Complication and Resolution stages. The Complication is signalled with the words 'Just then', and the Resolution starts with 'The smoke from the three guns'. These three stages are labelled on the text, using initial capitals. However, Deconstruction in R2L involves analysing the phases within each stage, that are also labelled here in lower case.

Within each narrative stage in Text 4, the story plot goes through a series of phases that the author has crafted to engage the reader's interest and emotional engagement (Rose, 2006; 2016; Martin & Rose, 2008; 2012). Dahl starts the Orientation stage by setting the scene, whereby Mr Fox emerges slowly and carefully from his hole. Tension is created with a small problem; Mr Fox *heard or thought he heard a tiny noise*. The tension increases as Mr Fox reacts to the noise, *very still, his ears pricked*, but then the tension is released by Mr Fox solving the problem and telling himself *It must have been a field-mouse ... or some other small animal*. This sequence of setting, problem, reaction and solution foreshadows the Complication. From Mr Fox's perspective he is now safe to come out from his hole, but the reader knows from the previous chapter that the

Text 4: Narrative extract from *Fantastic Mr Fox* (pp. 18–20)

Orientation setting	Mr Fox crept up the dark tunnel to the mouth of his hole. He poked his long handsome face out into the night air and sniffed once. He moved an inch or two forward and stopped. He sniffed again. He was always especially careful when coming out from his hole. He inched forward a little more. The front half of his body was now in the open.
problem	His black nose twitched from side to side, sniffing and sniffing for the scent of danger. He found none, and he was just about to go trotting forward into the wood when he heard or thought he heard a tiny noise, a soft rustling sound, as though someone had moved a foot ever so gently through a patch of dry leaves.
reaction	Mr Fox flattened his body against the ground and lay very still, his ears pricked. He waited a long time, but he heard nothing more.
solution	'It must have been a field-mouse,' he told himself, 'or some other small animal.'
setting	He crept a little further out of the hole... then further still. He was almost right out in the open now. He took a last careful look around. The wood was murky and very still. Somewhere in the sky the moon was shining.
Complication problem1 reaction problem2 reaction problem3	Just then, his sharp night-eyes caught a glint of something bright behind a tree not far away. It was a small silver speck of moonlight shining on a polished surface. Mr Fox lay still, watching it. What on earth was it? Now it was moving. It was coming up and up... Great heavens! It was the barrel of a gun! Quick as a whip, Mr Fox jumped back into his hole and at that same instant the entire wood seemed to explode around him. Bang-bang! Bang-bang! Bang-bang!
Resolution setting	The smoke from the three guns floated upward in the night air. Boggis and Bunce and Bean came out from behind their trees and walked towards the hole. 'Did we get him?' said Bean.
twist	One of them shone a flashlight on the hole, and there on the ground, in the circle of light, half in and half out of the hole, lay the poor tattered bloodstained remains of ... a fox's tail. Bean picked it up. 'We got the tail but we missed the fox,' he said, tossing the thing away.

farmers are waiting for him; it is our empathy for Mr Fox that creates the tension.

Dahl then re-sets the scene; Mr Fox emerges from his hole, and looks around at the murky wood and light from the moon. This apparently peaceful setting provides the context for the Complication, announced by the immediacy of *Just then*. Tension is built rapidly through the Complication with a series of worsening

problems and reactions. First is the minor problem of *a glint of something bright behind a tree*. Mr Fox reacts by *laying still, watching it*. Then, the problem worsens by *moving ... coming up and up*, until Mr Fox realises it is a gun. He reacts by jumping *back into his hole*, just as the problem becomes catastrophic. Dahl begins the Resolution by re-setting the scene from the farmers' perspective; as yet we don't know whether Mr Fox is dead. Releasing the tension is delayed until the last sentence, and, there is an unexpected twist; Mr Fox has apparently survived, but he has lost his tail.

This ingenious plot structuring is revealed to students as the extract is read and discussed by the teacher. Deconstruction of model texts is a teacher-guided whole class activity, in which each phase is named and labelled in the model, both on the board and in students' own copies. This metalanguage for talking about text structures is negotiated with the students, guiding them to come up with appropriate names to use. For example, if we say Mr Fox has a little problem, and ask the class what the problem is, they can then name it as a *problem*. If we ask how he reacts to the problem, and how he would be feeling, students will be able to infer the term *reaction*, and so on. Hence, the metalanguage is transparent and memorable for all students.

Once the model structure has been deconstructed and labelled, new characters, settings and events are 'brainstormed' by the class for the Joint Construction. This process is carefully guided by the teacher, who scribes students' ideas on the board. Generation of ideas is scaffolded by the discussion during Deconstruction. For example, the protagonist must be a likeable rogue like Mr Fox, who is after something and someone is after him. In the setting, the character must move slowly towards a goal, and then be stopped by a small problem, that is resolved. In the Complication, the character must become aware of the real danger, and perhaps almost be killed by it, but, in the final twist they escape.

Ideally, students take turns to scribe the new text, as this puts them in control. The teacher guides by pointing to the model and asks what should happen in each phase. Each sentence is built up in steps, either by the teacher suggesting how to start, or asking students for ideas, that may then be adjusted. As each sentence is written on the board, students write it in their books. Text 5 is an example of a Joint Construction written from the Mr Fox model, using another familiar character.

Text 5: Joint Construction written from the Mr Fox model

Orientation setting	Peter Rabbit was feeling very hungry. He poked his pink button nose through a hole in the garden gate. He pushed himself through the hole, until he was almost inside the garden.
problem	His long ears turned from side to side, listening for any sound of Mr MacGregor, the gardener. He was just about to go hopping towards the carrot patch when he heard the sound of crunching gravel.
reaction	Peter froze. He peered about looking for the source of the noise.
solution	A robin flew up from the path. 'Oh, that's all it was,' he told himself.
setting	He hopped off happily towards the vegetables. The scent of fresh carrots and radishes was overwhelming.
Complication	All of a sudden he heard the crunching sound again.
problem 1	What on earth could it be?
reaction	Then through the carrot tops he saw a wheelbarrow coming around the garden shed. Oh dear, it's Mr MacGregor! Like lightning Peter hopped back towards the gate, just as a rake swooped down towards his poor head.
problem 2	
reaction	
problem 3	
Resolution setting	'Aha, got you this time' hooted Mr MacGregor.
twist	There lying sprawled on the ground, skewered by the rake, was the torn remains of ... Peter's pretty blue jumper. 'Fiddlesticks,' muttered the gardener, 'he's slipped away again.'

Although it has the same stages and phases, the jointly constructed text may be shorter than the model, reducing the scale of the writing task and the time it takes. As each phase of the text is written, it is labelled on the board and in students' books. Their task is then to follow the same structure for Individual Construction.

In Individual Construction, the jointly constructed text is left on the board. Students now have two models from which to write a new text, the original and the joint text. The task is to use the same stages and phases, but with their own characters, settings and events. Some students will be able to do this without much help, which allows the teacher to provide more support to other students. Students can also start Individual Construction in groups, helping each other with ideas. In the primary school, two Joint and Individual Constructions are recommended before an independent writing task is expected of students. This provides at least two different models of stories by accomplished authors that students can draw from their own

creation. In the secondary school, due to limited time, one Joint and one Individual Construction is recommended before each independent writing task.

Level 3: Detailed reading and rewriting

The third level of strategies enables all students to read a short text with detailed comprehension, and to use its language patterns in their own writing. It starts with Detailed Reading, in which a short passage is selected from the reading text. The teacher guides students through the passage, sentence-by-sentence, with the students identifying and highlighting groups of words as they go. The teacher then guides the class through Joint Rewriting of this passage, borrowing the same sophisticated language patterns from a literary text, or detailed content from a factual text. Students then practise the same task in Individual Rewriting.

Whereas Joint Construction focuses on the global structure of model texts, preparing students to write whole texts with that structure, Detailed Reading and Rewriting focus on the patterns of language within and between sentences, preparing students to use those language patterns in their writing. Detailed Reading and Rewriting are usually done before Joint Construction, giving students practice with these language patterns before attempting a whole text. This sequence prepares them to use both the language patterns and text structure in independent writing tasks. In this paper, Detailed Reading and Rewriting are discussed last, as they are the most detailed. But in classroom programming, they are typically done after reading whole texts, and before Joint Construction.

For Detailed Reading of stories, a short passage is selected from the story, such as an exciting action sequence, or a rich description. The passage should include well written language patterns that are used to build tension in an action sequence, create images in a description, or carry a key message in the story. These are literary language patterns that readers must recognise, to get the full meaning and value of the story, and which the students will learn to use themselves in their writing. Very importantly the passage must be interesting and challenging for the students. (Interesting does not mean easy to read, as the teacher supports all students to engage with challenging language.)

In the extract from *Fantastic Mr Fox* above, several paragraphs are ideal for Detailed Reading. Examples are the setting, in which Dahl uses a series of short staccato sentences to construe Mr Fox' hesitant progress from his hole, or the first problem, in which Dahl use

the opposite tactic of long recursive complex sentences to convey Mr Fox' mental processes, wondering about the noise he hears. Another is the Complication, with its sequence of mounting problems and reactions, including internal questions and exclamations, metaphors and elaborate nominal groups. Text 6 re-presents this paragraph line-by-line to facilitate discussion.

Text 6: Passage selected for Detailed Reading
(from Dahl, 2007, p. 20)

problem 1	1	Just then, his sharp night-eyes caught a glint of something bright behind a tree not far away.
	2	It was a small silver speck of moonlight shining on a polished surface.
reaction	3	Mr Fox lay still, watching it.
	4	What on earth was it?
problem 2	5	Now it was moving.
	6	It was coming up and up ...
	7	Great heavens! It was the barrel of a gun!
reaction	8	Quick as a whip, Mr Fox jumped back into his hole
problem 3	9	and at that same instant the entire wood seemed to explode around him.
	10	Bang-bang! Bang-bang! Bang-bang!

Each group of words in this passage has been carefully chosen and crafted by the author to build the story. Roald Dahl was famously meticulous in this regard, and his study was crowded with notes of the continual changes he made, sculpting each sentence.

To start with, the conjunction *both* connects the problem with the preceding setting, and signals the Complication with the immediacy of *Just*. Then, instead of saying simply that 'Mr Fox saw something bright', Dahl uses the idiomatic *his eyes caught a glint*. In this complex metaphor, *stand* for 'seeing', that *caught a glint*, which stands for 'only just saw'. Furthermore, Mr Fox needed *sharp night-eyes* to see the glint in the murky wood. Then *something bright* indicates that Mr Fox didn't know what it was, *behind a tree* tells us he couldn't see it, and *not far away* suggests a potential danger.

Sentence 2 describes what he saw in more detail. The reader knows the polished surface may be a farmer's gun, but for Mr Fox *a small silver speck of moonlight shining on it* is unexpected in the dark wood. This is the context for his reaction in 3 and 4, physically *lay still*, mentally *watching it*, and his inner exclamation *what on earth?* The perspective thus shifts from the reader observing Mr Fox to his own thoughts, all inferring his growing puzzlement and anxiety.

Problem 2 begins with *Now*, construing both sequence and immediacy, followed by two actions,

moving and *coming up and up*, and three dots representing time passing as Mr Fox watches it. Finally he realises that *what was coming up and up* was *the barrel of a gun*, as the farmer raised it to take aim at him; this the reader must infer.

Mr Fox' exclamation *Great heavens* is the spring-board for his reaction *Quick as a whip*. He is still the observer at the same instant, when *the entire wood seemed to explode around him*. So was he too late? The last step in this complex chain of interpretation is the six bangs, the context for which is the three farmers' double-barrelled shotguns, introduced in the preceding chapter. This device shifts the perspective from Mr Fox back to the reader, for the re-setting to follow.

Dahl's skilful writing is certainly worth spending time on in detail. While many weaker readers would struggle to comprehend what was going on in this passage, few, if any, top students would recognise and appreciate the complex meaning choices that Dahl is making.

Detailed Reading is designed to reveal the author's verbal art for both these groups of students. It does so by carefully managing the structures of teacher/student interactions around the text, so that all students can firstly recognise the literal meanings in each sentence, and then use this recognition as a platform for interpreting other layers of meaning.

The starting point for Detailed Reading is with the whole text that has been read previously. This may be a source text, such as the novel the class is reading, or it may be the model that will later be used for Joint Construction. In the particular case in this paper, the model is an extract from the novel. It is important to situate the passage in the text, in this instance it is a Complication that follows Mr Fox emerging from his hole.

Next, the sentence must be prepared so that all students understand it as it is read aloud. This is essential for highly metaphorical sentences such as problem 1. The teacher could simply say 'the first sentence tells us Mr Fox saw something shining behind a tree', and then read the sentence. Despite its metaphors and complexity, this preparation should enable all students to get the gist of the sentence as it is read to them.

Next, students are prepared to identify each chunk of meaning with its position in the sentence and a literal meaning cue. For example, the teacher could say 'at the start are two words that tell us *when* he saw the glint'. As this makes the identifying task easy, any student in the class can then be asked to

say these words, which enables the teacher to praise their success, and hence engage every student in turn, and manage their attention. The teacher then tells the whole class to highlight the precise words. Although only one student has answered verbally, highlighting puts all students physically in control of identifying the meanings under focus.

This universal success and literal understanding then forms a platform for elaborating other layers of meaning. For example, the students could be steered to recognise inferential connections, by the teacher asking the class ‘just when, what was happening just then, what was Mr Fox doing?’ The teacher could also point out that the immediacy of *Just then* signals the Complication, that ‘something is going to happen’. Recognising such inferential connections is why the passage must first be situated in the whole text.

Next, *his sharp night-eyes* could be prepared with ‘the part of Mr Fox that saw the glint’. It could then be elaborated by asking the class what you could do with *night-eyes* and *sharp night-eyes*, and explaining that foxes have special eyes that can see in the dark. Hence, meanings are elaborated with questions if we are sure to get an appropriate answer; if not, the teacher must explain or define them. Students are prepared to identify metaphors like *caught a glint* with their inferred meaning, ‘the next words mean he only just saw a glint’. They are then elaborated by unpacking the metaphor, that his eyes didn’t literally ‘catch’ something, rather he almost didn’t see it.

Although the identifying task is made easy, meaning cues enable students to do the mental labour of identifying particular wordings in terms of their meanings, which rapidly enhances their meaning recognition skills. Where words are easy to identify, wh-items are used to prepare them, so that students must reason from the general wh-meaning to the specific words.

For example something bright may be prepared with ‘a glint of what’, *behind a tree* with ‘where’ and *not far away* with ‘how far’. They can then be elaborated on with interpretive questions, focusing on their functions in the story, ‘Did he know what it was?’ ‘Could he see what it was?’ ‘How would he feel if it was close?’

Working through a passage sentence-by-sentence in this way, continually supporting all students to succeed, enables every student in a class, not only to read the passage with complete comprehension and fluency, but also to recognise the language choices the author has made. This provides a strong basis for them to read the remainder of the text independently, and to use the same language choices in their own writing.

However, planning such lessons requires the teacher to select excellent text passages, and to closely analyse what is going on in each sentence. A basic grasp of functional grammar can be useful for teachers to recognise the word groups that express each chunk meaning in a sentence, but the analysis for Detailed Reading requires a higher level of interpretation than grammar knowledge can provide. In fact, teachers must reason about the function of each meaning in the unfolding story plot. This is an analysis at the level of register rather than grammar (Martin & Rose, 2008).

Although the interpretation of meaning is so elaborate in Detailed Reading, it is supported through cycles of interaction that are highly predictable, thus allowing all students to focus on what they are reading, rather than how to respond to the teacher. Teachers’ lesson plans are condensed into brief notes, with four elements. Firstly, a note to prepare the sentence, secondly the sentence itself, thirdly the meaning cues that will be used to prepare students to identify each wording, and fourthly a note for elaborating each meaning. Table 1 shows the elements of such a lesson plan, for the sentences discussed above.

Table 1. Elements of a Detailed Reading lesson plan

Sentence prep	Sentence	Prep cues	Elaborations
Little problem – Mr Fox saw something shining behind a tree	Just then,	When he saw	Just when? What was Mr Fox doing before?
	his sharp night-eyes	Part of Mr Fox saw the light	What can night eyes do? – sharp eyes do? – foxes’ eyes can see in dark
	caught a glint	He only just saw	Glint = tiny light
	of something	What he saw	Does he know what it is?
	bright behind a tree	Where it was	Could he see it?
	not far away,	How far the tree was	It was close – How would he be feeling?
More about the something bright	It was		
	a small silver speck	Tiny dot	Speck = tiny bit
	of moonlight	Of what	
	shining	What doing	Why was it silver?
	on a polished surface.	Where	What was the polished surface? (a gun)

Each sentence preparation in Table 1 rephrases the sentence, or its relation to preceding sentences, in simple terms before reading the sentence aloud. Preparation cues give a general meaning or a synonym, from which students identify the specific wordings in the sentence. Elaborations deepen students' understanding, in terms of discourse connections *What was Mr Fox doing before*, background knowledge *foxes' eyes can see in dark*, expanding vocabulary *A glint is a tiny light*, or interpreting the story *How would he be feeling?* Elaborations may be given by the teacher, or discussed through questions.

Following Detailed Reading, students are guided to appropriate the author's language choices in Joint Rewriting. As with Joint Construction, new characters, settings and events are brainstormed, and the teacher guides the class to write a new passage, closely modelled on the original. The discussion during Detailed Reading provides a powerful scaffold for students to do so. Text 7 is an example of a Rewrite of the beginning of this passage, using another familiar story to add humour. Each sentence follows precisely the structures of the Detailed Reading passage.

Text 7: Rewrite of Complication from *Fantastic Mr Fox*

At that moment, Pooh's fluffy yellow ears caught a rumbling of something moving in the dark woods very close by. It was a grizzling, growling groan, echoing through the chattering trees. Pooh stood terrified, listening keenly. What in the world could it be? Now it was escalating. It was getting louder and louder. Good heavens! It was his stomach!

As with Joint Construction, Joint Rewriting is followed by Individual Rewriting, in which the teacher circulates within the classroom and supports students as needed. The task is to use the same sentence patterns as the original and jointly rewritten texts, but with their own characters, settings and events. Ideally, a series of Detailed Readings and Joint and Individual Rewrites are done before writing a whole text. This provides students with a repertoire of language resources to use in Joint and Individual Constructions, and then in their independent writing tasks.

Conclusion

As the assessment data suggests, the three levels of strategies outlined here are highly effective at engaging all students in literature and giving them success in writing. The methodology works, firstly, by giving teachers skills and confidence in selecting and

analysing literature in depth and detail, and secondly, by managing their interactions with students to engage and enhance the learning of every student in their classes. In the process, teaching the art of literature becomes as much a pleasure for teachers, as learning it does for students. However, both these skills take practice to master. This is helped by interspersing professional learning with guided practice, but, at its heart it is a theoretically informed body of knowledge about language and pedagogy. This knowledge distills the years of research collaboration with teachers, outlined at the start of this paper. It is offered back to future generations of teachers in the cited publications, most directly in Rose and Martin (2012) and Rose (2016).

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Developing a differentiated model for the teaching of creative writing to high performing students

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Abstract: Differentiating writing instruction has been a puzzling matter for English teachers when it comes to teaching creative writing to high potential and high performing (HPHP) students. The lack of differentiation in creative writing pedagogy for HPHP students in Australia is due to two major issues: (1) teachers' lack of high-level linguistic and pedagogical knowledge and (2) insufficient curriculum support. The paper discusses current practice in HPHP education in the area of creative writing and demonstrates the types of knowledge required of teachers to enable them to extend beyond a regular curriculum and effectively differentiate their teaching in terms of content and process.

Introduction

Literature is one of the three major strands that interactively constitute the current Australian Curriculum: English (AC:E) along with Language and Literacy. Literature is highly valued in Australian schools for its 'personal, social, cultural and aesthetic value and potential for enriching students' scope of experience' (ACARA, 2009, p. 5). Stories from the literature of any culture are the most prominent and enduring form of verbal art. Stories are not only written, read and told for pleasure but also for education in aesthetic and ethical values. Stories come in many genres in the Anglophone culture (Martin & Rose, 2008) and in the story family, narrative is the most frequently taught and assessed genre throughout schooling (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; NAP, 2010). Teaching narrative composition has been a very demanding task for many English teachers in Australia, especially in the domain of education for high potential and high performing (HPHP) students as differentiated teaching in this particular context requires the teachers to deliberately adapt and modify the regular curriculum, instructional processes and assessments to respond to the needs of HPHP students (Maker & Nielson, 1995; Tomlinson, 2014; VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006).

Effective teachers need 'subject content knowledge' (knowledge of an academic domain), 'pedagogical content knowledge' (knowledge of how to teach that academic domain) and 'pedagogical knowledge' (knowledge of how to teach) (Shulman 1987, cited in Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013). Shulman's categorisation of knowledge in the act of teaching in general has been adapted to think about language and literacy teacher's knowledge with 'metalinguistic content knowledge' and 'metalinguistic pedagogical content knowledge' being the terms coined by Myhill et al. (2013). Love, Macken-Horarik and Horarik (2015) adapted the concepts and used the terms 'Linguistic Subject Knowledge' (LSK) and 'Linguistic Pedagogical Subject Knowledge' (LPSK) to bring them closer to the context of the AC:E,

which refer respectively to 'a knowledge of different levels of language knowledge, attentive to form, function and meaning in a wide range of texts' (LSK) (p. 172) and the pedagogical knowledge to be able to apply LSK in the teaching of writing as well as reading (p. 173). Aligning with Myhill et al. (2013) and Love et al. (2015), teachers need to possess secure *linguistic knowledge about narratives* as well as secure *pedagogical knowledge about teaching narratives*.

However, although the two aforementioned types of knowledge are essential to effective teaching of literature, they are not sufficient in the context of HPHP education, where Shulman's third type of knowledge – pedagogical knowledge, needs to be incorporated and employed collaboratively with LSK and LPSK. This paper provides a framework of fundamental areas of knowledge needed for teaching creative writing to HPHP students, and illustrates how these types of knowledge are applied in teaching a Year 7 HPHP student in a regional school. In the following sections, the paper reviews current issues in literacy teaching to HPHP students before explicating the types of knowledge teachers need in order to effectively differentiate the teaching content and process of narrative composition, rather than simply providing differentiated products of student works as exemplified in current Australian curriculum support documents, and illustrating how these were applied in a differentiated teaching sequence.

Current issues with the teaching of narrative composition to HPHP students in Australia

Two major issues contributing to the challenges of differentiated teaching of narratives to HPHP students are teachers' lack of specialised LSK and LPSK and inadequate specific curriculum support.

The lack of differentiated teaching is principally due to teachers' inadequate content knowledge (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005). Specifically, teachers lack high-level LSK and LPSK that would assist them in confidently differentiating teaching content and process. Many Australian teachers (particularly those working in secondary school settings) do not feel well-equipped to cope with the language strand of the English curriculum (Derewianka & Jones, 2010; Jones & Chen, 2012; Love et al., 2015). At the same time narrative is a complex genre with very sophisticated linguistic features in multiple facets (Macken-Horarik, 2003; Macken-Horarik & Sandiford, 2016; Martin & Rose, 2008; McDonald, 2013). Having 'good enough

grammatics' (Macken-Horarik, Love & Unsworth, 2011) or 'secure' LSK and LPSK (Myhill et al., 2013) will enable teachers to deal with the language demands of a regular curriculum but not necessarily to extend beyond the content descriptions of the curriculum to select teaching content that can effectively be differentiated for HPHP students. It is the high level and sophisticated LSK and LPSK that teachers need to make deliberate and systematic decisions about the teaching content and pedagogies which can then be realised in the differentiation of programming, teaching and evaluation of students' works.

The lack of curriculum support documents and literature specified for teaching writing to HPHP students also contributes to teachers' difficulties in differentiating literacy education. In both public and private education sectors, there have been various resources deemed to support curriculum differentiation such as the NSW Department of Education and Communities and Catholic Education Melbourne websites for Gifted and Talented Education (Catholic Education Melbourne, 2016; NSW Department of Education and Training, 2004). These resources provide a comprehensive overview of HPHP education curriculum models such as the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) for programming; the Bloom's taxonomy for planning to meet the cognitive domain outcomes; the Maker model modifications of content, process and product to enhance HPHP students' ability to manipulate abstract and complex ideas; and the Williams model for fostering HPHP students' creative thinking (NSW-Department-of-Education-and-Training, 2004, pp. 13–21). Although these models serve as very useful tools for designing curriculum and activities to differentiate HPHP students' *products*, they are rather generic and not applicable for the differentiation of *content* and *process* in teaching writing, which in fact requires LSK and LPSK as discussed earlier. Samples of literacy units following these models are also for differentiating products rather than the teaching content and process. Australian teachers, therefore, are not well-supported when working in the HPHP education area.

Teachers' programming is commonly based on students' 'needs' or what they cannot do, and the teaching hence focuses on deficits rather than building upon and extending what students have already achieved. For high achieving HPHP students in creative writing, it is not always easy to identify what they cannot do at their year level based on the achievement standards of the regular curriculum. As a result of this, common

alternative ways of implementing differentiated writing instruction to gifted students include moving them to a higher grade and/or assigning them more work or different tasks, and such alternatives are not what differentiated instruction is meant to be (Tomlinson, 2009). Instead, a differentiated programme or lesson should 'permit students to demonstrate mastery of materials they already have' (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2004, p. 11) and provide opportunities for them to extend their work along this trajectory. These principles require sophisticated knowledge about LSK and LPSK that enable teachers to extend beyond the scope of a regular curriculum.

The assessment and evaluation of HPHP students' creative writing is another issue for English teachers in Australia due to inadequate LSK, LPSK and curriculum support. The assessment and evaluation criteria teachers often rely on are either unsystematic, linguistically uninformed, vague and generalised statements describing random features of narratives, or only assess different aspects of texts in isolation (such as the NAPLAN Writing: Narrative Marking Guide's assessment criteria of 'Audience', 'Text structure' and 'Sentence structure') (NAP, 2010). Moreover, teachers' responses to students' narratives are often intuitive or prone to correction against the *conventions of print* (Dargusch, 2014; Fang & Wang, 2011; Macken-Horarik & Sandiford, 2016). Such feedback will certainly fail to extend HPHP students' creative writing.

Teaching creative writing, particularly narrative writing, to HPHP students is indeed a very complex issue due to the multi-dimensional knowledge required of teachers who are provided minimal curriculum support. The following sections demonstrate the types of knowledge teachers are required to have in order to effectively differentiate content and process (including teaching, assessment and evaluation) when teaching creative writing to HPHP students.

Linguistic and pedagogical knowledge required for differentiated teaching of creative writing

LSK about narrative: knowledge for differentiating teaching content

As the social purpose of narratives is to entertain and educate readers, it is important that writers are able to make readers 'care' about the stories and manipulate readers' feelings and judgements about events and values in the story. This kind of interpersonal meaning is 'crucial to effective composition of narratives'

(Macken-Horarik & Sandiford, 2016, p. 67). However, this is not to diminish the role of the other types of meanings (i.e. experiential meanings for dealing with the plot; logical meanings for elaborating (i.e. restating, reformulating, exemplifying and describing ideas), extending (i.e. adding, contrasting and replacing ideas) and enhancing ideas (i.e. explicating when, where, how and why) to enrich the action, reaction and description phases at sentence level; and textual meanings to make ideas hang together as a whole and to convey a coherent message). The type of linguistic knowledge needed to teach students about such rhetorical effects of language is certainly not simply the rules of traditional grammar that could be used to correct students' writing. It has to be the type of knowledge that allows teachers to help students see the relations between linguistic choices and their meanings. Knowledge about the metafunctions of language (experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings), stratification (layers of language), and context (genre purpose, staging and phasing) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Martin, 1992; Martin & Rose, 2007, 2008) is the key to understanding the holistic functioning of language. Linguistic features of narratives at different levels including stages (prototypically including orientation, complication and resolution) and phases (e.g. setting, action, reaction, description) (Martin & Rose, 2008), interpersonal meaning resources (e.g. inscribed and invoked attitudes, graduation, focalisation, and voicing) and logical meaning resources focusing on sentence structure and development of ideas (e.g. expansion) have been well demonstrated as significant knowledge bases for effective teaching of narrative. (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Macken-Horarik, 2003; Macken-Horarik & Sandiford, 2016; Martin & Rose, 2008) This paper focuses on interpersonal meaning resources for intensifying attitudes, extending the Appraisal framework originally developed by Martin and White (2005).

The Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005) includes the system of Attitude describing linguistic resources for expressing personal feelings, judgement of people's characters and behaviour and appreciation of inanimate things and phenomena. The 'volume' of Attitude can be 'turned up and down' by resources of the Graduation system such as Force for intensification of attitudes and quantification of amount, extent and frequency to augment attitudes; and Focus for sharpening or blurring the boundary of entities and the completion of processes (Hood, 2010; Hood & Martin,

2007). This paper focuses on resources for intensification of attitudes, and the use of this LSK in differentiating content in the teaching intervention reported herein.

Strategies for intensification of attitudes include isolated lexemes, semantic infusion, repetition and exclamation (Ngo, 2013). *Isolated lexemes* refer to both grammatical items (e.g. *very* greedy, *slightly* greedy) and lexical items (e.g. *dreadfully* cold, *dirt* poor). Skilful narrative writers often use isolated lexical items for amplifying attitudes, rather than grammatical items, to make the expressions more vivid by embedding evaluative stance within them.

Semantic infusion refers to the degree of amplification of meaning being infused in one single term. Semantically infused lexemes can be understood as non-core words constructed from core meaning topped up with degree or manner or a subtle additional aspect of meaning. For example, 'anguish' is semantic infusion because its meaning is constructed from the core meaning 'pain' added with the degree of 'extreme' and the subtle aspect of 'mental' pain. Semantic infusion is a manifestation of richness in writers' language repertoire. The use of semantic infusion allows writers to achieve precision and sophistication in their expressions.

Repetition is another strategy for intensifying attitudes, which can be understood as linguistic parallelism (Fabb, 2008), referring to a relationship of partial identity between sections of a text. There are three types of parallelism: syntactic, phonological, and lexical (Fabb, 2008, p. 462). Phonological parallelism is, in fact, the alliteration technique, which is the repetition of sounds. Lexical parallelism is repetition of the same words or words that are semantically related (e.g. '*I ran and ran and ran, not knowing where I passed; or I am different – alienated, lonely and excluded from society*'). Syntactic parallelism refers to the same or similar syntactic structure of parts of a text (e.g. *Stop! You can't! You can't!*). This is repetition of groups or phrases, clauses or sentences and even the whole phrase. Repetition of the same part of a text intensifies a quality, process or attitude overall (such as in '*I ran and ran and ran, not knowing where I passed*'). Repetition of parts of a text that are semantically related such as in '*I am different – alienated, lonely and excluded from society*' serves the purpose of elaboration (Macken-Horarik & Sandiford, 2016) and at the same time creates the effect of augmenting the degree of the attitude expressed in the repeated item (i.e. '*different*').

Exclamation can be considered as 'outburst' of feelings. Exclamations are used in direct quotes to project characters' mental processes or verbal interactions with each other and are realised as wordings (e.g. *Phew!*). Exclamations can also be realised by typography, often in larger font (e.g. 'Stop! YOU CAN'T!') or extra letters (e.g. 'Oh nooo! Stop it. You caaaaan't.') to resemble the loudness and duration of an oral speech, creating an effect of liveliness in written language.

The resources for intensification of attitudes in story writing presented above are delicate LSK about narrative. This level of delicacy in language features of narrative composition is not presented in any curriculum documents. However, effective HPHP literacy teachers need access to this knowledge if they are to differentiate teaching content in their lessons.

PLSK for teaching narrative composition: knowledge for differentiating teaching processes

There are many aspects of PLSK that teachers need in order to effectively deliver the differentiated teaching content to their students and to sensibly evaluate their work. Fundamentally, the required PLSK includes knowledge about teaching approaches for programming and how to deliver writing feedback in evaluating student work.

The key ingredient in programming a writing unit of work is the teaching approach, taking into account the student profile and teaching context. Two of the most significant **approaches to teaching writing** have been process writing (Graves, 2003) and the genre-based approach (Rothery, 1994). Process writing involves five phases of Pre-Writing/Planning, Drafting/Writing, Revising, Editing and Publishing, in which the three phases of Planning, Writing and Revision have been identified as being 'critical to effective writing instruction' in the North American context (Warger, 2002, cited in VanTassel-Baska & MacFarlane, 2008, p. 751). In Australian schools, the genre-based pedagogy has been highly promoted and adapted to contextualised pedagogies such as Scaffolding Literacy (Gray, Cowey & Axford, 2003), Accelerated Literacy (Gray, 2007) and Reading to Learn (Rose, 2006; Rose & Martin, 2012). Basically, the teaching sequence under this writing approach involves four phases of Field Building, Deconstruction/Modelling, Joint Construction and Independent Construction (Derewianka & Jones, 2012). The differences between the two writing pedagogies are that the first one gives students more autonomy and freedom to be

creative whereas the latter is more dependent on the teacher's structured input and modelling, which may be perceived as inhibiting student creativity. However, the language focus in the process writing approach seems to be rather simplistic, generic and lacks logical linguistic reasoning in the order of teaching content. VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh (2006) identified language focus among a list of essential skills gifted learners need to be taught, including: 'paragraph development', 'theme development', 'development of introductions and endings', 'work on supporting ideas', and 'effective use of figures of speech' (VanTassel-Baska & MacFarlane, 2008, p. 755). In contrast, the teaching of language in the genre-based pedagogy is influenced by the functional model of language and is systematically organised according to the metafunctions of language and their realisations at different levels of language in relation to a particular social purpose (genre). It is critical that HPHP education teachers are able to make decisions about what to adapt and adopt from current practices in writing pedagogy to differentiate the programming of a teaching sequence that can most effectively enhance their students' learning.

The other dimension of PLSK this paper discusses is knowledge about how to deliver structured explicit feedback when evaluating students' texts to build on their work, assuming teachers already possess high-level LSK. In teaching writing, structured feedback based on specific instructional objectives produces higher achievement gains than vague and general feedback (Appleman, 2014). An explicit structured feedback consists of five phases: (1) evaluation, (2) teaching, (3) task setting, (4) student redrafting, and (5) student's reflection. **The evaluation phase** can start with identification and evaluation of one specific instance in the student's text against one particular teaching content. The evaluation can indicate whether the instance is strong and can be extended or the instance is not strong and should be enhanced. For example, if 'semantic infusion' is one teaching content in the teaching sequence, a specific instance of semantic infusion in the student's text (e.g. '*agonising*' in '*tears of agonising pain raised to my eyes*') should be identified and evaluated in terms of the effectiveness of intensifying attitudes. The evaluation can then expand to other similar instances in the text (e.g. 'anguished' and 'alienated'). In **the teaching phase**, students can be asked to develop a generalisation of common rhetorical effect from the instances teachers identified in their text and extend with examples outside of the text. In

the case of teaching semantic infusion, teachers can discuss the common interpersonal effect of intensifying attitudes among all the semantic infusion instances identified in the evaluation phase and ask students provide examples of semantic infusion outside of the text before introducing the terminology 'semantic infusion'. This is when the teaching moves from specificity to abstraction. In the **task-setting phase**, teachers can use metalanguage when setting the task. For example, they can start by telling the students that they are going to enhance intensification of attitudes through the use of semantic infusion in their writing, then ask the students to go over their text again, find instances where they could have used semantic infusion and edit the text by using semantic infusion. The **redrafting phase** occurs after this when students work with specific instances in their texts. On the students' completion of the task, the teacher can ask them to **reflect** on their changes (e.g. their new choices of semantic infusion), which again moves from specificity to abstraction. The cycle of structured explicit feedback moving between specificity to abstraction is illustrated in Figure 1.

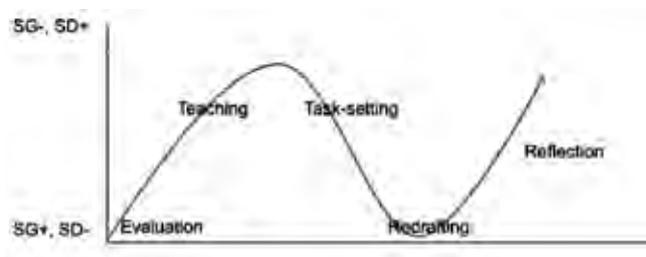


Figure 1. Example of a semantic wave of structured explicit feedback

The case study

Teaching context: student and researcher profile

The student, Thuy-Tien (pseudonym), in this study was a 12-year-old Year 7 high performing student in a selective class in a regional high school. Thuy-Tien came from a middle class family whose first language is Vietnamese and only started learning English at the age of six when her family migrated to Australia. Thuy-Tien had intrinsic motivation for academic work and very strong cognitive, affective capacity and language gifts. Regarding her home education environment, she was exposed to an enormous amount of Vietnamese and English literature. Creative writing was in fact Thuy-Tien's hobby rather than a school task. Before starting Year 7, Thuy-Tien had composed a large

number of stories and poems of a variety of genres. Thuy-Tien's strengths in narrative include creative story line, skilful management of narrative genre stages and phases, strong use of elaboration at sentence level and a very rich repertoire of evaluative resources. Her only weakness seemed to be her inconsistent use of tense and verb forms due to her first language influence.

The researcher is Thuy-Tien's mother and an academic whose expertise is in educational linguistics and who lectures in Literacy and TESOL education in a regional university. The researcher had always been working closely with Thuy-Tien at home in consultation with her English teachers to assist her as a HPHP student from Stage 2 onwards.

The teaching context of this case study is that at school Thuy-Tien had learnt about the poem '*Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening*' by Robert Frost (1923) (see Appendix 1). The English teacher at school had done a unit of work to address the sub-strand of Responding to Literature, having the students figure out the theme of the poem. Literally, the poem is an appreciation of beautiful nature. Metaphorically, it can be understood as a message about death or even suicide via the metaphorical meaning of 'sleep' in the last verse:

'And miles to go before I sleep.' (Robert Frost, 1923)

As part of the Creating Literature curriculum sub-strand, Thuy-Tien, along with her classmates, was given a task to compose a narrative that would continue the flow of the theme conveyed in the poem. Thuy-Tien chose to pursue the metaphorical theme – death (see Thuy-Tien's final draft in Appendix 2).

The differentiated teaching sequence: content and process

In the light of Thuy-Tien's profile, particularly her strengths and weaknesses in narrative composition, her mother selected 'teaching content to enhance' and 'teaching content to accelerate' as the two aspects of 'enhancing' and 'accelerating', which should be incorporated in HPHP education (NSW-Department-of-Education-and-Training, 2004).

In this study, the teaching sequence prioritised **teaching to enhance** and the language focus was on extending Thuy-Tien's already very good communication of attitudinal meanings, using the resources for intensification of attitudes as explained in 3.1, with Repetition, Semantic Infusion and Typography as the order of the teaching content. The level of detail in

the teaching of each of the language contents varied depending on its level of abstraction and complexity. Semantic infusion, for example, was explained in greatest detail, while typography as a resource for amplifying attitudes was least complicated and therefore taught most briefly.

In addition to 'language focus to enhance', the teaching sequence also had 'language focus to accelerate'. As mentioned in the previous section, although Thuy-Tien had a very strong command of literary techniques and a rich repertoire of descriptive and evaluative language, there were still L1 influenced grammar mistakes of past tense verb forms in her writing occasionally, such as in '*I look at my reflection in the water, I realised my side was torn with blood dried and matted on my fur, tangled and ungroomed*'. This was a 'mistake' rather than an 'error' because Thuy-Tien was well aware of the variation of verb forms in past tense, which is evident in her conjugation of other regular verbs such as 'realised'. However, this aspect of language still needed to be incorporated in the teaching sequence to increase her awareness of the change of verb forms in past tense and the accuracy and fluency of her writing. This language focus was not 'taught' to Thuy-Tien but identified for her to self-correct.

The differentiated individualised **teaching process** for Thuy-Tien adopted the aspect of student autonomy and freedom for creativity of the process writing approach and the systematic organisation of teaching content of the genre-based pedagogy. The teaching sequence for Thuy-Tien started with a discussion of the context of the text to be composed, including genre (narrative) and field (the story plot), followed by a pattern of student writing and teacher's feedback and completed with student's revision of the text as a whole and self-editing. The model in Figure 2 illustrates this sequence.

The discussion of context in this particular teaching sequence was about the plot and ideation of the text that the student wanted to compose. In addition to the theme of 'death' conveyed in the poem, the student needed to include key ideas of the poem such as the settings-'the village', 'the woods', and 'the dark snowy evening' and the participants -'the man riding on a horse', 'the snow' and 'the darkness'. The teacher feedback on teaching contents for enhancement followed the five phase model outlined in section 3.2. The teacher's feedback for content for acceleration (i.e. verb forms) involved only two phases of evaluation of sample instances and discussion of error correction. No correction was done for the student but she was

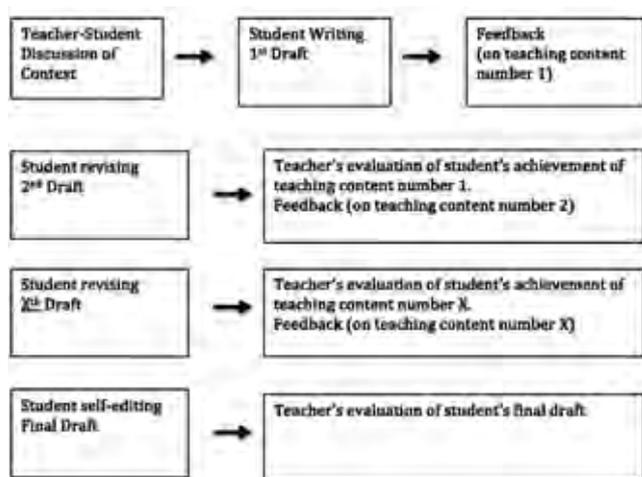


Figure 2. The differentiated teaching sequence of narrative composition

directed to resources such as grammar factsheets and a dictionary when necessary.

Evaluation of product: the student's work

At the end of the teaching sequence, Thuy-Tien's final draft was of high quality incorporating all the teaching contents. Ideationally, the story incorporated all the 'images' of the settings and participants represented in the poem, yet wove them together in a cinematic plot (see Appendix 2). In terms of the interpersonal meanings, the student demonstrated excellent knowledge and skills in using linguistic resources of Repetition, Semantic Infusion and Typography for intensification of attitudes as shown in both her dialogue exchanges with the teacher-researcher and her final draft. In her dialogue exchanges, for example, the student unpacked the meaning of 'infusion' in the term 'semantic infusion', bringing the concept closer to something she was familiar with in her own analogy:

So semantic infusion is like infused tea. When you want to have strawberry tea, for example, you don't need to have a strawberry fruit separately and tea leaves separately. You can have both in one teabag and when you drink it, you can't see strawberry and tea separately but you can feel the infusion of both.

In terms of **Repetition**, in the final draft, the student demonstrated highly skilful deployment of this resource at all language levels. Repetition of whole phrases using syntactic parallelism was applied in the opening and ending phases (sections 1 and 18) and action phases of the killing-Complication (section 5) and the revenging-Resolution (section 17). The repetition of the syntactic structure of the opening phase in the ending phase creates a sharp contrast between the

main character's mood and feelings before and after his revenge for his family's death. Before the revenge, he was 'lost', 'lonely' and powerless (i.e. 'sinking into the snow').

(1) *I was lost. A lonely person, lost in the middle of the deep and dark woods. Sinking slowly into the snow.*

Lost in the mind ...

Lost in the heart ...'

After the revenge, he was 'not lost', 'determined' and no more powerless as he was 'standing' on the snow rather than 'sinking' into it.

(18) *I'm not lost. A determined person, standing on the carpet of crimson snow in the middle of the deep and dark woods.*

Determined in the mind ...

Determined in the heart ...

It was the same 'heart' and 'mind' that were referred to but the feeling of 'lost' at the beginning was replaced by 'determined' at the end. Thuy-Tien did not need to explicitly describe this shift in the character's mood but she was successful in doing so by using Repetition of syntactic structure of the whole phase. Similar effects of contrasting can also be seen in the killing and revenging phases. This powerful effect did not exist in Thuy-Tien's first draft when repetition of the syntactic structure of the whole phase was not used.

Repetition at word level of the same words can also be seen in these two phases above, with 'lost' and 'determined' being repeated in every clause, which could very effectively intensify the two feelings. Repetition of words that are semantically related was also found throughout the story as exemplified and highlighted in section 8, the reaction phase describing what the character saw after his family was shot.

(8) *Mother. Father. Sister. Their faces torn and tortured in most brutal ways and their eyes staring into space, emotionless and lifeless. Nothing but shattered bodies and pools of blood.*

In the first sentence in section 8, Thuy-Tien could have used one word 'my family' instead of naming each person. However, the repetition of each family member makes the reader feel that the character's pain of losing each family member keeps mounting up each time she mentioned one person.

Repetition of syntactic structure at clause level (e.g. 'red like') was also skilfully used to amplify the character's extremely negative feelings of 'grief, anger and pain' via the iteration of the colour 'red' in the scene he saw. In Thuy-Tien's first draft, she did not have this repetition.

(10) *I stepped outside, speechless with grief, anger and pain. The fire was no longer warm and comforting, but a violent and uncontrollable rage that burnt the Christmas tree and its decorations. Smell of burnt pine from the fallen Christmas tree lingered through the house like some eerie ghost of a false happy past. The snow was a crimson red. Red like Father's book cover on that day. Red like Mother's dress on that day. And red like Sister's hair ... Red like their blood.*

In terms of **Semantic Infusion**, Thuy-Tien demonstrated a mastery of this interpersonal meaning resource throughout her story. Examples of semantic infusion can be found in extract (10) above such as 'grief' intensifying 'sadness' and 'rage' intensifying 'anger'. This sophisticated linguistic feature had already been present in Thuy-Tien's writing and was one of her strengths in creative writing. The explicit teaching of semantic infusion brought her use of semantic infusion to consciousness and enabled Thuy-Tien to make deliberate choices of when to use semantic infusion. In phase 10, for example, the character's feeling was introduced by the core meaning lexeme of 'anger' in the first sentence (i.e. *I stepped outside, speechless with grief, anger and pain*) and was pushed to the higher degree through the use of the semantically infused lexeme 'rage' as the story unfolds (i.e. *The fire was no longer warm and comforting, but a violent and uncontrollable rage that burnt the Christmas tree and its decorations*).

In terms of **Typography**, Thuy-Tien incorporated typography of upper-case (i.e. YOU CAN'T) in her focalisation phase to resemble the loudness of the 'scream', amplifying the character's feeling of 'pain' and 'loss'. This was not found in her first draft where all the exclamations were in normal case.

(6) *Tears of agonising pain and loss sprung to my eyes. I didn't want to and couldn't face the reality. I wanted to say to them, 'STOP! You can't! YOU CAN'T!' and my mouth opened in a silent scream. I felt something hit me on the head, and I knew nothing more.*

The inclusion of the three intensification strategies introduced in this teaching sequence enhanced the interpersonal and logical effect of the student's writing remarkably at genre, phase and sentence levels. This piece of writing demonstrated HPHP students' ability to respond to instruction in dealing with a very challenging task in creative writing, even for professional writers, which is to engage the readers and make them 'care' about the characters and the story. Intensification strategies are only one aspect of interpersonal linguistic features of narrative but could very effectively make a significant difference to the student's writing.

Conclusion

The paper has discussed issues with HPHP education in the field of writing in Australia and demonstrated the types of knowledge teachers are required to have to differentiate the curriculum effectively in terms of content and process as demonstrated in the teaching sequence and the student's final draft. The first issue is teacher's lack of LSK and PLSK in order to differentiate teaching content and process. The case study reported in this paper is a vivid example of teaching content and process that teachers with high levels of relevant professional knowledge can use to extend high achieving students' creative writing. It is an individualised teaching sequence tailored for one student. What teachers need is high-level and delicate LSK and PLSK to deliver complex and abstract teaching content to students and extend far beyond the regular curriculum.

The second issue discussed in this paper is teachers' lack of quality curriculum support documents. Currently available resources for teachers not only lack specific guidance in how to differentiate writing teaching, but they also include problematic advice that warrants critical examination. One such piece of advice notes that 'teachers of the gifted devoted less time to instruction and more time to questioning' (Silverman, 1988 cited in NSW-Department-of-Education-and-Training, 2004, p. 49). This conflicts with the view in guidelines for quality teaching in another support document which states 'Although Gifted and Talented (currently replaced by 'High Potential and High Performing') students are usually adept at complex thinking and language use, they often benefit from the explicit teaching of high-order thinking' (Professional-support-and-curriculum-directorate, 2003). The teaching of abstract linguistic concepts introduced in this study and how to manipulate them in the text requires high-order thinking. This needs explicit teaching as illustrated in the five phase feedback model in section 3.2 rather than implicit teaching via questioning. Another point about the teaching environment that teachers need to be alert to is the comment 'Most teachers rely heavily on feedback but some teachers of gifted avoid doing this' (NSW-Department-of-Education-and-Training, 2004, p. 49). Teachers need to critically understand the multifaceted nature of productive feedback and ensure they do not reduce feedback to error correction. The teaching illustrated in this study was based firmly on the teacher's structured and explicit feedback and if teachers avoid doing this, how else could they build on the student's writing?

The discussions of the two major issues in HPHP education in writing instruction provided in this paper call for holistic and unified actions from all educational stakeholders. Australian literacy education has been too focused on 'bridging the gap' between low and high achieving students (as manifested in the development of literacy pedagogies such as Accelerated Literacy and Reading to Learn) and has neglected the extension of higher achieving talented students. The practice of inclusive education in Australia has actually been exclusive of HPHP students in teaching writing. Teachers of HPHP students need more support in accessing high-level LSK and LPSK and their use in developing differentiated writing pedagogies.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (by Robert Frost 1923)

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Appendix 2: Thuy-Tien's final draft

Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening

By: A Year 7 student, 1 March 2015

(1) I was lost. A lonely person, lost in the middle of the deep and dark woods. Sinking slowly into the snow.

Lost in the mind ...

Lost in the heart ...

(2) It was the evening of Christmas Eve. The warmth of the fireplace spread around the house and the decorations around the Christmas tree glimmered in the firelight. The vivid smell of gingerbread filled the house with its delightful smell of nutmeg and cloves. Mother was making them, and my little sister spent her time decorating them in icing. Father, who was a doctor, was sitting in the corner of the room, reading books and newspapers. I sat, watching the soft downy flakes of snow settle onto my windowpane. The snow was so white, and glistened like a thousand diamonds in the sombre moonlight.

(3) In the background, I could hear my family laughing joyfully and sharing stories of the year gone by. I smiled and continued to gaze out the window at the serene and placid scenery. I wanted to open the window so badly, to experience the cold icy touch of the snow. After all, there was nothing separating me from the beautiful scenery, apart from a sheet of glass. But Father told me not to.

'Children, there is war going on,' he said, 'and it is important that you do all the things Mother and I tell you to do to keep you safe. Do you understand?'

I agreed, naturally, because you just couldn't disagree with Father. We promised we would do anything unconditionally to keep ourselves away from harm. I evidently still didn't understand.

(4) I carefully opened a fraction of the window. Then, I saw the most beautiful snowflake of all. Crisp and clear it was in the pale moonlight. As I reached my hand out to touch the most delicate snowflake of all, the peacefulness shattered with a loud gunshot. Father stood up from his chair, alarmed. The newly painted front door was forced open, and there stood soldiers with rifles. I could tell by their facial expressions that they weren't the kind soldiers that told us to evacuate, like Mother had told me about, but they were merciless and cruel. They asked Father and Mother if they knew any information, but they both reiterated several times that they knew nothing. The soldiers were obviously losing their patience and said something in a strange language, then, they pointed their guns at Mother and Father. They loaded the gun, and pressed the trigger.

(5) Everything was in slow-motion,
The bullets flying through the air ...
the widening of Father's eyes ...
Mother's face white with despair ...
They shot a bullet right in Father's head. And they did the same to Mother and Sister.
Shot them until they were dead.

(6) Tears of agonising pain and loss sprung to my eyes. I didn't want to and couldn't face the reality. I wanted to say to them, 'STOP! You can't! YOU CAN'T!' and my mouth opened in a silent scream. I felt something hit me on the head, and I knew nothing more.

(7) And today, when dawn broke, I woke up too. I thought yesterday was just a dream, a horrible dream. But when I looked around, I realised it was true. Around me was blood. Pools of innocent blood, spilt for no reason. I glanced around the room ...

(8) Mother. Father. Sister. Their faces torn and tortured in most brutal ways and their eyes staring into space, emotionless and lifeless. Nothing but shattered bodies and pools of blood.

(9) I walked and gently closed their eyes. I closed mine too, to stop the tears, although that didn't help at all. I thought of all the things I could have said to the brutal people and all the things I could have done to stop them. What I could do now is only to go bury my family somewhere where there are no soldiers who will shoot them for no reasons again.

(10) I stepped outside, speechless with grief, anger and pain. The fire was no longer warm and comforting, but a violent and uncontrollable rage that burnt the Christmas tree and its decorations. Smell of burnt pine from the fallen Christmas tree lingered through the house like some eerie ghost of

a false happy past. The snow was a crimson red. Red like Father's book cover on that day. Red like Mother's dress on that day. And red like Sister's hair ... Red like their blood.

(11) I ran and ran and ran, not knowing where I was going or who I passed. All I saw was the red crimson snow. The crimson snow of pain and innocence and ...

Death!

(12) Night time came. Now I sat against a tree trunk, alone in the deep dark forest. It was a moonless night, and the woods suspended into a pitch blackness. I wanted to be with them. Why could I not have been with them? Why was I separated, alone and isolated from the world? After all, there was nothing separating me from them, apart from a long, long sleep that lasted forever. Like there was nothing separating me from the snow apart from a sheet of cold glass.

But whether I had chosen to open that window or not on that fatal night depended on me.

(13) It's so easy to sink into the wonderful snow, to sleep in an endless sleep, and to dream of pleasant things, of wonderful times and events. But the moment you open your eyes, the moment when you realise what is reality and what is not, the more tempting it is to close your eyes again. There seemed to be no tomorrow, no today, no yesterday and it seemed that time had suspended into beautiful visions of a happy future, yet ignoring the horrible truths of the present.

(14) Stop being weak! I must be strong. I must be brave and courageous, and find the justice that would be restored to my innocent family. I would forever defend the innocent, the weak, the defenceless and the powerless, even if my life was at risk-at risk of threat, of danger and of death.

(15) My determined horse and I galloped through the woods, fast yet quietly, as soft as snow falling. We were riding on the white snow, in search for peace and justice. Soon, it would be the enemy I saw in pools of blood. It would be the enemy I saw in sorrow and despair. It would be the enemy's blood which dyed the snow crimson red.

(16) Silently, I blended in with the snow. I saw them. On another Christmas Day, there they were-laughing together, leaving the evil deeds forgotten behind. My white horse obeyed me, and stood perfectly still, camouflaged in with the white snow. I had my rifle in hand. I aimed for their heads.

(17) Everything was in slow-motion.
The bullet flying through the air ...
the slow turn of their heads ...
their sneering faces suddenly aware ...
I shot a bullet right in his head. And I did the same to the rest of his comrades.
Shot them until they were dead!

(18) I'm not lost. A determined person, standing on the carpet of crimson snow in the middle of the deep and dark woods.
Determined in the mind ...
Determined in the heart ...

Language Variation and Change in the Australian Curriculum English: Integrating sub-strands through a pedagogy of metalogue

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Abstract: The Language Strand of the Australian Curriculum: English (Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2016b) includes the sub-strand of 'Language Variation and Change'. This sub-strand is a marked space for discovery and discussion of the history and politics of language use. As such, this sub-strand points to an agenda of respect for different languages in use throughout Australia, including the means of communication between Indigenous Australians and those representative of multicultural Australia. We posit that this important sub-strand can be made more enduring by not being treated as a 'singular' (Bernstein, 2000) but integrated with Content Descriptions from other Language sub-strands. This integration of knowledge, called 'regionalisation' by Bernstein (2000), 'implies challenges for pedagogic practice' (Wolmarans, Lockett, & Case, 2016, p. 99). As a way forward, we consider the affordances of an instructive dialogue or metalogue (Bateson, 1972). To demonstrate how such a pedagogy might unfold in a class discussion, we introduce one stimulus text, 'Old Cat' (Aquilina, 2016), and consider the 'Language Variation and Change' sub-strand requirement for students to recognise that all languages and dialects are of equal value. We then document how integrating the Content Description from the 'Language Variation and Change' sub-strand with a Content Description from the 'Text Structure and Organisation' sub-strand using a pedagogy of metalogue provides for a deep appreciation about the historical and linguistic accounts of languages. Doing so offers productive discussion about the agenda of respect for the different languages in use between Indigenous Australians and throughout multicultural Australia.

Background to the 'Australian Curriculum: English'

The establishment of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in December 2008 was momentous in the history of Australian education. ACARA's establishment was the impetus for the nation 'to consider what all Australian children should learn, how their learning and progress should be assessed, and how Australian school education should be reported back to the community' (ACARA Annual Report, 2009, p. 7). Informed by the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (Ministerial Council on Education Employment, Training & Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), 2008), ACARA's mission was to develop a world-class national curriculum, and national assessment and reporting programs to enable all young Australians to become 'successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens' (ACARA Annual Report, 2010, p. v). Accordingly, the design of the Australian Curriculum involved enhancing 'the school experiences that Australian students are collectively able to access' (Hill in ACARA Annual Report, 2009, p. 7). To this end, the Australian Curriculum was conceived as a three-dimensional 'living' document comprising: (i) traditional discipline or content areas; (ii) three contemporary cross-curriculum

priorities (CCPs) which singled out areas such as 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures', 'Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia' and 'Sustainability' as highly relevant to students' lives; and (iii) seven general capabilities, for example, 'Literacy' and 'Intercultural Understanding', which represented the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions considered necessary for students to function successfully in an increasingly complex globalised world (ACARA Annual Report, 2010). This design was hinged on the belief that each student, regardless of where they live, can achieve high standards provided they have sufficient time, resources and support which necessarily includes teachers who have appropriate training, and opportunities and support to improve their professional practice (ACARA Annual Report, 2010).

From the earliest English curriculum documents, integral to this design was the role that the *Australian Curriculum: English* (hereafter AC:E) would play in developing the understandings, attitudes and capabilities needed for students to engage effectively in contemporary Australian society. This emphasis recognised Australia's linguistic and cultural diversity. This recognition manifested in the AC:E's three interrelated strands namely, 'Language', 'Literature' and 'Literacy', which were intended to support students' growing understanding and use of the English language (National Curriculum Board, 2009). Specific aims of the AC:E included supporting students to: 'learn Standard Australian English to help sustain and advance social cohesion in our linguistically and culturally complex country' and 'respect the varieties of English and their influence on Standard Australian English' (National Curriculum Board, 2009, p. 5). Such aims transcended the desire to ensure that the AC:E was accessible to all students, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) students, but stressed, as Exley and Chan (2014) observed, the 'imperative for all young Australians to develop better understandings of the interconnected nature of cultures and identities' (p. 61).

Behind this drive were broader moves in Australia toward reconciliation between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians and a new and increasing wave of multiculturalism in Australia that had resulted from complex processes of globalisation. Despite some policy changes that served to promote a transformation among Australia's population

toward equality for all people, much needed national discussions about contested issues such as sovereignty, constitutional recognition, power relationships, racism, conflict and acceptance mean that latent tensions that would impede an agenda for reconciliation and multiculturalism persist. This backdrop of continual dynamic social, cultural and political flux in twenty-first century Australia highlights the difficulties faced by the AC:E writers in curriculum development. Simultaneously, it underscores the significant challenges for AC:E teachers to develop student understanding and use of the English language. This challenge amplifies an inherent tension created by the AC:E's silence about how the curriculum should be taught – leaving decisions about pedagogical enactment for teachers to make given the requirements and needs of their school contexts and individual students.

Continued politicisation of the Australian Curriculum however, has led to notable changes in the documents. Indeed, successive Commonwealth governments with opposing ideological views has meant that even before a complete set of curriculum documents could be finalised for trial implementation, existing documents underwent a review in 2014. And even before the formal review began, in his three and a half minute televised announcement of the review, Education Minister Christopher Pyne (2014) identified a number of criticisms of the Australian Curriculum, including questioning the 'necessity' to have 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures' as a CCP. The controversial curriculum review by Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014) subsequently saw many references in earlier versions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders deleted and in other places references to Australia's Judaeo-Christian heritage inserted (see Adoniou, 2015).

This situation demonstrates that:

who decides what is taught in and through education, how that learning is organised and the evaluative criteria for students and teachers is the site of intense struggle at the macro level of state policy formation, the mezzo level of syllabus committees and the micro level of face-to-face or virtual teaching and learning practice. (Vitale & Exley, 2016, p. 7)

Such a reality creates challenges for AC:E teachers seeking to enact a curriculum which respects and advances an agenda of reconciliation and multiculturalism. These challenges are exacerbated by innovation and implementation fatigue given the number and rate of change to curriculum documents that teachers

have experienced over the past several years. New challenges have also emerged which concern the lack of knowledge and understanding of beginning and experienced teachers about the politics of reconciliation and multiculturalism – not just concerning Indigenous Australians but people of all races, religions and cultural groups. In a national study on the education of Indigenous students, *The Stronger Smarter Learning Communities Project*, for example, Luke et al. (2013) noted that despite significant community support for the embedding of Indigenous knowledges in the curriculum, the reality in practice suffered because of ‘significant problems with non-Indigenous teacher knowledge and intercultural sensitivity’ (p. 120). In writing about tensions between policy and practice in reconciliation agendas in the AC:E, Exley and Chan (2014) drew further attention to the complexities involved given Trudgen’s (2010) research of living in a remote Aboriginal community in Arnhem Land, Australia. They wrote that Trudgen found that ‘after living, working, laughing and crying with a proud and functional Aboriginal clan for more than a decade [there was] no definitive list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives or worldviews’ (Exley & Chan, 2014, p. 61). The point is that the continual intersection of environmental and historical factors meant that people’s world views continually changed over time and place (McLaughlin & Whatman, 2011). However, Associate Professor Tracey Bunda, Chair of Indigenous Studies at Deakin University and a Murri woman from Queensland, Australia, noted that raised awareness of such complexities has meant that many teachers actively avoid important cultural teaching. Speaking at the 2013 Social Educators’ Association of Queensland (SEAQ) conference, she stated that this is because: “They are fearful of not “getting it right”, asking themselves, “Am I entitled to talk about cultural matters?” and “Am I regarded as a perpetrator because of past actions?”” (Bunda, 2013).

In the sections that follow, we consider this backdrop of complexity in light of the work that is demanded of AC:E teachers, specifically in reference to the Language Strand.

The Language Strand of the ‘Australian Curriculum: English’

The Language Strand of the AC:E is ‘based on concepts drawn largely from historical and linguistic accounts of the English language’ (ACARA, 2016b). The Language Strand is made up of five sub-strands, as noted below:

- Language Variation and Change
- Language for Interaction
- Text Structure and Organisation
- Expressing and Developing Ideas
- Sound and Letter Knowledge.

The first of these sub-strands, ‘Language Variation and Change’, focuses on students learning that ‘languages and dialects are constantly evolving due to historical, social and cultural changes, demographic movements and technological innovations’ and understanding that ‘these factors, along with new virtual communities and environments, continue to affect the nature and spread of English’ (ACARA, 2016b). This sub-strand has received very little attention in the research literature to date. It is thus prudent to review the full complement of Content Descriptions for the ‘Language Variation and Change’ sub-strand of the AC:E from Foundation to Year 10 (see Table 1). A notable feature of this complement is that each year level is represented by a single Content Description that presents a topic related to the form or spread of language use. The discernible topics include: many languages (Foundation), Auslan (Year 1), genre and mode (Year 2), historical overview of languages (Year 3), historical overview of English (Year 4), historical overview of pronunciation, spelling and meanings (Year 5), dialects within Australia (Year 6), evaluation of language in an era of new technologies (Year 7), dialect between English and other languages (Year 8), language as living (Year 9) and language as continually evolving (Year 10). The specific learning of each Content Description is not provided; it is assumed that teachers’ and students’ different social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds will enable them to engage with these Content Descriptions in different ways.

We also see the ‘Language Variation and Change’ sub-strand as the place where the politics of language use meets the politics of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and multiculturalism within the Australian population more generally. The point needs to be made that the AC:E is focused on disciplinary English, so the teaching of Indigenous languages and Languages Other Than English is outside its ambit; that is the work of the Languages learning area (ACARA, 2013). What the AC:E does provide however, as suggested by Exley, Davis and Dooley (2016) ‘are opportunities for involvement in practices through which the social order is changed, for example, through partnerships with local

Table 1. Content Description from the AC:E Version 8.2 (ACARA, 2016a)

Year Level	Content Description from the AC:E Version 8.2 (ACARA, 2016a)
Foundation ACELAI426	Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community
Year 1 ACELAI443	Understand that people use different systems of communication to cater to different needs and purposes and that many people may use sign systems to communicate with others
Year 2 ACELAI460	Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background
Year 3 ACELAI475	Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning
Year 4 ACELAI487	Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages
Year 5 ACELAI500	Understand that the pronunciation, spelling and meanings of words have histories and change over time
Year 6 ACELAI515	Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English
Year 7 ACELAI528	Understand the way language evolves to reflect a changing world, particularly in response to the use of new technology for presenting texts and communicating
Year 8 ACELAI540	Understand the influence and impact that the English language has had on other languages or dialects and how English has been influenced in return
Year 9 ACELAI550	Understand that Standard Australian English is a living language within which the creation and loss of words and the evolution of usage is ongoing
Year 10 ACELAI563	Understand that Standard Australian English in its spoken and written forms has a history of evolution and change and continues to evolve

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop language awareness activities to meet AC:E indicators' (p. 37).

Another important consideration of this complement of Content Descriptions is that their topics should not be seen as silos. Bernstein (2000) calls knowledge that addresses only themselves 'singulars' (p. 52). In our

reading of the AC:E, we prefer not to trap understandings from 'Language Variation and Change' within its singular. The viewpoint to which we subscribe treats knowledge, understandings, skills and processes about the nature and spread of languages as a dialectic that evolves from, is situated in, and contributes to active participation within a social arena (Halliday, 1978). We thus prefer to open possibilities for what Bernstein (2000) refers to as 'regionalising knowledge' (p. 52) across the sub-strands of the Language Strand. The remit of the AC:E is that the knowledge, understanding, skills and processes form ongoing dialogue across the years of schooling. The AC:E explains that 'learning in English is recursive and cumulative, and builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years' (ACARA, 2016b). An implication of regionalisation, or what Stavrou (2011) refers to as a 'rupture' of knowledge categories (p. 145), is the expectation that more than one inferential path exists through a students' career in subject English.

We conceive of language as being dynamic and complex and also needing to be considered in relation to one or more of the other sub-strands such as 'Expressing and Developing Ideas', 'Language for Interaction' and 'Text Structure and Organisation'. These three sub-strands have been recontextualised by the AC:E writers from the three bundles of language functions or *metafunctions* identified in contemporary educational linguistics (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) – one bundle for construing experiences in the world (the ideational metafunction), one for enacting interpersonal meanings (the interpersonal metafunction) and a third bundle for organising these into coherent texts (the textual metafunction) – into Year Level Content Descriptions in the AC:E (see Derewianka, 2012; Exley, 2016; and Exley & Mills, 2012 for a more detailed explanation).

A suggested pedagogy for the language strand

As noted in this manuscript, another remarkable feature of the AC:E is that it 'does not prescribe approaches to teaching' (ACARA, 2016b). Guidance about possibilities for enactment may be gleaned from the seven general capabilities which include 'Personal and Social Capability', 'Ethical Understanding' and 'Intercultural Understanding'. Together these general capabilities may be called upon to assist students to become responsible young citizens who are able to successfully participate with others in a variety of different local, national and international contexts.

This ability requires students to develop knowledge and understanding about the interconnectedness of their identity not only with their culture and language use but also with the culture and language use of others. As noted by Wolmarans et al. (2016), a shift from singular knowledge to a regionalisation of knowledge 'implies challenges for pedagogic practice, especially if the shift remains implicit and invisible to students' (p. 99; see also Millar, 2016).

Willis and Phillips (2016) posit that such strategies may be developed in subject English through the use of quality texts. For example, teachers can choose texts which enable them to assist students to examine the more obvious aspects of their own and others' cultures (e.g. clothing) and to interpret the less obvious aspects (e.g. values) with greater understanding. Such texts may enable students to see how their behaviours, words and dispositions are influenced by their languages and cultures and how different interpretations in meaning by different cultural groups may be connected to unequal power relationships. The use of quality texts can also enable students to compare their experiences with others by looking for commonalities and contrasts in ways that cultivate empathy, foster mutual respect, celebrate diversity and encourage critical thinking about bias and stereotypes (Willis & Phillips, 2016). Using the combined lenses of the general capabilities to teach about identity and cultural diversity in the English classroom also presents multiple challenges for teachers such as: choosing texts that represent cultural perspectives beyond narrow, tokenistic or touristic ways; recognising possibilities for student misunderstandings; and equipping students with the skills to critically engage with texts by asking questions, seeking clarification and working collaboratively as they interact with people, histories, stories and one another (Willis & Phillips, 2016). Equipping teachers with effective strategies for using quality texts can therefore assist to cultivate reflection in students who in turn can contribute to and benefit from a curriculum of reconciliation and multiculturalism.

In the next section, we use one quality text, the poem, 'Old Cat' (Aquilina, 2016), as stimulus for how teachers may consider regionalising Content Descriptions from across the Language Strand of the AC:E. We consider 'Old Cat' a quality text because it offers teachers opportunities to go beyond tokenistic or touristic ways of thinking about linguistic and cultural differences to enable students to connect deeply with complex issues like reconciliation and

multiculturalism. Our demonstration of practice uses metalogue (Bateson, 1972) – a pedagogical strategy that we have used previously in our work individually and together (e.g. Willis & Exley, 2015; Willis, Kretschmann, Lewis, & Montes, 2014; Willis & Menzie, 2012). Bateson describes metalogue as 'a conversation about some problematic subject' (p. 12). In this article, metalogue allows our readers to metaphorically 'eavesdrop' as we engage in dialogical conversation about how aspects of the poem such as language features and their effects invite teachers and students to talk about the way that language works. Bateson elaborates that metalogue '... should be such that not only do the participants discuss the problem but the structure of the conversation as a whole is also relevant to the same subject' (p. 12). As presented in this article, metalogue encourages participants to adopt an open disposition to learn with and from one another about different interpretations of the poem and the possible effects of these aspects. Hence, our metalogue affords readers deeper understandings and explanations of the poem yet shows we, qua participants, engaged with one another in a form of conversation where: each voice is respected (e.g. through equal turn taking and not talking over one other); ideas are shared and built upon; judgement is suspended; debate without necessarily reaching consensus occurs; and differences are valued. These characteristics reflect the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions considered necessary for students to develop such general capabilities as 'Personal and Social Capability', 'Ethical Understanding' and 'Intercultural Understanding' in order to function successfully in an increasingly complex globalised world (ACARA Annual Report, 2010). Metalogue thus provides a means to emulate ways English teachers might advance the regionalisation of language knowledge to promote an agenda of reconciliation and multiculturalism in their English classrooms.

Demonstration of metalogue to explore another language/dialect

In this metalogue, we hone in on two Year Six Content Descriptions from the Language Strand of the AC:E, namely ACELA1515 and ACELA1518 (see Table 2).

To begin our metalogue, we both read the stimulus text, 'Old Cat' (Aquilina, 2016, p. 5). We shared what we knew about Jude Aquilina, the South Australian poet, and about our separate contextual experiences with being 'owned' by a family cat. We realised we

Table 2. Linking Two Content Descriptions from the AC:E (ACARA, 2016a)

Language Strand Sub-strand	ACELA Content Description	Elaboration
Language variation and change	Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English (ACELA1515)	recognising that all languages and dialects are of equal value, although we use different ones in different contexts, for example the use of Standard Australian English, Aboriginal English and forms of Creole used by some Torres Strait Islander groups and some of Australia's near neighbours
Text structure and organisation	Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects (ACELA1518)	examining different works by an author who specialises in humour or pathos to identify strategies such as exaggeration and character embarrassment to amuse and to offer insights into characters' feelings, so building empathy with their points of view and concern for their welfare

each had connections to this topic, with Linda's being more pronounced in her childhood and Beryl's being both in her childhood and through her family members who are all still 'owned' by various family cats. We discussed our recounts as emotional experiences, shared experiences and connecting experiences, thereby giving licence to 'storytelling'.

We then considered the poem (see Figure 1), one 'utterance' at a time as presented by the poet. We consider an utterance to comprise the words between the beginning and end of each slash. We asked ourselves focus questions drawn from the ACELA1518 elaboration,

in particular the use of language features, including pathos (mentioned in the elaboration). Pathos is a language resource that 'creates a unity of feeling that builds allegiances' (Humphrey, 2010, p. 12) and is one part of the three forms of rhetorical appeal (persuasion) conceived by Aristotle (in Kennedy, 2007). The three forms of rhetorical appeal include:

- Ethos – an unemotional statement that highlights the trustworthiness of a character
- Logos – a logical argument/statement
- Pathos – the emotional effect a text has on a reader (which often includes the pairing of emotions such as 'happiness' and 'sadness').

(Aristotle in Kennedy, 2007)

*Figure 1. 'Old Cat' by Jude Aquilina (2016, p. 5).
Used with the generous permission of the poet.*

Is poem about old cat I once had / I call old
one Stinkrat / he live to shaggy twenty /
is poem of purr-engine cat / the sort that
sit and rub and rub and nibble till you
give ear-rubble then he roll on back / if no
scratch / he scratch / you must tummytickle
rough and round and up and down
and he purr and purr / and when you stop
he stand up and head-butt / purring louder
/ louder / if no more come he swipe leg
or he clamber up and bite pen / no more
writing he say pushing big skull up under
my chin / he bad old ankle-nipping cat
when food take too long / he hiss-snake
cat when tread on tail / he sneak and steal
from table cat but when I look he just clean
paw beside empty pie / he bad and he old /
and I'll be that one day / so I open can for
toothless yowl and pat scruffy head.

Rather than being definitive language elements focused on form (such as nouns, verbs and adjectives etcetera), ethos, logos and pathos are interpretations of how language is functioning in a particular instance of use. Ethos, logos and pathos have to be 'read' into and from the text, by the 'active' reader. Ethos, logos and pathos do not always have clearly defined boundaries; rather they are woven into the text as a subtle form of persuasion. To better highlight the expertise of the language user (in this case the poet) and the sophistication of this dialect of English, we discuss the language features most present in the text, including evidence of ethos, logos and pathos and 'how it works' (ACARA, 2016b, p. 7). Unlike the systematic work of a linguist parsing this text to examine its grammatical form, we are responding to the regionalisation of knowledge of the Language strand of the AC:E. Our metalogue, as it occurred, is presented in written form below.

Is poem about old cat I once had /

Linda: From the opening utterance, I see Aquilina introducing the reader to a new language dialect that she uses throughout the poem. In Standard Australian

English (SAE), the opening might otherwise be written as, 'This is a poem about an old cat that I had once'. To me, the dialect has an almost 'rap' feel. I'm also seeing language such as 'old cat' used to evoke pathos in the audience and to connect with them through a personal yet common relatable experience of losing a pet cat.

Beryl: I see pathos evoked through the use of the word 'once'. She uses this word to draw on her own experiences as valid, making an appeal to the audience through logos. At the same time, the word 'once' shows logos. It gives the poem its narrative structure; as the audience, we think we know what to expect since we've all had a pet that is no longer here.

I call old one Stinkrat /

Linda: 'Stinkrat' combines 'stink', an unflattering word, and 'rat', where rats are regarded as the enemy of cats, to produce a compound word that is powerful for the way it conjures an image for the audience that includes how the cat might look and smell. And yet Aquilina uses 'one' which the audience might recognise as a diminutive term of endearment rather than dismissive language. The careful juxtaposition of 'old one' and 'Stinkrat' is where I see a kind of playful respect since in Australia it's common to use nicknames as a way to playfully engage others.

he live to shaggy twenty /

Beryl: If you took out the word 'shaggy' we would have a declaration about the cat's age – an appeal to the audience through logos. 'Shaggy' also appeals to pathos. It stirs our emotions because it delivers a realisation that two decades for a cat is a phenomenal age and that Stinkrat has survived on 'borrowed time'. And when we're talking about authorial choice, Aquilina could have said 'ratty' or 'bedraggled' which conjure up different emotions for the reader. There is also an appeal to the audience through ethos: the fact that Aquilina kept the cat alive for twenty years means that she is a trustworthy cat owner. Cats don't live that long by accident!

is poem of purr-engine cat /

Beryl: Logos is created around the declaration that: 'this is a poem about a cat' but pathos is carried through the adjective 'purr-engine'.

Linda: Aquilina has used text structure here in a similar way to utterance three: taking a statement – logos – and injecting pathos through careful word choice. As with 'shaggy', if we were to remove the

adjective 'purr-engine', the effect of the words would be quite different.

the sort that sit and rub and rub and nibble till you give ear-rubble then he roll on back /

Linda: Aquilina uses poetic devices such as onomatopoeia with the use of double letter words – 'nibble' and 'rubble' – and alliteration – 'rub', 'rubble' and 'roll' – and repetition – 'rub' and 'rub'. The conjunction 'and' is used to extend the length of the utterance, perhaps to convey the time over which the action takes place. The poet engenders pathos through the use of discursive devices such as 'the sort that' which we might recognise in SAE as: 'you know the sort'. This has the effect of appealing to the audience's experiences. It's difficult to separate ethos, pathos and logos. There is the appeal to ethos that convinces us that Aquilina knows what she's talking about; pathos as the poet recollects memories similar to those we each might have of pets; and an appeal to logic as the poem accords with audience expectations in terms of our knowledge of (1) cats and (2) poetry.

if no scratch /

Beryl: For me, that word 'if' is so conditional; I'm seeing an emotional effect, that if Aquilina dares to withdraw the 'right' of scratching, it would mean denial or neglect.

Linda: Yes, the word 'if' does the work of appealing to pathos but also logos as it's almost like: 'if you don't pay attention to me, then Aquilina can expect a negative response'.

he scratch /

Beryl: We have the most typical (logical) negative response: old cat scratches back.

Linda: But how clever is authorial choice here, since 'scratch' in utterance six and seven is used in two different ways. In six, the scratch is friendly but in seven, it's more retaliatory.

you must tummytickle rough and round and up and down and he purr and purr /

Linda: Here again Aquilina uses poetic devices such as onomatopoeia – 'tummytickle', alliteration – 'rough' and 'round', and repetition – 'purr' and 'purr'. 'Round' and 'down' provide a sense of rhyme and the use of the conjunction 'and', without any interruption as seen in utterance five with 'till' and 'then', serve to convey the extended length of time over which the action takes place.

Beryl: I see the language as giving us a game; it's the language of a game. And all of the things you've said make an appeal to the audience through logos: it's the rules of the game.

Linda: The word 'must' is interesting too. The modality is the strongest possible; it indicates the described interactions are non-negotiable.

and when you stop he stand up and head-butt /

Beryl: We see that if Aquilina doesn't engage in the rules of the game, there is a consequence. The structure of the utterance to focus on the conjunctive 'when' sets up the responsibility of the human: if the human makes the choice to 'stop', then the human needs to expect that the cat is almost obligated to offer a 'head-butt'.

Linda: That is the nature of what cats do; it's predictable.

Beryl: Aquilina is appealing to the audience through logos.

Linda: And I think there is an appeal to ethos given that her knowledge of how cats and humans interact is convincingly represented.

purring louder /

Beryl: In this next utterance, I'm actually feeling a bit overwhelmed by pathos because the rhythm of a purring cat has an emotional effect on a cat owner, or one who has been 'owned' by a cat.

Linda: It's the way they connect with their owner and, in this case, the use of modality (louder) communicates that Stinkrat is making some form of demand.

Beryl: It's almost like: 'serf' (Aquilina) please 'thy master' (Stinkrat).

louder /

Linda: The next utterance, a repeated single word, shows the cat's demands are escalating. The use of text structure with two short utterances in quick succession creates a metaphoric crescendo which makes me wonder about how the tension between cat and owner will be released. I think Aquilina uses these techniques to appeal to the audience's ethos (we know cats can be demanding) and logos (if you ignore this cat, the situation is only likely to worsen).

if no more come he swipe leg or he clamber up and bite pen /

Beryl: The focus here again is on the conditional word 'if'. 'If' serves to structure the utterance and give meaning to the text. I'm also seeing a lot of prosody.

Linda: Prosodic elements in written texts are not often spoken about. I can see elements of prosody through the use of 'if' which creates stress for the audience through the repeated use of certain text structures. So too, repetition of words like 'louder' that creates a pattern so that the audience assigns more emphasis to the word each time it's used. I'm also seeing the logical release of tension in the cat's actions. Aquilina combines action verbs and repeated long vowel sounds in the words 'swipe' and 'bite' to convey these actions as swift and predictable.

no more writing he say pushing big skull up under my chin /

Linda: This is the first time I'm seeing personification of the cat. That hasn't happened before. It's almost like a point in the interactions between Aquilina and the cat has been reached that Stinkrat has to say: 'you really need to pay attention to me'.

Beryl: It's the word 'say', isn't it?

Linda: That's what I'm seeing: we're hearing from the cat now, through the poet's voice. It's such a strong emotional connection between the cat and owner that we actually gain the sense that Aquilina knows the cat so well that, if the cat could talk, this is what he would say.

he bad old ankle-nipping cat when food take too long /

Linda: I'm feeling different emotions. I'm thinking of the context of a twenty-year relationship. We know that as people age they seem less tolerant and patient and I imagine that also happens with animals. You might not accept such behaviour from a younger cat, but the poet's decision to put the word 'bad' before 'old' in the noun group 'bad old ankle-nipping cat' suggests that Aquilina understands Stinkrat's behaviour in the context of their long relationship. It's like the cat has been anthropomorphised.

he hiss-snake cat when tread on tail /

Linda: Calling Stinkrat 'he hiss-snake cat' is very powerful. If we were to ask students how they might express this idea in SAE, I wonder how much meaning might be lost. For example, is Aquilina saying that the cat hisses like a snake when you step on his tail? Or, do the words 'he hiss-snake cat' operate like a noun group to develop Stinkrat's character for the audience? I see this utterance as providing another example of the potency of Aquilina's dialect given the different possible meanings she captures by the words she chooses.

Beryl: There are also appeals to emotion to justify the less desirable character attributes of old cat. Having a tail stepped on is not altogether too pleasant, so pathos is invoked as I start to feel sorry for the cat and concerned for his welfare. It's really quite an emotional roller coaster this poem.

he sneak and steal from table cat but when I look he just clean paw beside empty pie /

Beryl: So the noun group 'he sneak and steal from table cat' is actually doing the character work here; the power of contrast. It's almost as though Stinkrat has gone from cat burglar to innocent cat. Appeals by Aquilina to logos and pathos achieve this effect.

he bad and he old /

Beryl: This utterance also uses contrast. Stinkrat's character is one of perplexing contrasts.

Linda: The repetition of 'bad' and 'old' together with the juxtaposition of these two ideas sets up that contrast.

Beryl: And in the structural pairing we feel empathy.

and I'll be that one day /

Linda: These words are a powerful declaration. Because getting old and passing away are inevitable for all living things, the connection between Aquilina and Stinkrat is incontestable. So too, the connection Aquilina makes with the emotions of her audience for whom these ideas also hold true. Here again we're seeing careful weaving of ethos, pathos and logos.

so I open can for toothless yowl and pat scruffy head.

Linda: I'm really struck at the movement in the poem toward the end. I see this occurring through Aquilina's use of tense. In the first utterance, Stinkrat is introduced as a cat Aquilina 'once had' (past tense). As the poem concludes, Aquilina speaks as if the cat is still there: 'so I open can' (timeless present tense). It's as if her memories have meshed with the present and she is affectionately reliving the relationship she had/has with her cat.

Beryl: So the audience is able to pick up on the way that the poet is referring to someone who is dearly departed in the present: this is an emotional reaction to grief. And here's an opportunity to reconnect to the pathos of the text. I'm seeing Aquilina's style of offering those many opportunities to connect to ethos, pathos and logos, and you and I have done that differently, but what is unexpected is Aquilina's provision of so many choices throughout her poem. Some of her

words are mundane but used effectively; other words are neologisms yet we can appreciate their intent. It's almost as if you have to pause at the end of the poem to allow the surge of emotions to wash over you and be absorbed into your consciousness.

Conclusion

At the outset of this manuscript, we offered several ideas about how we think about the sub-strands of the 'Language' strand of the AC:E and the possibilities of regionalising their knowledges, as well as the affordances of a pedagogy of metalogue for advancing agendas for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian and the greater agenda of multiculturalism throughout Australia.

The first point we make is that the 'Language Variation and Change' sub-strand of the AC:E is a marked space for discovery and discussion of the history and politics of language use. In this manuscript we demonstrate how a dialect of English can become known as robust and substantial in and of itself. We resisted the colonising discourses of labelling difference as deficit, or trying to translate the text into SAE, instead examining the different levels of the dialect and possibilities of meaning Aquilina made available to each of us as an active reader. We respected the language as it is and the way it is shaped and the authorial choices that have been made.

Our second point is that including a Content Description from another sub-strand gave our work with ACELA1515 (ACARA, 2016a) more substance. Using ACELA1518 (ACARA, 2016a) and its inherent reference to language features and the grammar of rhetoric, provided the framework for our discussion about a stimulus text that is marked by a different dialect. We contend that the 'transformation' (Stavrou, 2011, p. 144) of the singulars permitted us to bring a lens that is integrated with other knowledge about language from another sub-strand of the Language strand. There is something symbolically powerful about the ability to appropriately combine a range of disciplinary discourses in a manner evoked by a particular piece of text in order to analyse that text. Bernstein (2000) contends that the possibility of regionalising knowledge – such as regionalising agendas of reconciliation and multiculturalism with a version of linguistic analysis – points to the ongoing currency of both knowledge sets.

Our third point concerns the affordances of metalogue as a pedagogy for enabling a rich discussion of

the identifiable language features and their effects. Our example of metalogue showed how two teachers worked within a pedagogy of metalogue. Such a demonstration might offer students a way to develop conscious, cumulative knowledge about language to position them as researchers of language in use. In using a pedagogy of metalogue, we implicitly advanced an agenda for reconciliation and multiculturalism. The tenor and processes at work, for example, showed how the strategy afforded each of us 'permission' to maintain our own voice as we talked about difference as being substantial and intellectual. In doing so, metalogue allowed us to show respect for each other's ideas and perceptions as well as for the intellectual complexity of different languages and dialects. Hence, metalogue affords the reader (and participants in the dialogue) a new lens for looking at difference as a resource, not difference as a deficit. The academic label of metalogue gives credibility to the multiple layers of 'talk pedagogy'. Doing so validates this process as something other than a regular conversation; we were informed by the experience of conversing but also operated within a regionalisation of knowledges about language.

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Building a metalanguage for interpreting multimodal literature: Insights from systemic functional semiotics in two case study classrooms

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Abstract: English is an already crowded curriculum and the incursion of multimodal literature puts it under increased pressure. How do teachers and students learn to understand and deploy tools of analysis that shed light on verbiage and images without becoming entangled in a complex and crowded analytical language? Is it possible to develop a metalanguage that relates meanings made in one mode to those in another – to enrich literary interpretation without overwhelming students' appreciation of literary texts? An adequate response to this question calls for an epistemological stance and metalanguage that accepts *polysemy* (multiple meanings); that reads choices as *motivated* by higher order concerns; and that is *relational* in its approach to analysis. This paper explores the potential of systemic functional semiotics (SFS) for addressing such requirements. Drawing on data collected in the final year of an Australian Research Council project (DPI10104309), it considers three principles of SFS informing the metalanguages used by two secondary teachers in their work with students on literary picture books and fiction films. Halliday's principle of metafunctions (three major kinds of meaning) enabled the teachers to explore different meaning frames in interpreting images and language; the principle of system (contrasting options for meaning in a given semiotic environment) allowed them to open up the idea of choice for students in analysing texts; and the principle of stratification made relations between meaning, function and form easier to unpack in classroom discourse. The affordances of such intellectual tools in SFS are observed in students' oral and written responses to literary picture books and in teachers' accounts of what they taught and what they learned from their classroom interventions. The paper interleaves reflections on each aspect of SFS with interview accounts of how the metalanguage was used to enhance literary interpretation of selected students. The final section of the paper highlights implications of this case study work and possibilities for future research into the relationship between metalanguage and processes of metasemiosis in literary interpretation. It turns on the question of whether the analogic power of concepts like metafunctions, system and stratification gives students portals to literary meaning that enrich (without crowding) interpretive work on multimodal texts.

Introduction

Young people's pleasure in multimodal narratives is well known. Whether in storybook conversations between caregivers and children, in social media fragments with their cryptic response codes (WTF or lol or J), imitative responses in fan fiction or extended commentaries in panel discussions like *First Tuesday Book Club* or *The Movie Show* on Australian television, text response is ubiquitous. But demands for more specialised 'literary' responses

to texts call for particular kinds of interpretive attention and for metalanguages attuned to the interplay of pictures and words (and other semiotic choices) in multimodal literature. Understanding the comic force of parallel narratives in picture books like *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins, 1968), gender reversals in *Piggybook* (Browne 1986/1996) and (later) the combined action of image, verbiage and layout in graphic novels like *Maus* (Spiegelman, 1980) calls for metalanguages adequate to their complex workings and tractable for those who deploy them.

In semiotically fertile enterprises like this, English asks much of young learners. And it seems they are 'up for it' too, especially if their teachers are. Exploration of the riches of multimodal literature is an exciting aspect of disciplinary practices. But there is a challenge in this plenitude too. While the texts (and modes through which they communicate) are expanding, the task of integration – of higher-order interpretation – remains pressing. Literary study is at the disciplinary heart of subject English. And study of multimodal literature, even at secondary level, has become a prominent aspect of this endeavour. But if we take seriously the fact that literary texts selected for study now include a diverse array of picture books, graphic novels, e-literature and film narratives, we need to offer students a working vocabulary for exploring particular choices in each mode and the contribution of each mode to the workings of the whole text. In other words, both exploration and integration are central to multimodality. A key problematic here, one that the Australian curriculum has not resolved, is the matter of conceptual overload. The review of the curriculum conducted in recent years was predicated in part on the claim that it is 'content' heavy, conceptually incoherent and has 'too many areas to cover' in a deep way throughout schooling (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014). But whether we accept criticism of the curriculum as overly crowded or not (many teachers did not), there is a problem with terminological weight in multimodal analysis, especially if we adopt a different metalanguage for each mode. Theo van Leeuwen contextualises the issue this way:

Traditionally words and pictures have been analysed in quite different ways. Different disciplines, different terminologies, different methodologies, and different criteria of relevance grew up for each: linguistics for language, art history for pictures – and for children's drawings mostly Piaget-inspired developmental psychology ... This made it difficult to compare the two, to investigate, for instance, whether a text and its

illustration, or a photo and its caption derive from the same underlying construction of the reality that is being represented. (van Leeuwen, 2000, p. 276)

The question van Leeuwen and colleagues have investigated is whether we can develop common principles, common semiotic functions and even a common terminology for multimodal analysis. Research informed by systemic functional semiotics has pursued this line of inquiry in analysis of images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), artworks (O'Toole (1994) and even film narratives (Bateman, 2013). The excursions have been promising and have influenced curriculum development in Australia (ACARA, 2012). However, the implications for a coherent approach to literary interpretation need careful consideration. If students are asked to compare meanings made in photo and caption, text and illustration and perhaps music and montage in film narration, they require unifying abstractions to bring their analyses together. In short, if students are to engage with multimodal literature in a focussed and uncluttered way, they need access to a shared metalanguage that enables them to move from consideration of one mode (e.g. colour palette or visual framing) to another (e.g. tone or verbal framing) and to 'climb' from analyses of semiotic choices in different modes to higher orders of interpretation. These shifts are made along two dimensions. For example, visual point of view can be compared to that linguistic point of view in a picture book. This is analysis on a horizontal dimension – of intermodality (Painter, Martin & Unsworth, 2013). Analysis of their higher order significance occurs on a vertical dimension, exploring questions about what the interplay means more abstractly. Both metasemiotic 'moves' are crucial to interpretation of multimodal literature and depend on a model of meaning making that accounts for both dimensions.

The Australian curriculum for English (AC:E) is ambitious in its remit when it comes to multimodality. Its content descriptions for secondary English build on those for earlier years in ways that bear closer scrutiny. In Year 7, for example, students are expected to 'compare the ways that language and images are used to create character' (ACELT1621)¹ In Year 8, they 'explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener' (ACELY1735). Then in Year 9, they 'analyse and explain the use of symbols, icons and myth in still and moving images and *how these augment meaning*' (ACELA1510). The underscoring of a principle of augmentation is deliberate because

we still know so little about how readers draw on and integrate meaning cues in different modes to interpret texts (see Unsworth, 2014 and Unsworth & Chan, 2009 for discussion). And, if research into the horizontal (interplay) dimension of multimodality is pressing, the vertical one is urgent. A 'meta' perspective is necessary if students are not only to analyse language and image in still and moving images but synthesise their understandings in explanatory accounts. As Len Unsworth argues about the Australian curriculum:

In grades 6–10, the content descriptions require a 'meta' perspective of the students, assuming the role of text analyst (Freebody & Luke, 1990), explicating the semi-otic bases of the 'constructedness' of the multimodal texts. What is not at all clear is what kinds of explanations are expected of students in these content descriptions for grades 6–10. (Unsworth, 2014, p. 28)

Getting 'meta' to texts is something many students find difficult. In the face of an open question about a narrative (e.g. What do you think the story is about? or 'Why do you think the story ends this way?'), they are at a loss. They wonder about what is required and what kind of response will be acceptable (Macken-Horarik, 2009). In supporting work on such tasks, teachers need access not only to a metalanguage for exploring different choices with students (verbal, visual, typographic, etc), but to principles for orchestrating analyses into written responses. The matter of conceptual overload is important, especially if students are asked to comment on visual as well as verbal choices and explain how they contribute to a work's themes. Is it possible to develop a metalanguage that deepens interpretation without crowding, and perhaps overwhelming, students' appreciation of texts? As I explain below, this requires a metalanguage that is relevant to texts (and their elements) and to processes of meaning making (or metasemiosis).

This paper outlines three principles of metasemiosis that emerged as crucial to a metalanguage adequate to school English in recent research (e.g. Macken-Horarik & Unsworth, 2014; Macken-Horarik, Sandiford, Love & Unsworth, 2015). The data on which the current paper is based was collected during the final year of a larger study that investigated the character of grammatical knowledge necessary for English teachers and their students in work on narrative (2011), argument (2012) and text response (2013).² In this paper, I focus particularly on text response as this was taught by teachers following workshops based on principles of systemic functional grammar (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)

and a framework developed by Painter, Martin and Unsworth (2013) to explore image and verbiage in literary picture books. We drew on this to introduce workshop participants to tools for analysing texts like *The Lost Thing* (Tan), *The Tunnel* (Browne), *The Violin Man* (Thompson) and *Not Now Bernard* (McKee). Guiding principles in systemic functional semiotics (hereafter SFS) like metafunctions, system and stratification can inform analysis of linguistic choices in verbal narratives and visual choices in multimodal narratives. Our project exploited analogies between visual and verbal choices in common areas (e.g. dialogue, point of view, emotion) to 'uncrowd' the semantic space of analysis. In this way, tools of SFS were used to help students 'travel' across modes, investigating commonalities and differences in these. And, as will be seen, they were used to help students integrate insights through unifying abstractions such as focalisation, social distance, ambience.

Importantly, our dialogue with the profession was two-way. As professionals with responsibility for implementing a new curriculum, project participants had to see evidence of a strong interface between workshop resources and the AC:E. Fortunately, the metalanguage of the AC:E is based on the functional model associated with SFS (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Martin, 1992 & 2009; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This made the negotiation of principles and tools of SFS much easier for project participants and enabled researchers to think productively about those aspects of SFS needing adaptation in light of curriculum demands and teacher needs.

This paper includes extracts from interviews with two case study teachers and their students and some of students' written responses to questions about literary picture books. Along with 31 other teachers, the focus teachers Annette and Tom³ attended workshops on text response and adapted tools presented in each session for units of work planned for the following term. As researchers, we did not ask teachers to trial our schemes of work but to 'infuse' the ideas and resources into the work they had to do anyway, albeit with a focus on multimodal narratives. The aim was to help teachers improve their students' understanding of visual and verbal modes and to enable them to write more effective response texts. Because we working with Years 4, 6, 8 and 10, we introduced teachers to a range of response genres, including review, thematic interpretation and critical response.

The two teachers have been selected for special

focus in this paper. Annette's work is interesting because it demonstrates both challenges and pleasures of multimodal analysis in the hands of Year 7 students who were new to this way of working with picture books, graphic novels and feature films. It highlights the possibilities of a principled approach to literature – one that shifts students from 'the what' of labelling to 'the how' of analysis and then to 'the why' of interpretation. Annette drew on the principle of stratification to help her students 'climb' from relatively low level work labelling choices to description of their function and finally (ambitiously) to interpretation of their purpose or effect.

Tom's work is interesting for somewhat different reasons. Tom agreed to focus on visual analysis of picture books like *The Lost Thing* in a context of intense achievement pressures on his Year 10 students. His students were working within a strongly paced curriculum and a rigorous assessment regime. And the curriculum pacing did not leave him much time to engage in exploratory work on images or other features of multimodal literature. Tom's challenge was to adapt tools to prepare his students for questions about images in the Year 12 examination. In their responses to interview questions, each teacher 'recontextualised' the metalanguage of SFS (Bernstein, 2000) in distinctive ways. At the same time, they deployed it to assist students to 'read' verbal and visual features of narrative (horizontal dimension) and tackle higher order literary interpretation (vertical dimension). The latter, after all, is the special province of subject English, especially in the secondary years.

In the following sections of this paper, I introduce principles underpinning the 'meta' view of meaning making (metasemiosis), followed by illustrative data from teachers and students. My aim is to bring key attributes of the meta' perspective emerging in this data into greater visibility and to contribute to future discussions of what interpretation of multimodal literature involves. The paper begins with an assertion about metasemiosis followed by elaboration of key attributes. Each feature is then related to data from teachers and students as they reflected on what they had learned in the course of this final year of the study.

Metasemiosis and literary interpretation

Students read and respond to texts throughout their long apprenticeship in school English. Text responses can be oral (talk about texts just read), written (book reviews, interpretive essays) or multimodal (visual

representations of some aspect of a narrative along with written rationale). They can be informal (reading circles), guided (reciprocal teaching) or formal (examination essays). They can be private (journaling), skills-based (comprehension tasks), literary critical (essays again) or post-structuralist (theorised interpretations or critical interventions). But however heterogeneous, text response is always metasemiotic, at least to some degree. The prefix *meta* comes from the Greek and means 'above, beyond or about'; it is often added to the name of a subject, designating another subject that analyses the original one at a more abstract, higher level. Hence *metaphysics* is the study of physics, *metacognition* the study of cognition and *metalanguage* is a language for describing language. And the word *semiosis* comes from Greek to refer to any activity, conduct, or process that involves signs. Metasemiosis is reflection on meaning making; it is 'meta' to processes of meaning making and, to that extent, is always more or less abstract. Metalanguage is a crucial aspect of this knowledge (though not its totality). Of course, such a bald assertion takes us no further than any generalisation. Subject English might be heterogeneous but it rewards certain forms of interpretation in its specialised practices (especially formal assessment). When we research the forms of metasemiosis that English values, we are necessarily somewhere on the vertical dimension, dealing with increased levels of abstraction. And when we build a metalinguistic toolkit for exploring texts that make meaning through different modes, we are somewhere on the horizontal dimension. The key challenge here is to make it accessible to students – to enable them to move between modes and to interpret their abstract significance. Others have drawn attention to the difficulties of introducing an abstract metalanguage for analysing multimodal texts to an already crowded curriculum:

Theoretical formulations describing multimodal texts are not easily transferable to teachers' work with students when the language used is abstract and when they lack connection to actual classroom texts. Any metalanguage needs to have the capacity to engage, rather than inhibit, dialogue about dimensions of multimodality between teachers and learners and amongst diverse learners. Such a metalanguage needs to be invitational, generative and be able to be used flexibly in different contexts. (Cloonan, 2011, p. 37)

This paper offers a response to this claim by Cloonan. An invitational, generative and flexible metalanguage for exploring multimodal literature will have

(at least) three features: it will *accept polysemy*; it will read semiotic *choices as motivated* and it will be *relational* in approach to analysis.

But these proposals are too abstract. An example is needed. A student reads a literary picture book like Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing* (2000). She explores each page – crowded with allusions, carefully framed, typographically unique. She reads the verbal narrative on each page and finishes the book, puzzling over its enigmas (polysemy). She turns back to look again through the text and wonders about the lost thing – the creature at the centre of the narrative, imaged as salient in red throughout. She imagines that the young man who collects bottle tops might also be lost (choices are motivated)? What does it mean to be 'a lost thing' and why is it hard to find again the creatures that have touched us earlier in life? The student processes meanings made in each mode and possible meanings of the interplay. When she turns to another to talk about the text, she will use a metalanguage to refer to choices, arrangements and patterns of meaning (relational analysis).

But her teacher needs ways of scaffolding the talk (and later writing) to ensure it moves in the direction of a specialised metasemiosis (which is valued in school English). Let me elaborate now on each feature of metasemiosis and principles in SFS that help us understand it, followed by discussion of its uptake by project participants.

Polysemy and Halliday's theory of metafunctions

An aesthetic perspective on semiosis assumes that texts are 'made' and made in particular ways that are open to interpretation. It is an assumption that literary texts especially are polysemic – multiple in meaning. The term 'aesthetic' has an old-world air, reminiscent of cultural practices of elite groups with enough money and time to reflect at length upon lyric poetry or Shakespearean drama. In fact, it has contemporary relevance for all English teachers. It is the subject of recent calls by Ray Misson and Wendy Morgan (2006) for an engaged dialogue between critical literacy and the aesthetic. They call for attention to emotional, sensory and affective responses to texts *and* to the material particulars in texts that elicit these:

The aesthetic makes a strong claim for the importance of the material and of knowledge gained through engagement with material reality. However, there is also a persistent strain in the aesthetic that relates it to the numinous, to things immaterial and immanent. (Misson & Morgan, 2006, pp. 27–28)

An aesthetic perspective attends to details such as recurring visual motifs and patterns in the background of a book like *The Lost Thing*, the grain of narrator's (Tim Minchin's) voice in the film based on the book (Tann and Ruhemann, 2010) or perhaps alternating viewpoints on the lost thing in the film's montage. But it is also alive to the numinous, the symbolic force of such particulars in the work as a whole. This is relevant to interpretation generally. Some assume that only canonical texts are polysemic. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is a text that lends itself to a variety of interpretations, none of which fully exhausts its potential meanings. However, as linguists like Carter (2004) argue, polysemy is a feature of almost all processes of meaning making. For example, humour depends utterly on the play of meaning whether in stand up comedy or in off-the-cuff jibes or metaphors in ordinary conversation. Acceptance of the multiple facets of meaning in texts is a necessary starting point in metasemiotic work.

But how do we operationalise the notion of polysemy in school English? Does it need to remain inef- fable or can we provide more systematic 'ways in' to its exploration for students? One portal to this is the principle of metafunctions. Halliday (1978) has argued that all ranking clauses (and indeed texts) make three major kinds of meaning – they about something (idea- tional); they interact with others in a particular way (interpersonal); and they 'hang together' more or less cohesively (textual). In the functional grammar that emerged from this crucial insight, Halliday has shown how clauses encode in microcosm the meaning features that texts display macroscopically (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Metafunctions is a powerful prin- ciple that not only provides a differentiated account of polysemy, but is also echoed in the organisation of the Language strand of the AC:E: Expressing and developing ideas (ideational meaning); Language for Interaction (interpersonal meanings); and Text struc- ture and organisation (textual meaning). But its reach has extended further in work on images and more recently on multimodal texts (e.g. Humphrey, Droga & Feez, 2012; Callow, 2013). In fact, the principle of metafunctions provides a portable intellectual tool for analysing multimodal texts and the metalanguage employed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) is a striking feature of the visual metalanguage of AC:E.

In project workshops, we adapted this principle using a metaphor of 'lenses on meaning' in clauses (the micro view) and in texts (macro view). (Macken- Horarik, et al., 2015; Love, Sandiford, Macken-Horarik

& Unsworth, 2014). In this way, we highlighted ways in which polysemy becomes visible through different optics. For example, when we ‘put on’ an ideational lens in analysing a narrative, we focus on who is involved and what happens to the characters. It is what we highlight when someone asks ‘what is the story about?’ An interpersonal lens, however, brings evaluative meanings into view, the way a text ‘addresses’ us, makes us feel, see and judge. A textual lens throws different choices into relief – texture, organisation, rhythm and framing. While all texts make each kind of meaning simultaneously, some give greater emphasis to one over another. For instance, like other forms of persuasion, advertising works ‘the interpersonal’ angle, while scientific writing emphasises experiential or ‘content’ meaning. Some say that poetry freshens perspectives on experience because of its textual patterning. Roman Jakobson (1971) claimed that some genres and modes make some functions ‘dominant’, pressing them upon our attention.

Acceptance of polysemy was a necessary feature of our work on text response. The principle of metafunctions enabled us to be precise about which types of meaning we were exploring in narratives. Although workshops introduced teachers to three lenses on meaning, we emphasised interpersonal meaning. Understanding how texts position us to see, feel and judge in particular ways is crucial in English and often left out of the picture in many classrooms.

Table 1 displays questions related to literary craft that are relevant to an interpersonal lens on meaning.

How did teachers apply this lens on meaning with

students? I turn now to some telling insights emerging in the work of Annette and Tom and their students.

Looking closely at meanings in multimodal texts: Case study insights

Annette’s Year 7 classroom was abuzz with the excitement of multimodal analysis. Her students loved having access to a metalanguage – as one student put it, a way of making things more ‘concrete’. Annette began her post-intervention interview by expressing enthusiasm for PD that supported work she ‘had to do anyway’⁴:

Annette: I love it. It’s been great. It’s been the best PD I’ve done because usually PD has a focus on something you might implement that was always an extra burden on what you do but *this has been directly related to what I do*. And I’ve found that I can just apply it directly to how I teach now so I haven’t had to make any fundamental mind shifts in what I do.

Annette acknowledged the importance of close attention to class activities analysing interactive meanings in images. Students collaborated on analysis of powerpoint images using the toolkit provided in workshops. A key goal was to help students see images as deliberately composed or ‘made’. For example, having explored the significance of Social Distance (close up, mid-shot, long-shot) and Power (high, eye-level and low shot) in picture books and graphic novels such *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* (Selznick), her students were in a position to analyse interaction in scenes from the film, *Hugo* (Scorcese). But, as Annette admitted in opening remarks, scaffolding metasemiotic awareness in a class takes time:

Table 1. Relating the interpersonal lens to relevant aspects of narrative craft

Interpersonal lens	Interfacing with narrative craft
	<p>Narration: Who tells the story – a narrator or a character? Is this ‘person’ internal/external to events in the story? Is the narration in first or third person (perhaps even in second person)?</p>
	<p>Focalisation: Who sees? How are you being positioned in relation to characters in terms of interaction with them? Consider naming choices, endearments in verbiage and social distance, relative power, involvement in images.</p>
	<p>Dialogue or voicing: Who speaks? How do characters address one another? Do they use endearments, intimate, antagonistic or formal language? Does dialogue reveal character? How? Is dialogue represented in images? How?</p>
	<p>Evaluation or appraisal: What attitudes are expressed? <i>Affect:</i> How are characters’ feelings of un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction portrayed? Do you empathise with them or feel distanced? <i>Judgement:</i> How are personal traits (capacity, normality, tenacity) of characters portrayed? How are evaluations of truth or moral or ethical issues conveyed? Do these ‘invited’ judgements align or distance you from characters? <i>Appreciation:</i> How is atmosphere or ambience conveyed?</p>
	<p>Graduation: Does the text amplify evaluation – via exclamatives, intensifiers or repetition in language; in strong colours and contrasts in the images? Where does this occur? Why here?</p>

1) What is the story about - A selfish bear who had enough of being chased.

2) a) the towns people
 b. locking away
 c. the music players/musicians
 d. to create an aspect of fear for the bear
 e. to keep the scene together
 f. to see the bear's point of view
 g. to draw you in
 h. make it more interesting
 i. to make the score more interesting
 j. to show the reader what is happening and it is all very much to some it up

3.) I would judge this book by the artwork the key words the start and finish. ~~By a good book colour.~~ The people's face and part of the book.

Figure 1. Timothy's pre-intervention response to questions about *The Great Bear*

1) What is the story about - A selfish bear who had enough of being chased.

2) a) the towns people
 b. locking away
 c. the music players/musicians
 d. to create an aspect of fear for the bear
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3.) I would judge this book by the artwork the key words the start and finish. ~~By a good book colour.~~ The people's face and part of the book.

Figure 2. Timothy's post-intervention response to two questions about *The Tunnel*

Now they're starting to think of these texts not just as a story, but as something that's been composed and that's been the big shift for me to see. So they were spotting things like there was a poster of a brick wall behind the two (characters in the movie) and they're learning to take notice of things like this in interpreting the film. We still go back to - - you know if you say to them 'What do you think this text means?' they'll say 'It's a story about a boy and a girl'. They don't always get to really high order thinking. Whereas if I ask them to do that and keep prompting them - 'Why do you think that?' and 'Do you think that's deliberate?' - then they get to that level. But some haven't quite got the idea that is what we want them to do.

Like other teachers in the project, Annette selected two of her Year 7 students for discussion in interviews - a high achiever and one who struggled with literacy. Timothy was in the latter category.

Figure 1 presents Timothy's written responses to questions about *The Great Bear* (Gleeson & Armin) five months earlier.

Timothy's post-intervention response was longer and more confident. It is too long to present in full but Figure 2 presents his answers to the first two questions about the new prompt text, *The Tunnel* (Browne). The first question posed an open question - 'What is the story about?' The second asked students to explain why they thought an image of a young girl gazing out and 'haloed' by tunnel-shaped blackness was shown as it was. Figure 2 displays his responses to these questions.

When I interviewed Timothy about his second response, I began with a question about what he had been doing in class and he provided an interesting insight into the value of a metasemiotic approach for enriching interpretation:

Interviewer: So what have you've been doing in class that you found interesting? What sort of ideas about the images have you been taking up?

Timothy: Lots of analysing like pages and stuff, seeing stuff that isn't there unless you take a deeper look at it.

There is a telling wisdom in Timothy's observation. Learning to see stuff 'that isn't there unless you take a deeper look at it' is one way of thinking about polysemy. Annette commented on the impact on Timothy's work as follows:

I think *it's given him more tools, more places to start – so more inroads*. Whereas before he would look and say, 'I don't know what you want me to look at', now with the labelling techniques, I don't have to prompt him. I sometimes push a little bit more and say 'You've got a zillion words you can use now. Pick one and see if you can find something that applies to it'. So it gives him a little bit of confidence to go 'Well the background has got a pattern on it', and so on.

If we turn to the interview with our second case study teacher, Tom, we get a different approach to meaning. In the context of harried curriculum pacing, Tom decided to orient his Year 10 students to metafunctions as 'thinking hats' and to focus on their intellectual potential:

I just started off getting them to look at a whole different variety of images. We looked at how those images were built or constructed and what effect they were having. And then we started looking at examples of images with text, looking for links between those things. We did work on focalisation and interactive meanings. But it was more about *trying to get them to think about 'the why'*, I guess. So when we were looking at *The Lost Thing* we looked at frames in context. *I asked, 'What do you notice about it? Why do you think it's like that?'* Clearly, the images are so important to this text. You've got the obvious layout of the textbook and the different size frames all the way through, like a scrapbook. So, we sort of looked at the effect of these choices and *tried to think* about what was happening in the story compared with what was being shown in the images.

In follow up interviews with two of Tom's students, it became clear that they were aware of the need to think more deeply about images:

Interviewer: Okay, in reading texts like *The Tunnel* and *The Lost Thing*, do these tools, if you like, help you work out what's going on?

Helen: Well, they kind of *make you think about it* more. If you gave this to a child they would look at it and read it and not really get everything that the illustrator or author was trying to get at. Like reading this helps you to *go more in depth* into like how or why something is placed in that exact place and not just think 'Oh, it's there because it's there'.

The notion of metafunctions proved intellectually satisfying to students like Helen and gave the class a handle on polysemy in texts like *The Lost Thing*.

Representing choices in systems of meaning

Within a social semiotic approach to texts, the form-meaning connection is crucial. As Kress argues, 'the relation between signifier and signified is always motivated, that is, that the shape of the signifier, its "form", materially or abstractly considered, is chosen because of its aptness for expressing that which is to be signified' (Kress, 2003: 42). If the signified is an abstraction (a meaning), the signifier is a material realisation of this (a form of some kind). Within interpersonal meaning, for example, the system of Mood (in the environment of the clause) distinguishes between statements, questions and commands. While all indicative clauses select for Subject and Finite verb, a clause in declarative mood puts the Subject in front of the Finite verb, whilst the Interrogative puts Finite verb first, thus enabling us to distinguish the interactive difference between a clause like 'I am teaching literature' and 'Are you teaching literature?' For native speakers of English, the distinction in form and meaning is taken for granted. For speakers of English as an additional language, it has to be learned. And of course, this is only the barest beginning when it comes to interpersonal meaning systems in English. But having a paradigmatic model like the system network gives teachers a powerful 'way in' to choice in language teaching. They can show students not only what options are available in a given grammatical environment but how these are 'realised' in particular selections and their sequencing. In this way, they can move in a motivated way between forms and meanings in analyses of messages and larger texts of which messages are part.

Like metafunctions, the principle of system is portable and has been crucial to the mapping of new modes in which SFS has been employed. Van Leeuwen has discussed the central role of systems in this process:

System networks can include both binary and simultaneous choices. But the idea of a taxonomically organised paradigm of choices distinguished from each other in terms of *single crucial functional semantic features* remains fundamental in system networks and hence in the organisation of semiotic modes that are based on this principle. (van Leeuwen, 2009, p. 74)

Although visual choices are different in realisation from those of language, and require a horizontal gaze, they have certain features in common, at higher levels of abstraction (along a vertical dimension). Within image analysis, visual options for meaning are analogous to verbal ones in that they 'share crucial semantic features'. Focalisation, for example, is a system that

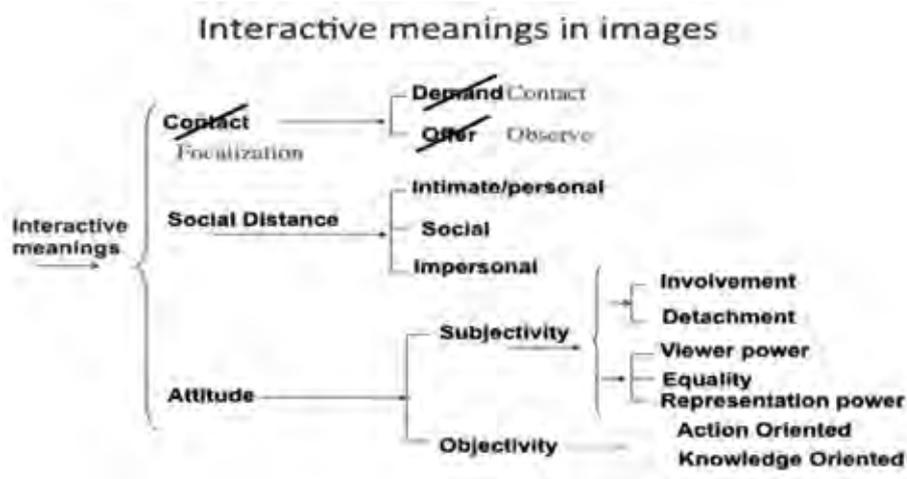


Figure 3. Interactive systems of meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001/2006)

engages viewers through gaze in images and through sourcing of perceptions in language. Visually, it can be realised in a direct gaze (previously Contact) or in an oblique gaze (Observe). If a depicted participant is positioned to look directly at a viewer, s/he makes contact with us. But if there is no direct gaze, the participant is positioned as an object of contemplation, something we observe. In a related system within interpersonal meaning, Social Distance aligns us with represented participants (close up), at a (respectable) social distance (mid shot) or at an impersonal distance (long shot).

Figure 3 presents three systems for interactive meanings in images presented in workshops, based on work by Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) and Painter et al. (2013).

Understanding the distinctive either/or nature of options for meaning and their typical realisations in form was crucial to teachers' classroom work and to the ease of analysis in the early stages of students' analysis of images. Most teachers like Annette and Tom began with visual systems that seemed to be easily 'embodied' – ones that students could apprehend relatively easily.

Looking closely at systems: Case study insights

Both Annette and Tom produced PowerPoints containing a wealth of images and analysed these in class activities. Like others, they tended to concentrate on systems of Focalisation, Social Distance, Power and Ambience within the interpersonal metafunction. Following class analysis using PowerPoints, students worked on individual pages from picture books. In our interviews, we asked Tom's students to tell us about

what they had learned. Our goal was to see whether new knowledge (and the associated metalanguage) persisted in their approach to images. In the following extract from the interview with Lee and Helen, it is clear that students understood the difference between Contact and Observe and saw the distinction as meaningful:

Interviewer: What do you understand about interactive meanings?

Helen: So, in focalisation, *Contact* is where they're looking directly at you. You can tell because their eyes and face are directly towards you and *Observe* is ... they're looking off in a different direction but you can still see what they're looking at.

Interviewer: Okay, all right. And why might an illustrator use Contact or Observe?

Helen: Well, I guess Contact would be to kind of to grab your attention or to show the characters' direct feelings and stuff so you can see their facial expression, and then their eyes kind of like tell you more. When you can see someone's eyes you feel more connected with them.

Many teachers introduced their students to the system of *Ambience*, which is a resource for creation of 'feeling' in images. As Painter, et al. argue, 'probably the most instant bonding effect created by a picture book is that established by its choices in the use of colour' (Painter, et al., 2013, p. 35). Tom's students analysed sub-systems within *Ambience* of Vibrancy, Warmth and Familiarity focussing on choices in *The Lost Thing* and *The Tunnel*. Their work with the sub-systems gave them a purchase on contrasts in colour that underpinned contrasts between the charm of the protagonist's encounter with the lost thing and bureaucratic dullness of the world in which it found itself.



Figure 4. Ambience systems and their realisations with telling examples

2. a) I believe the first image of the girl is shown this way to create a dark, frightened, closing in space effect. It is done this way by using a non-contextualised background, framing, salient and slight illumination on the girl's frightened face. It is emphasised by a mid shot of her face.

Figure 5. Cody's use of the metalanguage to analyse an image

The network in Figure 4 was presented by a project teacher at the Australian Systemic Functional Association conference in 2013. I gratefully acknowledge its contribution to this paper.

A knowledge of choices as motivated found its way into students' discourse. When asked to elaborate on her response to the question on the image of the young girl (explored in Timothy's work in Figure 2), Helen drew on her knowledge of Ambience to do so:

Helen: The *black background* is in contrast to the *vibrant red* of her jacket, and it kind of gives you a border of her face. And your eyes are automatically drawn into her face which emphasises her feelings of worry and how she was really scared of what was going to happen next.

This is an example of awareness of choices as 'motivated' in Kress's (2003) lexicon. Helen demonstrates awareness of semiotic forms (black background and vibrant red) and describes their significance (feelings of worry) at this point in the text.

In Annette's class, it was the boys who took to visual analysis most enthusiastically and this was evident in

their post-intervention responses. Figure 5 presents Cody's answer to question 2 (a) about the girl in *The Tunnel* and indicates not only his assimilation of the metalanguage but the ability to deploy it in visual analysis:

Interestingly, Annette felt Cody had not really achieved all he could have in this response. As she put it, 'He hasn't really taken that extra step and said something like 'That's there because ...'. Whilst Cody's use of technical labels was impressive, she wanted him to explain more carefully the effect of the interactive meanings – the why beneath the 'what'. Even so, having access to portable systems for exploring interaction gave her students easier access to scene analysis in the film *Hugo* in later lessons:

I found it really interesting to add those interactive understandings to what we already did with camera shots and angles and apply them from still images to moving images. I got some images off the Internet from the film *The Lost Thing* and the text *The Lost Thing* and we talked about camera position because quite a lot of the

film is the 'over the shoulder' stuff, so we talked about the difference when the camera was a part of the person to when it was just observing from a distance. I asked them to think about whether that does make a difference and that kind of thing. *So having that knowledge of interaction choices and being able to apply them I found really helpful.*

It was easier to move from analysis of still to moving images once Annette had established key systems of Social Distance, Focalisation and Power in work on picture books. It gave her a toolkit for moving across modes whilst staying within a unified semantic field (point of view).

Metasemiosis is relational and stratification makes this analysis possible

A third feature of specialised metasemiosis is that it is *relational*: it involves stepping 'up' from identification of visual or verbal forms to description of their purpose or effect on a page to interpretation of their contribution to the unfolding meaning of the text as a whole. It is a crucial aspect of the vertical dimension of literary interpretation. Furthermore, analysis works differently at different levels (strata) of description and this has consequences for metalanguage employed by analysts and for pedagogy (most important for English). In linguistic analysis, for example, students need to (be able to) recognise and label units that carry meaning. Whether these are verbs, verb groups, clauses or clause complexes (Halliday's term for what we call 'sentences' in written language), each unit of analysis has a distinctive grammatical structure. Grammatical awareness of 'verbness' is important, along with what affects the form of a verb (e.g. 'being' verbs change if the subject is in first or second person – 'I am', 'You are'). This is something all grammars of English teach and is a necessary landing place within a relational approach to linguistic analysis.

Even so, knowledge of how grammatical units work is necessary but by no means sufficient, especially in tasks of interpretation. On a higher 'landing place' as it were, students need to describe the semantic function of a phrase, clause or clause complex – the role forms play in wordings. For example, verbs encode different processes in experience such as sensing, doing, saying, being or having and play different roles in interaction. For instance, within the system of mood, the Finite verb combines with the subject to produce the mood of a clause whilst other parts of the verb communicate meanings to do with modality, aspect or secondary tense.

Once students can identify a unit of analysis (e.g. a verb or verb group) and describe its function (e.g. sensing, doing, relating), they are in a strong position to interpret the effect of combined or contrasting verb choices (e.g. metaphoric uses of verbal processes to suggest attitude, as in Anthony Browne's *Piggybook* (1986/1996) or alternations between action and reflection phases of a narrative). In a semiotically informed metalanguage, the focus of our interpretive work shifts as we move from one landing place to another. We can ignore the role of grammatical choices in interpretation of course. Much of what occurs in school English is not attentive to grammar. But if we are to incorporate knowledge of grammar and discourse semantics into interpretation of literature, there is no way we can either do all we need to with the limited apparatus of traditional grammar nor skip away from knowledge of grammatical form into the heady territory of patterns of meaning. A stratified model of semiotic resources allows us to bring out the relationship between forms, functions and patterns of meaning.

Halliday proposes that language is stratified, with semantic systems ('meanings') being realised by lexicogrammar (an inclusive reference to the 'wordings' of a language) and the two 'content' strata being realised by the expression stratum of phonology/graphology (what Halliday 1978: 21 sometimes called 'soundings' of language). The notion of 'realisation' enables us to step upwards in a plausible way from forms to functions to semiotic patterns in texts. This principle is relevant both to visual and verbal semiotic resources and so could be leveraged to support students' interpretive work on multimodal literary texts and to help them shift gears from more material (formal) observations about images (point of view or colour for example) to more symbolic (abstract) readings of their significance.

In our workshops with teachers, we applied this principle to our work on texts, referring to each level as a distinctive 'landing place' in analysis of texts.

Figure 6 illustrates the concept of stratification as applied to identification of forms (landing place 1), to description of the function of forms (landing place 2) and to the interpretation of semiotic patterns across texts (landing place 3). Examples drawn from our case study classrooms are used to illustrate how analysis and the relevant metalanguage shifts as we move from one level (landing place) to another in interpreting texts.

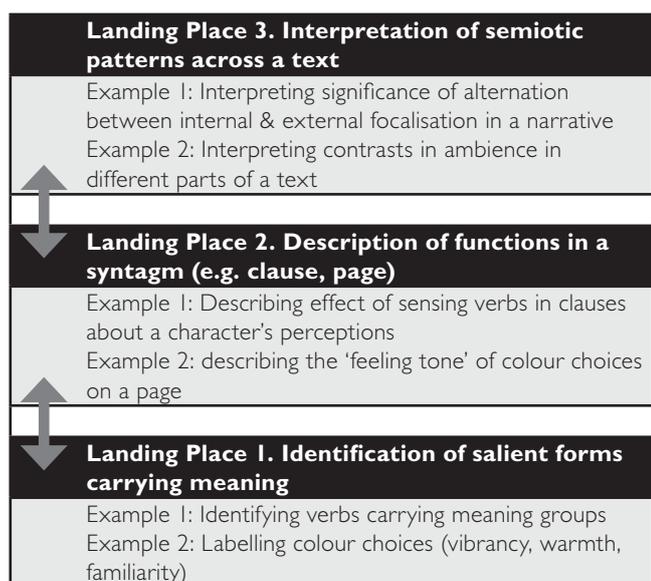


Figure 6. Adapting stratification to tasks of interpretation of multimodal texts

Some might argue that accepting the need for a metalanguage differentiated for form, function and pattern only adds to the terminological load, crowding the curriculum. This is something that needs further research. But Halliday (2002) argues that having a metalanguage that is meaningfully related to the phenomena it describes (what he calls a 'mimetic' quality) makes it easier to understand and to apply across modes. Furthermore, such a relational approach is not simply a linguist's dream. It is now a curriculum requirement that students be taught about 'the structures and functions of word and sentence-level grammar and text patterns *and the connections between them*' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009. p. 7, my italics). Enabling students to make meaningful connections between levels of organisation in texts is surely an advantage in this enterprise.

A relational approach can be more or less technical, more or less specialised. It is most obviously manifested in students' use of symbolic processes of interpretation. A capacity to shift gears in interpreting

multimodal texts was clearly realised in the verb choices of students, which provided vital evidence of metasemiotic development. It was clearly in evidence in Tom's Year 10 class and a striking feature of two of those students we interviewed following his work with them.

Climbing into symbolic meaning: Case study insights

As with Annette's student, Timothy, in Tom's Year 10 class too, it was apparently weaker students who demonstrated the most telling development in their capacity for literary interpretation. Our workshops on the linguistic character of text response had introduced participating teachers to what we called 'symbolic' verbs which we related to the task of literary interpretation. Once a student has begun to use verbs like 'shows', 'represents', 'showcases', 'symbolises', 'depicts' or even 'realises', it is possible to argue that they are beginning to undertake crucial tasks of semiotic interpretation that are the special province of English. A symbolic verb enables us to demonstrate understanding of the significance of semiotic choices.

Lee's answer to a question about an image on one of the last pages of *The Tunnel* is emblematic of movement 'upwards' in this direction. In one of the final questions on the post-intervention task, students were asked to comment on the 'over the shoulder' image of a boy looking at his sister after they have survived the ordeal of the tunnel and returned home together. Figure 7 presents Lee's response to the question: Why do you think the final image is shown as it is?

While Lee had identified choices in the pre-intervention response, her later work reveals a gear shift – a capacity to describe the role of the yellow lighting (Ambience), the proximity of the siblings (Social Distance) and to interpret the significance of this representation. She uses an increased range of symbolic verbs ('gives', 'shows' and 'symbolises') to relate forms to meaning, thus demonstrating a capacity to move

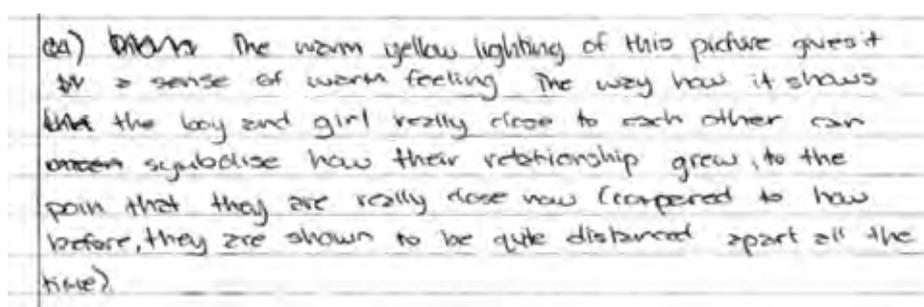


Figure 7. Lee's written response to a question about a final image in *The Tunnel*

from identification of formal choices to description of their function and from there to interpretation of their significance. Tellingly, her gaze has widened in her comparison of the newly acquired intimacy of the siblings, compared to earlier visual representations of their distance from one another.

The wider purview of her semiotic gaze was strikingly in evidence in one of the final moments of the interview with her and Helen. This moment in the exchange demonstrates the capacity of students who have been invited into and engaged by a multimodal metalanguage for interpretation. One can feel the excitement of this insight into the symbolic reversal experienced by the two characters in the *The Tunnel* which emerges in 'the between' of a three-way dialogue between Helen, Lee and the interviewer:

Lee: There was just one thing I noticed. I guess it just symbolises when the brother went into the tunnel –

Interviewer: Yes –

Lee: The next time we see him as a stone in this dark, magical forest I guess which is what you normally see in fairytale books, right. It just kind of makes me feel like the brother and the sister somehow are – how do you say it? No, they kind of get the feel of what the other's world is like, like how the brother is so energetic and adventurous and like how the girl would not normally do that ... But this time she went into the tunnel on her own into this adventure and the boy, who doesn't have anything to do with fantasy stuff, with fairytales, fantasy, monsters and witches has to enter the girl's world in this dark magical forest turned into stone.

Interviewer: That is so clever, Lee. You are so clever.

Helen: I think also it shows that they were able to experience emotions that the other one would face in like the same situation because he's running – normally he seems so brave and everything to his sister but when he's frozen in stone, you can see on his face that he's really actually scared looking back. He's running really fast and he's frozen in that position and in the tunnel, Rose is actually being the brave one and going in to get her brother.

Interviewer: It's like a role reversal. It's wonderful.

Both Helen and Lee have grown in awareness of the contribution of images and the way these unfold and change in the course of a text to the symbolic meaning of the whole. They have inter-related image and verbiage (in a horizontal move) but interpreted their abstract significance (in a vertical move). And this is achieved not solo in this interview but as a collaboration between students themselves as they explore metasemiosis and an attuned interviewer. Overall, a

stratified model of semiosis has enabled them to shift gears – moving from close attention to particulars of gaze, colour and action and then to climb from this evidence base into reflection on the author/artist's intentions that have shaped these choices. The purview achieved by Lee and Helen at the end of this process is nothing less than the whole text and the psychosymbolic implications of its overall patterning.

Interim Conclusions

What are the implications of this brief foray into the attributes of a specialised metasemiosis? I turn my attention first to the horizontal dimension of the task – exploration of the relation between images and language for example. If students are to engage with multimodal literature in a focussed and uncluttered way, they need access to a shared metalanguage that enables them to move from consideration of one mode (e.g. colour palette or visual framing) to another (e.g. tone or verbal framing). Tools of analysis need to be able to 'travel' – both between modes of communication employed within a text and between texts. It is a risky enterprise because it tends to flatten differences between modes, assuming that meanings made in one mode can also be made (albeit differently) in another (Unsworth & Chan, 2009). But it is a crucial one even so, especially if students are to move in a semiotically informed way between modes. Given the need for tools of analysis that transcended *and* made sense of variety, we found the framework developed by Painter, Martin and Unsworth (2013) to explore image and verbiage in literary picture books useful. In analysing dialogue, for example, participants found it helpful to explore different ways in which speakers and their words are represented. They could look at 'saying verbs' and quotation marks in short stories, speech bubbles in graphic novels or lip sync in films. Moving to analysis of different modes in the one text, some (like Tom) compared reports of events in a story with visual representations of the same events in moving images. Others explored ironic differences between verbal and visual interaction in picture books like *Not Now Bernard* (McKee, 1980/2004). A portable metalanguage enabled participants to move between different forms of realisation in each mode (saying verbs, speech bubbles, lip sync) and to explore redundancies and differences between these because of their common semantic domain (speech in this case). It enabled exploration (along the horizontal dimension of multimodal interpretation).

But it also enabled integration. Although verbal and

visual media are different at lower levels of description (i.e. in their forms of realisation), students were able to find commonalities at higher levels of interpretation ('landing place 3 in Figure 6). At this abstract level, they could thus identify what van Leeuwen (2000) calls 'common semiotic functions' to provide coherence to their readings. Working at this meta-level enabled them to yoke powerful observations about visual and verbal choices to insightful commentaries on their literary significance. Their explanations highlighted the contribution of visual and verbal choices to higher order meanings of narrative (the vertical dimension of multimodal interpretation). Systemic functional theorist, Jim Martin, argues that an understanding of key resources such as genre and discourse semantics is central to improving literacy achievement in English (Martin, 1992, 2009). Certainly, it is clear from case study interviews that students enjoyed exploiting the analogic power of their systemic functional metalanguage both to explore different modes and integrate insights about their workings into higher levels of interpretation.

The Australian curriculum appears to offer teachers and students a space of unlimited variety, with fertile opportunities for study of multimodal literary texts. But understanding how readers draw on and integrate meaning cues from different modes to interpret texts is an under-theorised aspect of English. This is the vertical dimension of metasemiosis in focus and the question: Is it possible to develop a meta-semiotic toolkit that deepens interpretation without crowding, and perhaps overwhelming, students' appreciation of literary texts?

When I interviewed Annette about her work with Year 7, she emphasised how the SF metalanguage had helped her integrate her work on different modes:

Earlier, we sort of segregated work on the visual from work on other modes. Film had its own distinct language and advertising had its own distinct language and so on. But if we consider interaction across the board, we can see how texts position us whatever the mode. With my class, we talk now about the camera lens and the power of the person and gaze and all that kind of stuff. So I've found it much easier to integrate all of that in my work on texts.

This paper cannot hope to resolve issues of multimodal literary interpretation, only to pose questions about the dimensions of metasemiosis relevant to subject English. It has attempted to relate principles of a powerful metasemiotic toolkit like SFS that help

to make this enterprise more do-able. Early evidence in the texts and talk of teachers and students gives us hope that the profession is more than ready to invest in this intellectual enterprise and to turn it into a practical portable toolkit for disciplinary work in secondary school classrooms.

Notes

- 1 The acronyms in brackets following content descriptions refer to content strands and associated numbers for each aspect. ACELT refers to literature; ACELA refers to language; and ACELY refers to literacy.
- 2 The author gratefully acknowledges the support of the Australian Research Council in funding a Discovery grant (DP110104309) that enabled M. Macken-Horarik, K. Love, L. Unsworth & C. Sandiford) to undertake this research.
- 3 I gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the teachers and their students to emerging insights into the character of a metalanguage relevant to multimodal interpretation. All have a pseudonym to protect their identities and that of their school.
- 4 Relevant interview extracts are highlighted in bold to direct attention to key points.

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Playing with Grammar: A pedagogical heuristic for orientating to the language content of the Australian Curriculum: English

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Abstract: In this article we introduce a heuristic for orientating to the language content of the Australian Curriculum: English. Our pedagogical heuristic, called 'Playing with Grammar', moves through three separate but interwoven stages: (i) an introduction to the learning experience, (ii) a focus on learning, and (iii) an application of new knowledge where students read and/or write with grammar in mind. We draw on aspects of Bernstein's sociological theories to consider the implications of keeping the content of the Language, Literature and Literacy strands together or apart. We also theorise different pedagogical approaches where teachers or learners control the sequence and pacing of content within the learning experience.

Introduction

We write from the viewpoint established through our expert knowledge base as experienced classroom teachers and educational researchers of language and literacy teaching and learning. We do not position ourselves as linguists or indeed as grammar experts. Instead, our focus is on teachers' pedagogic practices that are designed to support the development of knowledge about language as learners from approximately 4½ through to 15½ years bring skills, experiences and understandings to their interactions with texts. Our aim is to empower Foundation–Year 10 teachers of language and literacy by demystifying the process of teaching. In doing so, we seek to affirm teachers' existing pedagogic expertise and encourage them to make their own choices about the texts they use and the ways they use them. Our heuristic, which we've called 'Playing with Grammar', is made up of three separate but interwoven stages for engaging learners in discovering how language works for readers and writers of text. Heuristics, by definition, employ a practical method that works on rule-of-thumb characteristics. Heuristics do not prescribe a non-negotiable knowledge set or a teacher-proof sequence of activities.

This article is presented in four sections. The first section identifies grammar's contribution to the overarching Aims and Strands of the *Australian Curriculum: English* (hereafter AC:E) by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (hereafter ACARA). We hone in on the links across the four Aims and three Strands. The second section moves beyond the statement that the AC:E does not 'prescribe approaches to teaching' (ACARA, 2016, p. 6), instead considering the affordances of the General Capabilities for pedagogic practices. In the third section, Bernsteinian (1975, 2000) concepts from the sociology of education provide a language of description for our multiple orientations to

curriculum and pedagogical practices. The focus is on the inter-relationship of the three Strands and the different framings of pedagogical practice across the stages of the heuristic. In the fourth section, we explain our pedagogical heuristic in practical terms, then map this onto the Bernsteinian theory introduced earlier. Doing so provides a visual representation of the stages of our pedagogical heuristic.

The Australian Curriculum: English

The year 2012 heralded a new era for English Curriculum in Australia – the release of the inaugural AC:E. The AC:E is noted for its ‘fairly radical’ (Derewianka, 2012, p. 127) choice with the form and function of grammar used within the Language strand, and as we would argue, throughout the AC:E. Up until this point, centring an English curriculum on a theory of language had ‘often been lacking’ (Derewianka, 2012, p. 127) in the State and Territory curricula across Australia at varying times in what Harper and Rennie (2009, p. 25) refer to as the ‘post-grammar years’ of 1970s onwards.

The opening section of the AC:E outlines four overarching Aims for students studying within the disciplinary field of English. The four Aims ensure that Foundation–Year 10 students:

1. learn to listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken, written and multimodal texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose;
2. appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations and develop a sense of its richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain, persuade and argue;
3. understand how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with nonlinguistic forms of communication to create meaning;
4. develop interest and skills in inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of texts, and develop an informed appreciation of literature (ACARA, 2016, p. 4).

This focus on the inner working of ‘communication’ in Aim 3 is not to deny the way grammar interacts with, informs and enhances the other three aims. Aim 3 provides the metalanguage for talking about how grammar works within language and across a ‘growing range of contexts’ (Aim 1) and for creating texts with ‘accuracy’ (Aim 1). Grammar knowledge provides the

foundation for talking about how language serves different social functions such as to ‘entertain, persuade and argue’ (Aim 2) and to inquire ‘into the aesthetic aspects of text’ (Aim 4). To reinforce this connection, we are reminded of Halliday’s (1978, p. 12) remark ‘one can hardly take literature seriously without taking language seriously’.

Inherent in these four Aims are two positions for orientating to grammar: (i) the nativist position, which defines what is grammatical on the basis of ‘language rules’, and (ii) the environmentalist position, which defines what is grammatical by considering language-in-use as a resource for making meaning (Halliday, 1978, p. 17). The AC:E shows a commitment to both the nativist and environmentalist positions, as demonstrated in Table 1. As Halliday (1978, p. 18) contends, ‘the two are not in competition; they are about different things’.

Table 1: Evidence of the nativist and environmentalist grammar positions in the AC:E (ACARA, 2016)

Evidence of nativist grammar position	Evidence of environmentalist grammar position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accuracy (Aim 1) • fluency (Aim 1) • Standard Australian English (Aim 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • range of contexts (Aim 1) • purpose (Aim 1) • variations (Aim 2) • creating meaning (Aim 3) • inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of text (Aim 4)

The AC:E’s focus on the environmentalist grammar position draws on Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) (see Derewianka, 2012). We say ‘draws on’ as the knowledge about language that is covered in the AC:E does not adopt SFL theory in its complete form. For example, in the Year 3 Content Description ACELA 1482, learners need to ‘understand that verbs represent different processes, for example, doing, thinking, saying, and relating ...’ (ACARA, 2016, p. 46). In SFL theory, a more delicate range of processes are listed (see, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Tweaking is necessary, as SFL was never intended to be core content for learners aged 4½ to 15½ years. Relocating a disciplinary field from an adult context of use to school curricula is not uncommon. Bernstein (2000, p. 33) explains that the discourse of schooling ‘selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute their own order’. This process of re-locating knowledge from the field of production and relocating it as pedagogic discourse is called recontextualisation (Bernstein, 2000). The AC:E thus recontextualises language knowledge, skills and

understandings from the field of linguistics as content for learners from Foundation–Year 10. As expected in a continuum, these skills are aggregated, potentially allowing learners to develop independent and powerful language knowledge throughout their schooling years. Interestingly, some sub-strands begin with the teaching of broad understandings about language and its function in the world and then narrows this focus, whilst other sub-strands begin with a narrower focus, which is then broadened. For example:

- in the Language Variation and Change sub-strand, in their Foundation year, learners are required to take on the broad understanding that the English language is just one of many in the world. This concept narrows throughout the years, with Year 6 learners studying specific regional dialects.
- in the Expressing and Developing Ideas sub-strand, in their Foundation year, learners focus on sentence level grammar, building knowledge about the individual components of a clause, and combining these in Year 10 into broader knowledge about a wide range of sentences and clause structures.

The four Aims are neither linear nor confined to year groupings, as explicated in the English across Foundation–Year 12 statements (ACARA, 2016, pp. 10–11). For example, in the Foundation–Year 2 grouping, students cover a range of modes of language communication for different ‘contexts’ (Aim 1) and ‘for different purposes’ including the ‘wide range of experiences with language and texts’ students bring with them to the school (Aim 2) as well as Standard Australian English, which serves to provide the ‘foundation needed for continued learning’ (Aim 3) ‘through pleasurable and varied experiences of literature’ and other texts (Aim 4) (ACARA, 2016, p. 10). The Years 3–6 grouping focuses on students practising, consolidating and extending what they have learnt in Foundation–Year 2 so ‘they develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of grammar and language, and are increasingly able to articulate this knowledge’ (ACARA, 2016, p. 10). A similar statement foregrounds the explanation of the Years 7–10 (ACARA, 2016, pp. 10–11) groupings.

To further reinforce the knowledge spiral through the years of schooling, the AC:E reiterates that ‘learning in English is recursive and cumulative, and builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years’ (2016, p. 6). The Content Descriptions have been written ‘to ensure that learning is appropriately ordered

and that unnecessary repetition is avoided’ (ACARA, 2016, p. 6). However, a concept or skill introduced at one year level may be revisited, strengthened and extended at later year levels as needed. In their analysis of an earlier version of the AC:E, Macken-Horarik, Love and Unsworth (2011, p. 17) concluded that ‘language resources don’t just become more complex and abstract as students progress through the years’, but that the resources introduced in the earliest years ‘pattern and co-pattern at all levels of choice in distinctive ways’. Such sentiments align with Halliday’s (1978) claim of a separation between the language of childhood (which includes the adolescent years), and the language of adulthood. Halliday (1978, p. 22) refused to attribute the transition to a developmental sequence, stating ‘to what extent the individual child traces the evolutionary path in moving from one to the other’ as ‘immaterial’. He explains the transition as a route that reflects the circumstances of an individual’s history and experience.

Another feature of the AC:E is that three interrelated strands support students’ growing understanding and skills to achieve the four Aims. The three strands that focus on developing students’ knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking and writing are:

- the ‘language strand: knowing about the English language’;
- the ‘literature strand: understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature’; and
- the ‘literacy strand: expanding the repertoire of English usage’ (ACARA, 2016, p. 5).

Multiple Content Descriptions are provided for each sub-strand at each year level from Foundation–Year 10 inclusive. However, the Content Descriptions ‘do not prescribe approaches to teaching’ (ACARA, 2016, p. 6). As Love and Humphrey (2012, p. 174) observe, ‘while this new Curriculum offers enormous opportunities, it also carries considerable challenges for teachers about how to work with language as a system of structural and meaning-making choices’. Teachers need ‘ways in’ to working with the relationship between systems that describe language in all its potential (Macken-Horarik, et al., 2011, p. 13). We recognise this challenge, especially for teachers (ourselves included) who are neither linguists nor grammarians. In the following section we consider the General Capabilities of the AC:E and how these ideas contribute to our pedagogical practice.

Potential Pedagogical Practices in the *Australian Curriculum: English*

Included in the AC:E are seven General Capabilities that provide some guidance for pedagogical practice for the Content Descriptions. For example, the general capability of Critical and Creative Thinking talks about subject English using practices of '**discussion**', 'the close **analysis** of texts', '**interacting** with others' and students '**justify[ing]** a point of view and **respond[ing]** to the views of others' (ACARA, 2016, p. 14, our emphasis). In the General Capability of Ethical Understanding students '**apply** the skills of reasoning, empathy and imagination, **consider** and **make judgments** about actions and motives, and **speculate** on how life experiences affect and influence people's decision making and whether various positions held are reasonable' (ACARA, 2016, p. 15, our emphasis). The General Capability of Personal and Social Capability talks about pedagogical practice within the disciplinary field of English as students engage in '**close reading** and **discussion** of texts' and '**develop connections** and **empathy** with characters in different social contexts' (ACARA, 2016, p. 15, our emphasis). The General Capability of Intercultural Understanding specifically references the disciplinary field of subject English where students **interpret** and **analyse** 'authors' ideas and positions in a range of texts in English and in translation to English' and learn 'to **question** stated and unstated cultural beliefs and assumptions, and issues of intercultural meaning' (ACARA, 2016, p. 15, our emphasis).

Taken together, the General Capabilities suggest something other than teacher as the sage on the stage, grammar content as only the nativist position, or indeed grammar instruction to regulate the behaviour of the mass population. This is the premise that influenced the development of our pedagogical heuristic of 'Playing with Grammar'. Our heuristic also has its genesis in a range of research and ideologies circulating in the 1970s and 1980s that adopted a Durkheimian (see Thompson, 1982/2000) perspective of considering the individual as a social and intelligent organism who functions within a situated context. In particular, we are influenced by Halliday's (1978) 'Language as a Social Semiotic', Vygotsky's (1978) cultural-historical approach to language and play, Schwartz's (1983a) and Rietz's (1983) separate descriptions of 'Language Play' and Heath's (1983) seminal ethnography 'Way with Words' and her three decade long linguistic study published as 'Words at Work and Play' (2012).

Halliday (1978) posited that the 1970s is marked by a resurgence of the theme of 'language and social man[sic]', an acknowledgement that an individual exists within social environments where language is the main channel through which patterns of thoughts, actions, beliefs and values are transmitted. This perspective acknowledges language as a contextualised social practice. Halliday elaborated that this transmission of social roles of combinable kinds does not happen so much by overt instruction, but implicitly 'through the accumulated experience of numerous small events, insignificant in themselves', in which individual behaviour is 'guided and controlled' in specific contexts of use in such a way that the individual uses language to establish, develop and maintain personal relationships (1978, p. 9). This functional view hones in on what an individual can do with language by understanding the internal organisation and patterning of language. Important for our discussion here, Halliday (1978, p. 18) insists such a position is applicable 'at any stage in the life of the individual, up to and including adulthood'.

We acknowledge there is no one definition of play that encompasses all the views, perceptions, experiences and expectations it promotes. That is because play is complex, even though it is 'almost synonymous' with childhood (Schwartz, 1983a, p. 81). We see play as both reproductive and generative to literacy learning. We therefore see play as an important force through which to facilitate literacy development (Kervin & Verenikina, forthcoming). Halliday (1978), Schwartz (1983a), Rietz (1983) and Heath (1983, 2012) all provide detailed accounts of the way children of varying ages play with language – its structure, its sound, its meaning and its communicative conventions. Much of this play occurs with others in supported contexts where interactions and resources are paramount. Schwartz (1983a, p. 81, emphasis in original) contends that:

language play permits children to be angry and obstreperous; it lets them defy authority and test reality. And it does all this *safely* precisely because it is a *play* behaviour, a simulation of what is real. In addition, language play provides a free, unselfconscious way in which the child explores, hypothesises, tests, verifies, and practices with language ... without coercion.

Through play an individual is able to explore and demonstrate their appropriations of language and literacy. In taking this approach, we acknowledge the significance of diverse backgrounds and the richness of the literacy knowledge learners (and teachers) bring

to educational contexts. To appropriate is more than just learning to read and write through mastery of a symbol system and associated rules; language knowledge empowers the learner to be an active member of the literate community (Rowell & Harwood, 2015). Through appropriation, a language user activates cognitive, social and motivational dimensions. Play provides opportunities to engage with social interactions that are crucial to learn the appropriations of context-bound important, cultural practices (Baker, Afflerbach & Reinking, 1996). Literacy development occurs as learners demonstrate greater mastery of language as a cultural tool, and apply their knowledge in appropriate ways.

Therefore, we conceive of play as an approach that creates many opportunities for sharing oral and written language that capitalises upon each learner's 'locquaciousness and humour... [where] dialogue between teacher and children and among children is encouraged, ... [where] children and teacher laugh easily and often, ... [where] incongruity and diversity are enjoyed... imaginative solutions to problems are sought [and] invention and experiment are prized' (Schwartz, 1983a, p. 87). This pedagogy of play is in contrast to didactic processes that breed tension and shun difference. We argue that to support language development educators need to embrace language learning as a social process where the quality of interaction with more knowledgeable language users (Vygotsky, 1978) is critical. A focus on play provides individuals with opportunities to demonstrate and practise what they know about language in authentic situations with authentic texts while also being challenged to move to new understandings as they participate in quality literacy learning opportunities.

In the next section, we turn to theory to provide the descriptive lens for our choices around the separation or combining of the curriculum strands and choices in the control of pedagogical practices.

Theory – Bernstein's Sociology of Knowledge and Pedagogy

Bernstein's (1975, 2000) sociology of knowledge and pedagogy provides a useful lens for thinking about the choices teachers have for (i) connecting the grammar content from the Language strand to the Literature and Literacy strands, and (ii) structuring the pedagogical relationship between teachers and learners. Specifically, Bernstein's (1975, 2000) concepts of 'classification' and 'framing' are introduced.

Theoretically, classification refers to the strength or weakness of the boundaries that exist between knowledge contents (Bernstein, 1975, 2000). Classification does not distinguish what is classified; rather, classification refers to the insulation separating or combining the categories. The categories that interest us are the connections between the grammar content from the Language strand and the content of the Literature and Literacy strands. When there is little that links these strands together, the categories are said to be sharply distinguished from each other and are referred to as having 'stronger classification', symbolically represented as C+. With C+, each strand has its own distinctive specialisation or what Bernstein (2000, p. 7) calls 'its unique identity, its unique voice, its own specialised rules of internal relations'. Where the classification of the strands is weaker, there are less specialised discourses, less specialised identities and less specialised voices. When weaker classifications are present, symbolically presented as C-, the rule is, according to Bernstein (2000, p. 11) 'things must be brought together'. From this axiom, classification provides a measure, in the figurative sense, of the degree of specialisation of forms of knowledge (see Dowling, 1998). Stronger and weaker classification of the relationship between the grammar content of the Language strand and the content of the Literature and Literacy Strands can be located along a continuum, as per Diagram 1.

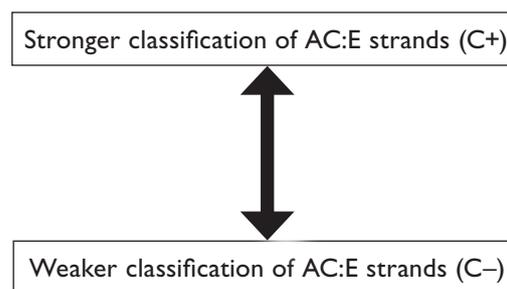


Diagram 1: Continuum of classification of curriculum content from C+ to C-

A classificatory system can only reproduce itself through relations of control. Bernstein (1975, 2000) explains relations of control via the theoretical concept of framing. Framing refers to the locus of control over the selection of the communication: its sequencing (what comes first, what comes second); its pacing (the rate of expected acquisition); the criteria; and the control over the social base which makes transmission possible (Bernstein, 2000). In school contexts, framing

is about who controls the intersubjective relations of teachers and learners that 'frame' and mediate the curriculum content knowledge. Framing therefore is the realisation of the 'form of control which regulates and legitimises communication in pedagogical relations: the nature of the talk and the kinds of [pedagogic] spaces constructed' (Bernstein, 2000, p. 12). In this way framing gives rise to relations of how valid curriculum content knowledge is transmitted by teachers and acquired by learners via pedagogic acts.

Like classification, framing is also described by its strength or weakness. Notions of stronger and weaker framing are also relational. The strength of framing refers to the range of options available to teachers and learners for the structuring the transmission and acquisition of knowledge. Stronger framing, symbolically represented as F+, occurs when the teacher appears to have more control over the selection, sequencing, pacing, criteria and social relations within pedagogic spaces. In F+ pedagogies learners are accorded very few options. Weaker framing, symbolically represented as F-, is generally evident via more learner-centred pedagogy. For example, learners may assert what appears to be more overtly agentive speaking positions, epistemic authority and interactional strategies. In this practice, the learner seems to have more control over the pedagogical relationship, but in reality, learner control is never absolute. Learners still have to work within an expected/accepted pedagogical frame. Stronger and weaker framing can be located along a continuum, as per Diagram 2.

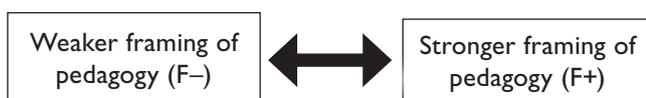


Diagram 2: Continuum of pedagogical framing from F- to F+

Classification and framing together translate into a pedagogic code that regulates the legitimate communication of 'what' is taught and 'how' it is taught. When the two continua of classification and framing, each with stronger or weaker representations, are intersected, four possible orientations to pedagogic codes are possible (see Diagram 3).

Diagram 3 displays the four possible orientations to pedagogic codes, with the top left hand quadrant being stronger classification (C+) of the AC:E strands within weaker framing (F-) of pedagogical practice. The top right hand quadrant is stronger classification

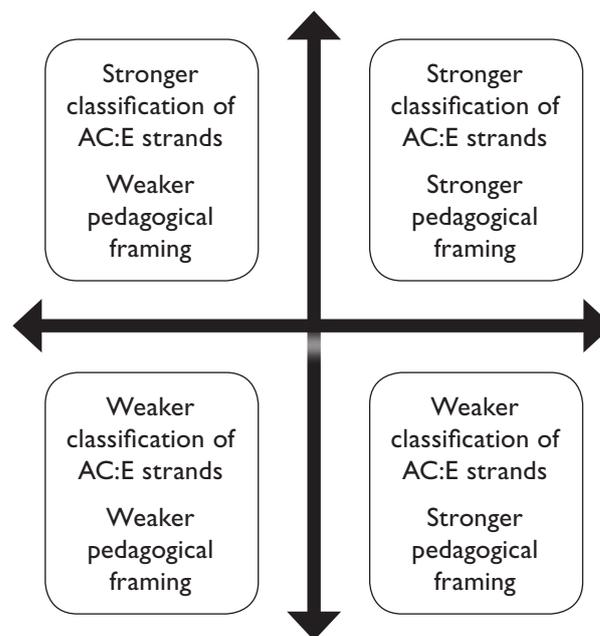


Diagram 3: Four possible orientations to pedagogic codes: intersecting the classification of AC:E strands with pedagogical framing

(C+) of the AC:E strands within stronger framing (F+) of pedagogical practice. The bottom left hand quadrant is weaker classification (C-) of the AC:E strands within weaker framing (F-) of pedagogical practice. The bottom right hand quadrant is weaker classification (C-) of the AC:E strands within stronger framing (F+) of pedagogical practice. Each orientation to the pedagogic code of knowledge and social relations produces its own implications for teachers and learners.

To show how this theory can be used to describe choices for the classification of the AC:E strands and framing of pedagogical practice, we consider an account of grammar teaching. In this account, Derewianka (2012, p. 143) describes the traditional way grammar teaching has often been taught: 'through exercises from a textbook or 'ditto sheets' at the level of individual sentences and often using inauthentic language designed simply to teach a grammatical point'. Theoretically speaking, Derewianka's (2012) account evidences stronger classification (C+) between the fields for knowing about the English language and the other AC:E strands of Literature and Literacy as well as stronger framing (F+) of pedagogical practice as the teacher (or the text book) seems to control the selection, sequencing, pacing, criteria and social relations within pedagogic spaces. A visual representation of this orientation to pedagogic code is shown by the grey quadrant in Diagram 4.

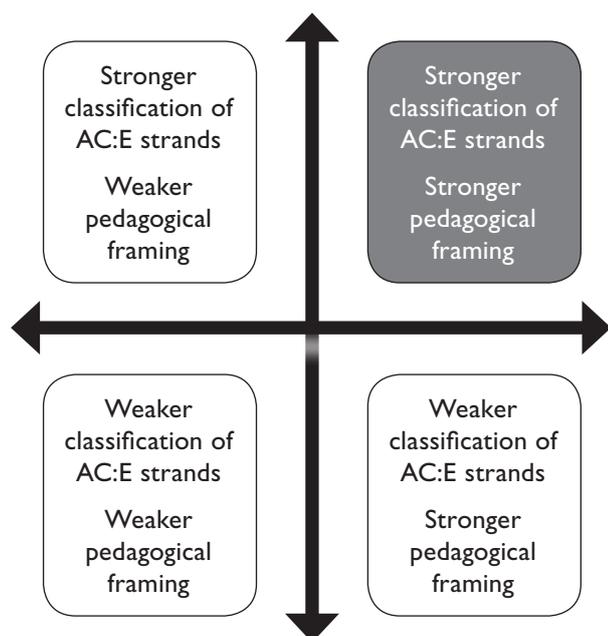


Diagram 4: Traditional grammar lessons show orientation to C+ of AC:E strands and F+ pedagogy

This orientation to pedagogic code privileges the nativist position which defines what is grammatical on the basis of 'language rules' (Halliday, 1978), what Macken-Horarik, et al., (2011, p. 20) refer to as a 'grammatics of deficit'. Whilst this orientation of C+ of the AC:E strands and F+ of pedagogy provides clear right and wrong answers, learners become passive receivers of knowledge. Given the interrelated nature of the three strands of Language, Literature and Literacy in the AC:E we 'should, ideally, see the end of the discrete, unconnected and often discredited grammar programs of times past' (French, 2012, p. 206). Our interest is in developing what Macken-Horarik, et al. (2011, p. 20) refer to as a 'grammatics of potential', where the nativist and environmentalist positions (Halliday, 1978) are both privileged and where what is grammatical considers language-in-use as a resource for making meaning. Herein lies the challenge. Teachers need 'ways in' to working with the relationship between systems that describe language in all its potential, and specific choices from these systems that co-pattern in particular ways with particular texts (Macken-Horarik, et al., 2011). As Love and Humphrey (2012, p. 174) observe, 'while this new Curriculum offers enormous opportunities, it also carries considerable challenges for teachers about how to work with language as a system of structural and meaning-making choices'.

In the section that follows, we explain the logic of text selection and then introduce each of the three interrelated stages of our pedagogical heuristic. We also describe each stage via the theoretical orientations

noted above so the general rule-of-thumb principles of our heuristic are clarified.

Pedagogical heuristic: 'Playing with Grammar'

By way of explanation, our pedagogical heuristic has evolved out of reflections on our teaching practices. We've published some demonstration lessons for Foundation-Year 2 as Exley and Kervin (2013) and for Year 3-Year 6 as Exley, Kervin and Mantei (2015). A more descriptive account of this heuristic in practice is provided in Exley and Dooley (2015).

Before the learning experience begins, a stimulus text needs to be selected. In the demonstration lessons we've already published, we've used community signs, poems, full length picture books containing a single sentence, single pages from a longer picture book, or single paragraphs from a chapter book. It might be that a learner selects a text on the basis of a need to find out more about something that has come up in their lives (Rudman, 1983). It might be that a teacher has identified a text on the basis of its possibilities for teaching about language in use. The stimulus text might be an authentic text from the home or community of a learner. Or the stimulus text might be a piece of literature. We like using high quality children's literature because we appreciate how children's book authors sweat over every single word choice. We also know that playful language is not reserved for the young learner. Our fundamental premise is that the stimulus text uses language that is real and with purpose. The stimulus text should also be relatively brief; the stimulus text must be open to multiple explorations within a learning experience.

Stage 1: An introduction to the learning experience

Stage 1 of our pedagogical heuristic is called 'An introduction to the learning experience'. In terms of the learning experience, we resist 'front-loading' grammatical features for students to incorporate uncritically into their texts. We are influenced by the empirical evidence from Nystrand, Gamoran and Carbonaro (1998), Wray, Medwell, Fox and Poulson (2000), Myhill (2005) and Exley and Dooley (2015) who document the successful outcomes of learning experiences where teachers consciously focus on language in context. In our opening learning experience, the stimulus text is explored, the situations of production and consumption are considered and multiple connections are made to the disparate life worlds of the learners. We also subscribe to Schwartz's (1983b, p. 39) assertion that

the search for meaning in language will be enhanced ‘if language is experienced as a whole entity, rather than as discrete units’. As Halliday (1978, pp. 28–29) notes, ‘any account of language which fails to build in the situation as an essential ingredient is likely to be artificial and unrewarding’. In Stage 1, the teacher’s role can be subtle and indirect or ramped up if more scaffolding is required for learner engagement; the goal is to ensure that this introduction contains enough of what is familiar to enable the learner ‘to bridge the discontinuity of what is new to what is old’ (Schwartz, 1983b, p. 40). As we recall our own practices in classrooms, we note our preference for not rushing this introduction. If we are to remain committed to the need for learners to experience, mull over and revoice their thinking at a later stage (e.g. the next day), it seems important for this introduction to be separate from Stage 2.

Theoretically, this introduction stage demonstrates a C– of the AC:E strands and a F– of pedagogical framing. Diagram 5 represents this orientation to classification of curriculum knowledge and the framing of pedagogical practice in the grey quadrant.

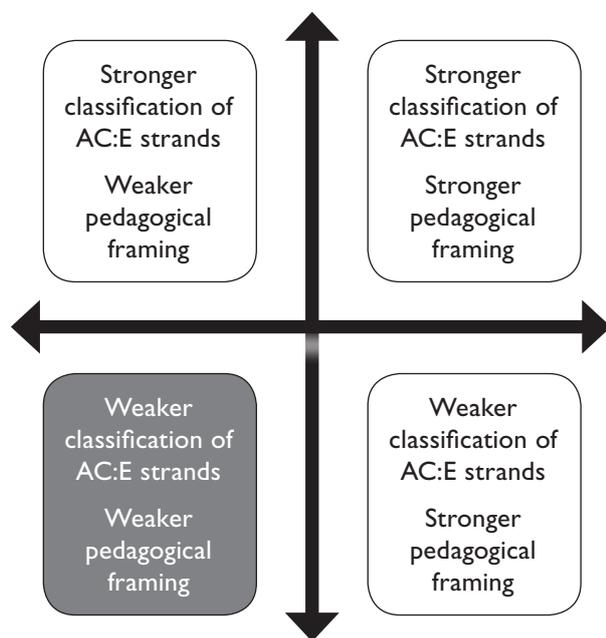


Diagram 5: Introduction to learning experience shows orientation to C– of AC:E strands and F– pedagogy

Stage 2: A focus on learning

Following Rietz (1983, p. 102), our thoughts are that the stimulus text ‘acts primarily as a tool for the development of access to language – it does not teach about language’. It is thus necessary for the pedagogic practice to shift gears. Stage 2, ‘A focus on learning’, considers the language patterns within the stimulus

text. Our preference is for an ‘open’ pedagogic relationship between teacher and learner and learners and learners ‘where reasons for contents, competences, and procedures are explained and discussed’ (Morais & Neves, 2001, p. 214; see also Morais & Neves, 2016). We conceive of this open pedagogic relationship as relatively liberal and learner-centred with the teacher picking and choosing the points in time to provide clarity and overt instruction as is required.

We see two major benefits in instituting an open pedagogic relationship. An open pedagogic relationship permits learners’ considerable tacit grammar knowledge, acquired through their years of experience as effective language users, to be activated (Myhill, 2005). Doing so respects learners as the capable language users they are. An open pedagogical relationship also permits an explicit metalanguage to be ‘discovered’, shared and reflected upon by learners and teachers together. We resist offering a schedule of teacher prompts. Instead, we suggest teachers actively pull together the points of discussion from Stage 1 by encouraging the learners to articulate their tacit grammar knowledge whilst also guiding them to ‘discover’ how language works to make meaning. Doing so constructs language as a field of inquiry rather than a finite set of understandings. Doing so also capitalises upon the learners’ innate way of thinking about language as a search for meaning within a particular context of use. Aside from developing a learner’s internalised metalinguistic awareness, the teacher’s role is also to develop a learner’s explicit metalinguistic vocabulary as a resource that is ‘more cognitively accessible for reflection and decision-making’ (Myhill, 2005, p. 89).

Theoretically, the constructivist approaches outlined in Stage 2 orientate towards a C– of the AC:E strands and a F+ of pedagogical framing. Diagram 6 represents this orientation to classification of curriculum knowledge and the framing of pedagogical practice in the grey quadrant.

The shift between Stages 1 and 2 concern the strengthening of the pedagogical framing. Stage 2 places much greater demands on teachers’ knowledge of content within a stronger pedagogical frame. Shulman (1986) would call this teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge, or PCK. As its name would suggest, PCK is the amalgam of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. It is the knowledge base upon which teachers draw as they transform their content knowledge into content of instruction. Shulman (1986,

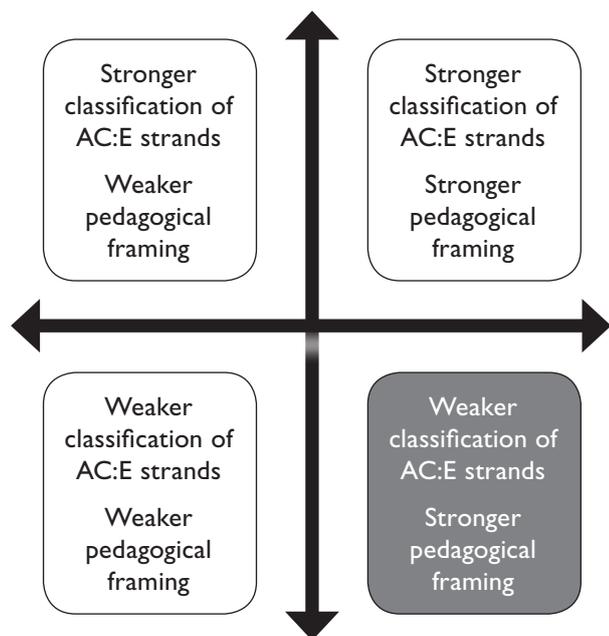


Diagram 6: Focus of teaching shows orientation to C- of AC:E strands and F+ pedagogy

p. 8) described PCK as the knowledge base that teachers draw upon to 'decide what to teach, how to represent it, how to question students about it and how to deal with problems of misunderstanding'. To enact Stage 2 effectively, as represented in Diagram 6, teachers need a deep and wide pedagogical content knowledge base to be able to respond to learners' misunderstandings or questions or 'to react sensitively to any grammatical issue that may arise unexpectedly' (Hudson & Walmsley, 2005, p. 21). We don't make light of this point. As Exley and Richard-Bossez (2013) found, misjudging Stage 2 pedagogies has serious implications for different sorts of learners.

Stage 3: An application of new knowledge where students read and write with grammar in mind

The explicit metalinguistic vocabulary from Stage 2 provides the resources for Stage 3, 'An application of new knowledge where students read and write with grammar in mind'. Stage 3 is based on the premise that the opportunity to play with language in all of its forms, to manipulate it playfully, 'will continue to enhance the child's mastery of literacy' (Schwartz, 1983b, p. 40). We've been deliberate with our choice of language here, activating learners with the verb 'play' and adverb 'playfully' to ensure our description of Stage 3 is not being misconstrued as a return to traditional neo-conservative grammar lessons. As with Stages 1 and 2, we advocate for the space and time for learners to make mistakes, and to trust in their abilities to review

and revise their thinking to enhance their reading and writing of text (see Schwartz, 1983b; Heath, 2012). The concept of application is an important one. Stage 3 requires learners to capitalise upon the metalinguistic awareness and metalinguistic terminology borne out of Stage 2 to identify and 'use the patterns of language choices from successful writers' (see Macken-Horarik, et al., 2011) to enhance their reading (Exley & Cottrell, 2012) and writing of text (Myhill, 2005).

Theoretically, Stage 3 returns to a C- of the AC:E strands and a F- of pedagogical framing. Diagram 7 represents this orientation to classification of curriculum knowledge and the framing of pedagogical practice in the grey quadrant. The point of difference between Stage 1 and Stage 3 is the lesson content is now about reading and writing with grammar in mind. The teacher's role is less dominant than in Stage 2, but no more distant. Issues will arise if progressivist pedagogies are adopted that limit Stage 3 to learners' own reference points (see Exley & Richard-Bossez, 2013). The teacher is still on hand, physically, emotionally and intellectually, should individual learners wish to continue discussions from Stages 1 or 2. The teacher also needs to have a formative or summative mechanism to ensure learning has progressed and that learners are satisfied that learning has progressed.

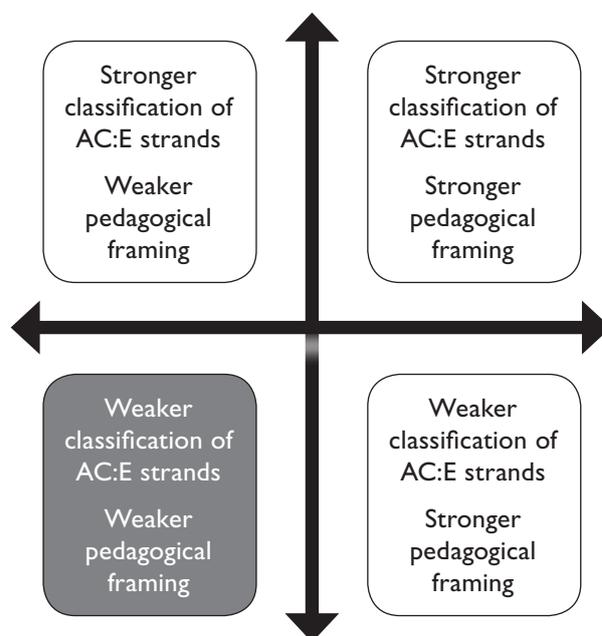


Diagram 7: Application of new knowledge shows orientation to C- of AC:E strands and F- pedagogy

Concluding Discussion

In contrast to the decontextualised approach to teaching grammar recounted by Derewianka (2012) in an earlier section of this article, our 'Playing with Grammar'

heuristic ensures a strong focus on the three strands of the AC:E working together. In our heuristic, knowledge about the English language (Language Strand) works with 'understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature' (Literature Strand) to expand the 'repertoire of English usage' (Literacy Strand) (ACARA, 2016, p. 5). The relationship between grammatical concepts and meaning is foregrounded throughout in positive contextualised ways rather than tacked on as an application at the end. Our approach is not dissimilar to what Australian teachers have come to value themselves. As one Year 9 teacher recounted:

I do not teach my students about grammar that is irrelevant to what I'm teaching e.g. one off lessons about adverbials from a text book. I do however teach it explicitly but as long as it is connected to the writing I am asking my students to do at the time (Love, Macken-Horarik & Horarik, 2015, p. 178).

Changes through the three stages centre on movement from F- pedagogies (Stage 1) to F+ pedagogies (Stage 2) and back to F- pedagogies (Stage 3). This movement, called 'weaving' (Cazden, 2006; Kwek, 2012; Exley & Richard-Bossez, 2013), marks out observable relations of pedagogical practice. This weaving allows an immersion in experience (Stage 1) that is more inclusive of learner difference, whilst allowing learners to discover and build their own knowledge from contexts of language use that they understand (Stage 2) and then use this knowledge in their reading and writing practices (Stage 3). Put another way the pedagogy moves from a semi-progressivist orientation (Stage 1), to semi-traditional orientations (Stage 2) and back to semi-progressivist orientations (Stage 3). In this heuristic, learners meet texts, make meaning from texts, interrogate texts and use texts to better understand how to make meaning as readers or writers of texts.

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Noella Mackenzie, NSW



Children's literacy development
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Teaching of film as text
Education Programmer, Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). Published extensively on Australian television culture and screen comedy.

Susan Bye, VIC

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& READING VIEWING

with Deb McPherson

Digital essays are attracting attention as a form of creative collaboration and I have really enjoyed exploring two examples, *Snow Fall: The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek* and *Kafka's Wound* that are reviewed below. Poetry remains a key area to engage and inspire students and Jim Kacian's anthology, *Haiku in English the First Hundred Years*, is a very accessible text for students. Some of the texts reviewed below encourage student choice, a vital ingredient in any classroom.

Fiction for Year 7 and 8

When Friendship Followed Me Home Paul Griffin
Text Publishing, 2016, 247 pp.



This novel took me by surprise and wiggled its way into my heart, just as Flip the dog does with twelve-year-old Ben and Halley, the protagonists of this appealing story. Ben Coffin has found it difficult to fit in. As a foster kid he tries not to attract attention but his life changes when he meets Halley, a cancer sufferer, and he takes a stray dog home. There is laughter at Flip's antics and their

collaborative fantasy tale, loss when his foster mum dies and he relocates to her sister and difficult partner, Leo, and gains as Ben makes new friends with Halley's family, and Flip trains as a therapy dog to help kids read. It sounds too cute doesn't it? But Griffin escapes sentimentality and addresses hard topics with toughness and honesty and when Flip flips over so people can scratch his tummy, well – the reader just surrenders then and there. Mrs Lorentz, Halley's mother, is the best librarian in YA literature and takes Ben to her heart, just as the reader does. While there are more hard losses and bruises to come there is mirth and happiness and a bit of magic as well. Year 7 students will have a wonderful time with this novel and dog visits to school might become obligatory.

Fiction for Years 9 and 10

Maladapted Richard Kurti
Walker Books, 2016, 306 pp.

Cillian is the only person uninjured when a massive explosion takes out the train he is travelling on in Foundation City. Time seemed to slow down for Cillian and he is able to get his badly injured father out of the carnage. But Paul dies of his injuries and Cillian is desperate to discover the meaning behind his father's last word to him 'Gilgamesh'.



A parallel narrative introduces Tess as the bomber. She's a survivor of a terrible pandemic and being manipulated to attack the city and especially to hunt down any designed 'humans' by a religious right-wing sect called Revelation, and its leader, Blackwood. It appears Cillian's unique talents as a mathematician and his speed and strength may have been manufactured by the mysterious P8 organisation that could be linked to Gilgamesh Hospital in the provinces. Tess is assigned to find out more about P8 and Cillian. She gets close to him and together they enter and explore the P8 site and see its terrible secrets. Tess struggles with Blackwood's command to destroy Cillian while Cillian clashes fatally with Gabrielle, the head of P8. After a separation and climatic chase Tess and Cillian escape across the sea. A sequel beckons with the knowledge of the existence of other experiments like Cillian and the fact that Gabrielle created Huxley, a super human who may render the rest of humanity redundant. Cillian and Tess have a fight on their hands once they work out who the real enemy is.

A better cover would have helped but *Maladapted* is fast paced and exciting with some fascinating futuristic touches and issues of trust, extremism, the role of science and a brave new world to explore. Many Year 8 and Year 9 readers will enjoy this novel and it could form part of a wide reading project in dystopias.

Poetry

Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years
Ed. Jim Kacian, Phillip Rowland and Allen Burns.
WW Norton & Company, 2013, 424 pp.

The Haiku Anthology Ed. Cor Van Den Heuvel
WW Norton & Company, 1999, 363 pp.



These two anthologies will provide much inspiration and poetic variety in the English classroom. The more recent publication *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years* has more than 800 poems by nearly 240 poets from Ezra Pound to Marlene Mountain. The poems are organised based on the publication date of the first poem in each poet's selection, or 'at the

time he or she began making an impact on the genre'. Billy Collins' Foreword and Jim Kacian's comprehensive Overview at the end of the collection are valuable sources of context and analysis about the poetic form and the poets who have employed it. It was wonderful to discover the work of Janice Bostok, 'godmother to Australian haiku'. Her three-part haiku beginning

pregnant again ...
the fluttering of moths
against the window

is a poignant elegy to a lost child whose tiny coffin is enfolded in the final stanza. Poets are not bound to the 5/7/5 syllable form. Some, like William M. Ramsay achieve much in fewer syllables:

slave cemetery
i scrape the moss to find
no name

while Robert Major invites us all in to the

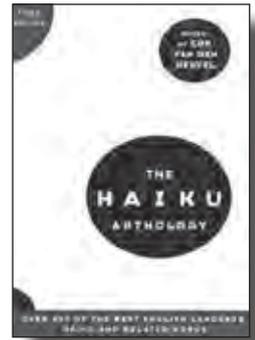
silent Friends meeting ...
the sound of chairs being moved
to enlarge the circle

The reader finds many single poems sequestered on a solitary page while others share the space but the overwhelming impression is of few words on a large white backdrop. Such presentation invites the reader's reflection.

Basho's famous line 'One who has produced even a single good poem has not lived in vain' gives all of us, teachers and students alike, hope and this extensive

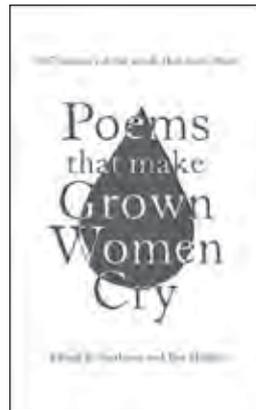
and beautifully presented anthology (the pages feel smooth, warm and inviting) gives us the opportunity to seek inspiration for our craft.

The Haiku Anthology edited by Cor Van Den Heuvel has over 800 poems as well, reflecting the simplicity and imagery of the original form. Its alphabetical organisation may lack some of the historical sweep of its companion but it delivers powerful and revealing poems to delight and provoke the reader. Both anthologies could find a welcome place in a 7-12 classroom where students can choose poems which do just that.



Poems that Make Grown Women Cry

Ed. Anthony and Ben Holden
Simon & Schuster, 2016. Hardcover 330 pp.



Poems that Make Grown Women Cry proves to be an excellent companion anthology to *Poems that Make Grown Men Cry* (reviewed in *English in Australia* Vol. 50, No. 1, 2015). The collection has almost a hundred poems from eighteen countries selected by women in their twenties to their late nineties. As a reader you find out the reason for the poem's selection before you

read it and then after the poem you discover a little about the woman who made the selection.

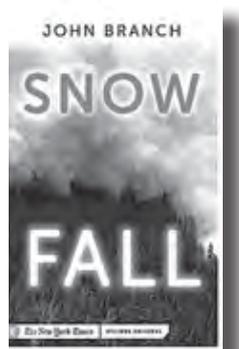
It's a great experience to dip into this new anthology, finding favourite poems and unfamiliar ones and the reasons different women give for their choice. What a pleasure to see Chandler's 'Late Fragment' chosen by Miranda Hart because she values being free and Causley's 'Timothy Winters' selected by broadcaster and author Joan Bakewell for the impact that little boy had on her life. Then I discovered 'Grow Old with Me' by John Lennon, chosen by Yoko Ono because it was the 'last song my husband wrote. He wrote it with a golden brush of sunset and I read it through tears without end'. Taive Selasi selected Warsan Shire's poem, 'for women who are difficult to love', because it 'exposed my deepest hope and my deepest fear'.

This is poetry that can 'touch with the fewest of phrases our raw beating hearts'. Ah, what solace and surprise await in a new anthology. And what a great

idea for a class project for students to create their own anthology from poems that move, confront or challenge them to think differently. Gather a selection of poetry anthologies like this one for your Year 9 and 10 students and ask them to make a selection, explain why they chose that particular poem and add a brief written biography of themselves. Collect, collate and publish on the walls, in the library, on the web and in the school newsletter. It could start a trend like guerilla poetry.

Digital essays

Two digital essays came to my attention last year when the NSW Department of Education's Senior Curriculum Support Officer English K-12 Prue Greene suggested in her newsletter a range of digital texts for teachers to explore. *Snow Fall: the Avalanche at Tunnel Creek* and *Kafka's Wound* have much to offer students in the senior years of high school for both analysis and composition.



Snow Fall: the Avalanche at Tunnel Creek
<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/#/?part=tunnel-creek>

A New York Times journalism project December 2012

This feature story of the 2012 Tunnel Creek Avalanche in the Cascade Mountains, to the east of Seattle in Washington State, is about sixteen people who set out for a day's skiing and encountered an avalanche that resulted in three fatalities. What is different about this story is the way it is told and the use it makes of digital and interactive elements. The reader/viewer encounters more than prose and some photographic illustrations: there are video and audio accounts, time-lapse maps and animations. These added multimedia elements are assimilated into the narrative and enhance the understanding of the reader/viewer. They do not distract us

from the narrative, rather they enrich and embellish it.

The story is told in six chapters: *Tunnel Creek*, *To the Peak*, *Descent Begins*, *Blur of White*, *Discovery* and *Word Spreads* which the reader scrolls through.

John Branch begins the narrative with a description of one of the skiers, Else Staustag, being caught in the avalanche.

She had no control of her body as she tumbled downhill. She did not know up from down. It was not unlike being cartwheeled in a relentlessly crashing wave. But snow does not recede. It swallows its victims. It does not spit them out.

Snow filled her mouth. She caromed off things she never saw, tumbling through a cluttered canyon like a steel marble falling through pins in a pachinko machine.

But we don't just get his description. We see Else on the embedded video as she recalls her burial. We can contrast this with another video where she talks of the joy of powder snow skiing and we can experience a slide show which illuminates the magic of night skiing. As we scroll through the chapters we can see the snow drop footage over Stevens Pass and experience the giddy sensation of the hologram depicting the 7th Heaven chairlift and the hike to Tunnel Creek gathering point. In Part 4 *Blur of white* we can be chilled by the sound of an avalanche and watch its swift descent (via the animation) through the valley until it spreads out into a debris field hundreds of feet below. We can hear the 911 call (the USA emergency number) as people try to get support for those who have been lost.

A fascinating article *How we made snowfall* can be found at <https://source.opennews.org/en-US/articles/how-we-made-snow-fall/>. It provides deep insights into the creative collaboration that produced this award-winning digital essay which won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing. Steve Duenes, Graphics Director, speaks for many of the other collaborators when he says

We wanted to make a single story out of all the assets, including the text. So the larger project ... was an editing project that required us to weave things together so that text, video, photography and graphics could all be consumed in a way that was similar to reading – a different kind of reading.

John Branch was the feature writer and joining him in the project were Jacky Myint, multimedia Producer/Designer, Catherine Spangler, Video Journalist, Graham Roberts, Graphics Editor and Andrew Kueneman, Deputy Director Digital Design. Catherine Spangler

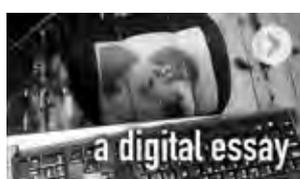
said that what the group learned more than anything was the vital importance of editing!

We focused on the pacing, narrative tension and story arc – all while ensuring that each element gave the user a different experience of the story. The moving images provided a much-needed pause at critical moments in the text ...

The team often asked whether a video or piece of audio was adding value to the project, and we edited elements out that felt duplicative.

I read the ebook, *Snowfall*, after I had experienced the website. The ebook has an evocative cover and contains John Branch's text from the digital essay and two illustrations. It took about an hour to read the same text that I had seen set amid the many elements available on the website. In comparison the ebook was a pale reflection of the vividness, richness and complexity of the digital essay.

Year 11 students will have a marvellous time exploring this website and could create their own digital essay based on issues inspired by their own interests and enthusiasms or ignited by the texts they encounter. For example, they could investigate the challenges of our landscape as opposed to that of the USA and be inspired by Karen Kissane's non fiction text, *The Worst of Days: Inside the Black Saturday Firestorm*, or by Amanda Lohrey's description of bushfire (pp. 105–121) in her novel *Vertigo* and by the material available on state rural fire services websites.



Kafka's Wound

<http://thespace.lrb.co.uk> London Review of Books

Kafka's Wound is a digital essay commissioned by the *London Review of Books*. Will Self, the Professor of Contemporary Thought at Brunel University, based his essay on Franz Kafka's short story, *The Country Doctor*. But the response was not intended to be his alone. It was envisaged as a collaborative creative composition.

Self encouraged seventy other staff and students to be involved. They could respond in music, animations, films, texts and other mediums.

Their various contributions are organised in a Visual Index that allows multiple routes through the essay.



Screen shot of *Kafka's Wound* Visual index
<http://thespace.lrb.co.uk>

The headings include the essay itself, archival, documentary, creative with audio, gallery and video as subheadings. As you scroll through the essay side note icons appear and invite you to select Creative, Archival, Documentary or Author's Note content.

So my first 'walk through the text' started conventionally enough with the essay but soon I realised I needed to hear or read Kafka's short story (both options available) I read the short and bizarre story concerning a doctor's visit to a young man whose relatives are worried about his health and shared the horror of the doctor as he discovered that the man has a worm-infected gaping wound in his abdomen. I couldn't escape the associations with Snowdon's hidden wound in Heller's *Catch 22*.

Then I chose *Creative: Die Goldene* to hear Professor of Music Peter Wiegold's composition, the sort of music Kafka might have listened to; an upbeat melody with decay at the end. My next choice was *Documentary* which allowed me to accompany Will Self on his journey in film to discover Kafka's Prague. I also selected *Video* and saw a response by Akram Khan, Professor in Particle Physics and e-Science, titled *I came into the world with a beautiful wound*. *Documentary* also allowed me to listen to an hour-long video, *Debating the Digital essay*, recorded at the London Review Bookshop. I only scraped the surface of the rich content available to any reader and many more hours of discovery await.

Self sees himself as a digital migrant, not a native, so it is exciting to consider what digital natives (our students) would make of this medium. The ability to dip in and out is typical digital behaviour and reinforces the 'no right path' idea as a reader selects his/her own personal route. Everyone's experience of this essay will be different.

These essays provide models for a group of students to emulate. They can choose an issue or topic they want to explore and use the form of the digital essay to explore that topic. They can consider a range of different perspectives that represent events, situations and people and select texts to explore those perspectives drawn from a variety of sources. For example 'Black voices: making sense of the past and the present'. The representation of Indigenous culture in popular culture and the changing representations of Indigenous People in their country would be a powerful topic to explore in Year 11. Texts to assist in that exploration could include: *The Stolen Children: Their Stories* edited by Carmel Bird, Paul Keating's Redfern speech, Noel Pearson's

eulogy to Gough Whitlam, Kevin Rudd's National Apology, Linda Burney's First Speech to the NSW State parliament and her First Speech as the first elected Indigenous woman to Federal parliament. Creative texts could include the play *The Secret River*, adapted by Andrew Bovell from the novel by Kate Grenville and including the foreword by Henry Reynolds; the play *Jasper Jones* adapted by Kate Mulvany from the novel by Craig Silvey; the *Antipodes* anthology edited by Margaret Bradstock; and Ali Cobby Eckerman's poem *Ruby Moonlight*. Visual and multimodal texts to explore could include the Creative Spirits website at <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/politics/inspirational-aboriginal-australian-tedx-talks>; the painting, *The Conciliation*, by Benjamin Duterrau; *The National Picture* by Geoff Parr and the new ABC series *Cleverman*.

More fiction, plays and poetry in my next column with a focus on Kate Tempest (who does all three), as well as some new websites, non fiction and picture books. Until then happy reading and viewing.

24/7

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