

Current Issues in Linguistic Theory

Text and Context
in Functional Linguistics

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Cyffprint

CHAPTER 8

Speaking with reference to Context

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The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something — because it is always before one's eyes.) ... We fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful. (Wittgenstein 1953: 50)

1. Introduction

As the title suggests this paper talks about context; more-specifically, it aims to present my understanding of the relation of text and context — what is involved in *speaking with reference to context*, when the phenomenon is seen from the viewpoint of systemic functional linguistics (henceforth SFL).¹ That the characterisation of this relation is not a new problem is obvious from the fact that for the last three quarters of this century ever since Malinowski (1923) first introduced the topic, linguists too numerous to name here have turned repeatedly to reflect on it. That the problem is also complex is evident from the fact that while conceptions of context have developed considerably over this period (for some accounts, see Hasan 1995; Lecki-Tarry 1995; Martin 1992), at least some fundamental issues still remain unresolved. So not only does the conceptualisation of the category of context prove descriptively inadequate when it confronts certain classes of data (see Section 2.3), but also a theoretical issue most fundamental to linguistic theory remains in need of elaboration. This issue is as follows: given that speaking is done with reference to the contexts of social living, what if anything does this signify for the relations of language and culture? Failing to maintain a sustained focus on this question, we have failed

also to appreciate that the exploration of the question has the power to define the very nature of the linguistic enterprise by identifying the nature of its object of study: how should "the science of human language" conceptualise language? Is language simply an invariable set of rules written into the human DNA? Is it just a cultural product with no basis in the evolutionary history of the species? Addressing these questions seriously, we might have succeeded in abandoning the age old polarisation between the biological and the cultural, accepting instead a view put forward by Vygotsky (1978) that the opposition between the biogenetic and the cultural is false: language, rooted in human biology, grows by cultural intervention. The postulate of cultural intervention in the growth of language is a prior condition for claiming that language is an inherently variable meaning potential (Halliday 1978) which varies with variation in its speakers' material and social conditions of living. The exploration of context along these paths would have developed the explanatory reach of the concept; what has happened is that instead of becoming an explanatory principle, the notion of context has become an a-theoretical appendage which functions as a mere trouble shooter, a disambiguator of ambiguous sentences.

On reflection, none of this should appear surprising. In fact the developmental trajectory of the concept of context proves the truth of the adage that the point of departure is never irrelevant to the point of arrival. In the development of ideas about the relations of context and text, from the very beginning, two assumptions have been universally made: first, that appropriate speech is speech suited to the social context in which the speaker finds himself, and second that the impetus for speaking does not originate in the knowledge of language, whether this is thought of as practical knowledge, gained in languaging with others, or as cerebral knowledge, not learnt but innate, and consisting of knowing at some level of awareness that language has such and such rules/regularities. I certainly am not implying that there is no truth in any of these assumptions, though with hindsight I reject the belief that they provide the only relevant, or even the most important, considerations when it comes to reflections on the relations of text and context: certainly, they do not tell the whole story. Nor does it seem fanciful to suggest that at least some of the unresolved issues have remained with us because we have tended to take these truisms as our point of departure, which has naturally steered the enquiry in a particular direction. For example, if we start with the assumption that speaking is simply fashioned to suit some given social context, then it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that context must "come before text", and that by the same token language is

powerless to create it. If to this bit of "reasoning" we add also the unquestioning belief that the cerebral knowledge of language is prior to its practical knowledge — you need to have language before you can use it — then the deterministic perspectives typically adopted on the relations of context and text become immediately intelligible: by these steps we are led to the belief that the innate cerebral knowledge of language is a pre-condition for languaging, which in turn is a pre-condition for the emergence of practical knowledge. What is implied is a unidirectional logic — what (Marková 1988) calls *monologic* — whereby the cerebral knowledge of language antedates its practical knowledge, causing it to come about while languaging — *speaking with reference to context* — can in no way shape the cerebral knowledge itself, which like context is *always already there* even before any speaking has been done. These intellectual stances create gaps between context, language and speaking, and the only bridge our unquestioning assumptions have provided for coping with the situation is the principle of monological determinism, according to which context of situation "determines" the meanings you might mean, while the system of language "determines" the wordings for expressing the meanings which are already "dictated" by context. Speaking is thus in a double bind: its meanings are bound by an already existing context, and the expression of those meanings is bound by the pre-existing rules of language. Meanwhile continued adherence to this "reasoning" has turned context and language into the mundane and the mysterious: context resurfaces in linguistics as a material backdrop for performance, leaving its own origins shrouded in mystery, while language resurfaces as a mental organ, a biological appendage whose evolutionary impetus remains equally mysterious.

It is important to emphasise that, despite the critical overtones of these comments, there is enough truth in the truisms and the arguments derived from them to make their simple, outright rejection problematic. The fact that the assumptions are not outright false explains their hold: it explains why even today with very few exceptions ideas about the relations of context and text continue to be largely "deterministic", thus stunting the growth of the concept. The persistence of this perspective does not mean that our predecessors foolishly failed to recognise the power of language to create context; quite the contrary, the theme is as old as the debate on context itself. For example, in developing his seminal ideas about the relevance of context to text, Malinowski (1935: 52 ff) very clearly identified² "two peaks of... [the] pragmatic power of words",³ one of which was to be found in the role of language as an instrument in carrying out a "concerted human activity" and the other in its role "as potentially

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creative of acts', such as the sacred language of magic, religion, law etc. around which evolve a large number of social activities. And Malinowski was by no means alone in drawing attention to both aspects of the relations of context and language: other scholars such as Firth (1957) and Halliday (1973, 1975, 1978) have reiterated his views; I myself have echoed the theme from time to time (Hasan 1980, 1984a, 1984b). In fact it is not difficult to find both the determinative and creative perspectives within one and the same piece of work, not reconciled in a dialectic but almost unaware of each other. The *emphasis* has, however, continued to remain on the role of context as the determinant of texts and this is so even where the professed aim is to abandon it in favour of a more flexible view. Examined impartially, most SFL literature would bear out the truth of this generalisation.⁴ In recent years, fuelled by the postmodernist faith in the efficacy of actual practice as the most important explanatory principle, critics of the determinative perspective — an approach sometimes dubbed "synoptic" — have suggested a shift of the analytical focus: it is recommended that instead of focusing on text, which is a rule-governed product, the analytic gaze should turn toward the rule-defying serendipity of real process located in real time carried out by real individuals. This shift in focus, it is argued, would constitute a "dynamic" perspective: taking as its object of analysis the particularities of a unique process, it would have the power to reveal the role of individual desires and decisions in contributing to the uniqueness of the *praxis* which unique social subjects engage in.

Whatever the merits of this recommended focus — and I doubt that there are many (Hasan 1995, in press) — employed by itself it too would suffer from limitations: its monological character will allow it to tell a story just as partial as that told by a synoptic analysis.⁵ I say this because in the current conception of the dynamic perspective which has become popular in SFL during the last decade (Martin 1985, 1992; Ventola 1987), the relations of a unique instance of practice and a non-unique system remain entirely unclear, not to say incoherent; and this remains true despite recent attempts at justification (e.g. in Martin 1997). It seems reasonable to conclude then that escape from one set of truisms into another is no recipe for producing a more palatable solution to the problem of providing a better description. Rather what is needed is a move out of the monological perspective into a dialogical one: instead of privileging either the system or the process as temporally and logically prior to the other, a better solution is to think of the two from the point of view of *how they interact*, how the two participate in a *cogenetic logic* (Marková 1988) whereby the uniqueness

of process is made intelligible by reference to the general regularities of a shared system familiar to the members of at least some specifiable social group — a system which itself receives its definition from the innumerable unique acts of meaning by innumerable individuals engaged with each other in the living of their life.

Over the last two decades SFL has moved steadily towards the dialogical perspective: what this means with reference to the relations of text and context, language and culture, is that each is instrumental in the precise definition and development of the other. I have argued elsewhere (Hasan 1995) that the critical step in this enterprise was the rethinking of realisation and instantiation as bidirectional relations rather than unidirectional ones:⁶ this is what distinguishes current SFL views of realization and instantiation from Hjelmslev's (1961) *expression/realisation* or Firth's (1957) *expotence*. In principle, the postulate of bi-directionality is the postulate of a dialectic between content and form on the one hand and between system and instance, on the other (see Figure 1 and its discussion in Halliday, this volume; also Hasan 1995, 1996a). Thus, for example, if in speaking,⁷ the speaker's perception of context *activates* her choice of meanings,⁸ then also the meanings meant in speaking *construe* contexts; and the same relation of activation and construal holds, *mutatis mutandis*, between meaning and lexicogrammar. The working of realisation as a dialogical principle — as a dialectic — limits the scope of the operation of arbitrariness in language. This is an important observation since arguably arbitrariness is the other side of a determinative monological relation across strata. I am aware that in this age of "post-everything" much has been made of "l'arbitraire du signe" by respected masters in every social field. However, there is reason to believe that the interpretation of the Saussurean principle has in fact been based on partial readings by partial readers (Hasan 1987, in press; Thibault 1997): the principle of arbitrariness in language is far less pervasive than current academic fashions would suggest. For example, it is only a certain class of phonological pattern, at least in English — the segmental ones such as the syllable — that relates unidirectionally and arbitrarily to linguistic form.⁹ By contrast, the categories of context, meaning and lexicogrammar are related realisationally, not arbitrarily: a contextual category has its being in its semantic construal just as a linguistic meaning exists by virtue of its activation by context *and* its construal by some lexicogrammatical form, which is not to deny that the categories of linguistic meaning bear a necessary relation to the categories of speakers' subjective experience. Subjective experience is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for the significance of linguistic meaning.

- The move towards a dialogical orientation has proved profitable for the SF model: not only has it opened up the possibility of providing a more powerful account of the relations of context and text, culture and language (see Halliday this volume; Hasan 1995) but it has also provided a sound basis for the much needed clarification of the role of text production in fashioning the system of language as it is — a functional system that at once displays stability and variation, that flourishes on the seeming contradictions inherent in the co-presence of homoglossia and heteroglossia, and that is at once cognisant of communal regularities as it is permissive of individual liberties; in short the limitations and determinism are not so much in the system as they are the artefacts of our own modes of analysis.¹⁰ Thanks to its dialogical perspective SFL is today better able to locate human language as an element in what Lemke (1984, 1993, 1995) calls *the dynamic open system*. But the processes of the development of a theory, much like the process of speaking, are full of unexpected turns, twists and even internal inconsistencies: the fact that SFL has adopted a dialogical perspective does not mean that all descriptive categories have been re-thought in light of this theoretical move. In asking what it means to *speak with reference to context*, I will be explore some categories from a dialogical perspective that are specifically relevant to the relations of text and context. This, as my introductory comments suggest, will involve making the following assumptions:
- that to describe the nature of human language we need to place it in its social environment; that this environment — call it context — must be taken as an integral part of linguistic theory;
 - that the linguistic theory is stratal, consisting of four strata: context, semantics, lexicogrammar and phonology. These represent four distinct orders of abstraction, which are both necessary and sufficient for a satisfactory description of language;
 - that the first three strata in the linguistic theory — context, semantics, lexicogrammar — are related overwhelmingly by realisation (Halliday 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Hasan 1995, 1996a; Mathiessen 1995; Mathiessen and Nesbitt 1996), whereas the relation of phonology to the other strata is in part expressive and in part realisational;¹¹
 - that language and text — system and process — are related by instantiation (Halliday 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Hasan 1996a) just as context of culture and of situation are (see Halliday, this volume: Figure 1 and discussion); that, therefore, the critical relation between language and context can be expressed in terms of two proportionalities as follows:

From the point of view of *instantiation*, situation is to culture as text is to language; the first term of each proportion instantiates the second:

situation:culture::text:language

From the point of view of *realisation*, language is to culture as text is to situation; the first term of each proportion realises the second:

language:culture::text:situation

So identified, my focus is on the second term of the last proportion displayed above, i.e., the realisational relations of context and text in a dialogical modelling that takes the other three terms of the proportions as essential to the argument. I shall continue to use the term *context* to refer to *context of situation*; the term *culture* will be used to refer to *context of culture* if and when needed (see footnote 8).

2. Context Making Text

In this section I will first present three cases of speaking. I will go on to offer an informal commentary on each case, using it as an occasion for making observations and raising questions that are relevant to the discussion in hand. Using the currently *prevalent* SFL model, I will specify the relevant context for each of these cases of speaking (sections 2.1–2.3). My aim is to highlight certain of its shortcomings. To list them briefly: (i) the prevalent contextual descriptions in SFL are based on an assumption of contextual constancy across a given text; for example, this is the assumption that underlies Halliday and Hasan's (1976: 23) claim that a text is "a passage of discourse which is coherent ... with respect to the context of situation, and therefore consistent in register". (ii) While the claim of contextual/registral constancy is empirically validated in the majority of cases, it is not universally true. It is possible to find cases where the integrity of a text is able to survive certain kinds of contextual/registral changes (see Section 2.3 for an example). (iii) This being the case, the question arises: what would one mean by "coherent with respect to the context of situation" in the latter type of cases? Current SFL models possess no satisfactory means of answering this challenge or of specifying the nature and character of those contextual and/or registral changes which do not disturb the unity of the text, nor can they specify *where* i.e., in what kind(s) of social situation, such changes are most at risk. (iv) By the same token, the systemic accounts of context fail to

provide the formal means for indicating the potential for such changes; and finally (v) current contextual descriptions fail to indicate the essential unity of the social process which lies at the heart of the notion of context, tending to treat each component of context as if it were a *thing in itself*. While subscribing to the general delineation of the theory of context as presented in Halliday (1964, and elsewhere), in Section 3 of this paper I shall attempt to follow an alternative path for its development in order to overcome these shortcomings. This will involve departing from certain assumptions so far never questioned in SFL. First then, the examples of speaking:

Example A.¹²

Emilie Durkheim: Selected Writings

Edited with an introduction and notes by

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Durkheim's writings have exerted a profound influence in modern sociology. Many of his ideas have been incorporated into the conventional wisdom of the subject; others have remained controversial, and are a matter of continuing debate. The reception of Durkheim's views in the English-speaking world, however, has suffered from the inadequacy of certain of the existing translations and, while most of his major studies are now available in English, a considerable number of his writings — particularly his shorter articles and reviews — have still not appeared in translation.

This is the first collection of Durkheim's writings to draw upon the total corpus of his work. All the texts included in the book have been newly translated, about a quarter of them for the first time. This selection thus offers a comprehensive survey of Durkheim's contribution to sociology and social philosophy. The book is organised in terms of the substantive themes in Durkheim's writings, rather than following the chronology of his intellectual development; but since it contains selections from every phase of his intellectual career, giving the date of their first publication, the interested reader can easily trace the evolution of his thought.

Mr Giddens' Introduction identifies the leading themes in Durkheim's work, and offers a critique of previous interpretations of his theoretical standpoint.

Example B: [Text 1: Post office]¹³

01 Server: yes please (CUSTOMER STEPS FORWARD)

02 Customer: can I have these two like that? (HANDS OVER TWO LETTERS)

03 Server: yes (... SERVER WEIGHS ONE LETTER)

- 04 one's forty-five (... SERVER WEIGHS THE OTHER LETTER)
- 05 one's twenty-five
- 06 Customer: and have you got.. the.. first day covers of..
- 07 Server: yes
- 08 Customer: [? Anzac] ..
- 09 Server: how many would you like?
- 10 Customer: four please
- 11 Server: two of each?
- 12 Customer: what have you got?
- 13 Server: uh there's two different designs on the — (... SERVER SHOWS CUSTOMER THE COVERS)
- 14 Customer: I'll take two of each
- 15 Server: uhum (... SERVER GETS THE STAMPS FOR THE LETTERS AND THE COVERS)
- 16 right, that's a dollar seventy thank you
- 17 (SERVER PUTS THE COVERS INTO A BAG; CUSTOMER GETS THE MONEY)
- 18 here we are
- 19 (... SERVER HANDS OVER THE STAMPS AND THE COVERS; CUSTOMER HANDS THE MONEY TO SERVER)
- 20 Customer: *thankyou
- 21 Server: *thankyou
- 22 (SERVER GETS THE CHANGE)
- 23 dollar seventy that's two four and one's five *thankyou very much
- 24 Customer: *thankyou (... CUSTOMER REACHES FOR THE LETTERS)
- 25 Server: they'll be right I'll fix those up in a moment
- 26 Customer: okay (CUSTOMER LEAVES)
- Example C: [extract from a dialogue]¹⁴
- 01 Mother: now Stephen, do you want a sandwich for lunch?
- 02 Stephen: yes
- 03 and some passionfruit
- 04 Mother: and some passionfruit
- 05 where is the passionfruit?
- 06 Stephen: um .. Um the passionfruit is um .. Um [? 1
- 07 do you know where the passionfruit is?
- 08 Mother: no
- 09 you were walking around with it
- 10 what did you do with it?

- 11 Stephen: I don't remember
 12 Mother: is it on the table?
 13 Stephen: let me see .. It is under the table
 14 Mother: under the table!
 15 Stephen: yes ..
 16 here it is
 17 Mother: ok .. right .. peanut butter sandwich?
 18 Stephen: yeah ..
 19 Mother: you go to the table
 20 and I'll bring it in ..
 21 there aren't many passionfruits out there at the moment
 22 Stephen: why?
 23 Mother: because .. passionfruit usually come
 24 when its warm
 25 here, you sit here in Nana's seat
- 26 Stephen: [why —
 27 Mother: [I'll put —
- 28 Stephen: why does Nana like to sit here?
 29 Mother: I'll put —
 30 oh it's easy for her to get up
 31 if she's sitting there ...
 32 we have to go to Chatswood this afternoon Stephen
 33 Stephen: why?
 34 Mother: um .. to .. Peter has to have injections ..
 35 Stephen: [?]
 36 Mother: and we might — if we've got time
 37 we might go to the library
 38 to see if we can get a book on goldfish
 39 Stephen: why?
 40 Mother: Richard wants to know about how to keep goldfish ...
 41 ah I have to ring up that lady about the music class, don't I?
 42 Stephen: what music classes?
 43 Mother: um the music classes that Daniel goes to
 44 Stephen: oh .. you mean the um the dancing class .. Mummy
 45 Mother: yes
 46 I'll see if she's got room for you .. in the class, will I?
 47 Stephen: mm
 48 Mother: ok .. what would you like to drink, Stephen?

- 49 Stephen: um orange juice ..
 50 and I want some vitamin C
 51 yeah that one ..
- 52 [I want —
 53 Mother: [you can have one tonight darling
- 54 Stephen: why? (WHINGING)
 55 Mother: well, they're very big tablet, sweetie
 56 very big tablets
 57 five hundred milligrams there are in those
 58 that's twice as much as any other tablets ..
 59 so you really had two tablets this morning ..
 60 do you want a banana .. or some mandarins?
 61 Stephen: um no ..

2.1 Context and text: Example A

I came across A as a blurb on the back cover of the book entitled *Emile Durkheim: Selected Writings*. It is the kind of place where, as a buyer somewhat undecided about the purchase of the book, I might have turned for information on its orientation and/or its content. Given the practices of the publishing industry, it is highly likely that the blurb was produced at least in consultation with Giddens himself; but if not, it would certainly have been okayed by him. In any event, it is not the specific identity of the "speaker" of this written text that is criterial; what is more important is the fact that the interests of the author and the publisher coincide in producing information which presents the publication as attractive: the voice of the composer is the voice of collaboration between the intellectual and the economic. It is also certain that in composing the blurb, the writer could not have been thinking of any particular person as a reader except in the capacity of a prototype: the intended addressee of this text has an imaginary being. He is the anonymous prospective buyer, whose face is refracted through the author's text as an educated adult with a serious (i.e., near-professional rather than dilettante) interest in sociology. This is borne out by the fact that the positive evaluation of the information presented to attract buyers depends on the buyer's (desire for) familiarity with the field of sociology. The producer of this text would have been aware also that such intended addressees will come in contact with the text through writing (what I have referred to technically as

the *graphic channel* (see Hasan 1985b: 58)) encountering it as the product of an already completed process. The addressee's absence from the scene of the text's production naturally implies that he would be unable to share in the process of text production: thus, the use of strategies such as *probe*, *repair* and *realign* (cf. Hasan 1985b: 66) — in fact the possibility of any *immediate* response — would be unavailable. Here it is essentially the writer's privilege to decide what information and from what perspective, the reader needs to know, though this privilege is constrained by the writer's need to capture and enlist the reader's interest. The social relationship of the speaker and addressee is thus balanced as peers. It is notable also that on the basis of the language of this blurb, no reader of text *A* would be able to judge whether or not the original composition of the text was interrupted at any point, and if so, how often and where. The text's seamless appearance suggests that *if* there were such interruptions, then at each resumption, the writer's sense of the social activity he was engaged in and his sense of the addressee he was addressing had remained the same as when the interruption(s) occurred — in other words, the writer's perception of the context relevant to his composition did not undergo any significant change during the process of production. The text bears no proof of emendations that are very likely to have been made, nor does it carry any indication of the specific location or time of its original composition. Much of what I have called the *material situational setting* (Hasan 1973, 1980 etc) is destined to remain unknown even to the addressee of this blurb.

The above comments on text *A* are one reader's "reading" of that text's relevant context from the text itself, but the reading is very likely to be shared by at least some other persons in the community. What does it take to make this kind of reading? and on what basis is it performed? It is a commonplace of discourse analysis that the ability to read a text in this way implies familiarity with the functioning of the text types in the reader's culture. The linguistic habits for such interpretation shapes itself through the processes of communal living which is saturated with speaking. And it is very likely that as a social subject the recognition rules for interactional practices (Bernstein 1990) become a part of one's being considerably earlier than do those realisation rules (*ibid.*) which enable the performance. In fact, the realisation rules may never reach that stage of felicity where they are able to translate themselves into an actual text. This, as scholars of literacy have testified, is very often the case when speaking concerns the *specialised* not the *quotidian* sphere of social activity.¹⁵ To sum up then, those who can provide this kind of reading of the context from text *A* are

persons familiar with the family of this text type as its purveyors or/and its consumers and the basis on which they are able to do this reading resides (i) in their practical experience of speaking with reference to such contexts and (ii) in the language of the text itself. As Bernstein (1971) would put it, the language of a text encapsulates its own context, though to be sure the quality of this encapsulation varies across texts as the discussion of examples *B* and *C* will show. One important factor relevant to this variation is how much is shared between the speaker and the addressee: the greater the reliance on the shared *material situational setting* (Hasan 1973, 1980; Cloran 1994, and this volume), the less, and the less explicitly, will the language of the text encapsulate its context (see Section 2.2 for some examples). Variable though the degree of context encapsulation is, *complete* inability to construe anything at all from the language of a naturally occurring text would normally be an indication that the speaker and/or the reader of the text suffer from some variety of language disorder. But of course what makes an enormous contribution to the reader's ability to go beyond the text in making contextual inferences, is the quality of the reader's own experience of participation in the processes of text production — the embodiment of the cultural ways of being particularly by speaking and being spoken to. If I am a reader of books, if I have an interest in sociology and/or allied areas, if as an author or a publisher's editor I have monitored such compositions, then I will read the context from *A* in a way that is likely to be qualitatively different from the reading made by those who do not have such experience.¹⁶ With practical involvement in this variety of speaking, one would have an idea rooted in experience about what information might be foregrounded and why; and one would have a fairly good understanding of the extent to which the activity of producing such a blurb might be responsive to the writer's image of his virtual addressee, the prototypic reader/buyer. One's own experience of producing such texts might lead to the recognition that, behind its seamless facade, the blurb on Giddens' book is very likely to be the product of several tries at speaking.

This brings us to an interesting question: are those trial runs whose existence will never reveal itself to anyone purely on the basis of contact with the text significant to an understanding of the relations of text and context? and if so, in what way? The real issue in general terms is as follows: experience of making sense of texts tells us that some of the situational details are invariably encapsulated with varying degrees of explicitness in the language of the text,¹⁷ others, such as the trial runs and interruptions, might do so only under certain circumstances (see the discussion of *B* and *C* in 2.2 and 2.3. For further discussion of

one relevant parameter, see Halliday 1985a), while information about many other situational features such as the specific time or place of textual composition, the body posture of participants, their general appearance and so on may be encapsulated in the text's language even more rarely if at all. The question is whether we need to treat all these sets of situational details alike in describing the relations of text and context. If so, our description of context runs the danger of being as unmanageable as "transcribing infinity" as feared by Cook (1990; see also Levinson 1992), leave aside the question: on what basis can we justify the inclusion of all such details? More basic still: would we really know what the expression *all such details* refers to? How do we conclude that enough has been said about some specific context? On the other hand, if to make context an effective tool for analysis it must be "contained", then we need to be clear what aspects of the interactants' material and social conditions of existence are integral to the concept and why?

This dilemma — what should be taken as the content of the category of context and why — has been with us ever since the introduction of the concept (Hasan 1995). Firth criticised Malinowski for taking context as "an ordered series of events considered as in *rebus*" (Firth 1957: 182); Halliday (1964) modified Firth's construct and was the first to explain the grounds for his choice; others, such as Gregory or Hasan attempted to modify Halliday's constructs.¹⁸ But there still remains room for discussion and I shall return to this problem below (see Section 3). For the present I adopt the SFL view of relevant context as a theoretical construct with three variables:

- (1) *field of discourse* (the nature of social activity relevant to speaking),
- (2) *tenor of discourse* (the nature of social relation relevant to speaking), and
- (3) *mode of discourse* (the nature of contact for the conduct of speaking).

Elsewhere I have referred (Hasan 1978, 1980, 1985b etc) to this tripartite structure as the *contextual construct* and to the totality of its detailed features — the specific values of field, tenor and mode relevant to any particular instance of speaking — as the *contextual configuration* (using CC as the acronym): the CC is thus an instantiation of (some category of) the contextual construct. Since language in use realises some given CC, any variation in CC will naturally activate some variation in this language; it is this kind of variation that in SFL we refer to as *register variation*. According to the classical SFL modelling of the relations of context and text (which approximates Halliday's framework), each specific instance of language in use, 'is a' text that realises one CC and in so doing,

also instantiates some diatypic variety (Gregory 1967), some specific register.

The contextual configuration relevant to text *A* is presented in Table 1. The description itself is modelled on Halliday and Hasan (1985).¹⁹ According to SFL, descriptions at any level of language can vary in detail of focus: the specification of a CC is in principle no different in this respect; it too can be always extended in delicacy. The dots in Table 1 indicate this open endedness of the description of text *A*'s contextual configuration as presented here.

Table 1. *Reading context from text A*

FIELD OF DISCOURSE:

promoting a sociological publication: giving overview of content; foregrounding distinctive qualities ...

TENOR OF DISCOURSE:

agentive relation: promoter addressing prospective buyer: virtual addressee imagined prototype: adult; educated; interested in social questions ...

social relation: institutionalised; peer: promoter dependent on buyer's goodwill, buyer dependent on promoter's service ...

social distance: near maximal ...

MODE OF DISCOURSE:

role of language: constitutive ...

channel: graphic; no visual contact; monologic: no process sharing ...

medium: written ...

2.1.1 *Field, tenor and mode in text A: the anatomy of the contextual construct*

As the foregoing discussion of text *A* suggests the contextual configuration presented in the table is relevant to the entire product of that particular process of speaking which we have encountered as text *A*. The text is thus a prime case of "a passage of discourse which is coherent... with respect to the context of situation, and therefore consistent in register" (cf Halliday & Hasan 1976: 23) exemplifying what I will from now on refer to as *the principle of contextual/registral consistency in text production*. The principle of contextual/registral consistency applies *typically* where the channel of communication is graphic — i.e., where the addressee's contact with the text is in writing, as in the present case. However, this generalisation is neither invariable nor is it restricted to contexts with graphic channel,²⁰ as will become obvious from the discussion of text *B* (see Section 2.2). In the following two subsections, I review the implications of some of the specific terms used in the description of the contextual configuration of text *A*.

2.1.2 *The social process of speaking: goals, outcomes and designs*

Turning first to the parameter of field in Table 1, consider the description *promoting a sociological publication*. A view could be taken that promotion is strictly speaking the *goal* of the social activity; the actual activity itself is simply that of informing. The goal of promoting should therefore be recognised as separate from the act of informing. But to accept this view would be to assume that informing can be done without any underlying principle for selecting and organising information, which is hardly credible. From this point of view it would seem that goal or motivation must be regarded as an inherent aspect of human social action, and as such an important component of a text's relevant context. This is a view that has been accepted in SFL, both in Martin's connotative semiotic model and in the classical Hallidayan model that I have favoured, though the treatment of goal is somewhat different in the two (compare, for example, the use of the term *goal* in Hasan 1985b and in Martin 1985). This claim about the relevance of the notion of goal seems to be relatively simple and obvious but the simplicity is deceptive: as a concept, goal/motivation in social action is riddled with problems, which despite the long tradition of philosophical discussion on the topic, have remained unresolved. So clearly it is not a matter that can be pursued here in any detail; however it will be useful to highlight some of the most crucial considerations, which a competent description of context cannot afford to ignore.

In the first place, it is notable that social agents' awareness of the goal/motive of their action is variable: agents are more overtly conscious of goals in certain types of activity than they are in others. As a rule, this awareness is at its lowest when the activity is *relation based*, and at its highest when the activity is *action based*.²¹ For example, agents are typically well aware of the goal of their activity when engaged in such actions as, say, buying stamps or getting lunch for someone than they are when having a chat with the neighbour or reading a story to a child. There is thus a cline of goal awareness, the two endpoints of which I have referred to as *visible* and *invisible* goal, respectively. Visible goals tend to be *short term*: they are achieved (or not) typically within one interaction; by contrast, invisible goals tend to be *long term*: their achievement occurs, if it does, over a series of interactions bearing some logical relation to each other. However, the two pairs of terms are not synonymous: they refer to different aspects of an activity, and their conjunction is not a necessity, simply a tendency. For example, by contrast with chatting to a friend on the phone — a short term activity, with invisible goal — the buying of a car or a

house is a long term social activity with visible goal. Reflection suggests that the goal of social activities might also differ in its complexity: in some activities there may be *an array of goals*, in others just a simple one. For example consider again the social activity of buying postal goods: its goal is typically simple as stated in the name of the act itself, which contrasts with the social activity of telling a joke, where the joke teller may have the goal of just "going along" with other members of the group who are swapping jokes, and/or of amusing his company, and/or showing off his verbal prowess, etc.

As practised social actors with a rich experience of engaging in social activities, I believe we would have no difficulty in granting the truth of these observations, which throw doubt on the use of the unanalysed concept of goal as a descriptive tool in discourse/genre analysis. Take, for example, the notion of *invisible goal*. If it is true that social agents are not *always* aware of the goal of their activity, this poses some serious problems: throughout the long history of this concept, it has been taken for granted that goals/motives are conscious mental states even though side by side there have existed such familiar expressions as *hidden motive*, or *covert goal*. To attribute an *invisible goal* to some activity of a social agent's is to ascribe him a conscious mental state of which he is unaware, and that is patently self-contradictory, unless we change the meaning of the word 'goal' by fiat! A possible solution is to claim that there exist some goal-less social activities in which subjects engage without any purpose whatever. But this again seems far from satisfactory especially if goal of the activity is what determines its staging or structural shape: after all a friendly chat, a casual conversation are social activities with maximally invisible goals unless somewhat speciously the goal is taken to be to chat, to converse; but if the speaker's goal/purpose is what really organises (the shape of) his sayings then it is remarkable that there is such a thing as "conversational structure" or "conversational logic"; certainly ordinary conversations are far from being incoherent or disorganised, and this organisation goes beyond the mere creation of what is known as exchange structures. An additional problem with goal is that to have a goal is *not necessarily* to achieve it: one may start off with the goal of persuading, but end up with a quarrel on one's hands.

This brings us to a notion closely allied to that of goal, viz., *outcome*. Roughly speaking, outcome is to goal as the present is to the future. Further, unlike goal, outcome is not a subjective phenomenon, but an objective one. So irrespective of whether and to what extent the social subject is aware of it, every social activity has some outcome(s) — not excepting even those which might

have been prematurely terminated: social action always produces something, though *this something need not be the same as the goal with which the subject started*. It seems to me that the discussion of goal as a necessary feature of a text's context has most probably been subject to some confusion: what has been described as the goal of a social activity is in fact nothing else than what we have perceived or assumed to be the *outcome* indicated by the text that is produced in the context of that social activity. After all, our analysis of goals and social activities has always been *post hoc*, based on our reading of the text: we have never been innocent of a text's outcome. Irrespective of whether as analysts we claim to employ a dynamic perspective or a synoptic one, what we analyse is not text-in-process; it is, by necessity, a text whose process is already completed, so typically its outcome is easy to perceive or assume, the assumption being communally engendered. One might be tempted to treat this as a reason for replacing the notion of goal by that of outcome as perhaps a more viable descriptive tool than goal. But outcome under any name is not a very satisfactory tool for analysis: for one thing, it is logically unknowable until the process of the text's production is well under weigh or terminated; and, beside, it makes no concession at all to the interactants' sense of the nature of their social activity — what they are attempting to achieve. What we need is a concept that is open to both the subjective intentionality typically associated with goal and the objective distancing implied in the outcome, allowing us to invoke either as and when needed without making either criterial to the description of register/genre. I suggest such a concept is *design*.

Design is not an expression of field alone: it is associated with the social process as a whole (i.e., as a contextual configuration of the features of field, tenor and mode together), and is independent of any one individual's desires, intentions and/or decisions. These designs have come about because through the long history of the communal living of life, in every culture there have evolved ways of being, doing and saying for those occasions where social subjects have co-acted. The design of a social process is nothing other than a near ritualisation of ways of doing something with some others by using such semiotic media as are at our disposal: the more culturally significant a social process, the more ritualised it gets (Hasan 1980, 1994. Further discussion, Section 3 below). It is in this sense that specific social processes have become the *raison d'être* of specific designs. And all things being equal, interactants will choose to engage in a social process whose inherent design promises to best satisfy their own desires/intentions, their own sense of what they are attempting to do in their

encounters with others. The verbal behaviour of social agents suggests that during their engagement in the social process, interactants tend to monitor it from the perspective of its efficacy in the actualisation of their goal(s) and purpose(s), hence we come across corrections, clarifications, and the use of a different strategy when one has failed. This monitoring is clearly important since the speaker's goals/motives are unknowable to another unless they are embedded within the design of a social process. If "an intention is embedded in its situation, in human customs and institutions" as Wittgenstein (1953: 337) claimed, this is because any other mode of the intention's existence is solipsistic; the design of a social process as a whole is taken as an enunciation of the interactants' (intended) goal. As acculturated persons, speakers have (varying degrees of) awareness of the design of a social process and its relation to whatever they perceive as their own desires/motives: they know also how the process should begin, how end and what may or may not come in between the two ends under what circumstances if the design of the social process and their own intention are to be calibrated. So one way of paraphrasing *engagement in social process* is to say that it is a *continuous struggle on the part of the speaker(s) to calibrate their perceived goals with the perceived design of the social process so that the outcome matches the goal*, with the implication that interactants must also have a pretty good idea of when the social process they are engaged in is being suspended, diverted, jeopardised or abandoned before the completion of its design. A full understanding of the outcome of the social processes we engage in is perhaps even more rare a phenomenon than the full awareness of why we engage in certain social processes.

2.1.3 *The social process of speaking: social relation and modes of contact*

Turn now to the parameters of tenor and mode. The channel of discourse relevant to text *A* is graphic, i.e., the text producer's languaging is accessed via graphological representations. Typically such texts are (meant to be) received in displacement from the location of their production. And, again, typically such texts may be accessed not only by the intended addressee but by whoever has physical access and the desire and power to do so. But the relation of these different categories of "readers" to the text is never the same, and it is useful to make a distinction between the technical term *addressee* and everyday words *listener/hearer*. The most significant difference is that the addressee is built into the text as a prosody of its meaning and its structure: that is to say, what meanings will be at risk and how the social process will be conducted is

responsive to the speaker's relation to the addressee. No such relation exists between the speaker and the (mere) listener/hearer: they lack *textual recognition*. As implied above, when the channel is graphic, the addressee is typically not co-present with the producer of the text, as is the case with text A. But the context of text A possesses another feature, which does not logically inhere in the graphic channel: the addressee of this text is not simply absent from the moment of production, but he is also an imaginary being, corresponding to the text producer's idea of the type of person who might be interested in reading and therefore perhaps in purchasing the publication in question. Let me refer to an imaginary addressee of this kind drawn in the image of some prototype as a *virtual addressee*: in addressing such an addressee, a speaker speaks to a category, a stereotype. This contrasts with other addressees who, though they might be absent from the scene of the text's production, are in fact *actual addressees* of whom one has some actual experience, such as one's friend or one's lawyer being spoken to in writing. This distinction is textually significant: where the addressee is virtual, all aspects of the interactant relation — their respective status, their social distance, the specific attributes of the addressee — are *logically* entirely *created* by the language of the text, none having a basis in reality for obvious reasons. The relations of language to context are here highly complex, and it makes little sense to ask whether it is (a pre-existing) context that is determining the language of the text or whether it is the language itself that is creating (an important part of) the context relevant to this text: the process and the product become inextricably entwined. And by the same token, irrespective of the fact that the speaker must have had some sense of the context as he began composing this blurb, for others including his virtual addressee, the context relevant to the production of text A is logically unknowable except on the basis of the language of the text — a so-called static product, that is encountered objectively after the fact when the text's process has been completed: either the process of this text has something missing or the text is its own process in that respect!

Obvious as the point is, it is important to underline its implications. First, if it is true that in arriving at the contextual configuration relevant to text A, its language has played an important part, then this is because language has the potential for construing context: this is a principle that applies invariably, irrespective of whether the moment of a text's production and its reception by the addressee are the same or not and whether the addressee is virtual or actual. The construing power of language is equally relevant where both the speaker and the addressee are co-present as they engage in an on-going social process —

including unexpected moves, changes and surprises that might suspend, divert, or force the interactants to entirely abandon the social process before the completion of its inherent design. The critical difference between the two is that where the interactants are co-present, there *the text's context is construed for both interactants in the very moment of speaking being done*, whereas in the former case — where the text is interpreted in displacement — the moment of the construal of the context by language is different for the producer and the receiver, for the speaker and the addressee. Whichever is the case, in an important sense textual context is not something that is knowable with certainty, or guessable to any significant extent, in the absence of text just as linguistic meaning is not knowable without the lexicogrammatical resources that construe it. This follows logically from the dialogism of realisation.

The second point follows directly from the first: since language has this creative, construing power in relation to context, it seems best to abandon the popular though pejorative term *product* for text, or at least to elide the notion of *stasis* from it. For whatever is thing-like about a text is strictly immaterial to its quality of text-ness. A text is, rather, the voice of its social process: it is through this voice that a social process is known for the social process that it is (Hasan 1978): it follows that dynamic contexts too are known by language, i.e., the text. Drawing a firm line between a process and what construes that process — what specifies its recognition criteria — gives rise to an unnecessary complication in the context of semiotic activities.

Third, while the practical experience of speaking is important in inferring a text's context, it is in fact the text's language that acts as the essential crystalliser of that experience. As acculturated adults, our discursive and practical experience of social life clearly surpasses particular texts or text types, and not all of this experience is equally relevant to reading a specific text's context. It follows that in interpreting some particular text/context, what is needed is some discriminating device for calling to one's consciousness only that aspect of practical experience which bears directly on that text/context. I suggest that whatever the nature of this device, it must be set in motion by the language of that particular text: whether in its completed form or in its on-going state, it is the text's language that summons up that part of a speaker's experience which has bearing on the reading of that text. If this view is accepted, it provides a principle for resolving the problem of the "content" of context raised earlier (see Section 2.1). From this perspective *the concept of context must include all those features of the interactants' material and social conditions of existence which are necessary and*

sufficient for the explication of what is said, whether directly or by implication.

And finally, it is notable that the context with reference to which the writer of text *A* wrote is bound to be somewhat different from the context of the text's reading by a genuine user of the blurb, who could, after all, be an approximation of the virtual addressee: in the ordinary everyday sense of reading, this genuine reader will use the text as a resource for making decisions about whether to invest money and time in acquiring and reading the Giddens book. And as part of this enterprise it is useful for the genuine reader to be able to "place" the blurb in its relevant context: is it an advertisement? whose interests is it expected to serve, how? etc. But this understanding is important to the genuine reader only in so far as it serves his practical purposes: his interest is neither in theorising the relations of context and text in general nor in discovering, out of simple curiosity, the motivational relevancies underlying text *A*. Speakers do not speak with reference to context and addressees do not attend to speaker's speech with the aim of being able to present an analysis of the relations of text and context. The one who aims to do so is Bourdieu's much maligned 'impartial spectator' who "seeks to understand for the sake of understanding" (Bourdieu 1990: 31). There is thus a good deal of difference between the genuine speaker's/addressee's practical angle and that of the analyst's "purely theoretical relation" (ibid) to the object of analysis. The interactants' practical angle is limited by the specifics of the social process precisely because it concerns only specific subjectivities, specific praxis. The analyst's aim is to go beyond these so as to describe elements of the habitus of some section of the community in question. It is possible to produce *subjective accounts* and it is possible to produce *objective analysis* — whether judged good, bad, or indifferent depends on the analyst's and the evaluator's conception of the task in hand — but to ask for *subjective analysis* is to produce an intellectual oxymoron, for analysis demands generalisation and the subjective is by definition specific.

2.2 Context and text: example *B*

Example *B* differs from *A* in several obvious ways. One simple difference, though with far reaching consequences, is that while text *A* belongs to a category where in the nature of things the speaker and addressee will never find each other in the same place at the same time, with text *B* the interactants are co-present. With this co-presence comes the possibility of sharing material environment, which implies a qualitative difference in the conduct of speaking at least

in three significant ways.

First, the physical actions of each are visible to the other as are many surrounding material objects, whether immediately relevant to the on-going activity or not: these constitute part of the material situational setting. It follows that in referring to these phenomena the interactants can rely on this sens-ibly shared information to assist in an understanding of what is going on — a facility that is not available to the analyst *qua* analyst. Consider in this light the interpretation of *these two like that?* (line 2): the density of *exophoric reference* (Hasan 1984b, 1984c) in this message poses no problem of interpretation to the server, who completely undaunted by it, answers in the affirmative (line 3) and goes on to inform the customer that *one's fortyfive one's twentyfive* (lines 4–5). By contrast, without some external help the meaning of these utterances must remain opaque for the analyst, who lacking co-presence would be unable to share the material environment. The reading provided by an analyst who is herself absent from the scene of the social process, is likely to be retrospective, supported either by what the interactants go on to say after line 2 and/or by reliance on her own experience of conducting business in a post office — the latter can happen only when it becomes obvious to the analyst that the speaking is in fact *a propos* postal goods. In text *B*, the first such clue comes in line 6, with the customer's *and have you got .. the .. first day covers of ...* where, for an acculturated speaker, the enquiry about the availability of *first day covers* clinches the issue of locating the social process.²²

Secondly, the complex structure of multimodal semiosis is immediately accessible to co-present interactants. The human body is an amazing system for engaging in multimodal semiosis and co-presence provides the best environment for an effective exercise of that potential (Hasan 1973, 1980, 1996c; Ventola 1987). Speaking becomes only one aspect of face to face social interaction, and may not be easily intelligible in dissociation from the workings of other modalities and/or the sharing of material environment.²³ Speakers not only make use of the semiotic modality of body language that is lost where the record of speaking is displaced but also there occur acts which are semiotically non-specific but which come to be seen as having some specific semiotic significance due to their contiguity with linguistic acts: for example, in *B* the act of getting the stamps and day covers (line 15) would be interpreted as Compliance in an environment where Sale Request (line 2 & line 10; 14) for these items has already been issued. The same act of getting stamps etc out of a drawer in the absence of a Sale Request is not very likely to be interpreted as an act of Compliance. It

follows that the context of situation (partially) realised by the language of text *B* cannot be successfully read by the analyst without knowing what meanings are construed jointly with other modalities — in the words of Bernstein (1971) the language of text *B* is context dependent (for a discussion of the terms context dependent and context independent, see Cloran this volume). The information provided in parentheses by the transcriber records the interactants' physical actions, which are clearly not part of their *speaking* though they are part of their social interaction. Naturally the provision of such information is strictly for the benefit of the outsider/analyst: so far as the interactants themselves are concerned, their use of other modalities and of their shared information is as much part of their social performance as is their use of language. If by text we mean *just* speaking with reference to some context, then strictly speaking, example *B* is not just a text: it includes also a meta-text — an informal commentary on what else is going on in its own process. It is this commentary that gives the analyst access to (part of) the material situational setting, though the power of language in construing the details of a situation should not be underestimated (see footnote 23 below).

Finally, although phonic channel does not *require* the interactants' co-presence, it is nonetheless the default choice in such contexts: this in turn opens up the possibility of dialogue, which is hospitable to process sharing, as process sharing can come about only in an environment permitting immediate semiotic reciprocity between interactants. So far as languaging is concerned, at least *in theory* each can speak and by speaking contribute to the social process in which they are jointly engaged dialogically.²⁴ For example, if necessary the server can, and in text *B* does, ask the customer for further information by saying *how many would you like?* (line 9)?²⁵ *two of each?* (line 11) where the use of these questions positions the customer into construing the identity and quantity of goods that she is interested in buying. I have suggested that these meanings are crucial to the realisation of the element of text structure called Sale Request in the environment of a certain CC (see for details, Hasan 1985b). The customer in turn asks *what have you got?* (line 12) which construes a variety of Sale Enquiry where information about the goods on sale is exchanged while the actual conduct of buying/selling is held in abeyance until by these semiotic acts the nature of the goods under consideration has been established.

It is already implied in the above discussion that the social activity relevant to text *B* is economic in nature. In fact from this point of view texts *A* and *B* are distant relatives, at once similar and different. The speaking in text *B* is with

reference to the purchase of goods by an actual buyer who is involved in the activity of buying it from a real salesperson at a real location. This contrasts with text *A*, which is concerned with promoting the goods to a potential buyer somewhere, some time. In text *B* the goods are material, in *A* essentially intellectual which implies a relatively restricted category of buyers for *A*. The interactant relations relevant to texts *A* and *B* are also 'distant relatives'. To appreciate this, compare the social activity of selling postal goods with that of, say, selling fruit and vegetables by the owner of a small shop. The crucial difference lies in the relation of the two salespersons to their work place and their work activity, which bears also upon their social relations to their clients: given the socioeconomic infrastructure, the small shop owner is dependent on being able to serve his customers to their satisfaction; it is in this environment that "the customer is always right". By contrast, neither the postoffice salesperson nor the composer of text *A* are dependent on their clients' satisfaction in this way, and understandably the relation of neither to their (actual or prospective) clients is one of subservience. Despite this similarity in tenor between *A* and *B* at a primary degree of delicacy (see Table 2), differences in the attributes of the addressees emerge as we look deeper into the categories of goods the disposal of which is the concern of the blurb producer in *A* and the postal salesperson in *B*. Since text *A* realises an activity that is ultimately related to the marketing of intellectual goods, the buyer is likely to be someone who, in terms of Bourdieu (1991), has already invested in the intellectual capital of his culture. So he is likely to be educated and probably informed in the field of the study of social problems. The buyer of stamps is not known by any such specific attributes; and while the prospective buyer of a Durkheim anthology is likely to be an adult, this is not a requirement for buying stamps. Table 2 summarises the relevant contexts of texts *A* and *B* at a primary degree of delicacy.

As the description in Table 2 indicates text *B* too observes what I have called the principle of contextual/registral consistency: just like text *A*, the context of text *B* too "covers" the whole text. As with *A*, so also with *B*, we have one single text that realises one single context and instantiates one single register. Further, a comparison of the two columns in Table 2 shows quite readily that the most outstanding differences between the contexts relevant to these two texts are to be found in their mode of discourse. I have already pointed out that this difference is realisationally related to the quality of texture, which is in turn crucial for the outsider's or the analyst's ability to interpret the speaking. Note at this point that features in mode are also significant to the

Table 2. *Context in texts A and B*

	text A	text B
field:	economic: goods promotion by foregrounding distinctive qualities goods: sociological publication	economic: goods disposal by buying and selling goods: postal items
tenor:	promoter & potential buyer addressee virtual; adult; educated relation institutional nonhierarchical social distance maximal	salesperson & actual buyer addressee actual relation institutional nonhierarchical social distance maximal
mode:	role of language: constitutive channel: graphic; monologue no visual contact no process sharing medium: written	role of language: ancillary channel: phonic; dialogue visual contact present active process sharing medium: spoken

realisation of a register's generic structure potential. In fact, we can generalise quite safely that the selection of mode features is systematically related by realisation (a) to texture in texts and so to variation in the degree of context-dependence in the text's language, and (b) to the actual global structure of texts instantiating the structure potential associated with a given register. We can raise this generalisation to a higher level of abstraction: there exists evidence for claiming that the actual global structure of a text is realisationally related to its *entire contextual configuration*; the features of each parameter — field, tenor and mode — are in principle capable of making some contribution to this structural shape (Hasan 1978, 1979, 1985b, 1994). In light of this fact, models such as Martin's which claim that the structural shape of texts in a genre is activated by a single parameter — sometimes simply by (the goal of) an activity and sometimes simply by mode — have some explaining to do.

A final point to be made before leaving this discussion is as follows: the CC relevant to text *B* shows even more emphatically than that of *A* that although each contextual parameter has a separate identity of its own, the three do permeate each other. The contextual parameters — field, tenor and mode — are not, to use Bernstein's (1975) terminology, three strongly classified domains, each with a clear-cut boundary of its own: they are in fact permeable. What choices are made in field is relevant to some extent to the choices in tenor and in mode. Thus, as discussed above, the social activity of promoting a sociological

publication by producing a blurb has implications not only for (some of) the attributes of the promoter and prospective buyer but also for some features of mode. Naturally, the interdependence across the three parameters is partial: the choices in one parameter do not "determine" or fully "predict" all the choices in the remaining two, otherwise we would not have needed to recognise three separate parameters. What happens typically is that they display (with apologies to Firth 1957) a "mutual prehension": the echoes of a choice in one are found to some extent in the choices of the others.²⁶

Before leaving this discussion, let me point out two curious characteristics of systemic relations amongst contextual choices which have been foregrounded. First, SFL assumes that choice paths in a system network typically display *genuine dependency*. Idealising a little, if entry condition *a* then options *b* or *c*, if entry condition *b* then options *d* or *e*; and if entry condition *c* then options *f* or *g*; and so on. This illustrates a relation of genuine dependency, which is encountered fairly typically in lexicogrammatical system networks (for some examples, see Hasan and Fries 1995; Hasan, Cloran and Butt 1996; Matthiessen 1995 etc). It seems to me that at the level of context, in addition to such a relation of genuine dependency, there also exists just as often a relation of *default dependency*. Take the phonic channel: though it is hospitable to dialogue, it provides a genuine choice between dialogue and monologue (compare a conversation and a lecture). But in the environment of graphic channel, monologue is the default choice. It is not that we do not find dialogues simulated in the graphic channel, but when we do, we find also that it creates an *as-if* context: some examples of text types that realise such contexts are novels, drama, or a news story reporting a dialogue. In other words, the value of dialogue in graphic channel is significantly different from that of dialogue in the phonic channel where it is a genuine option.²⁷ Default dependency relations are not unknown at the level of lexicogrammar, but they are far less frequent. This suggests to me that the organisation of the level of context may differ from that of semantics and/or lexicogrammar in subtle ways, which would not be entirely surprising: after all, context may be (partly) construed by language, but it can never be dissociated from the material and institutional aspects of a culture.

The second characteristic of systemic choices at the level of context has to do with the way that probabilities function. For example, it will be found that in the phonic environment, the probability of the choice of dialogue increases IF the field choice is a quotidian activity such as buying stamps or having a conversation: the more specialised the social activity the less likely it is that the choice of

dialogue will be taken up; thus the activity of presenting a keynote address or a sermon is not likely to "go with" a dialogue: in pronouncing his sentence, the judge is not really engaged in a dialogue. If, however, with phonic mode and quotidian social activity, the social distance in tenor is minimal, the probability of the choice of dialogic mode increases considerably: unlike a keynote address or a legal sentence, telling your friend about the burglary you suffered from is highly likely to be in dialogue mode rather than in monologue. We are familiar with the concept of *conditional probability* at least at the level of lexicogrammar,²⁸ but it seems to me that interestingly, conditional probability there tends to implicate choices within the same general system network: for example conditional probability operates within the larger system network of mood, modality and polarity. At the contextual level, however, conditional probability is more likely to implicate features *across* the systems of field, tenor and mode. I suggest that this pattern of conditional probability at the level of context can be explained by the fact that the three contextual parameters are in fact permeable. When as analysts we talk of context as a tripartite structure, it is important to remember that so far as the interactants are concerned, the social activity and the interactants' relation to each other as well as their mode of jointly carrying out the activity are one integrated whole: unlike a character in an absurd farce, a speaker does not first choose to carry out an activity such as buying stamps and then look around to determine what his relation to the addressee, i.e., the salesperson, might be, whether greeting is in order or not, and whether he should talk to the addressee or write — something that is implied by the dynamic flowcharts which employ the metaphor of decision making to report on the process as it occurs in real time. To impose this kind of conception of context on the study of text is certainly at variance from our subjective experience of how things are done in our culture.

2.3 Context and text: example C

Perhaps most readers would agree that example C differs crucially from both A and B. The most pressing problem we face here is whether a reading of the context for C can be provided that will display the principle of contextual/registral consistency at work as in the case of texts A and B. Certainly at a particular degree of delicacy the tenor and the mode appear to "cover" the entire example: throughout the example, a mother and her son are engaged in face to face dialogue. Their relation is hierarchic, based on kinship and age,²⁹ especially

since the son is no more than 4 years old. This in turn implies a fairly minimal social distance: supporting this conclusion, their talk shows them at ease with each other, able to address questions, requests and comments to each other with equally relaxed facility. In A and B, a particular aspect of interactant relation — their *agentive role* (Hasan 1978, 1985b) — derives logically from what they are engaged in doing, e.g., salesperson or publication promoter talking to actual or virtual buyer (see Table 2). For C, it is difficult to identify one single relation of the agentive kind which would apply constantly to the entire dialogue: the interactants are, in fact, engaged not in just one activity but several. So far as the features of mode are concerned, C resembles B a good deal. Like B, C too is a dialogue between interactants who are co-present; there is visual contact between them, and also good evidence of process sharing; the medium is throughout spoken and the channel is phonic. However the role of language appears to shift in keeping with the shift in their activity: what it is that the child and his mother are engaged in doing. I examine these shifts briefly below.

The dialogue opens (line 1) with the mother asking Stephen if he would like a sandwich for lunch; Stephen accepts the sandwich but asks for some passionfruit as well. The social activity, call it care giving, (see Cloran this volume, Table 1) takes up lines 1–4, at which point mother and child engage in a hunt for the missing passionfruit (lines 5–16). When the passionfruit is located, the mother turns again to the business of providing Stephen his lunch, eliciting more information from him about what particular sort of sandwich he would like and advising him on where to sit to have his lunch (lines 17–20). There is a short pause (see line 20) before the mother comments on the scarcity of passionfruit and states the reason for it. This happens most probably as lunch is being taken to the table (lines 21–24).³⁰ She turns again to the management of lunch (lines 25; 27; 29) but is diverted from it by Stephen's demand for information regarding Nana's preference for a particular seat (lines 26; 28; 30–31). As their talk overlaps, the mother and the child engage in rather different activities: the mother is concerned with getting Stephen to sit somewhere suitable for eating his lunch, and the child with getting the mother to explain his grandmother's seating preference. Obviously sitting is not a physical action that requires help from the use of language for its performance; we assume that Stephen is getting himself seated in compliance with the mother's advice while she is giving the explanation required by him. Thus two related but somewhat different actions co-occur. In lines 32–47 the mother and Stephen talk about something which is not connected with any aspect of the lunch: the mother reveals her plans for their

visit to Chatswood. In the absence of any comments to the contrary from the mother, we assume again that as the mother and child discuss their Chatswood plans (32–47), Stephen is seated and is eating his lunch. So it is not surprising to find talk of lunch reasserting itself at line 48. But a potential conflict appears on the horizon as the mother rejects Stephen's request for vitamin C (line 53–59). From the child's point of view, the concern is perhaps still with lunch: vitamin C which Stephen apparently likes to eat is another thing he could have at lunch (48–53). But from the mother's culturally informed point of view the situation is different: as medication, vitamin C cannot be eaten just any old time and Stephen must be made aware of this. The mother is thus engaged in the activity of classifying the activity — medicine-taking, framing Stephen's performance relatively strongly (Bernstein 1990): she rejects his request, and when Stephen appears disgruntled, she offers a rationale for this rejection (lines 54–59). Again as the child does not continue to "whinge", it appears reasonable to assume that he has accepted the mother's reasoning, and we return once again to talk that concerns lunch (lines 60–61). The dialogue between the mother and her child continues (see a larger extract in Cloran, this volume), though for my purposes this much is enough.³¹

Table 3. *Shifting fields of discourse in example C*

Segment i:	lines 1–4	organising lunch
Segment ii:	lines 5–17	finding the passionfruit
Segment iii:	lines 17–20	organising lunch
Segment iv:	lines 21–24	commenting on scarcity of passionfruit
Segment v:	a: lines 25, 27, 29 b: lines 26, 28, 30–31	organising lunch explaining Nana's seating preference
Segment vi:	lines 32–47	planning visit to Chatswood
Segment vii:	lines 48–53	organising lunch & eat vitamin C
Segment viii:	lines 54–59	explaining about vitamin C tablets
Segment ix:	lines 60–61	organising lunch

Table 3 presents a schematic account of the social activities I have read in example *C*. If a given contextual configuration consists of the total set of the values relating to each of the three parameters, and if *any* change in these values automatically spells a change of relevant context, then clearly the speaking in example *C* does not realise just one CC, but several different ones; by the same token, it does not instantiate just one register but several different ones. If we insist on the principle of registral/contextual consistency as an invariable attribute

of text-hood, we would have to treat example *C* as a succession of distinct texts realising distinct registers. Another alternative is to abandon the principle and treat example *C* as one conversation which nonetheless realises different registers — a solution which I believe might be favoured in the framework suggested by Martin (1985, 1992) who has used the term *genre combination* for similar cases of speaking, in referring particularly to Ventola's (1987) data. But both these positions leave something to be desired. According to the first position example *C* consists of either nine (and a half?) different texts, or at least of six, five of which (segments ii, iv, vb, vi and viii) just interrupt the text that opens the example (segments i, iii, va, vii and ix); the latter are all concerned with organising lunch, and the different parts of this lunch text simply leap-frog over the interrupting segments (see Table 3). Whatever the number of texts we claim to find in example *C*, according to position one, each text is, as it were, on its own; none bears any relation whatever to the others, and this surely goes against our intuition as makers and receivers of texts. The second choice is marginally better as it suggests at least a sequencing of genres/registers. However, it leaves the concept of text-hood dangling in the air: is genre combination a feature of one text? If so, what is the difference between a text and a verbal interaction? Then again it offers no principle underlying the temporal sequencing of genres as if it is equally possible for any genre/register to combine with any others, and as if there exists no other basis for their affinity. This is manifestly not the case: consider that neither any part of text *A*, nor even a substantial portion of *B* could combine with *C* to produce a credible case of genre combination.³² Nor could we claim with justification that amongst the nine segments of *C* identified in Table 3, there exists no other relation than that of temporal sequencing: in fact, perhaps all segments except one, viz., (vi: lines 32–47) can be shown to be related to each other not by the accident of their spatio-temporal co-location but by the function they have in the ecology of the text concerned with lunch. I develop this theme in the following subsections.

2.3.1 *The concept of primary text*

A textual concern that runs intermittently through example *C* centres around the mother providing lunch for her son Stephen: intermittently but coherently, segments (i, iii, va, vii and ix, highlighted in bold in Table 3) voice the concern of the interactants with this activity. As Cloran (this volume) points out this is a variety of care giving activity, whose various elements (or, *stages* if you prefer) the mother negotiates with her child. So in segment (i) (lines 1–4) she consults

Stephen about what he wants to eat; in segment (iii) (lines 17–20), having finalised the lunch menu, she tells him where she would like him to sit for the purpose. Segment (va) (lines 25, 27, 29) actually guides him to this location while segments (vii) (lines 48–53) and (ix) (lines 60–61) establish what more he might drink or eat. Together the segments realise — albeit with certain interruptions — what at some degree of delicacy can legitimately be seen as just one contextual configuration, consisting of the details of one activity which involves the same interactant relation; and their mode of discourse remains the same throughout. From now on I will call the strand of the context relevant to this identified part of example C the *main CC*; and the segments which together realise it will be referred to as the *primary text*. Table 4 presents the details of the main CC.

Table 4. *Main CC realised by the primary text in example C*

FIELD OF DISCOURSE:

care-giving; negotiating the menu for lunch, indicating location for its consumption & presenting items on menu, attending to child's lunch needs ...

TENOR OF DISCOURSE:

mother care-giver & preschool child recipient of care; age-relation institutionalised as hierarchic; acculturated mother & apprentice child; social distance: minimal ...

MODE OF DISCOURSE:

role of language ancillary; channel phonic; dialogue; process sharing; visual contact present; medium spoken ...

2.3.2 *integration: dependent context and complex text*

What about segments (ii, iv, vb, vi) and (viii) which fall outside the primary text? Clearly in some way they do interrupt the realisation of the main CC. The idea that a text/context may be interrupted is familiar in SFL: it is implied in the observation that texts may be enclosed or interspersed (Halliday 1964; Hasan 1968). But when a text/context is enclosed within another or when two (or more) texts/contextuals are interspersed, there is no departure from the principle of contextual/registeral consistency: each such text stands, as it were, on its own, without contributing to the conduct and/or structure of the other(s). The situation is different — at least in part — so far as example C is concerned. Here all the segments, except perhaps segment (vi) (lines 32–47 planning a visit to Chatswood), make a substantial contribution to how the interactants themselves

experience that social context which is realised in the primary text. In fact the very *raison d'être* of these four segments (ii, iv, vb, and viii) lies in the management of the conduct of the main context realised in the primary text: it is some aspects of this context that, in a manner of speaking, provoke the segments into existence.³³ Their occurrence acts on the overall nature of the social process, modifying the very character and structure of what is identified here as the primary text. When a segment contributes to the character of the primary text in the way(s) I have just outlined, I will refer to it as a *sub-text*.

A sub-text relates to (some part of) the primary text in certain clearly specifiable ways, and in so doing it creates a complex text, much as the relation of *taxis* creates a complex unit, such as the clause complex at the lexicogrammatical level. And just as in a clause complex, the secondary clause tempers those clauses to which it relates by *taxis*, so in a complex text such as presented in example C, the sub-texts temper (parts of) the primary text, changing its nature substantially for the interactants. To appreciate some of the specific ways in which sub-texts relate to (parts of) a primary text, I will begin by considering segment (ii) (lines 5–16), which will be referred to as *sub-text1* from now on.

It is obvious perhaps that the field of discourse construed by sub-text1 is subservient to that construed by the primary text: if passionfruit is one of the relevant objects for lunch, its whereabouts are bound to make a difference to what the interactants might do and/or say *a propos* the provision of lunch. The search for the missing passionfruit arrests the actual progress of the primary text much as a *side sequence* (Goffman 1981) arrests the progress of an exchange or adjacency pair consisting of, say, a question and answer, and just as a Sale Enquiry arrests the design of a buying text (see discussion of example B). The arrestive nature of a sub-text such as sub-text1 is independent of what may or may not be achieved in material terms by it, since irrespective of that it will have a modifying effect on the structure of the primary text. If the material outcome is successful — and notably success and failure in this context will be defined entirely by reference to the (details of the) main CC — this will contribute to the completion of an ongoing element/stage in the structure of the primary text, which is what happens in example C.³⁴ If the material outcome is unsuccessful, this will still impinge on (some) details of the main CC, giving rise to further negotiation, revision and/or even termination of the main context altogether. This suggests that the occurrence of sub-text1 is not a simple temporal sequencing of a text of one register/genre with that of another as the term *genre combination* appears to imply; rather it performs a *facilitative* function in the economy of the primary text.

A facilitative sub-text realises a *dependent context*, which typically varies from the main context in a limited way. The crucial feature of a dependent context is that it is subordinated to some feature(s) of the main CC which is in the process of being construed when the dependent context first appears. For example, sub-text1 construes a dependent context the details of which are identical to those of the main CC except with respect to its field: it is the field of the dependent context realised by sub-text1 that is different, while its tenor (except for the agentive role) and mode remain constant. As Table 4 shows one feature of the field in the main CC is *presenting (to addressee-recipient) items (which by mutual agreement have been placed) on the menu*. By contrast, the field of discourse relevant to sub-text1 could be described as *locating the whereabouts of an item on the menu which the interactants expect to be presented to the recipient*. It is this relation of contextual dependence that underlies its facilitative function whereby a sub-text and a primary text become integrated into a complex text. Approaching the problem from the related perspective of textual constituency, Cloran (this volume) interestingly suggests that the part here identified as sub-text1 in example C is an embedded constituent within a rhetorical unit which realises (part of) the care-giving activity.

Facilitation is thus a functional relation of (some) elements of the (global) structure of a *complex text*. What passes here between the mother and the child by way of sub-text1 is in its function very much like a category of an optional element that I have referred to as Sale Enquiry (Hasan 1979, 1985b, and elsewhere): both contribute to the conduct of the activity specified in the main context and both get integrated into the primary text. Whereas the principle for the production of simple text such as exemplified by A and B is that of contextual/registeral consistency, an alternative principle for text production is at work in the case of a complex text: I will refer to this principle as the *principle of contextual/registeral integration*.³⁵ Whether the principle for the production of a text is that of contextual/registeral consistency or of integration, what is not in doubt is the fact that whatever is perceived as a text typically displays two kinds of unity: the unity of texture and the unity of structure.³⁶ The operation of the principle of contextual/registeral integration does not negate this generalisation, which I believe applies almost invariably except in pathological discourse (Armstrong 1987, 1992). It needs to be said quite clearly that the dependency of a context is a functional relation: there is nothing inherently dependent in the features of a context described as dependent, *except their dependent relation to (some) component of the main context*. Thus a search for missing objects does not

have to be subordinated to some other on-going context as it is in example C; it could just as well have been (part of) a context operative on its own: clearly, then, it is only the function of sub-text1, not its own internal structure, that denies it the status of realising a genre/register with the same independent status as that of the primary text. When the term *genre combination* is applied to a complex text such as in example C which is embedded in one spatio-temporally identified interaction, there is an implication that all segments of such an interaction are genres/registeral each equal in status with the others. At best, this is to equate a spatio-temporally identified unit such as *interaction* with a descriptive semantic category namely *complex text*; and at worst it is to view the discourse from a morphological perspective only — i.e., on the basis of what the various parts look like in their own make up — rather than from a functional one — i.e., on the basis of what, if anything, the segments do in the context of the other co-occurring parts. It is certainly on the cards that within the same spatio-temporally identified interaction there may be found a text instantiating a register which does not “combine” functionally with the other co-located texts/genres. In the following section, I will draw attention to one such example, while identifying other forms of contextual/registeral integration.

2.3.3 Contextual/registeral integration: collaborative contexts, complex texts

Not all sub-texts are facilitative in the sense described above. Thus although segment (iv) (lines 21–24; see Table 3) is integrated into the primary text in example C, its relation to the latter differs a good deal from that of sub-text1. Just before the four messages of this segment occur, the mother has identified the place where she would like Stephen to eat his lunch (lines 19–20). The short pause (indicated by the dots at the end of message 20) suggests that most probably, segment (iv) is produced as the mother is carrying the lunch to the table with Stephen in tow, a reading further supported by the fact that the segment is the joint work of Stephen and his mother — both participate in the dialogue. Moreover immediately following its close, the mother is able to point Stephen precisely where to seat himself (line 25), which implies co-presence. So unlike sub-text1, segment (iv) occurs at a moment when the mother’s action of carrying food to the table is ‘silently’ i.e. purely physically contributing to the realisation of the main CC: the mother is actually presenting Stephen items on the previously agreed menu. It can hardly be denied that the discourse on passionfruit in this segment is materially inessential to carrying out the particular series of actions necessary to the completion of the activity of the main context.

The mother's physical action of presenting food and her verbal action of telling Stephen about the fruit-bearing conditions for passionfruit vines are independent activities running side by side: segment (iv), unlike sub-text1, is not arrestive but concurrent with the non-verbal manifestation of some action predicated by the main CC. From now on I will refer to segment (iv) as *sub-Text2*, and to the type of context it has construed as a *collaborative context*: I will simply stipulate, for the moment, that a collaborative context is a context construed by a sub-text and that unlike dependent contexts it runs side by side with the conduct of (some part of) the main CC. We will see below that this characterisation of collaborative context requires additional definition and recognition criteria.

Collaborative contexts differ from the dependent ones in significant ways. A dependent context is by definition dependent on the main context; a collaborative context is not. Further, during the operation of the dependent context, the conduct of the activity in the main CC is arrested as exemplified by sub-text1 (for discussion see 2.3.2); by contrast, this is not necessarily the case with the collaborative context where two (or more) contexts may run side by side, a characteristic exemplified by sub-text2. However, if the matter is left at this point, then we would have to grant that the context construed by segment (vi) (lines 32–47) is also collaborative. It is fair to assume that while in segment (vi) the mother reveals her plans for her visit to Chatswood that afternoon, the physical activity of attending to the child's lunch — an aspect of the activity in the main context — is 'silently', i.e., physically, going on without any verbal realisation at that point. So we might maintain that just like sub-text2, segment (vi) too is a sub-text and that it construes a collaborative context with respect to the main CC. But there are good grounds for arguing against this claim: the similarity between sub-text2 and segment (vi) is in fact superficial; segment (vi) is neither a sub-text, nor does it construe a collaborative context, though it does share with segment (iv) the characteristic of being concurrent. To justify these assertions, I will first examine the function of sub-text2 — segment (iv) — *vis a vis* the primary text.

A facilitative sub-text, which construes a dependent context, contributes materially to the conduct of (some part of) the activity in the main CC. Generally speaking the same is true of a sub-text which construes a collaborative context, such as sub-text2: it too contributes to the conduct of (some part of) the activity in the main CC, *but it does this with a difference*. The facilitative sub-text contributes via an action that, as it were, assists whatever activity is being carried out; sub-texts such as sub-text2 contribute not via an action but by *managing the*

affective tone of whatever is going on, either tending to make the wheels of ongoing (inter)action turn smoothly or tending to create obstructions. In short, it affects the manner in which the activity of the main CC is conducted *not by contributing directly to the activity in a concrete, physical way but by acting on interactant relations*. I will refer to this function as *tone setting*, which explains my choice of the term *collaborative* for the context that is construed by such sub-texts. Taking the variation in the quality of interpersonal relation as a cline, I will refer to its two endpoints as the *relaxed* and the *strained*. The tone setting enacted by a sub-text may be said to be *positive* when the sub-text construes a (near) relaxed relation, and *negative* when the relation construed is (near) strained. Sub-text2 belongs to the former category: it performs the function of positive tone setting; its relaxed friendly nature further cements the relation of social solidarity between the interactants that is evident from the very beginning of their dialogue. That sub-text2 does have a positive tone setting function is perhaps clear from a comparison of this sub-text with cases quite easy to imagine where the mother may simply put the food down on the table without saying anything, or more likely, where whatever she says is directed toward getting the child to eat in a particular way, at a particular pace considered appropriate by her (e.g., "*don't play with your food just sit down properly and eat up your lunch*" as many mothers do say. For some naturally occurring examples of this type, see Cloran, in press). Segment (viii) (lines 54–59 in Table 3) — the last sub-text in example C where the mother explains her rejection of the child's request for "some vitamin C" — teeters closest to a negative tone setting: the child is clearly unhappy; their relations are more strained than at any other time in this extract. The mother rescues the situation by the strategy of explanation which, on the basis of her prior experience she most probably expects to be effective with her child.

The genesis of facilitation is in what main action is being performed, and what the "ingredients" of that action are: it arises from some features of the field choices in the main context and is typically *action-based*; the genesis of tone setting is not so much in *what* is being done but in *who* is doing it: it arises from some features of the tenor choices in the main context, and is typically *relation based*.³⁷ More specifically, tone setting sub-texts are more likely to occur where the social distance is (near) minimal; and whether positive or negative tone setting will occur depends typically on the interactants' ideological orientation — their view of what constitutes legitimate forms of the living of life, which view is in turn related by social logic to their social positioning. This ideological orientation is expressed, amongst others things, in the way the interactants *frame*

their interaction with their interactive other. In SFL, we often talk about the power of language to enact social relations: the tone setting function is one highly effective and relatively more visible means of enacting social relations.³⁸ If interactants experience positive tone setting in their interaction with each other, their mutual relation over time is likely to develop an evenly relaxed tone which will, all things being equal, carry over from one interaction to the next: when we talk of positive affect, what we really mean is that the mutual interactive history of those interactants has hitherto not given rise to any significant anticipation of conflict or strain.

One may quite reasonably ask why segment (vi) should not be said to have a tone setting function: after all, it fills the silence in companionable talk while the child is eating his lunch and the mother is attending to his needs. Wouldn't this companionable talk act positively on the affective tone of whatever other activity is going on? On these grounds, we might conclude that broaching the plans for the visit to Chatswood has the function of positive tone setting. So why do I reject this analysis? The rationale for my rejection is to be found in a comparison of the language of sub-text2 with that of segment (vi). I have argued earlier (see Section 2.1), I hope successfully, that speaking — i.e., language in use — is not simply activated by context: it also construes context on-goingly, and that evidence from language is decisive in the intersubjective construals of context. It follows that if I claim that the context construed by sub-text2 differs qualitatively from that construed by segment (vi), then by my own argument the language of the two segments in question should show some significant difference. This is indeed the case. In bringing the evidence to notice, let me reiterate first that of all the contexts construed in example *C*, the only one that is considered not integrated into the main CC is the one construed by segment (vi): the context of (vi) is an *independent context*, albeit its realisation runs side by side with the conduct of the main CC. The remaining segments (ii, iv, vb and viii) all construe *integrated contexts*, and only sub-text1, i.e. segment (ii), is facilitative; the remaining three — segments (iv, vb, and viii) to be known as sub-texts 2, 3, and 4, respectively — have a tone setting function. A look at the language of all those segments which I am claiming to be functionally related to the primary text and construing contexts integrated into the main CC will reveal that each one of these enjoys textural unity with the primary text: irrespective of whether their function is facilitative or tone setting, each is *cohesively multiply related* to the primary text. This point is brought out excellently by Cloran, who presents a cohesive chain formation and cohesive harmony analysis of much of what is

presented here as example *C* (Cloran, this volume: see especially her Table 2 and appendix I). Cloran's Table 2 shows quite clearly that segment (vi) (lines 32–47) is the only segment which displays a negligible chain relation to the rest of example *C*; and this is precisely the segment that according to my analysis has no functional relation to the primary text nor does it construe an integrated (collaborative or dependent) context, but an independent one. Further, in approaching example *C* from the point of view of textual constituency analysis, Cloran finds linguistic (i.e., semantic and lexicogrammatical) grounds for treating the entire segment (vi) as *an independent, free-standing rhetorical unit, and not a constituent of some other larger unit* (see her Appendix II, this volume). This is in complete agreement with my analysis according to which segment (vi) is not a sub-text: its status is that of a *parallel text* to the (complex) text, represented by the remainder of example *C* within which the parallel text is *enclosed*.

Due to the lack of its textural unity with the primary text, the speaking in segment (vi) is something that could just as well have happened somewhere else, either alongside of some other discourse or singly on its own: from the perspective of the complex text made up of the primary text and its various sub-texts, there is nothing that links segment (vi) specifically to it, except its quite fortuitous spatio-temporal co-location with it. This contrasts with the four integrated segments (ii, iv, vb and viii) each of which acts as a sub-text and each displays points of cohesive continuity with the primary text. These threads of continuity which unite the other parts leap over segment (vi), leaving the latter unconnected to the rest of the dialogue (see the iconic representation in Table 2, in Cloran, this volume). And again it is significant that whatever new cohesive chains are formed in segment (vi), they are restricted to just that single segment; they do not continue beyond it (see chains labelled l-q in Table 2: in Cloran, this volume). In common parlance, segment (vi) has nothing to do with any concern raised in/by the features of the main context realised by the primary text. And this is my justification for describing segment (vi) not as a sub-text but as a text parallel to the complex one, within which it also happens to be *enclosed*. The context construed by this enclosed parallel text is not collaborative but *independent*. This analysis is further supported dramatically by the cohesive harmony analysis,³⁹ which iconically separates it from the remainder of example *C*. By contrast, the textural unity of the primary text with the four sub-texts is a strong justification for treating them as one complex text. In common parlance, the discourse in each of these sub-texts arises from the discourse in the primary text: this is what underlies the substantial threads of textural unity amongst them.

Generalising from this, I would claim that textural unity is as crucial a condition for postulating contextual/registerial integration between segments of speaking within a single interaction as is the function of the segments to the conduct of the main CC: this follows from the logic of realisational relation across context, semantics and lexicogrammar. Table 5 is a schematic summary of the relation of segments (ii, iv, vb, vi and viii) to the primary text. To highlight the difference between the other segments and segment (vi), the row pertaining to the latter has been italicised in bold.

Table 5. *The relation of primary text to remaining segments in example C*

segment	status vis à vis primary text	function in primary text	context construed	chain interaction with primary text
ii: 5–17	sub-text1	facilitation	dependent	present
iv: 21–24	sub-text2	tone setting	collaborative	present
vb: 26–31	sub-text3	tone setting	collaborative	present
vi: 32–47	parallel text	none	independent	none
viii: 54–59	sub-text4	tone setting	collaborative	present

Since, in the last resort, textural unity bears so much “responsibility” for the analysis proposed above, it is important to comment briefly on those cohesive chains and their interactions that link the parallel enclosed text (segment vi) to the primary one. Notably there are only two such chains: the chain with the lexical repetition of *go* and the identity chain⁴⁰ referring to the mother and Stephen (see Table 2 in Cloran, this volume). I will ignore the former, since not much weight can be attached to one single lexical cohesive tie across segments of an interaction, especially since the tie does not interact with any other chain than the identity chain just mentioned. One might argue that because the referents of this identity chain are Stephen and his mother — the interactants in the main CC — the context of the enclosed text (segment vi) does, after all, make contact with the main CC and so the segment should be treated as a sub-text, construing not an independent context but a collaborative one. There are, however, good reasons for arguing (Hasan 1979, 1985b) that to claim cohesive continuity between two cases of speaking *simply* on the basis of reference to the interactants themselves is problematic: it potentially extinguishes the very claim of individuality for texts and contexts, since such reference is likely to pervade over a wide range of cases of speaking by the same person(s). Of course at one level of analysis, any one individual’s actions and locutions throughout their life do possess a historical continuity. This is a holistic perspective whereby everything

in life — not only in one individual’s life but in the whole community’s life and perhaps even beyond that in the history of the entire universe — is related to everything else; it is a related perspective of this kind that SFL has hoped to capture by postulating that each situation is an instantiation of (some choice path from) the system of culture (cf Halliday, Figure 1, this volume). Further, this holistic perspective is also captured to a certain extent by the claim that underlying every instance of material and verbal action is the actants’ ideological orientation. The fact remains, however, that in life we cannot get by without talking about individual historical events: we do need to talk of some one single episode in the life of some one person, and we do attribute responsibility for certain actions and outcomes to certain specific individuals. To my mind this implies equal validity to the perspectives of both the individual and the collectivity. The choice between the two is perhaps best decided not by the swings of academic fashions but by the nature of the problem to be solved. The notion of individual contexts and individual texts — whether simple or complex — is important to the problem⁴¹ that concerns me. And from the perspective of that problem, any relevance construed by any form of cohesive continuity based *only* on the spatio-temporal or historical continuity of specific interactants is of no consequence (Hasan 1994): it is immaterial that the language of segment (vi), like the language of the primary text, refers to (the same) Stephen and his mother, who are the interactants throughout. We cannot use such an identity chain for recognising what constitutes one text (Hasan 1979, 1985b). The basis for textural unity cannot be said to reside in the identity of the referents of *you*, *I* and *we* when they refer to the speaker and the addressee; it lies in a textured reference chain to some third entity.⁴² Such a third entity is either actually mentioned in the speaking e.g., *passionfruit* or *Nana’s seat* in example C or its potential relevance is implied by some aspect of the main CC, as for example the relevance of shampoo to the activity of bathing (cf an extract from a naturally occurring dialogue discussed in Hasan 1995). In either case, such a third person identity chain must be echoed over the entire stretch of speaking that one proposes to treat as part of the same text — as, for example, *passionfruit* does with respect to example C or shampoo does in the example discussed in Hasan (ibid). It is also important to emphasise that as recognition criterion for texthood, chain formation by itself is less decisive than the patterns of chain interaction of the type which bring about a particular measure of cohesive harmony (cf Hasan 1984c, 1994). And by this measure, segment (vi) is best treated as a text on its own that is not integrated into the complex text, but runs

parallel to it. Figure 1 displays a schematic representation of the analysis of example C. It includes both the enclosed text and the complex text which encloses it. As stated before, the complex text itself is an outcome of the integration of a primary text and its (four) sub-texts. The straight line in the figure stands for the progress of the design logically associated with the context of the primary text; the four sub-texts are shown as creating a shift from the direct progression of this (normal) design, producing an overall design for the complex text which modifies the primary text's character. The enclosed text is represented as a circle with a solid boundary that separates it from the complex text.

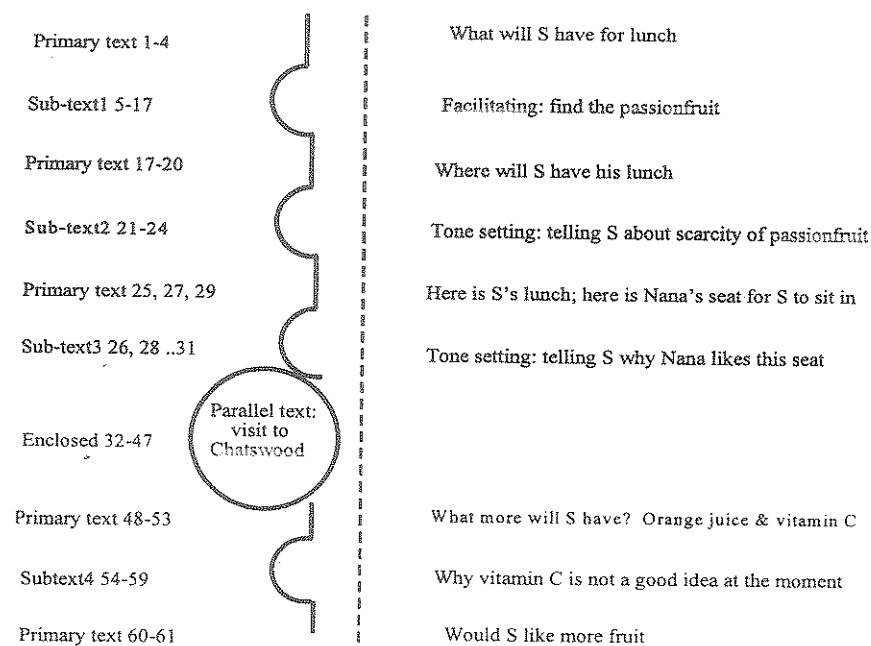


Figure 1. Textual integration and co-location in example C

2.3.4 Material and semiotic continuities: spatio-temporal co-location and textual integration

The problem that example C posed was: how many texts have we got here? If more than one, what if any, is the relation between them? Problems of this kind arise only in environments of one *interaction* where the same interactants

continue their acts of meaning without change in their spatio-temporal location. And notably *identical location* and *identical interactants* both appear to be necessary for raising such questions: no one has suggested that when *different groups* of guests engage in conversation at the same cocktail party, they are producing one text with or without genre combination, just as it has never occurred to anyone to suggest that every critique of Hamlet written by the same critic on *different occasions* is one text. But while the continuity of interactants and spatio-temporal location may be good attributes for identifying an interaction, it cannot be assumed that an interaction and a text are isomorphic — that whatever speaking is done within the material frame of one interaction necessarily represents one text, where if activity changes then what we have is a text with genre combination. To equate interaction and text in this way may provide an easy and simple way of defining a textual boundary, but the definition is far from satisfactory:⁴³ by this definition textuality would no longer be a semiotic phenomenon, but a material one, and it seems to me that the notion of text emerging from this kind of perspective would not be very satisfactory. There is the obvious fact that an interaction thus identified could be either less or more than one intuitively perceived text. It would be less, if for example the judge adjourns a case, resuming it the next day precisely at the same point where the case was left off; and the interaction would be more than one text if for example in the course of providing dinner to my child, I also help him with his homework. If as practised speakers, we perceive the continuity or discontinuity of texts on some principle other than that of “same interactants, same location”, then the definition and recognition criteria for text-hood must lie elsewhere than in the physical identity of an interaction. This makes sense: a text realises some contextual configuration; it must, therefore, be responsive at once to the social activity, the interactant relations and to their mode of contact; in short a text's identity is as multifaceted as the text's context. The structure and texture of a text are activated by the features of the CC, the details of which are construed for the addressee by certain patterns of worded meanings, i.e., by the calibrated selections at the levels of semantics and lexicogrammar. In the make-up of a text we find a classic demonstration of the co-operation of the material and the verbal: the relevant aspects of the material are linguistically validated and the crucial characteristics of the verbal — the text's textural and structural unity — are materially motivated. This dialectic is an active force throughout the process of text production, irrespective of the channel of discourse.

The possibility has to be allowed that while an interaction is a locus for

discourse, a discursive unit such as text is not necessarily co-terminous with all of the speaking done during one interaction. Within any one interaction we may have a primary text into which are integrated certain sub-texts that construe contexts which are integrated into the main CC; or we may have two or more texts each of which might construe a context that is independent of the context construed by the other(s): it is these latter category that I refer to as *parallel texts*. Whereas a primary text and its sub-texts are *textually integrated*, parallel texts are *materially co-located*. The criterial relation between parallel texts is material, not textual and their status vis a vis each other is pretty much the same as that of texts that are embedded in distinct interactions: the critical difference is that the latter are not co-located; the former are. It is important to add that although across parallel texts there might exist some marginal textural relation — for example, contiguous texts may share a short cohesive chain or two (as with segment vi in example C) — the perception of chaining is accentuated due to co-location; this is true especially for cohesive relations of the type that make up a similarity chain.⁴⁴ Further, there is no established pattern of the clustering of chain interaction: textural unity is not expected to exist amongst parallel texts (as again illustrated by segment (vi) in example C). It is important to emphasise also that the fact of co-location itself says nothing about the internal nature of the parallel texts themselves: each parallel text co-located in an interaction may be simple or complex; or some may be simple and some complex. Thus according to my analysis, there are two parallel texts in example C, one simple, instantiating one register, which is realised by the enclosed parallel text (segment vi as Figure 1 shows) and the other a complex parallel text made up of the remaining segments. Also, co-location may take different forms: for example, texts may be *interspersed*, different parts of the speaking relevant to two (or more) texts appearing in alternation; or one text may be *enclosed* within another, as with segment (vi); or they may appear in *sequence*, one parallel text following the preceding one,⁴⁵ and of course, the three temporal arrangements may combine. From a practical point of view, problems of comprehension can be expected to arise sometimes for listeners/analysts where extreme degrees of enclosure or interspersion occur, especially where co-located simple and complex texts combine in any of these temporal arrangements. We all know some speakers who give the impression of “darting about from one topic to another”, which is in fact a non-technical description of texts in close material proximity without significant textural links.

Genre combination (Martin 1985, 1992), as I understand the term, and

contextual/registral integration are not simply terminological variants. To appreciate this difference, imagine a set of parallel texts each simple, and each, therefore, displaying the principle of contextual/registral consistency. We may, if we wish, refer to this collection of simple parallel texts as a combination or co-location of genres/registers; but if so, genre combination obviously means no more than spatio-temporal contiguity of texts instantiating different registers. By contrast, as I have argued above, the structuring of a complex text is significantly different: irrespective of whether a complex text is co-located with some other text or not, the underlying principle for its own production is contextual/registral integration. Integration implies that *the context of the complex text as a whole has an integrated character* in which the dependent and/or collaborative contexts construed by the sub-texts are neither random nor dissonant: in the over all design of the social process, the contextual shifts construed by sub-texts have a functional place since the nature of the main CC continues to act as the denominator of the entire complex. So, for example, the context construed by a facilitative sub-text differs from the main CC *only with respect to (certain) features of field*; its tenor and mode remain largely unchanged as example C illustrates. Shifts in the features, ingredients, stages (call it what you will) of action are fairly easy to observe whether the action is material or verbal, whereas it is comparatively less easy to observe subtle contextual shifts in social relation, i.e., in the tenor of discourse. Nonetheless as I have argued tone setting sub-texts do construe *some adjustment to (some) feature of the tenor* of the main CC.⁴⁶ In addition to acting on tenor features, the tone setting sub-text may construe a context whose field may differ considerably from that of the main CC: consider, for example, sub-text2 in C, where the field choices in the collaborative context differ significantly from those in the main CC. But such shifts are always mediated by a reference to what Firth (1957) would have called relevant objects and actions: it is this joint focus by interactants on objects and actions relevant to the main CC that becomes a means of textually enacting social relations (on the significance of this, see footnote 43). Although these subtle shifts in the context/register of the primary text do occur with respect to its field, and/or its tenor, and/or the mode, the integrated contexts do not completely overthrow or change the character of the main CC.⁴⁷ Instead, the integration acts on the character of the entire complex as a whole, creating a unity out of diversity: what happens is that the primary text's context/register is modified — or, to use my earlier term, “tempered” — by the contexts/registers of the sub-texts. In this process, each of the involved contexts/registers loses its independence and its

character as an individual; the integration, whether in progress or as a completed whole, presents itself as the unique experience of a unique context/register. In this sense, the principle of contextual/registeral integration does not negate the essence of the claim that "a text is a passage of discourse that is coherent" (Halliday and Hasan 1976) though it certainly throws doubt on the universality of contextual/registeral consistency as a pre-requisite of textuality.

There is, however, another side to the story: whether a context is collaborative or dependent and whether the function of the sub-text is tone setting or facilitative, the occurrence of a sub-text carries the potential of disruption for the (putative) primary text. For sub-texts can, and sometimes do, "take over". For example, given certain circumstances, the tone setting function can transform itself, so that the sub-text may end up construing a context which itself becomes the interactants' focus, with the main context either entirely dissipated or largely placed in the background. I would suggest that this may be less a case of integration than that of the main context/register being *supplanted* by another context/register following a brief interspersion of the two. To elaborate on this comment, let me draw attention to what Bernstein (1990) has called *local pedagogy*, which often begins its life, particularly in one of its manifestations, in a tone setting sub-text, especially if the interactants are a child and an adult, and especially if the adult is a parent. The form I have in mind is the one closest to *official pedagogy* as exemplified in the range of official pedagogic registers, particularly those produced by official pedagogues. Elsewhere (Hasan 1995) I have claimed that a major component of official pedagogic discourse, such as classroom talk, is *reflection based*: its design is geared to creating some understanding of the world around us. Clearly, understanding of any kind is a semiotically created construct. So it is not surprising that when texts construe reflection based activity, the action is typically verbal:⁴⁸ in terms of the current SFL terminology, in performing reflection based activity language acts constitutively. The linguistic realisation of the official pedagogic discourse, particularly that produced by official pedagogues, relies (amongst other things) on generalisation of one kind or another, such as we find in defining, classifying, explaining etc. The realisation of local pedagogic discourse particularly in the middle class educated families in most industrialised countries bears resemblances to this and in such families those sub-texts are at risk of developing into a local pedagogic discourse which typically construe the verbal activity of informing (whether on demand or spontaneously) by describing, classifying or generalising about the nature of some entity or process⁴⁹ or by explaining some form of injunction. Let

me illustrate this point, by considering a likely scenario, which might have come about but did not: in example *C*, the mother's comments on the scarcity of passionfruit could have built up gradually into a fairly detailed description of the conditions under which passionfruit might be successfully cultivated. In fact something of this kind does occur in an embryonic way as can be seen in the continuation of the same dialogue presented in Cloran, this volume. The resemblance of differentially distributed everyday talk to the critical qualities of official pedagogic discourse is sufficient to remind us that the early construction of knowledge is rooted in quotidian social processes of the type which enact a specific kind of social relation.⁵⁰

It is interesting to note that when a casual verbal activity is on its way to becoming a local pedagogic activity, such a development activates a subtle shift in mode from dialogue towards monologue: thus in the continuation of example *C* to be found in Cloran's text (lines 67–81) the balance of turn taking changes so that the mother's turn is considerably longer than the child's. Figure 1 presented above (see Section 2.3.3) highlights a similar pattern in sub-text4 represented by segment (viii) explaining the mother's rejection of Stephen's request for a vitamin C tablet (See lines 54–59): here the mother's turn accounts for most of that sub-text; in fact it is the longest turn taken by the mother in what is presented in this paper as example *C*. I have remarked earlier that the tone setting sub-text acts on human relations: when tone setting construes a reflection based activity as for example with Stephen's mother explaining why/when passionfruit get thick skin (cf Cloran this volume: see her Table 10, especially lines 67–69), the interaction serves to construe knowledge mediated through a specific category of interpersonal relation. In this way, learning about the world becomes not just learning about objects, activities, or concepts in isolation from one's relation to the interactive other: rather, both the world and the self become known within the frame of some human relation. The nature of these relations differs across the different segments of a community, but the fact that the first acts of construing knowledge are embedded within such relations is a constant (Williams in press; Cloran in press). This close nexus between interpersonal relation and what Vygotsky (1978) calls concept automatization characterises all acts of local pedagogy. By contrast much of official pedagogy is an effort to construe an understanding of the world — to create what we call knowledge — as if such construals and creations were dissociated from interpersonal considerations: this aspect of official pedagogy is a denial of the importance of those human relations, those discursive contexts, in which the social

subject's understanding of the world historically begins. Whatever the ideological justification offered for the practice, the results are less than palatable.

Returning to the (informing) sub-text that might come to supplant the primary text, it is notable that where such supplanting does actually come about, the common perception is likely to be that of speakers having "moved on" to something else, because the concerns of the discourse are no longer what they were before: what might under different circumstances have been just an (auxiliary) episode — a tone setting or facilitating sub-text — has developed into a text that, so to speak, declares its independence from that other text where it started its life. At least two observations appear important in this connection. First, this situation closely resembles one where two parallel texts might be interspersed briefly, with one of them — the one that began first — discontinuing while the other continues in temporal sequence. After all as I have remarked earlier, the speaking that functions as a sub-text has nothing in its own make up that stops it from being a text in its own right: the line between purely material co-location and textual integration is not drawn along the morphological make-up of the sub-text, but on the grounds of its functional value and its textural relations. When speaking of this kind is not pressed into performing the function(s) which allow it to be integrated into a primary text, it logically assumes the independence which is implicit in its own make-up: realisationally its textural relations with the preceding text "thin down". Whether there is a substantial difference between *supplanting* and *sequence* is an empirical issue, though it appears likely that the early stages of *supplanting* may display a more robust cohesive linkage than would those of *sequence* or *interspersion*. In fact, supplanting of the type with relatively robust cohesive linkage "at the edges" is the most highly favoured method of progression in casual conversations.⁵¹ Secondly, a supplanting pattern of the kind described above explains the basis of the feeling interactants sometimes have of, say, a conversation having moved away from a casual affair to a serious discussion. But if speaking is subject to these vicissitudes, and if speakers for the most part successfully navigate these twists and turns in their discourse, then it follows that at some level of consciousness they must monitor the discourses in which they are engaged, for it is this on which the success of their discursive enterprise depends (Hasan 1994). It is not simply the objectivity of an analyst that makes her note the difference between the complex text and the simple parallel one, but very probably Stephen and his mother too recognise that the plan to visit Chatswood is a different kind of discursive episode compared with commenting briefly on the scarcity of passion-

Table 6. *Material and textual relations within one interaction: complex v. parallel simple texts*

	relations within complex texts	relations between parallel simple texts
material:	same location; same interactant	same location; same interactant (=colocation)
principle:	integration of different registers	consistency of register within each text
structural:	subtexts and primary text integrated	each text a separate structural identity
contextual:	dependency or collaboration	each context independent of the other(s)
functional:	facilitation or tone setting	one text has no function in the other(s)
textual:	substantial textural unity present	textural unity absent or marginal
	chain sharing, chain interaction	chain sharing minimal: no interaction

Table 7. *Forms of co-location: parallel texts within one interaction*

material continuity:	same location; same interactant (=co-location)	
text type:	complex or simple	
forms of colocation:	<i>enclosure:</i>	one parallel text is preceded & followed by another parallel text
	<i>interspersion:</i>	parallel texts 1 and 2 occur in alternation
	<i>sequence:</i>	parallel text 2 follows parallel text 1; 3 follows 2 ...

fruit or explaining Nana's preference for a particular chair, or the inadvisability of taking too many vitamin C tablets.

The material and textual relations discussed so far are presented in tables 6 and 7. Table 6 summarises the critical attributes of complex and parallel simple texts, in order to highlight the differences between integration and pure co-location. Table 7 presents a summary of the forms of co-location, ie. the modes of material contact between parallel texts.

As the reader will note, whether speaking is examined from the point of view of integration or of pure co-location, the necessary assumption in both cases is that the segments occur within the outer frame of the same interaction. There is thus a material relation between a primary text and its sub-texts which together make up a complex text: each of the constituents of such a complex text has the same interactive location and the same interactants. From this point of view, the constituents of the complex text are co-located just like parallel texts; the difference is that over and above this material contact, a complex text also has a textual relation. For the formation of complex texts, the co-location of its constituents is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one. Table 6 is intended to bring out this contrast.

The one relation that is not mentioned in either of these tables is that of *supplantation*. It seems to me that supplantation is a genuinely fuzzy category, so that the supplanting text shares some characteristics with a sub-text and others

with the parallel ones. Thus, all things being equal, in a supplanting text, as also typically in sub-texts, there will occur some shared identity chain(s), whose referent will be some (third person) object or action relevant to the supplanting text. This is what accounts for the display of early textural unity in a supplanting text. As I have argued above, this characteristic is either totally absent from parallel texts or only nominally present: the identity chain they may share with other texts will typically refer to the interactant(s) as in the case of segment (vi) in our example. However, as the field of the context being construed by the supplanting text moves further towards independence from that contextual configuration wherein it began its life, the textural unity between the supplanting and the supplanted texts weakens. In fact, the absence of textural unity and the divergence of contextual configuration are one and the same fact seen from the perspective of the distinct levels of linguistic description.

In introducing the discussion of sub-text 1 and 2, which construe a dependent and a collaborative context respectively, I used the terms *arrestive* (Section 2.3.2) and *concurrent* (Section 2.3.3). These terms refer to how one social process and its realising text impinge on another context/text along the time line furnished by the interactive frame. When the conduct of an ongoing social process and its realising text is suspended by that of another (no matter how small the difference between the two processes), this arrests the direct progress of its design. For example, this is how sub-text1 with its facilitative function impinges on the on-going social process being realised by the primary text in example C. But arrestive contact is not limited only to facilitative sub-texts construing dependent context; a parallel text construing an independent context too could arrest the on-going social process and its realising text. To give an imaginary example: John is engaged in a casual conversation with a friend when the postman knocks with a recorded delivery parcel for him. The casual conversation previously in progress will be arrested by the activity of receiving the recorded delivery parcel, and the realising text of the latter context will be an enclosed parallel text, assuming that the casual conversation with the friend is resumed.

The term *concurrent* is used when the conduct of an on-going social process continues, irrespective of the onset of another: both processes run side by side. In the nature of things, this is possible only if at the time of contact, one process calls only for verbal action and the other is at a stage where it can be manifested just by physical action. This condition is met by sub-text2 *vis a vis* the primary text in example C. The action in sub-text2 is verbal: the mother is commenting on the scarcity of passionfruit, while the action in the primary text at that point

is wholly physical: a part of the design of organising the child's lunch is to actually present the items to him. Just like arrestive contact, concurrent contact too is not limited to occur only with sub-texts: a parallel text may be concurrent with another, the context construed by the two being independent of each other. This is illustrated by example C, where the complex text and segment (vi) represent two parallel texts, each with a context independent of the other (see Figure 1 above in Section 2.3.3). It appears that a sub-text with facilitative function is limited to making an arrestive contact⁵² with the primary text; by contrast, tone setting sub-texts may be either concurrent or arrestive. We have already witnessed concurrent tone setting sub-texts in example C (e.g. sub-texts 2-4 in example C. See Figure 1). Examples of arrestive tone setting may be found quite regularly in classroom talk, as for example, when in the middle of an on-going lesson, the teacher tells the pupil(s) to pay attention, or upbraids them (explicitly or implicitly) for not doing so.⁵³ This kind of injunction/observation naturally arrests the progression of the on-going lesson. One significant justification for treating such interventions as a variety of tone setting sub-text lies in the fact that they act on teacher-pupil relations: in fact, episodes of this kind are often cited in the analysis of classroom discourse as evidence of the teachers' will to power.⁵⁴ At the same time, these segments of classroom talk typically display textural unity with the on-going lesson. Table 8 summarises the patterns of contact found in integration by tone setting and facilitative sub-texts as well as two forms of co-location, viz., enclosure and interspersion. Sequencing is not included in the table since clearly it will tend to be arrestive, for obvious reasons.

Table 8. *Interactive time and types of process contact*

	concurrent	arrestive	contacting CC
tone setting:	✓ e.g. sub-text2	✓ e.g. classroom	collaborative to main
facilitation:	—	✓ e.g. sub-text1	dependent on main
enclosure:	✓ e.g. segment (vi)	✓ e.g. recorded parcel	independent of other(s)
interspersion:	✓ (actions material & verbal)	✓ (both actions verbal)	independent of other(s)

The notion of arrestive and concurrent contact is significant as it forces us to confront an important issue in the description of context. If, for example, we wish to make predictions about the possibilities of concurrent contact, it is important to be able to talk about both material and verbal action. Concurrent contact is possible only when the activity in *at least* one contextual configuration is essentially material; if the activity in both relevant CCs is entirely verbal, then concurrent contact for their realising texts is logically impossible: if any contact

occurs, it must be arrestive. Note that making this kind of generalisation implies a recognition that social activity in the field of discourse could be material and/or verbal. In the current SFL frameworks, however, such recognition is problematic because the term *activity* as an aspect of field has been interpreted (at least by implication) as largely physical/material activity (calling upon language for assistance). The descriptor *social*, which in SFL literature often modifies the term activity simply confirms that the activity is typically *synsomatic* — in other words, it involves the synchronisation of effort by two bodies or more: it is, in the words of Malinowski, concerted human action. So paraphrasing field as social activity does not recognise the verbal action aspect of social activity. Verbal actions such as those of explaining, defining, narrating, reporting, chronicling, lecturing and a myriad of others that I would describe as verbal actions are treated as a matter of mode in the current SFL models of context. From this perspective, the distinction between field and mode is suspiciously reminiscent of the distinction between the what and the how, the content and the style, which has always been popular in literary criticism.

The history of this practice is irrelevant at this point; what is relevant is the fact that it poses serious problems in the description of context. In the first place, when all that is happening on some occasion of speaking is, say, simply the recounting of a past experience, or storying — narrating an already fashioned story, or fashioning one anew — then considerable confusion arises. Is there an activity in contexts of this kind? If not, then we are confronted with the possibility of activity-less contextual configurations,⁵⁵ which in turn raises further questions. For example, under what conditions is it permissible for a contextual configuration to have no activity? And even assuming that in some way it makes sense to have an activity-less contextual configuration, what would the rhetorical mode be a mode of? On the other hand, if we maintain that there indeed is an activity when one is storying, then it seems reasonable to assume that this activity would be named by some synonym for narrating a story.⁵⁶ In that event, we need to be clear about the nature of this activity: it is clearly not physical/material; what is it then? And what is its relation to the mode (that in this hypothetical case is very likely to be described as “narrative”)? I believe it is important for SFL to problematise the notion of activity, for a good deal of the complexity of field is describable by reference to the interaction of physical/material action with the verbal ones. At a later point in this paper (see Section 3.3), I shall propose that the presence of verbal action is an essential attribute of the field of discourse; in doing this I shall in fact be simply repeating

what I had claimed more than a decade ago. As early as 1985, at a conference organised by Martin, I had suggested that the notion of social activity must be reconceptualised to cover both action and locution, both material and verbal action,⁵⁷ and my recent exploration of the relations of context and text appears to support this position.

2.4 *Learning from instances: from texts to system*

Certainly much more can be said about the three examples discussed above, but perhaps this is already enough to point to new directions. On the basis of the examination of these instances, we can turn now to ask how the insights we have gained might be represented in a way that does justice to the system. In recent years system has received bad press, whether from scholars devoted to critical studies or from those who have favoured a particular interpretation of the dynamic perspective. This appears to be a hangover from those approaches which treat the system of language as synonymous with a set of invariant rules: this implies in turn that the system is static and incapable of change; obviously if this were true then there would be no question of it contributing to social change in any way. From this viewpoint, the very concept of system may be considered reactionary. However it is a view of system that is excluded logically from SFL, since it contradicts the postulated dialectic of system and instance according to which system is a resource for instance and instance in its turn fashions the nature of the system (Halliday 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Hasan 1984a, 1996a; Matthiessen and Nesbitt 1996). If the system of language changes through time — and we know that it does; if at every stage of its history, the system of language is variable — and we know that it is; if we postulate that language as a system is fashioned by the (near) infinity of instances, and that by definition each instance is unique, then clearly it follows that these unique instances must mediate change and variation in the system of language. System itself cannot, therefore, be either static or a body of invariable rules: instead of being a constraint, it is in fact a resource; instead of determining what can or cannot be said, it serves as a grid for saying — whether innovatively or conformingly — and for interpreting — whether the said conforms to the probabilities of the system or departs from them (Hasan 1996b, in press). However, at the same time it is important to note the obvious fact that no one instance by itself can ever reveal the potential of the system as a whole: it cannot tell us what other possibilities exist by way of instantiation. Language, in the sense of the system

of language, is the biggest abstraction made in linguistics, as Firth (1957) points out some four decades ago: as individual speakers or even as analysts, we can never come in contact with the whole system of language; what we encounter at any one moment is but some instance of some variety of language. This gives rise to a paradox: on the one hand it is true that an instance is not a miniaturised version of the system; on the other hand it is also true that all we ever encounter is an instance of some one variety. As analysts, then, we are faced with having to piece together the system of language — which we are unable to encounter — from instance(s) — which we do encounter, but which are limited in their power to reveal. The informal analysis of three examples of speaking is certainly not sufficient ground for generalisations, but one must begin somewhere. Beginning from the analyses I have offered above, I take the following conclusions for granted as warranted by the acceptance of the analysis.

- The principles for text production are variable: speakers may produce simple text, simply pursuing the design associated with a social process; this is the principle of contextual/registral consistency, exemplified by texts *A* and *B*. But it is also possible for speakers to produce a complex text diverging from a simple design to accommodate other, subsidiary concerns: by so doing, they modify the character of the social process with which they began; this is the principle of contextual/registral integration, exemplified by the complex text in *C*;
- An adequate framework for the analysis of context must be able to identify the environments i.e. the (conjunction of) features where contextual/registral integration is at risk (and, by implication, where such integration is relatively less likely to occur);
- The modelling of context must be such as to be able to explain why certain conjunctions of contextual features are typically less hospitable to integration, and others are not;
- There is reason to believe that the three contextual parameters of field, tenor and mode are not just three completely separate ingredients of social situations: it may be in fact more profitable to think of them as three inter-related perspectives on the social context with reference to which speaking is done. Activity (i.e. field), relation (i.e. tenor) and (modes of) contact permeate each other. An adequate description of context must reflect this close relation;
- The modelling of context must embrace both the material and the semiotic: to act as an adequate tool for the analysis of talk, it can neither be viewed

as entirely material — an external backdrop for the enactment of the drama of speaking — nor as entirely semiotic — as something that impinges only on the intellect, not on the senses.

Current SFL frameworks for the description of context/text are unaware of the phenomenon of contextual/textual integration. The competence of these frameworks is limited to the description of independent contexts realised by simple texts as is evident from the Halliday and Hasan model used above in stating the contextual descriptions of examples *A-C* as well as from the framework offered in Martin (1992; see especially Chapter 7). Lacking the concept of contextual/registral integration, we have been satisfied with the sequencing/combining of register/genres, and the only explanations offered for the occurrence of these reside in the imagined desires and decisions of unique individuals as represented in the dynamic flowcharts⁵⁸ (Ventola 1987). In the absence of the notion of integration, the question of addressing the difference(s) between integration and co-location can clearly have no meaning; nor can the issue of producing formal descriptions suited to the distinction. Further, in both models the three parameters of the contextual construct are treated as impermeable — three discrete vectors, each to be seen as the point of origin for a system⁵⁹ of choices which pertain simply to that vector without creating any echoes in the other two. In fact, I have reason to believe that to point out default dependencies across the different systems and choices — “habitual conjunctions” — such as I have presented above (see Section 2.2) is not regarded favourably by at least some: it is felt that to draw attention to the typical conjunctions of contextual features is to “naturalise” the *status quo*, thus potentially hindering change in the system of culture by making contextual disjunctions invisible (Martin 1985). My own view of linguistic analysis is that description is not “injunction”: to say “this is how it is” is not to say “this is how it should be”. Linguistic analysis is good if it makes available a deeper understanding of how language works, but good analysis is not necessarily interchangeable with an agenda for social reform, no matter how excellent that agenda might appear and notwithstanding the fact that one might wish for a firmer relation to exist between analysis and praxis. The description I present below will certainly make connections with the material social conditions of human existence, for this is the only site for language to be and to work. However, *on principle*, I will attempt not to exploit the inherent fuzziness of boundaries between description and injunction.

3. The system of context: a dynamic perspective

It is not possible to present the description of the entire contextual construct even at the primary degree of delicacy within the scope of a paper such as this. In this section I shall focus particularly on field, since whatever the form of integration — facilitating or tone setting — some shift in the field choices is possible if not always necessary. So the description of field can provide a good starting point for representing hypotheses about contextual/registeral integration. In the course of doing that I will attempt to address the issues highlighted above at the close of the last section.

3.1 *Field of discourse and the concept of action*

The most important concept relevant to field is *action*: what is being done. Everything else in field may be seen as an elaboration of this concept. The concept of action/activity/act is not unique to linguistics: irrespective of what label⁶⁰ we use to refer to it, the concept is in fact crucial to most disciplines concerned with studying the conditions of human social existence. As one would expect each discipline brings a different perspective for engaging with the concept, but in the majority of cases action is thought of as non-verbal, often physical. So far as the discipline of linguistics is concerned, its perspective on action is language based: aphoristically, the focus of the field of discourse 'is' *doing with different degrees of speaking*. The concept of action is of interest to linguistics only because, and to the extent that, non-linguistic human action actually impinges in some way on linguistic action — on the choices in speaking and interpreting. Without this nexus between non-linguistic action and meaning, linguistics would have had little ground for interest in the concept of action as it is generally understood; and it certainly would have scarce tools, if any, for the analysis of action in that sense. But the concern with the nexus of action and language means that the perspective linguistics brings to the examination of activity is, *without apology*, centered around acts of making meanings by language, irrespective of whether this focus is shared or spurned by other human/social discipline(s).⁶¹

To my mind, the acceptance of this position has some important implications. To begin with, if as a linguist my interest in activity stems from its relation to language, then *the presence of speaking is a sine qua non* for something to be regarded as an activity. No matter how many non-verbal actions

might be going on in an interaction, if there is no speaking, then there is no object of study so far as linguistics is concerned: *in the absence of discourse, there can be no call for a field of discourse!* Linguistic analysis can assign some value to "silence" and/or physical action only in the context of speaking, when it is surrounded by language, not when it occurs divorced from language. The significance of this claim will become obvious as the description of field progresses, but note here that if non-linguistic action enters in the conceptualisation of context, and especially of field, because it impinges on speaking and interpreting, then the field of discourse — the doing with degrees of speaking — has a Janus-like character. One face that field *must* present is that which consists of speaking — call it *verbal action*: the necessity for the presence of language follows from the fact that languaging is a *sine qua non* of activity so far as linguistics is concerned. The other face field *might* present is that of some doing which is basically physical/material — call it *material action*: so far as the linguistic focus is concerned, material action is not a necessity; it may be present or not; what must always be there to justify a linguistic analysis is language. However, linguistics needs to recognise both faces of action if it is to explain how the two might co-operate within the same activity when they are co-present. This co-operation can take different forms. It is certainly possible for the two kinds of action to proceed along two parallel paths. Here is an imaginary example: John is driving a friend to work, and as they drive they also discuss the recent reports on "road rage". So the two actions simply run parallel to each other, and it is possible at least in theory that neither helps/hinders the performance of the other — the material action remains purely material, the verbal, purely verbal. But anyone who has participated in such a situation will readily accept that the conduct of each activity could impinge on the other, simply because they are co-occurring; thus depending upon the state of the traffic, the discussion might be full of stops and (re-)starts, though one hopes that the driving might be less subject to distraction! However, the very fact that one is apprehensive driving with a driver who is engrossed in discourse shows that the possibility of mutual impingement is recognised. Systemic descriptions of context have no way of building such possibilities into the description — a point first made in principle by Martin (1985), though I believe his model did not offer a solution to the problem. Then also experience teaches that material and verbal actions do not always simply run side by side with this kind of marginal contact: in fact social activities vary in the extent to which these two classes of action might coalesce in their make up. Below, I describe some of the ways in which

the co-operation between these two classes of action occurs. The description is paradigmatic in orientation and will be represented in the form of a system network.

3.2 *Verbal and material action: primary systems*

It is a commonplace of observation that in every known culture there exists a large category of social activities *that just cannot be performed except by language*, irrespective of whether or not they are also assisted by other semiotic systems,⁶² such as those of gesture or graphics. In an important sense, such activities are really semiotic, and more specifically they are essentially verbal. And not unreasonably their recognition as this or that kind of activity typically depends not on what else is going on physically/materially at the moment of speaking but on what the verbal action itself is like. Examples of such verbal action are, say, defining, explaining, generalising, narrating, lecturing, persuading, advising and so on. We may rightfully claim that in such cases, the activity (i.e., field) is constituted by verbal action(s) in the sense that *there would be no activity for linguistics to analyse if there were no action of speaking*. From this point of view the verbal action in these cases is *constitutive* of activity (i.e., field), which of course is not to claim that the social value of such activities — their place in the culture — is determined by speaking as such. As I will show below, the choice of constitutive verbal action interacts in interesting ways with the choice of material action.

By contrast with verbally constituted activities, there are some social activities which *just cannot be performed with verbal action ALONE*: they call for material action, although many will permit, if not actively require, some speaking as an additional resource in their performance.⁶³ In this way verbal and material action coalesce into one activity: the material action is *present* and the verbal action may be employed as an additional resource in the performance of the activity. This type of verbal action is *ancillary*: it does not constitute the activity, it simply assists⁶⁴ in its conduct. Since such activities are basically (material) *action based*, it is not surprising that their identity can be established more readily by an observation of the material action than by looking at what the speaking is like. This is demonstrated by text *B*, which is a good example of a kind of action based field: we noted (see Section 2.2 for discussion) that it was fairly problematic to read the nature of the activity in this text's context by reference to the text's language alone.⁶⁵ Further examples of this category of action are care-giving e.g. bathing a child, helping with household chores, such

as cooking, cleaning etc.; helping with a practical project, e.g. setting up a theatre stage, building a model aeroplane etc.; economic transactions e.g., buying goods from retail stores, and so on. These are the sorts of actions that Malinowski (1923; 1935) might have described as concerted human activities.

It follows from this discussion that ancillary verbal action will occur *only if* a material action is present; but the reverse is not true: it is not the case that whenever material action is present the verbal action will be ancillary. First, there is the possibility that material action may be present without any verbal action whatsoever, but in that case the situation is not one that linguistics can be implicated in (see footnote 63). So any modelling of the field of discourse needs to "block out" that possibility. But there is of course another scenario: the possibility exists that material action may be present, and at the same time the verbal action may be constitutive. It is this kind of conjunction of material and verbal action that is implied in the imaginary example of John driving (material action: *present*) while discussing road rage with his friend (verbal action: *not* ancillary but *constitutive*). It must be noted that constitutive verbal action of discussing does not *require* the material action of driving for the conduct of its design: strictly speaking the latter is irrelevant to the former. It is perhaps for this reason that SFL has never incorporated the scenario into its model of field. But in principle with this sort of conjunction what we have is two goings on which create an interesting situation of uncertainty: potentially they could remain unrelated, though the possibility is open that they could impinge on each other as suggested earlier, and if so this would definitely be realised in the speaking. The conjunction thus identifies an environment where the field is left open to shifts and changes of one kind or another, which might lead to textual co-location and/or integration: in other words, this is where the possibility of *iterative field choice* exists (see Section 3.11 for further discussion). Note also an interesting fact about the ancillary verbal action: this kind of verbal action is typically intermittent; it comes in spurts; in between these spurts of ancillary verbal action, the conduct of the material action continues "silently" being manifested by physical act(s), as demonstrated both by example *B* and *C*. This is significant because such 'silent' spatio-temporal *loci* offer another environment that is hospitable to recursive field choices which underlie textual integration and/or co-location, as shown by example *C*.

As implied above, when material action is *non-present*, its absence is of no consequence so far as the linguist is concerned so long as there is some verbal action. But in this case, for obvious reasons the verbal action would have to be

[constitutive]: this is the default choice in the environment of [non-present] material action. The non-presence of material action might itself mean that it is genuinely *absent*. With absent material action, the constitutive verbal action must be *conceptual* as when one is writing an exam paper. [Conceptual] verbal action construes verbal semiotic constructs — something that must be processed by the intellect; it calls for mental work, without implying any physical action. And if any physical action does occur, it is typically an adjunct e.g. in writing an exam paper, one does do something physical with one's hands and eyes but the point of the action is the creation of something that is semiotic. The choice contrasting with [absent] material action is that of *deferred* material action. When material action is [deferred], the verbal action must be not only constitutive but more delicately it must have the feature *practical*: verbal actions with this feature specify the details of the material action that is to be performed at some time following the production of speaking. The feature [practical] verbal action is thus related by default to the feature [deferred] material action, and itself functions as an entry point for more delicate choices, which will be described in Section 3.5 below. The hypotheses discussed above about how material and verbal action may interact in the field of discourse suggest that the (co-)selection of the various features from the two kinds of action is both non-random and systematic. The possibilities of their conjunction are represented in the form of a system network in Figure 2a.

Before turning to a discussion of some issues arising from Figure 2a, let me emphasise that the hypotheses underlying this system network and all those presented hereafter in this paper are only partially tested against data: they are both tentative and lacking in depth of delicacy. Thus the selection expressions based on these networks will provide a reasonable (though not thorough) indication of the *structure potential of a register*,⁶⁶ since the structural aspect of a text (type) is activated by relatively less delicate features. However, the networks will need to be developed a good deal in delicacy before we can specify the kind of semantic and lexicogrammatical features which are criterial to the creation of textural relations in a text.⁶⁷ The row of dots found at various points in these networks emphasizes the tentative and incomplete status of the network.

3.3 Default dependency in the system of field

The network in Figure 2a is at the level of context. Its point of origin is activity,

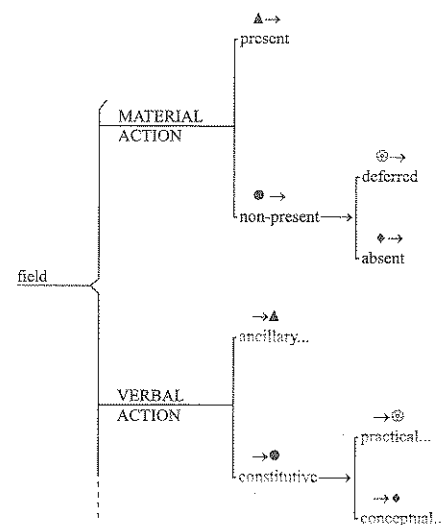


Figure 2a. Primary systems of action in field

i.e., field of discourse, and it displays the two simultaneous systems of MATERIAL ACTION and VERBAL ACTION, whose primary options are paired together by matched marking, e.g. the marking $\Delta \rightarrow$ appended to [ancillary] verbal action (to be read as “if ancillary”) is paired with the marking $\rightarrow \Delta$ appended to [present] material action (to be read as “then material action *must be present*”). The justification for recognising these pairings has already been discussed in some detail immediately above. Earlier (Section 2.2) I also discussed several cases of what I called default dependency, which contrasts with genuine dependency. The marked pairing of systemic features in Figure 2a is another manifestation of default dependency.

Default dependency translates possibility into necessity and choice into near singularity. This is demonstrated by Table 9a which takes the constraints imposed by default dependency on the possible conjunctions of material [present] v. [non-present] with verbal [ancillary] v. [constitutive] (note the use of modals in this table). Default dependencies thus limit the conjunction of systemic

features. This can be seen from a comparison of tables 9a and 9b: in 9b the constraints imposed by default dependencies on the conjunction of the same four terms have been ignored, which produces four possibilities with each term combining freely with the others as normally expected with simultaneous systems. However, of these, statement (iii) is clearly problematic: to put it informally, verbal action can hardly assist a [non-present] material action (i.e., one that is not in progress). Note also that (ii) is a valid conjunction, as illustrated by the example of John driving a car while discussing road rage with his friend — or indeed, Stephen eating lunch with mother attending to his needs while they also discuss their plan to visit Chatswood in example C.

Table 9a. *The conjunction of the first four terms from figure 2a showing default markings*

-
- (i) if verbal action is ancillary, then material action *must* be present;
 - (ii) if material action is non-present, then verbal action *must* be constitutive;
 - (iii) material action *may* be present while verbal action *is* constitutive
-

Table 9b. *The conjunction of primary systems from figure 2a: ignoring default marking*

-
- (i) material action present; verbal action ancillary;
 - (ii) material action present; verbal action constitutive;
 - (iii) material action nonpresent; verbal action ancillary; *and*
 - (iv) material action nonpresent; verbal action constitutive.
-

Finally Table 10 presents the possible conjunction of all of the systemic features displayed in Figure 2a, while observing the constraints imposed by the default markings.

Table 10. *The conjunction of choices from figure 2a, with default dependencies*

-
- 1: if verbal action [ancillary], then material action *must be* [present], as in B;
 - 2: if material action [non-present], then verbal action *must be* [constitutive] as in A;
 - 3: if material action [non-present:deferred], then verbal action *must be* [constitutive:practical]; for discussion and examples see Section 3.5;
 - 4: if material action [non-present:absent], then verbal action *must be* [constitutive:conceptual] as in A; for further discussion and examples see Section 3.6–3.8;
 - 5: material action *may be* [present], and verbal action *may be* [constitutive]; this implies co-location as in segment (vi) example C, or aligned relation; for discussion and examples, see Section 3.11.
-

Table 10 suggests that linguistic models of context which treat material

action as a matter of *field* and verbal action as a matter of [ancillary] v. [constitutive] *mode* might have greater difficulty in identifying those environments where textual integration or co-location might be at risk (cf entry 5 in Table 10; and discussion above). This is however not the only reason for treating material and verbal action as simultaneous systems of field. In the following section, I will review some of the reasons why verbal action must be thought of as a necessary component of the make up of the field of discourse.

3.4 *Ancillary and constitutive verbal action: field or mode?*

Tables 9a-b and 10 between them enumerate the possible conjunctions of systemic features that can be derived from the system network in Figure 2a. As the dots following some of the options in the figure indicate these options themselves can be further developed in delicacy, but before proceeding further, some comments need to be made (see for earlier discussion, Section 2.3) on the terms constitutive and ancillary, which have been used here to distinguish classes of verbal action — a practice that is at variance from that in the SFL literature where for nearly two decades now they have been treated as features of mode.

In agreement with other systemicists' views, I too have typically treated the distinction between constitutive and ancillary as a matter of mode, even despite occasional misgivings (see Section 2.3 and footnote 58): I suggested, in fact, that the two terms refer to the two endpoints of a cline, viz., the role of language (see Hasan 1980, 1985b etc; for further discussion and development, see Cloran 1994, and this volume). In SFL persuasion, explanation, definition etc are described as categories of rhetorical mode.⁶⁸ The role of language is obviously related to rhetorical mode, if not a pseudonym for it: in fact the terms constitutive and ancillary as used typically in SFL may be taken to refer to the least delicate rhetorical mode, whose more delicate instantiation might be such things as explanation, definition, generalisation etc (see Cloran 1994; Halliday and Martin 1993; Painter 1996). However, on reflection, it seems to me, that what part language is playing or what it is doing in the social situation (cf Halliday's remarks quoted in footnote 68) are not aspects of mode, nor is rhetorical mode really a phenomenon that belongs in mode: rather, these various cases of speaking, viz., persuading, explaining, joking, narrating are cases of verbal action. There seems no reason for suggesting that instead of verbal action, they are just a modality or mode for bringing that action about, especially since the actions in question are un-do-able any other way except verbally, just as the

actual exchange of goods cannot be done except materially: we do not, however, say that in the activity of buying, the mode is material. Note that just like material actions, verbal actions — so far known as rhetorical mode/role of language — in fact specify what the actants are doing: in the verbal action of explaining, one of the interactants explains just as in the material action of buying, one of the interactants buys. It seems to me that the parameter of mode is about contact: it is concerned with specifying the way (i.e., the mode) in which speakers and their speaking come in contact with the addressee's intelligence. If this is the case, then considerations pertinent to mode are those of what is known as channel (phonic or graphic) and the physical contact between the speaker and his addressee (virtual or real; if real, co-present or distanced). It is worth mentioning also that the lexicogrammatical realisation of mode in this sense generally implicates patterns of textual meaning and lexicogrammar, just as what I am calling verbal actions generally implicate patterns of ideational grammar.⁶⁹ In other words, it can be claimed that it is these patterns that are most at risk of variation with variation in material and verbal action. Again, to me the argument appears convincing that an actionless field is no field at all; and there certainly are occasions of talk when all that is being done is just speaking as when one is presenting a formal lecture. Unless we take lecturing as a kind of doing, we would be forced either to allow an actionless field, or to bring in unanalysed categories of action e.g., recount, lab report, exposition, or 'narrative'.⁷⁰ One problem with the use of unanalysed concepts of this kind is the pretence that the choice of, say, the narrative mode is independent of the choice of the activity of narrating, a stance that intuitively strikes one as quite questionable. Certainly there exists the possibility that for example a mother might tell her child a 'story', hoping thereby to make the child draw a 'moral' from it. But this kind of *quasi* "metaphorical" deployment is strictly a feature of verbal constitutive action: and it is neither a free choice nor is it an unmarked one; the normal unmarked expectation is that in doing narrating the speaker would employ what we call the narrative mode. It seems to me then that the so-called rhetorical modes such as explaining, defining, generalising, reporting, recounting, narrating, chronicling etc are best viewed as constitutive verbal actions, and if the system of field is concerned with specifying the nature of social activity, then both material and verbal actions should form part of it.

3.5 *Practical verbal action: secondary systems*

Figure 2a implies that if material action is [deferred] then verbal action must be [practical] (see entry 3 in Table 10). A constitutive verbal action with the feature [practical] construes the outline of some material action. So although [deferred] material action, unlike [ancillary] action, does not require a physical action to be in progress at the time of speaking, the future occurrence of some material action is always on the cards. As Figure 2b shows the feature [practical] itself acts as the entry condition for more delicate systemic choices such as *plan* or *instruct*, and perhaps other options of a similar kind. This possibility is indicated by leaving the system open at this point (see Figure 2b). I use the term *plan* with apologies to Cloran (1994), who employs it to label a rhetorical unit wherein interactants speak of some intended future action of theirs:⁷¹ my justification is that in terms of the analysis being proposed here, underlying at least a sub-category of such a rhetorical unit there would most probably be the following field features:

MATERIAL ACTION [non-present:deferred]; *and*
VERBAL ACTION [constitutive:practical:plan]

It is, for example, this set of features that underlies segment (vi) of *C*, where the mother and Stephen speak about their intended visit to Chatswood. An activity with the feature [plan], as I am defining the term, is action based⁷² in the sense that it is oriented towards some future physical action of the interactants.

The verbal action with the feature [plan] activates a text whose *stance* semantically speaking is assertive (Hasan 1996a): in informal terms the text *states/declares* the interactants' intention of doing something. By contrast, a verbal action with the feature [instruct] produces something of a resource for an addressee: the speaker's wordings construe a virtual design of some deferred material action, specifying the various stages through which it may be performed. So, although there is no on-going physical/material action occurring at the time of speaking, the point of a verbal action with the feature [instruct] is to enable the bringing about of such action as and when the addressee might need/desire to do so. And it is an action that typically construes instructions either on how to *create* some artefact or how to *manage* it. The feature [instruct] may thus be viewed as the entry point to a binary system with the options [create] or [manage]. For example, underlying texts which provide instructions on how to prepare a dish (i.e., recipes), how to knit a sweater (i.e., a knitting pattern), how

to conduct a lab experiment (i.e., a lab exercise in the schooling environment) etc. are the following field features:

MATERIAL ACTION [non-present:deferred]; *and*
 VERBAL ACTION [constitutive:practical:instruct:create].

The feature [manage] offers entry to three more delicate choices: how to *install* an artefact, e.g., instruction to install a computer monitor; or how to *maintain* it, e.g., instructions for taking care of an installed computer monitor; or how to *repair* it, e.g., instruction on how to repair a fault in a printer. These systemic choices whose ultimate entry condition is [practical] constitutive verbal action are presented in Figure 2b.

In discussing a system at the level of context, ideally a series of actual texts should be presented each of which can be shown to realise some possible selection expression derived from the system network in question. This is obviously not possible for lack of space. So, turning to the more delicate features represented in Figure 2b, I will adopt what seems to me the next best solution: this will be to present in Table 11 all the possible selection expressions (henceforth SE) whose ultimate entry condition is [constitutive:practical] and, with each SE, I shall provide example(s) of text types which would construe the field features that characterise the relevant SE. Since the choice of [constitutive:practical] verbal action calls also for the selection of [non-present:deferred] material action by default, each SE in Table 11 will assume the latter features.

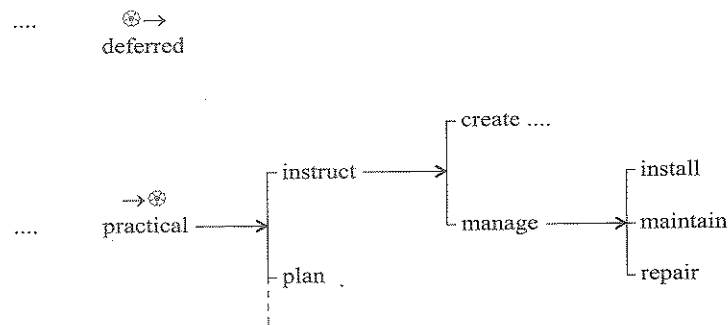


Figure 2b. Secondary systems of practical verbal action

Table 11. Reading Figure 2b: Practical verbal action with deferred material action

Assume for each SE the features: MATERIAL ACTION [non-present:deferred]

- 1: [constitutive:practical:plan]
 realising text construes what the interactants will do at some point in the future: e.g. segment (vi) in example C.
- 2: [constitutive:practical:instruct:create]
 realising text construes the stages of some action based activity as a resource for the conduct of the same if/when desired; outcome is typically a material artefact: e.g. recipes, knitting instructions; sewing patterns; model kits (e.g. for making a boat or aeroplane) etc.
- 3: [constitutive:practical:instruct:manage:install]
 realising text construes the stages of some action based activity as a resource for the conduct of same if/when desired; acting on some material artefact/device to make it function: e.g. instruction on how to install a washing machine, a computer monitor etc.
- 4: [constitutive:practical:instruct:manage:maintain]
 realising text construes the stages of some action based activity as a resource for the conduct of same if/when desired; acting on some already produced artefact to keep it in good order: e.g. instruction on how to keep food fresh ("keep contents refrigerated once opened") or on how protect a computer monitor ("avoid exposure to direct sun, heat and dust") etc.
- 5: [constitutive:practical:instruct:manage:repair]
 realising text construes the stages of some action based activity as a resource for the conduct of same if/when desired; acting on some damaged artefact to restore its original function: e.g. instruction on how to mend a torn shirt; repair a bike puncture; service a malfunctioning printer, etc.

3.6 Types of action and the identification of register specific meaning potential

In tables 10 and 11, all those SES which have either the feature [ancillary] or the features [constitutive:practical] verbal action, identify contexts where the point of the social activity is the performance of a material action, which is occurring/will occur some time somewhere. This is evident from the text types mentioned as examples of the SES in tables 10 and 11: in each of these the relevant material action is either going on (verbal action [ancillary]) or the language construes the steps whereby the possibility of bringing it about is put within the addressee's reach (material action [deferred]). It is activities of this kind that I have referred to as *action based* activity/field (Hasan 1995, and sections above). The choice of such options in the field always puts physical action in the picture, either as on-going performance or as a physically do-able one: this is what it means to say

that the field is action based. Typically activities of this kind have simple and fairly visible goal profiles, and significantly their endpoint, i.e., outcome, is both obvious and non-contentious. It is possible that the early focus of discourse analysis on action based fields has encouraged the belief that the statement of the goal of an activity is a non-problematic and clear-cut enterprise: when you are buying vegetables or stamps, the goal is to exchange money for certain goods and unless the activity is interrupted or terminated prematurely, the outcome would be the completion of just such an actual exchange; ideally the goal and the outcome are expected to be isomorphic in successfully conducted action based fields. Needless to say that there exist other kinds of activities that do not conform to these ideals.

Wherever the activity (i.e., field) is action based (as in entries 1 and 3 in Table 10 and in all of the entries in Table 11), there for obvious reasons the “relevant objects” and processes as well as the attributes and circumstances attendant on them e.g., the weight and size of objects, and the degree and extent of actions etc., will have a basis in physical reality. The details of such physical reality are construed by language — as something that is either being done at the moment of speaking or can be brought to the stage of being done at some point in time. This in turn implies that only certain categories of semantic and lexicogrammatical choices are relevant to the performance of such verbal action: for example, in a text of the type that instructs how to install some device (see Table 11, entry 3), semantically the *event* will be of the *doing* type, which will be realised lexicogrammatically by *material* processes. Example *D* presents an actual example of just the first two steps for the installation of a computer monitor.

Example D:⁷³

Chapter Two: Installation

Connecting Your Monitor to a Computer

- 1 Turn off your computer and unplug its power cord.
- 2 Connect the signal cable to the signal port on the back of your monitor.

All three processes occurring in this extract (*turn off, unplug, connect*) are material, each construes an event of the doing kind. Most of the relevant objects are semantically speaking physical entities and belong to the category of artefact; they are realised lexicogrammatically by concrete nouns functioning as Thing with or without Classifier (*computer, power cord, signal cable, signal port, back, monitor*). This is of course not an original insight — other systemicists have commented on such features of this text type known in the genre based descriptions as the “procedural genres”. My purpose in highlighting this observation is

to use it as a necessary step towards a more general claim about context, meaning, wording and register type (ie. genre).

The choices in the systems of field of discourse are relevant to the specification of what I have elsewhere called the *domain of signification* (Hasan 1985b) — ie. the domain of experience to which the wordings of the texts are expected to refer. The description of field in Figure 2a–b, whose *SE* derivations are presented in tables 10 and 11, is at a fairly primary degree of delicacy. Using these *SES* as the basis for making realisational claims, we can only specify the *general* categories of meanings/wordings that the given contexts will activate, such as *doing events* and *material processes*: it does not enable the identification of the *specific* domain of doing or the *specific* lexical taxonomies the members of which might be expected to realise those doings lexicogrammatically. However, the inability of the present networks to make contact with actual language is a practical problem, not a theoretical one. There is every reason to believe that as the description of the field of discourse progresses in delicacy, it would become possible to identify the specific lexicogrammatical and semantic domains at risk in the realisation of specific choices from the systems of field: such work is in fact well under weigh (see Halliday & Martin 1993; also Matthiessen, in press). This claim takes us to a higher level concept, to what I have called *genre specific semantic potential* elsewhere (Hasan 1985b: 98ff.) which consists of the meanings and wordings that are crucial to the identity of a register, which is naturally related to the notion of domain of signification. Clearly the more delicately specified the features of the field, the more specific will be our information about the domain of signification — what objects, events and circumstances are at risk of being referred to. Information of this kind constitutes an important part of the profile of the register identifying meaning potential and its realising lexicogrammatical patterns. It is, however, important to emphasise that the domain of signification is just a part of some *register specific semantic potential*: the two cannot be equated. This is because the domain of signification is “given” by the features of field alone, whereas the register specific semantic potential is “given” not simply by the field but by the contextual configuration as a whole. Important contributions to it are made by the features of tenor⁷⁴ and of mode (e.g., see Cloran 1994, 1995, and this volume) as the discussion of the three examples in Section 2 has already indicated. In principle, each vector of the contextual construct, and each value in each vector acts as the activator of some meanings/wordings that go into construing a text’s identity, which includes its register identity. However, the required degree of descriptive detail that would

allow us to make such specific statements is daunting. Certainly, this paper will not be able to reach even that stage in the delicacy of description where it would be possible to identify the specific components in the domain(s) of signification.

3.7 *Conceptual verbal action: the creative power of language*

As figures 2a and 2b show in the system of verbal action the feature [practical] is in immediate contrast with [conceptual]. Verbal actions with the feature [conceptual] are maximally different from material action: while material activities are, to use Russell's well known terms, *sens-ible* (i.e., they can be sensed) and physical (i.e., they call on the body to perform), the conceptual ones are *intellig-ible*; they do not call for any physical action. Just like the feature [practical], the feature [conceptual] too acts as the entry condition for a systemic choice: the terms of this secondary system are [relation based] v [reflection based] (for some discussion of these terms, see Hasan 1995) as shown in Figure 2c. In exploring these choices further, I will first consider the first mentioned, namely, [relation based] verbal action.

Engagement in *any* social action, quite obviously, contributes to the enactment of social relation: this is what underlies the notion of degrees of *social distance*⁷⁵ (Hasan 1973, 1980, 1985b, 1995). However, perhaps no category of action is as potent in the enactment of social relations as those I have called relation based. Examples of relation based activities would be chatting, swapping jokes, explicit show of agreement in opinions and perspectives, satisfying the other's need to know or to have, consulting, insulting, quarrelling, sarcasms, explicit show of disagreement, emphasising differences of perspective, and so on. Generalising from this and many other such verbal actions we may say that the feature [relation based] is the entry condition for a choice between [cooperative] v [conflictual]. Three quick comments on [relation based] action. First, one might suppose that in the everyday meaning of these terms, cooperation and conflict do not necessarily have to be enacted by verbal action: they can be just as well enacted non-verbally, for example by nodding, smiling, handing over something that someone desires, looking angry, pushing, hitting and the like. Up to a point this is true but [relation based] verbal action, being a variety of semiosis can import into the enactment of social relation such nuances as would elude purely material actions such as those of hitting, shoving, spitting and so on. When seen *in dissociation from verbal action*, the enactment of social relation purely by material action is qualitatively different: the elaboration of the

interpersonal relations that comes from [relation based] verbal actions is in a class by itself. Secondly, it is a notable characteristic of [relation based] verbal actions that between the same interactants they typically tend to follow a trajectory, which has become a part of the speakers' interactive history. Thus typically the same interactants will engage in the same/similar category of [relation based] action, whether [co-operative] or [conflictual] (see Cloran 1994, in press; Hasan 1989, 1992b; Williams 1995, in press). This is partly because such activities are particularly sensitive to the ideological orientation of the interactants: underlying what Bernstein (1990) calls (strong/weak) framing are in fact [relation based] actions of specific kinds. Finally, [relation based] action seldom appears as a feature of the field in the main context: though this is not impossible,⁷⁶ what happens typically is that the [relation based] verbal action — whether [co-operative] or [conflictual] — runs side by side like a prosody of the on-going main activity. It follows that this feature tends to be present in collaborative contexts which are construed by tone setting sub-texts rather than by a primary or independent one. The frequently prosodic appearance of [relation based] action is noteworthy since it agrees well with the observation (Halliday 1979, and elsewhere) that interpersonally sensitive patterns of meaning and lexicogrammar tend to occur prosodically. I have suggested that [relation based] action is highly relevant to interactant relations; it is thus a feature of context that is likely to be realisationally related crucially to the interpersonal semantic systems of punctuative message (e.g., address, feedback devices, ritual civilities etc), to the system of attribution particularly ascription of state (Hasan 1983); prefacing (Hasan 1989 etc., Cloran 1994; Williams in press); appraisal (Martin 1996) and to the lexicogrammar of mood, modality, and modification which construe those meanings.⁷⁷

If [relation based] verbal actions enact social relations, those that are [reflection based] produce semiotic constructs such as explanations, generalisations, classifications and descriptions of phenomena in the world of experience and imagination as well as various forms of moral rules: they thus underlie all institutions and all "knowledging" whether in its mundane form (*local pedagogic discourse*), as when Stephen's mother explains why that passionfruit had thick skin or in its esoteric form as when Ian Stewart (1989) explains the new mathematics of chaos (*official pedagogic discourse*). Esoteric knowledging, be it primitive magic or modern day science, the elders' code of conduct or what we know as jurisprudence, in all its forms — production, reproduction, and evaluation — is created when [reflection based] verbal action occurs in conjunction

with the sphere feature [specialised]. Both [relation based] and [reflection based] actions constitute creative activities, in that they are instrumental in creating something that could not be created in that form without such verbal action. This is not to claim that the actions create interpersonal relations or knowledge *ex nihilo* simply 'out of words': clearly social relations are created in the context of human communal existence, just as structures of knowledge such as physics, chemistry etc take for granted the existence of a physical world.

Despite this similarity, [reflection based] action and [relation based] action do differ from each other: to express this difference in terms of Halliday (1975), if the latter type of activities position the speaker as an intruder *vis a vis* his environment, the former, i.e., [reflection based] verbal conceptual actions, position the speaker as an observer *vis a vis* the already existing material and social world. This is perhaps one reason why [reflection based] action is often treated not as a creative action but as that of describing pre-existing phenomena. Since the semiotic constructs produced by the [reflection based] activities either take as their point of departure the physical phenomena of the sensible universe or the (existing) codes of communal conduct, the ordinary perception of such activities is that they are "about" something which already exists and whose identity is independent of [reflection based] verbal actions as such. Thus geography is taken to be about the physical features of a land that exists; history is about what some real people have really done in real time; science is about what the physical world is like; jurisprudence is about what is just and fair conduct; and so on, as if the human intellect were a replicator of what is and language the device by which that which is can be expressed. The basis of this lies in the old reference/correspondence theory whereby language is just a mirror of pre-existing material/social realities (for critical comments on this position, see Hasan 1984a, 1984b, in press). However, in a very important sense, we never know the universe as it really is: the world we know is the world uttered by language. Any sensuously validated knowledge of the world that cannot be exchanged with an other is of little consequence to human social existence; the universe *with* which and *in* which we live and act is that which is inter-subjectively objective. And this inter-subjectively objective universe is defined by, grows out of, the [reflection based] verbal actions of the human race, which naturally takes the sensuously apprehended as its point of departure. The feature [conceptual] identifies that family of context which Malinowski would have described as the peak of creative action.

3.8 *Conceptual verbal action: informing and narrating*

The feature [conceptual] acts as the entry condition for another system which is simultaneous with the system described above. The terms of this second system of [constitutive:conceptual] verbal action are [narrating] or [informing]. I use these common currency words in a rather abstract and technical sense here: one way of clarifying the underlying principle of this abstraction would be to say that the options capture respectively the significant division between already experienced time and time that is in some sense present. The feature [narrating] thus activates the construal of goings on supposed to be located *in time that has already been experienced* whether in reality or in imagination: examples of text types construing the feature [conceptual:narrating] verbal action would be an autobiography or a research report construing events which have already been experienced in real time, or it could be a story or a nursery tale construing events that have already been experienced in imaginary time. It is interesting to note that in the construal of the field feature [narrating], the semantic concept "experienced time" is, as it were, relatively more decisive than the lexicogrammatical feature known as "past tense": there is no one-to-one relation between "experienced time" and the tenses. Thus the so-called "narrative/historical present" is simply a present tense which construes "experienced time (dramatised)" when this tense is used in company with other semantic and lexicogrammatical features activated by [narrating]. It is interesting to note how much and what general categories of the semantic and lexicogrammatical features of the realising texts can be shown to be activated ultimately by field, when the concept of field is developed as being suggested here.

By contrast with narrating, the feature [informing] activates the construal of goings on perceived to be current at the time of speaking (ie. observations, comments, descriptions etc). Clearly there is much scope for the development of more delicate choices which depend on the feature [informing] and [narrating]. I will return to these presently (see Section 3.10), but first a further system which depends on the feature [conceptual] verbal action.

3.9 *Conceptual verbal action: discourse as object*

One respect in which language differs from most other semiotic systems is its ability to "turn back on itself". This capacity of language is rooted in the possibility of [constitutive] verbal action, and more specifically in the feature

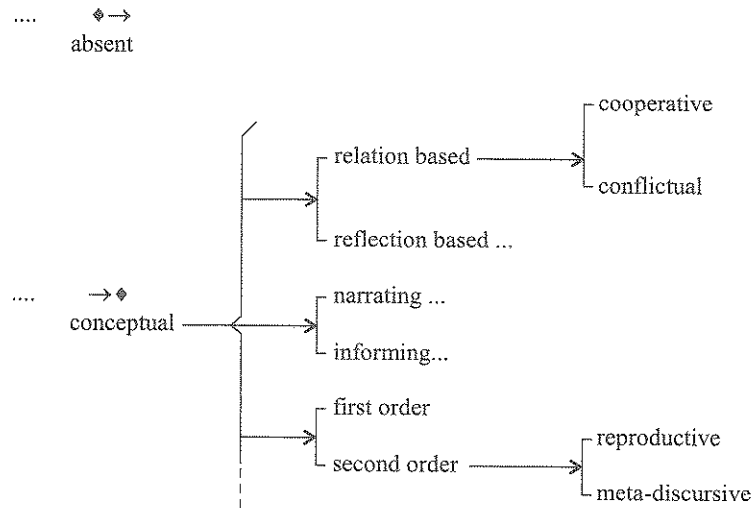


Figure 2c. Secondary systems of conceptual verbal action

[conceptual]: it is a sub-category of this kind of verbal action that possesses the potential of being reflexive in character. This presents a systemic choice: a [constitutive:conceptual] verbal action may be a [first order] verbal action or a [second order] one. The entry condition for this system is the feature [conceptual]. To indicate what these choices refer to let me use as example the simple case of a nursery tale, which realises the selection expression (see Figure 2c): [...conceptual:narrating:first order ...]. In other words, the activity described by the SE itself produces an instance of a narrative text type, say, a nursery tale. This is the [first order] activity of [narrating]. But once this verbal action has been accomplished, then by definition there exists a semiotic artefact, viz., a nursery tale, and this can itself become the relevant object in some other verbal action. This latter verbal action, though still [conceptual] in character, will differ from the [first order] action of narrating inventively (see Figure 2d and the discussion of the feature [narrating] below in Section 3.10). For example, one might simply reproduce the tale, either replicating it by, say, reading it; or one might condense it as in a summary; or one might transform it in the true sense of the word, by changing its form: for example, the tale of Snow White might become a 'little' stage play. These reproductive actions have the feature [second order] conceptual verbal action: they are [second order] in that for their own

conduct, they depend on the existence of a text produced by the first order activity; this somewhat parasitic relation to the discursive product of the first order activity is a necessary condition for the second order activity to come about. But [second order] verbal action is not restricted to being reproductive in the sense just described. It may, in fact, be meta-discursive, examples of which would be analyses, critiques, history of that text type and so on, the variety that is reflexive in character. This implies that the feature [second order] functions as the entry condition to a systemic choice between the features [reproductive] v [meta-discursive]. Figure 2c incorporates these systems.

3.10 Narrating and informing: secondary systems

In Section 3.8 I presented a very brief discussion of the contrasting features [informing] v. [narrating] whose entry condition is the feature [conceptual] (see Figure 2c). I would make a claim here: between them these two features identify the majority of constitutive contexts that are not action based, and as such their more delicate description in terms of secondary systems is crucial to an understanding of the nature of verbal action in the make up of the field of discourse. The claim must, unfortunately, remain speculative since any attempt to substantiate it by discussion and/or exemplification will go far beyond a paper of this scope. At this point, I present, purely by way of a brief example, certain systems of choices whose entry condition is [narrating].⁷⁸ The systems are presented in Figure 2d below.

The verbal action [narrating] offers a systemic choice between two rather transparently labelled features called [inventing] and [recounting]; [inventing] is verbal action creating an "as-if" universe, while [recounting] is verbal action capturing experienced events as refracted from the interactants' point of view. The option [inventing] in turn gives access to a choice between [simple] or [complex].⁷⁹ The highly tentative more delicate 'systems' of [tale], [fable] etc which depend on [simple] and those of [story], [novella] etc which entry condition is [complex] are more in the nature of an indication of where the systemic paths might take us in a development such as this. What I am suggesting is that there are verbal actions such as those of "storying", "fabling" etc which are *on par* with say "playing cricket" or with "drilling" the soldiers. In the latter cases, language is incidental: the physical activity is the main thing. In the former cases, anything physical is incidental: verbal activity is the main thing.

With these considerations in mind, turn now to [recounting] which acts as

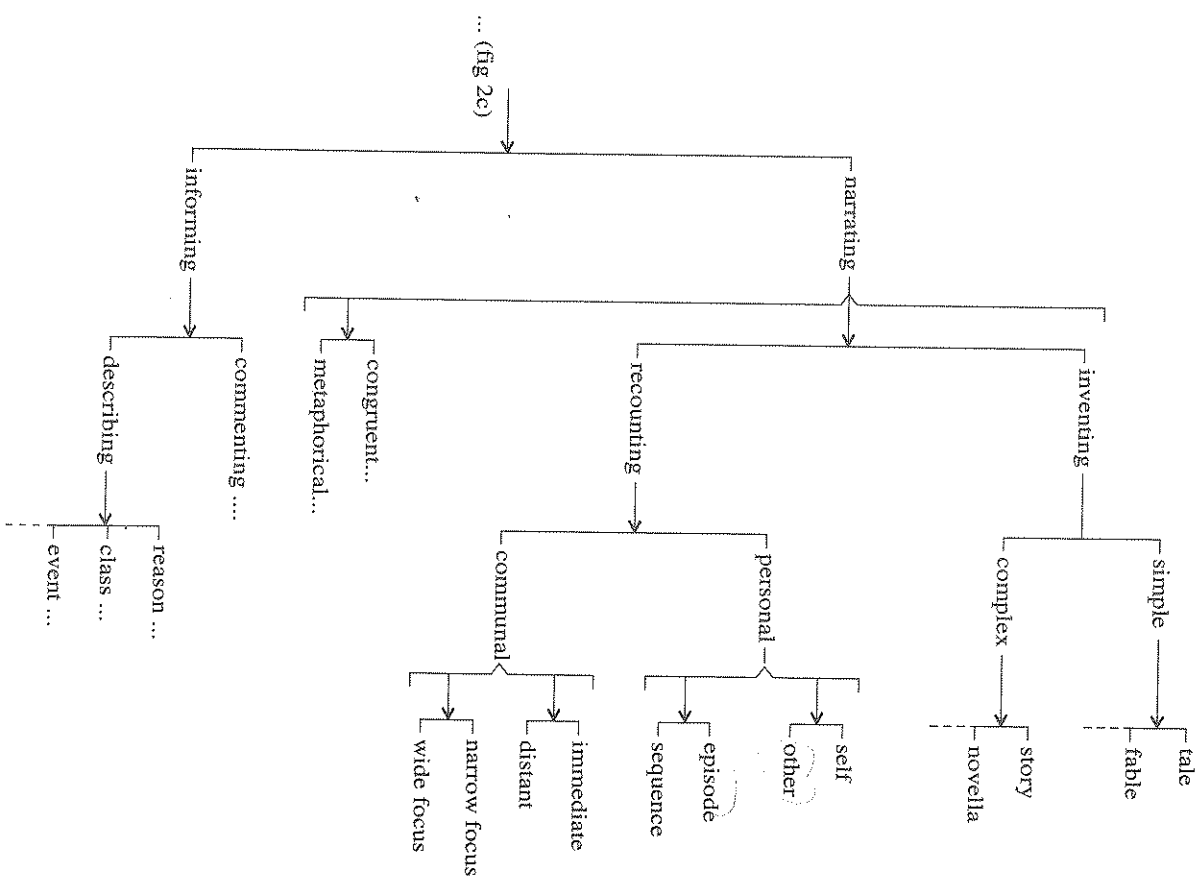


Figure 2d. Secondary systems of narrating and informing verbal action

the entry condition to a choice between [*personal*] v. [*communal*]: the reconstrual of the already experienced events activated by these field features may pertain respectively either to some specific person (cf the feature [*personal*]) or to a (section of the) community as a whole (cf the feature [*communal*]). This is at least one vector of distinction between (auto-)biography and (some aspect of) history. Each of the features [*personal*] and [*communal*] in turn gives access to two simultaneous systems as shown in Figure 2d. Since the concepts are really quite simple, to save space, I will simply present a selection expression, informally describing its realising text type with some examples:

1. [...*recounting:personal:self:episode*]
Recount of one memorable event in the life of one person: the so-called "first person narrative" e.g. the "narrative of personal experience" recorded by Labov.
2. [...*recounting:personal:self:sequence*]
An autobiography. Typically the speaker recounting several memorable (chrono)logically related events in his/her life, often centring around a specific domain of experience e.g. The Spy Catcher.
3. [...*recounting:personal:other:episode*]
A recount of one memorable event, an episode in the life of some person other than the speaker: the so-called "third person narrative".
4. [...*recounting:personal:other:sequence*]
Typically a recount of several memorable (chrono-)logically related events in someone else's life: thus a "third person narrative", i.e., a biography, e.g. James Gleick's *Genius: Richard Feynman and Modern Physics*.
5. [...*recounting:communal:immediate:narrow focus*]
a news "story", e.g. the recent shooting of school children in Arkansas.
6. [...*recounting:communal:immediate:wide focus*]
eg. a feature on a news "story" of communal significance presented as related to other communal issues, e.g. a feature on gun laws, violence in community and/or break down of "law and order", the power of the gun lobby linked to the recent shooting incidents at Arkansas, etc.
7. [...*recounting:communal:distant:narrow focus*]
a recount of some historical "event" e.g. the history of the 30s depression, where some segment(s) of communal past during a certain period are captured.
8. [...*recounting:communal:distant:wide focus*]
the history of a community e.g. Manning Clark's *History of Australia*.

Although at first glance it seems somewhat strange to treat [narrating] and [informing] as terms in a system dependent on [conceptual] verbal action, these two features belong to the same family. They also seem to bear a rather intriguing relation to each other. For example, like a tale or a short story, the early myths too realise the feature [narrating]; but it seems that these myths have a specific kind of function in human history: they as it were "explain" and construe the cosmology for some (section of a) community, though they do it quite differently from the way that a modern physics text realising the feature [informing] might explain the universe from the perspective of science today. Nor has this close relation entirely disappeared. It is present, though vestigiously, in the behaviour of mothers who in trying to explain some principle to their young children, are just as likely to use a narrative of some kind as they are to offer well argued information. It may be that behind the distinction between [narrating] and [informing] there is the implied diachronic development of ways of "knowledging" — something that is central to the evolution of human cultures. I suggest that it might be useful to recognise a system with the terms [congruent] v. [metaphorical] with the feature [narrating] as the entry point; thus the system would be simultaneous with the system of [inventing] v. [recounting] as shown in Figure 2d.

The selection of the feature [informing] verbal action activates reference to current time, i.e., it construes states of affairs that are current. Examples of text types that realise this feature are commentaries, observations, generalisations, explanations, definitions, descriptions and so on. As these examples suggest the currency of the states of affairs is variable. Thus on the one hand the [informing] verbal action may construe states of affairs that are as it were located within the spatio-temporal confines of the on-going interaction e.g. telling someone what is happening here and now. Let me refer to this kind of [informing] as [commenting]. One rather established variety of register that realises this feature is in fact known as commentary, where the speaker comments on some on-going sport. Nearer our everyday experience is someone in the middle of a conversation suddenly pointing out to something that is going on. So the currency of the states of affairs in [informing:commenting] is fairly constrained: they belong to the speaker's here and now.⁸⁰ On the other hand the [informing] verbal action may construe states of affairs whose currency goes beyond the here and now of speaking. For want of a better term, I will refer to [informing] verbal action with this feature as [describing]. It is a feature that may be realised by such texts as describe, say, the circulation of blood, the hydrological cycle,

the activity of atoms, the structure of society, the relations of supply and demand, the laws governing the transfer of property, the nature of language and so on. In informal terms, what we have in such text types is a description of what is a usual state of affairs: the currency of the event at the time of speaking is implicit in the so-called time-less or universal statements. In terms of the distinction being made here, various kinds of classifying verbal action such as explaining (= describing reason) defining (= describing class criteria), generalising (= describing habitual/universal events), etc would be viewed as some kind of 'description', even though in common parlance the word 'description' is much more restricted in its meaning. What is at issue, however, is not the label but the distinctions being made here: one implication is that at a certain degree of delicacy texts such as the exposition of hydrological cycle and those which classify and/or define are being seen as belonging to a category that differs from those which comment on the on-going states of affairs. The tentative nature of these hypotheses is shown by open systems indicated by the presence of dots in the outline of the system.

3.11 *The sphere of action: one aspect of the cultural status of an activity*

Let me return briefly to the set of actions listed in Table 11 as instances of the various selection expressions from the system as shown in Figure 2b. One respect in which the examples of some of these SES differ systematically from those of the others has to do with the sphere of a community's social life in which the actions are located: the actions might be *quotidian*, i.e. they might pertain to everyday, mundane living or they might be *specialised*, which would pertain to areas of life that are rather exotic and remote from unselfconscious everyday living. As such they would typically be carried out not by just anyone in the community, but by especially designated members. As some actions appear more specialised than others, we are in fact talking about a continuum rather than a binary division. For example, Table 11 shows that selection expression 5 might be instantiated by instructions to mend a torn sweater, to repair a punctured bike, or to service a malfunctioning computer printer. Of these the last is the most specialised, the repair of a punctured bike is, by comparison, less so, and mending a sweater even less so. Certainly, someone capable of servicing a malfunctioning printer would, in our community, be expected to have undergone some training or apprenticeship which is designed to bring about some understanding of how the printer is put together and how its various parts

function, this is not true of repairing a bike puncture, which requires no extensive training or apprenticeship and so far as mending a torn sweater is concerned, like many of the chores silently set aside as “woman’s work” it is seen as a job that calls for no expertise because anyone can do it! It is instructive to compare here the mending of clothes as part of a “woman’s work” with the mending of clothes performed by a trained “accredited” tailor: in talking of sphere, we are talking also of communal perceptions of the value of certain categories of action. The more specialised the action, the higher the “capital” in Bourdieu’s (1991) term and the greater the profit to the actants; by contrast, the more quotidian the action, the further removed it is from locations of social power; and by the same token, the less privileged or privileging (Bernstein 1990) any participation in it will be. It is my understanding that when constitutive verbal action is co-selected with quotidian sphere, the speaking it activates is in terms of Bernstein (1990, 1996) *horizontal*: such discourses, according to Bernstein (mimeo), tend to be context-specific and segmentally organised. From this point of view *local pedagogic discourse* is a kind of horizontal discourse. By contrast, when the verbal action is constitutive and the sphere is specialised, this activates the type of discourse that Bernstein (ibid.) would refer to as *vertical*: according to Bernstein such discourses are hierarchically organised with an “explicit systematically principled structure”. Bernstein’s *official pedagogic discourse* is a variety of vertical discourse. Inherent in these systemic distinctions is a remarkable power for indicating the crucial realisation choices in the texts, which for lack of space cannot be described here; but it is important to add that vertical discourses, with their systematically principled structures, are far less hospitable to the occurrence of co-location or integration.

It appears then that the description of field can achieve a greater depth if the contrasting choices of the sphere of action are included in the system network. Its inclusion into the field, just like that of material and verbal action systems, adds to our understanding of “discourse dynamics” by identifying those attributes of the field which open it to co-location and/or integration. At the same time, the system of sphere throws some light on an element of typical communal evaluation — or, to be more precise, it makes visible at least one basis of evaluation — the more specialised the activity, the higher its value — that links the evaluation of action unmistakably to issues of power and control. Naturally the systemic description simply says “this is how it is”, without in the least implying a moral stance that “this is how it should be”. Figure 2e takes us back to the primary systems represented in Figure 2a in order to incorporate the system of SPHERE as

a third system simultaneous with the systems of MATERIAL and VERBAL ACTION. The terms of this third system are [quotidian] v [specialised].

If I am right about the evaluation of an activity, then it follows that in general the more specialised the activity the greater the sense of authority it will bestow. Without doubt, various communal institutions collaborate in the performance of specialised activities: what this means is that around specialised activities there grow not only inter-textually related discursive corpora but also functionally inter-related institutions and personnel whose manifestation is at once material and semiotic. For example around the specialised activity of “trying a case in court” we have a network of resources the complexity of which is quite staggering. Consider simply the body of discourses which cumulatively support such activities: the body of law including legislation and precedents, the precedents, the lawyer-client case preparation, the prosecution of the case, its defence rebuttal, witness interrogation, cross interrogation, the briefing of the jury, the jury’s deliberation, the jury’s decision, the sentence.⁸¹ And attached to each of the immediate relatives of the discourse of legal trial are physical locations for the enactment of the process; these are often accompanied by specific designs for space management, spatial disposition of personnel, their clothing and control on forms of behaviour, etc etc. This multimodal coding, which gives a social process a relatively “ritualised” character, is what I identified as the defining characteristic of institutionalised activities and relations (Hasan 1980). The more specialised an activity, the more it will tend to be institutional(ised), in the sense in which I am using the terms. But it is worth noting that even quotidian activities differ in how far they are, as it were, shored up by communal conventions and institutions. It seems for example that one is free to wear whatever one likes wherever one likes “within reason”, but the very meaning of the expression “within reason” is spelt out by communal institutions: note, for example, how we have had to legally nominate “nude beaches”. What I would suggest is that certain quotidian activities are more institutional than others: consider from this perspective the social activities associated with giving birth (e.g. baptism in Christian communities; *aqiqa* amongst Muslims, and so on) dying, eating with others, marrying, exchanging goods and services, and so on. This suggests that the feature [quotidian] acts as a genuine entry condition for a more delicate systemic choice between [institutional] v. [individualised]. This is shown in Figure 2e. Note also the default relation that obtains between the feature [specialised] and [institutional]: as indicated by the markings *if* the feature [specialised] is selected, *then* the feature [institutional] will also be present by default.

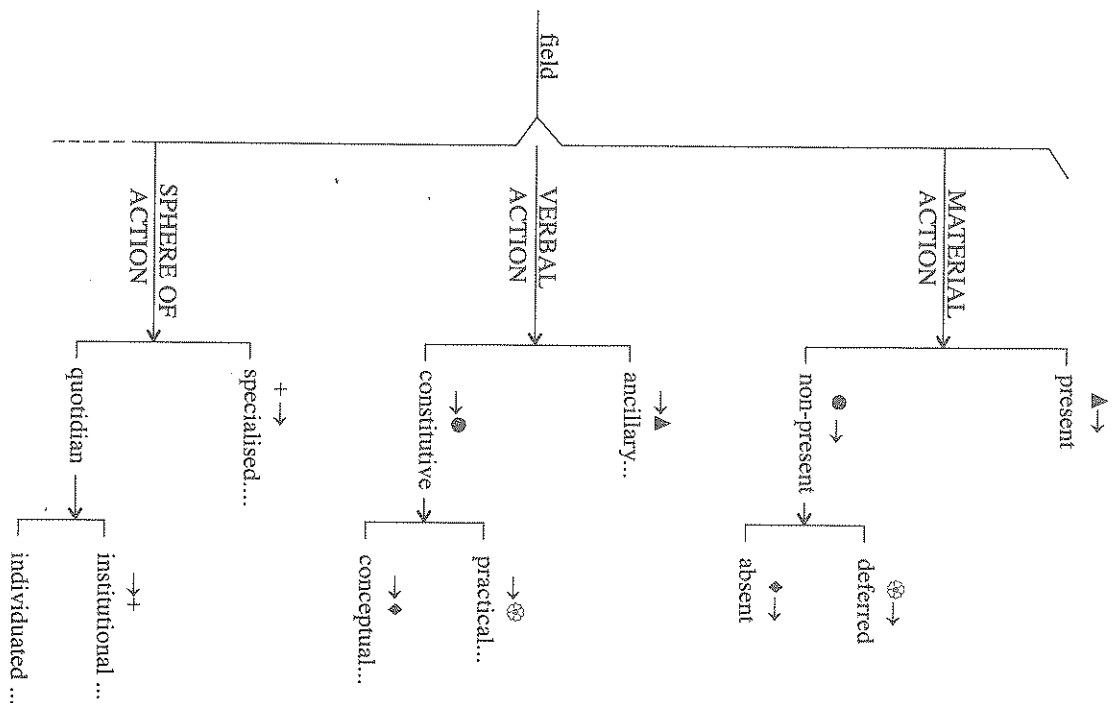


Figure 2e. Primary system of sphere of action

Since the three systems — material action, verbal action and sphere — are simultaneous, the choices in the system of sphere just discussed are applicable to the (permitted conjunctions of) material and verbal action (see tables 10 and 11). Clearly the number of SES yielded by the network represented fragment by fragment in 2a-e is already too large to discuss or exemplify even though the description of field is at a fairly low level of delicacy. However, it is perhaps obvious that the more delicate identification of the 'domain of signification' will be arrived at by consideration of the conjunction of choices from the system of verbal action and of sphere. It might be easier to determine the considerations that would apply in a more delicate description of cultural domains such as those of jurisprudence, religion, pedagogy, aesthetics, commerce, politics etc by relating them to the features of the systems of sphere and verbal action. For example, the existence of some domains, such as jurisprudence appears to be at the conjunction of [specialised] and [conceptual:reflection based; informing], whereas others such as pedagogic action are not limited to just the [specialised] sphere. The realisations of actions from the domain of religion as well as pedagogy are very likely to differ depending on whether the sphere is [quotidian] or [specialised]. The development of an analysis of the field of discourse along these lines might very well be a major step in producing a language based description of social actions and institutions.

Contexts — and by the same token fields — can differ from each other in a variety of ways because there are many parameters for differentiation and many differentiating features per parameter the differential selection of which produces an infinity of contexts. However, not all differentiating features of a context are equally relevant to and/or describable by the tools of linguistics: the attributes that are describable linguistically and relevant to a language based theory of context are those which activate linguistic meaning and wording in text types. From this point of view the choices in the system of sphere are as significant as those of material and verbal action. For example, to say that activities with the feature [institutional] tend to have a more ritualised design is to say that associated with them is a fairly clearly defined design, with a relatively determinate sense of a beginning, a middle and an end, e.g., a court trial of a case. And, as I have suggested elsewhere (Hasan 1980), this makes it relatively more problematic and therefore considerably rarer to find such contexts/texts supplanted, or co-located with parallel texts.⁸² Integration certainly occurs but what sort of speaking can be integrated with what class of institutional activity is fairly well narrowed down. For example, when a classroom lesson is

being presented, a pupil has just so much leeway and no more for her speaking to be seen as facilitative: the pupil's speaking must always link itself to some aspect of the lesson, otherwise it turns into disruption. But even fields with the feature [quotidian] are not free to accept 'genre combination' just anywhere, anyhow: for example, Cloran's (1982) empirical research has shown that an answer to a question in everyday talk can be just so detailed and no more; otherwise it tends to be seen as an effort at supplanting — teaching rather than telling: 'What is this? A lecture or a conversation?' as one of the outraged subjects in her experiment asked!

3.12 Contextual iteration: material situational setting and contextual multiplicity

In speaking with reference to context in real life situations, we manage the calibration of material and verbal action without a moment's thought, but the constraints and freedoms enjoyed by the terms related by default in the system network in Figure 2a are in fact highly complex. Let us return briefly to Figure 2a and to Table 10 which presents the selection expressions. My purpose in doing this is to spell out one outcome of the workings of default dependencies as displayed in Figure 2a. The claim that *if* there is [ancillary] verbal action, *then* material action *must* be [present] (see entry 1: Table 10) places a constraint on the feature [ancillary] verbal action: [ancillary] may not occur except with [present]. This, however, leaves [present] material action free to combine with [constitutive] verbal action. At the same time, Figure 2a claims that *if* material action is [non-present] *then* verbal action *must* be [constitutive], which places a constraint on the feature [non-present] material action, not on [constitutive]. Similarly with the next step in delicacy, the default pairing constrains the features [deferred] and [absent], not [practical] or [conceptual], which are the more delicate categories of [constitutive] action (see Figure 2a). A moment's thought will reveal that this creates a paradox: how can material action [present] be relevant to a field with [constitutive] verbal action? Unlike [ancillary] verbal action, the genesis of [constitutive] verbal action is not in material action [present]: in fact material action is irrelevant to the recognition of any activity characterised as [constitutive], and it is highly likely that so far as that particular activity is concerned material action is [absent] (for example in inventing a nursery tale).

Could we not reverse the default relation, by claiming that if the verbal action is [constitutive], then material action must be [non-present]? This would

remove the paradox at the stroke of a pen by restricting the feature [constitutive] and its more delicate categories, suggesting that the co-selection of [constitutive:practical/conceptual] verbal action and [present] material action is unlikely. This is fine so long as it is taken for granted that a field with the option [constitutive] is impervious to shifts, changes etc., which is of course not the case. So the solution is problematic in that the potential of impingement between, say, John's material action of driving and his constitutive verbal action of discussing road rage with his friend can no longer be accounted for with this alternative framework. In other words, this alternative description on the one hand is observationally inadequate — for such "conjunctions" are fairly common — and on the other hand, we block the possibility of revealing those attributes of a field that leave it open to co-location and/or integration. In the discussion of the various systems in field, I have informally identified three profiles of field⁸⁵ which make it relatively more susceptible to co-location and/or integration — (i) verbal action [ancillary]; material action [present] by default and ancillary verbal action intermittent; (ii) verbal [constitutive]; material [present], where material action is not germane to the conduct of the verbal action itself; and (iii) sphere [individuated]. The probability of co-location and/or integration in the presence of these field attributes is considerably higher. This does not however mean that all other categories of field are absolutely *prevented* from such shifts and changes. Whether at a particular moment in its history a field is independent or already displays integration, the possibility of iterative choice cannot be said to be completely restricted to the three "high risk" areas identified above.

Keeping these considerations in mind, I now propose a fourth system simultaneous with the systems of MATERIAL ACTION, VERBAL ACTION and SPHERE (see Figure 2f). I will refer to this fourth system as the system of ITERATION. Like systems of iteration elsewhere (e.g. taxis or tense at the level of lexico-grammar), the terms of the system are [stop#] v. [go]. The selection of the former term is realisationally related to the closure of further field choices: it thus announces the end-state. The selection of the term [go] enables re-entry into the three simultaneous systems of field discussed above. Further, at this point simultaneous with the re-entry into the three main systems of field, certain other choices become available but only to the field that is being newly instigated by the choice of [go]: in other words the term [go] is the entry condition for re-entry into the field system and also to another system. To facilitate the discussion of the latter, let me refer to the first field construct as an α -field, and to the subsequent ones re-entered with the choice of [go] as a β -field. The terms α and

β are used purely by reference to the iterative system — whatever field has the choice [go] is a also β -field without any necessary implication that it is subordinate to the co-occurring fields.

As the discussion of segments (ii, iv, and vi etc.) from example C has already implied, the selection of a β -field offers a systemic choice, two of which — co-location and integration — have already been discussed in some detail in Section 2.3. I suggest that in fact three options are available to the newly instigated field at the point [go]: it may be *independent*, or *aligned*, or *integrated*. Since the two outer terms are already familiar, let me say a brief word about these before turning to the middle feature [aligned]. To begin with the feature [independent]: we have already encountered two instances of field with this feature — first, segment (vi) of example C (plan for visit to Chatswood) which construes a field that is [independent] *vis a vis* the field construed by the complex text (a friendly and relaxed management of providing lunch); and, second, the imaginary case of John interrupting his conversation with a friend to receive a recorded delivery parcel; here too the two activities are independent of each other as in the first example. The difference is that the first is largely material, while the second is purely verbal. In both cases, the co-located fields simply occur within the time frame relevant to one interaction⁸⁴ but the design of neither is relevant to the conduct of the design of the other. This is what it means to say that they are [independent] of each other and that their only relation to each other is entirely physical. Their co-location is adventitious, and even if they impinged on each other — which they well might do by creating distractions of one kind or another — this would be a matter of chance: there is no basis of a functional relation between them. The choice of the feature [independent] means that the text activated by that β -field would not enter into the structure of another one as its sub-text, and all things being equal it would itself be a simple text.

In contrast with the above situation, a β -field may itself become ‘amalgamated’ into some already on-going field: as demonstrated by the sub-texts in example C. This is what happens when the option [integrated] is taken (for discussion, see Section 2.3). Clearly, the physical fact of co-location within the same interaction applies here too, but when the β -field has the feature [integrated], this means a relation to the α -field, the basis of which is not physical but discourse functional. What this means is that such a β -field contributes to the conduct of the design of the α -field, the two together activating a complex text, as with example C. The feature [integrated] itself acts as the entry condition for a choice between [*dependent*] or [*collaborative*], terms which have been discussed

informally in Section 2.3. In example C, the β -field construed by sub-text1 had the feature [... integrated:dependent] while the β -fields construed by the other sub-texts would be described as [... integrated:collaborative]. In integration, the verbal action in the α -field may be [ancillary] or [constitutive]. In example C, it was [ancillary]. An imaginary example of an α -field with [constitutive] verbal action is that of a teacher giving a presentation lesson. Imagine that during the course of this lesson, she presents some visuals she considers relevant to the lesson: in that case, she may engage in the material action of adjusting the display screen, switching on the overhead projector and checking with her pupils if the display is clearly visible to all, and so on. This will constitute a β -field with material action [present] and verbal action [ancillary]. Like the field of sub-text1 in example C, this β -field too would be [dependent], its realising text would function as a facilitative sub-text to the primary text of the lesson, while the α -field itself would be [constitutive].

We come now to the middle feature [aligned]. The placement of this feature as the middle term of the system is iconic, for it appears that the feature shares some qualities with the feature [independent] and others with the feature [integrated]; while there are other qualities which it shares with neither. As in the case of [independent] field, here too the actual conduct of one field is not affected by the conduct of the other. On the other hand, just as in the case of [integrated] β -field, so here too there seems to exist an intrinsic connection between the two that is over and above the simple fact of co-location. As an example, take the activity of broadcasting cricket commentary in its relation to the cricket game. I will refer to the game and the commentary as α - and β -field, respectively. Here the α -field has a material action [present], namely that of playing a cricket game, accompanied most probably by its own [ancillary] verbal action which is realised by intermittent cries such as ‘Out!’ ‘How’s that?’ etc. The features of the β -field are [constitutive:conceptual:informing:commenting] verbal action of broadcasting a cricket commentary on a game that is in progress; needless to say that the two activities — the commentary and the game — run side by side just as co-located [independent] fields might do, but this co-location of the commentary and the game is actuated by a necessity that is missing from pure co-location of independent fields: the cricket game is, in fact, the *raison d’être* of the commentary to the extent that every cricket commentary broadcast presupposes a cricket game in progress, though the reverse is not true. So the element of pure chance that underlies the feature [independent] is absent; the commentary is rooted in the game. The on-going cricket game becomes a

reference point so far as the β -field of commentary is concerned, which treats the game as an object⁸⁵ to which it must (selectively) refer. So the ongoing cricket game — the play, the players, and what the players do and what they say — turns into “relevant objects and activities” to be referred to by the β -field of commentary. We recognise this situation informally by saying that the commentary is *about* the game in progress: the game being played is the “topic” of the commentary. This is precisely why it seems appropriate to say that the β -field of commentary is [aligned] to the α -field of the cricket game: the two are logically associated. In this respect the relations of the [aligned] α - and β -fields appear to resemble somewhat those of the [integrated] β -field to the primary α -field: the game is logically relevant to the commentary; the [integrated] sub-text is functionally relevant to the primary text. But this is where the resemblance stops: unlike the [integrated] field it appears to have no bearing upon the structure potential of commentaries: the design of one turns out not to be relevant to the conduct of the design of the other, a situation that is more like the co-located [independent] field than the [integrated] ones. The structure of commentaries displays a number of preoccupations: a commentary moves between the recall and evaluation of other games, the evaluation of various players present and past, the expectations of the outcome of this play, what other games of similar salience are being played where, and what’s going on in the game in progress on the field; in short, the complex movements of the commentary range not only over the game but also over the game’s cultural domain. And yet the game has nothing much to do with this complexity, the sources of which lie elsewhere: so far as the design of the commentary is concerned the game scarcely plays any role in its shaping. And despite the multiplicity of the concerns the commentator manages in his discourse, technically speaking, the commentary would be a simple text,⁸⁶ not a complex one; this is in contrast with those texts whose field has the feature [integrated]. So we have an interesting situation: the game must be there — an on-going material action — but what happens in the game — what the players do in the field — is relevant to the commentary only as the appearance of an entity or event is relevant to a text that describes it. Conversely, what the commentator does in his commentary matters not a jot to the conduct of the game: the game is impervious to the commentary. The two activities are neither [independent] nor [integrated]: they are simply [aligned], or more precisely, a commentary is logically [aligned] to a game; no one has yet presented a commentary either in anticipation or in retrospect! The game has to be co-located in the same physical environment as the commentary. This brings

us to an additional characteristic of [aligned] fields: unlike the other two options, the fields with the feature [aligned] are not part of the same “interaction”. They are in fact two parallel interactions, each with its own separate activity, its own interactants, its own modes of contact, and yet the existence of one, i.e., of the commentary, unilaterally presupposes the existence of the other, i.e., the game. In this respect too the feature [aligned] differs from the other two in the system.

Figure 2f presents these features of the system of iteration along with the other three simultaneous systems with their primary terms.

The above discussion of the feature [aligned] might bring to mind another feature discussed earlier (see Section 3.8), viz., [second order] as at first glance the two features might seem to describe the same phenomenon. I have argued above that with the feature [aligned], the two fields are linked by a presupposition: to say that a particular activity (of a small sub-class) has occurred is to say that concurrent with it must have been another specific activity, though the two

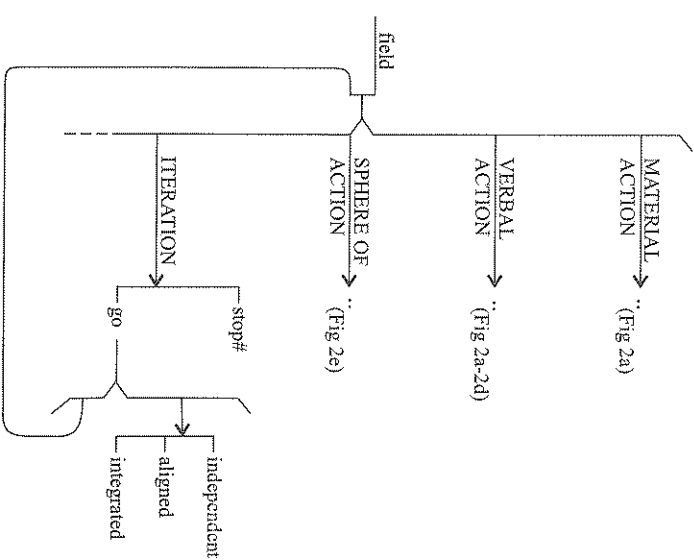


Figure 2f. Primary systems of iteration in action

are not necessarily part of the same interaction. Further, one field in this relation is, as it were, objectified, in the sense that what is said or done in that field becomes (part of) the potential domain of reference for the other field. It might appear at first glance that the above characterisation fits also those activities which have the feature [second order]: activities with this feature too presuppose another activity. Thus the [second order] activity of reading a nursery tale to a child presuppose someone somewhere undertook the activity of inventing that tale, of narrating inventively, and the trace of that activity is the nursery tale being reproduced. There are, however, some important differences between the feature [aligned] and [second order]. First, as the network in Figure 2f claims the feature [aligned] can only occur in the environment of field re-entry, which implies that the logically related activities must occur concurrently (for the most part) as the game and its commentary do. By contrast, with the feature [second order] there is no such constraint. For example, the activity of, say, creating a nursery tale will typically have occurred in the past before the activity of reading it is undertaken. Although the possibility of the co-location of two activities does need to be granted (if only to account for such activities as "repeating" after the teacher!), it is not a requirement the way that it is with the feature [aligned]. Further, the [second order] activity act without the product of some activity which functions as the/a relevant object for the [second order] field. Moreover, crucially, the class of the product is restricted: it must belong to the specific class *semiotic verbal product*. A [second order] activity either *re-discourses* an already existing discourse (cf the feature [reproduction]) or it discourses *on* an already existing discourse (cf the feature [meta-discursive]). This has an implication: both the [second order] activity and the activity whose product it focuses on must have the feature [constitutive] verbal action, because it is only the latter that is capable of producing a semiotic verbal artefact and it is only a [constitutive] activity that is capable of either "re-working it" or of "working on it"; these requirements are not applicable to the feature [aligned].

3.13 Using the field network: some examples

Incomplete as they are, the systems of field choices discussed in this section are brought together in Figure 3. I will close the discussion with a few examples of activity types and their description in terms of the features networked in the system presented in Figure 3. First, then, I return to example C, particularly to the main and the first two integrated fields realised by sub-texts1-2.

1: example C: describing field integration

α -field: primary text
material action [present]; verbal action [ancillary]; sphere [quotidian: individuated]

β -field: sub-text1

[go:integrated:dependent]; material action [present]; verbal action [ancillary]; sphere [quotidian:individuated]

β -field: sub-text2

[go:integrated:collaborative]; material action [present]; verbal action [constitutive: conceptual: relation based; informing: describing; first order]; sphere [quotidian:individuated];

The feature [integrated] activates the "complexification" of the primary text. Note that details of the field such as care giving: providing lunch and negotiating menu for lunch etc (see Table 4) are not included in the above description since the network in Figure 3 was not developed far enough in delicacy to reach this point. However, there is no reason to doubt that such systems, which in a manner of speaking are much closer to the linguistic coal-face, can be built into the network without much problem. But until the description is developed to this degree of delicacy, it is neither possible to make principled realisational statements in terms of the semantic categories at risk, nor is it possible to specify the structure potential. Martin (1992, Chapter 7) presents many system networks which appear to me to relate to the delicate end of field specification without building in any primary systemic choices as are represented in Figure 3.

2: example C: describing parallel fields

α -field: complex text

(as shown in example 1 above)

β -field: independent text

[go:independent]; material action [present]; verbal action [constitutive: conceptual: practical: plan]; sphere [quotidian: individuated]

The choice of the feature [independent] in a field implies that the text it activates would be simply co-located with the other(s) in the same interaction.

3: broadcasting cricket commentary

α -field: playing cricket

material action [present]; verbal action [ancillary]; sphere [specialised]

β-field: cricket commentary

[go:aligned]; material action [present]; verbal action [constitutive: conceptual: reflection based; informing: commenting; first order]; sphere [specialised]

The choice of the feature [aligned] in a field implies that the activity as a whole is relevant to the other co-located field as a (partial) specifier of its domain of signification; however each activated text is simple (unless other iterative choices are made).

4: minute taking at a meeting

α-field: a meeting

material action [absent]; verbal action [constitutive:conceptual:reflection based;informing;first order]; sphere [specialised]

β-field: taking down the minutes

[go:aligned]; material action [absent]; verbal [constitutive:conceptual: reflection based; informing; second order: reproducing]; sphere [specialised]

Taking down the minutes of a meeting is something like broadcasting a cricket commentary: both presuppose another ongoing activity: both have the feature [aligned]. However, with minute taking, the presupposed activity — the process of the meeting — is verbally constituted, whereas the commentary as we saw above presupposes an activity which is characterised by the presence of material action and ancillary verbal action. Note also that whereas broadcasting a commentary is described in example 3 as a [first order] activity, the activity of minute taking is [second order: reproducing]. Informally speaking, what the analysis claims is that (i) the activity of minute taking and the process of the meeting co-occur (feature [aligned]); (ii) what the minutes will talk about reconstructs (at least partially) what was going on at the meeting, not just what they said but what actions the sayings constituted e.g. proposing a motion, seconding it and voting etc (feature [aligned]); (iii) the minutes must attend to what is being produced verbally by the meeting e.g. decisions, objection, suggestions (ignoring such material actions as those of sneezing, fidgeting, laughing ... etc. (feature [second order])); (iv) the minute must schematically reproduces (some part of) the verbal product of the meeting (feature [reproductive]). The features [aligned] and [second order: reproduction] will most probably prove useful for the description of other such activities e.g. simultaneous translation, taking down dictation, prompting actors during a performance, repeating after the teacher, and (with a slight stretch of imagination) language lab practice and so on. In a rather important sense, much of what goes on in schools by way of education is

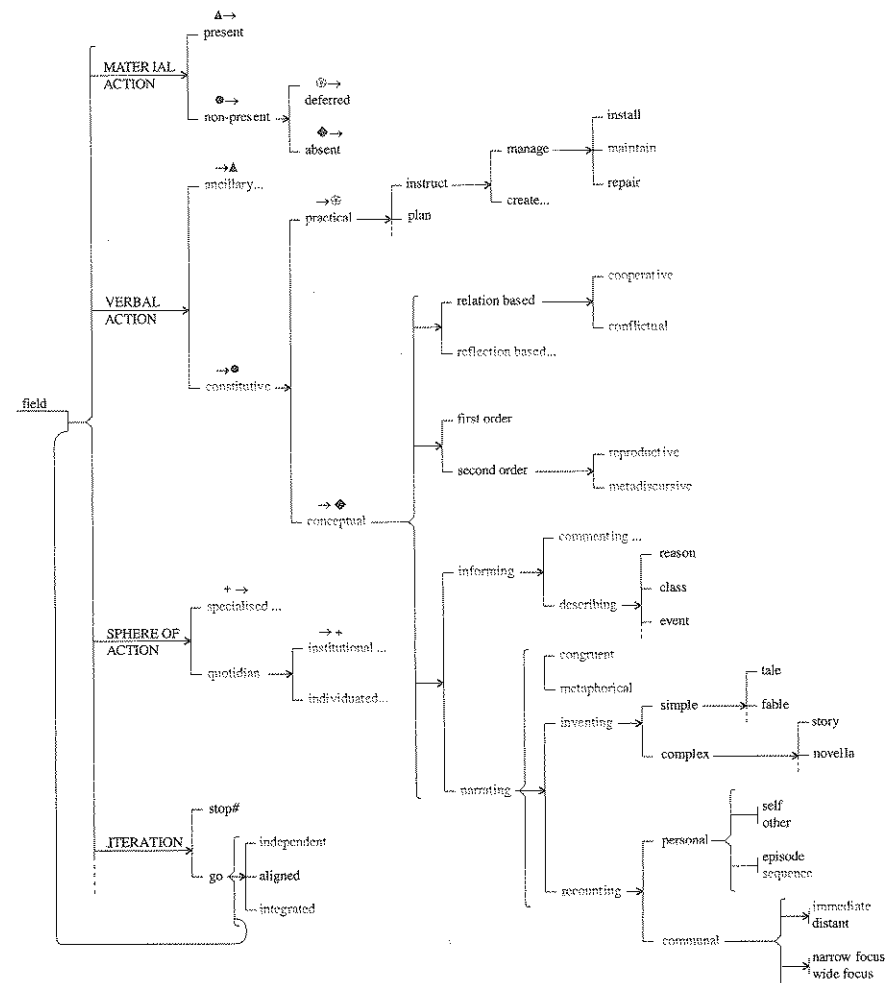


Figure 3. Field of discourse: some systemic choices in a language based conception of social activity

[second order: reproduction] activity: this is partly what it means to say that all educational knowledge is re-contextualised (cf Bernstein 1990, 1996). The catch is, of course, that reproduction is never equal to replication; rather it is a selective reorganisation of information that has already been produced by

someone somewhere. The problem of education is not that knowledge is re-contextualised — in fact, the very condition of human social existence is that discourses must move around, being discourses, re-discourses and meta-discourses: rather, as Bernstein has suggested, the problem so far as education is concerned is who controls the re-contextualising function and what principles do they use for this process.

4. Concluding remarks

Any attempt to account for the categories of the context of situation along the lines adopted here is an attempt to account for a language based theory of culturally significant action. In the context of this wide canvass, the (incomplete and somewhat rudimentary) descriptive categories represented in Figure 3 are only a small beginning. The impetus to re-think contextual description came from a specific problem: how to describe context so as to provide a principled basis for the description of dynamic moves which might occur during the process of speaking. Does the present approach appear promising from this limited perspective? On the whole I am inclined to think that it does. It differentiates casual occurrence of texts from those co-occurrences which have a functional significance (cf features [integrated] and [aligned]). On the basis of the possible conjunctions of the features of the primary systems in Figure 3, it is possible also to identify some of the environments where dynamic moves are at higher risk. And on the way to doing these things, the description enables us also to theorise at least some aspects of inter-textuality (cf the features [aligned] and [second order]). It opens up the possibility of describing educational registers (or genres, if you prefer) in a way that allows a better perspective on their social location (cf the features of the system of sphere; [reflection based], [informing] [first order] [second order] etc). To my mind, the description has taken a significant step forward in theorising the dynamics of discourse in culture.

A system network designed along these lines could very well be shown to be realisationally related to what Cloran calls rhetorical units. This is significant in that from the point of view of constituency her claim is that a text may consist of one or more than one rhetorical units. Further although in her analysis Cloran has displayed tacit relations between rhetorical units which she sees as making up one text, it is only with a descriptive framework such as the one presented here that these relations can be further clarified. That a development of this kind

has been necessary for some time now is never as obvious as when one encounters casual conversation. It is quite normal for SFL scholars to elide contextual descriptions when describing conversation (see Lemke 1990; Eggins and Slade 1997), as if conversation is a freakishly random social activity which is free to occur in any cultural context. To specify the contextual choices which are realised in a conversation is definitely not an easy task, for as Martin rightly pointed out (1985) this is the environment *par excellence* for dynamic moves in speaking. It seems to me that a framework such as has been initiated here could help provide a deep analysis of conversational contexts.

The approach presented here has also exploited the dialogical perspective: we do not take it for granted that process comes ahead of product, and even if it does, this, in a semiotic environment, would be no reason for discounting the importance of that which realises (substantial part of) the process. The mark of context on text is indelible, just as the mark of text on situations in culture is not negligible. It is therefore important to examine process to see what sort of expectations it gives rise to just as it is important to examine the product to see how/why it helps in (re-)constructing its own context. The perception of the occasion of talk is an important element in shaping the speaker's meaning making acts and to this extent context may rightly be said to "determine" the initiation of discourse. The semiotic act, however, has the power to redefine the initial context, and in this sense context may be rightly said to be "determined" by speaking. My own inclination is to speak of realisational dialectic, rather than of determinations. For lack of space, I have not been able to show how the structure potential of a text type/register/genre is realisationally related to the systemic features of context: after all a text's actual structure provides an important recognition criterion for the category of register which the text instantiates, while the underlying contextual features are the defining criteria for the categories of register. The connection between a text's structure, its register and its context is logically predicted by the theory of realisation.

As step toward further development of the framework presented here, I would like to draw attention to two shortcomings of the description that I am already aware of. In the first place, although it has been possible to point out *informally* the conjunction of systemic features where the phenomena of co-location, integration and alignment are more likely to occur, despite several efforts I have not succeeded in aligning on a formal systemic representation of these generalisations. Second and equally severe is the problem implicit in the shape of the network as presented here. The system of iteration allows a free re-

entry into the systems of material action, verbal action, sphere and of course again iteration: this, in my understanding, is normal in all iterative systems. But there is a serious problem in implying that on re-entry all choices are equally possible: this is certainly not the case. If the α -field is the material action of playing cricket, the choices in the β -field are far from open; similarly if the α -field is a meeting in progress, the β -field is not likely to have the feature [...practical:manage:install ...]. The way the probabilities of various choices might be indicated appears so complex as to be daunting. I believe these are problems that have not arisen simply from a defective hypothesis on my part. But if I am right in believing this, then could it be that a system network is not the optimal means of representing hypotheses in the language based theory of social action in culture? Or do we need other formal tools to add to the tool provided by the system network?

Finally, before closing this long discussion it is important to clarify two points. First, it is very likely that the *location* of the system of iteration in figures 2f and 3 is simply an artefact of the context of this paper. Clearly when from the system of iteration, the choice [go] is made, it is very likely that re-entry will involve not only field systems but also those of tenor and mode: one would hardly expect anything else in view of the reciprocities across the three parameters of context. So for example: the interactant relations in the cricket game are quite different from those in the commentary; and the mode of minute taking is clearly different from that of the meeting. Here is another respect in which the present account is simply an opening. Secondly, and related to this: all through my focus in Section 3 was deliberately limited to field. In closing this paper I want to say quite unequivocally that the dynamic possibilities of context do not inhere in field alone: both mode and tenor are important. But if any one parameter has to be singled out as the most relevant one, it has to be that of tenor. For it is the perspectives that interactants bring to the actions they engage in which act on the probabilities of grasping the chances of making dynamic moves (see for example Williams in press; Cloran in press). But entry into this discourse will have to await another occasion.

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Notes

1. The resurgence of interest in context over the past three decades has resulted in rich literature: today there are at least logical, sociological, pragmatic, linguistic, ethnomethodological and psychological theories of context. As an aspect of the relations of culture to language, discourse on the relations of context and text takes us back to the great American masters such as Boas, Sapir, Whorf and Mead. Then there is the work of contemporary scholars such as Garfinkel, Goffman, Gumperz, and Hymes, not to mention the many scholars of today who are devoted to speech act and conversational analysis. My decision to limit the discussion just to the SFL model is imposed by the space allowed to this paper, and by my belief that SFL, as I interpret it presents the most comprehensive account of the relations of context and text. I hasten to add that the interpretation of SFL presented here is mine, and as such it may or may not be in agreement with other scholars' interpretation of the same model.
2. For a discussion of Malinowski's contribution to this line of thinking, see Hasan (1985a).
3. I interpret this as *two peaks of the contextual efficacy of language*.
4. The comment applies also to the "dynamic" approach introduced by Martin (1985, 1992). See Hasan (1995) for discussion.
5. Since the so-called dynamic approach was launched in SFL by Martin, it is fair to point out that *his* recommendation, at least in theory, was for text to be studied from both the synoptic and the dynamic perspective; in practice, however, matters were far from balanced and straightforward. (see Hasan 1995; Martin 1985, 1992).
6. For a discussion of these concepts, see Halliday (1992a, 1996); Hasan (1995, 1996a); Mathiesen (1995). The move towards a dialogical approach is foreshadowed as early as Halliday (1970, 1973, 1975).
7. The word *speaking* is used throughout this chapter as approximately synonymous with the *act of verbal semiosis*, what Halliday (1993 and elsewhere) has called *the act of meaning*. It encompasses the processes of text production, activated by any category of activity (field), any class of social relation (tenor) relayed in any variety of *phonic* or *graphic* channel. In other words, speaking does not refer to only oral-aural discourse.
8. The word context has normally been used in linguistics to refer to the context of situation but, of course, every mention of situation implicates culture: just as behind every text lies a language system so also behind every situation lies the context of culture. See Halliday, this volume, for discussion. Throughout this paper I shall use the term context with these assumptions.
9. The syllable is typically activated by some category at the level of semantically activated form; it however, cannot constitute a lexicogrammatical category *simply by virtue of its phonological patterning*. So consider the lexicogrammatical status of the vowel in the second syllable of the following patterns: /beike/, /seife/, /eibe/ (baker, safer, labour). I would suggest that instead of

9. *construing* a lexicogrammatical category, a segmental phonological pattern *signals it* — or *expresses it* — by virtue of conventional (arbitrary) association.
10. To use Halliday's distinction analogically: the grammar of a language is not a set of invariable rules and not static; but most accounts of that grammar — i.e., our grammatics — are presented as a determinate, static set of rules.
11. See footnote 10 for an indication of purely expressive relation between phonology and lexicogrammar; for an indication of a dialogical realisational relation consider the systems of information focus and of key in relation to categories at the levels of lexicogrammar and semantics.
12. This is the complete reproduction of a blurb on the back cover of Giddens (1972).
13. This example is taken from Ventola (1987 p 239–40); each dot represents 1 second of pause; the dash shows that the utterance was left incomplete; the start of overlapping utterances is identified by an asterisk and its extent is indicated by finching the relevant part of the two utterances; other transcription conventions are the same as for Example C.
14. This extract is taken from data of naturally occurring everyday talk between mothers and their 3;6–4;0 year old children, which was collected for a sociolinguistic research. For a brief account of this research see Cloran (1989), Hasan (1989, 1992b), and Hasan and Cloran (1990). A larger extract of this same dialogue is discussed from a related point of view by Cloran in this volume. The transcription conventions are the same as in Cloran.
15. For an interpretation of these terms, see Figure 2c, and the relevant discussion in Section 3.10.
16. The socio-economic infrastructure that is needed to support the production of a blurb obviously depends on a "book culture". For an interesting account of the production of a book in a community without book culture, see Cerón & Canger (1993).
17. When the language of the text is such as to permit us to infer most of the contextual features relevant to the text, it is somewhat unfortunately described as *context independent or decontextualised*, conversely, when the possibility of such inference is low, the language is said to be context-dependent. For discussion, see Cloran (1994), in press and also this volume.
18. It is my understanding that the connotative semiotic modelling of genre and context (Martin 1985, 1992 and associates) does not modify the *content* of context; it simply inverts the relation of text type — viz., genre — to context.
19. See especially Halliday (Chapter 1: p 14) and (Hasan, Chapter 4: p 59). A similar account of context is also presented by those following the connotative semiotic model. See for example, some of the contributions in Hasan and Williams (1996).
20. For example consider the novel as a text type which displays coherence typical of longer texts such as a description of the immune system but at the same time, unlike the latter, a novel construes many distinct contexts (Hasan 1964; Bakhtin 1986).
21. For a discussion of these terms, see Hasan (1995) and the discussion of Figure 2a-c in Section 3 below.
22. The ready availability of the information in parentheses in texts such as supplied here, which have been prepared this way for analysis, prevents us from appreciating these facts at first glance.
23. It is however remarkable how little problem of interpretation arose in the face-to-face dialogues between mothers and their children, audio-recorded by mothers for my research (see details in Hasan and Cloran 1990 etc).

24. In this sense, a distinction must be made between Bakhtin's (1981) use of the term *dialogic* and my own. I agree with Bakhtin that in principle all interaction is dialogic. But being dialogic in the sense of being aware of and respond to the other's perspective, which I believe is what Bakhtin has in mind, differs from dialogue in the sense of the immediacy of semiotic reciprocity. The former is a *condition of all nonpathological interaction* while the latter implies in addition both co-presence and also a certain variety of social action and relation. Consider in this light the co-presence of counsel and jury, where despite co-presence there is no dialogue, though it would be rash to say that in his speaking the counsel is not guided (to some extent) by his sense of the jury's perspective. Thus there is dialogism in the Bakhtinian sense but hardly any dialogic engagement.
25. In terms of Hasan (1985b: 66) and elsewhere, a demand for information such as is made here functions as *repair*. This strategy calls for the construal of meanings which as yet have not been produced by the speaker but which are required for the realisation of the design of the on-going social process if it is to be continued.
26. For a discussion of this permeability see Hasan (1995), and for an early discussion Hasan (1973).
27. For examples of default dependency in the systems of activity, i.e., *field of discourse*, see Figure 2a and its discussion in Section 3.3 below, where default dependency is discussed again.
28. For a discussion of transitional and conditional probability in systemic choices, see Halliday (1992b).
29. Note that so far as the outsider is concerned, a good deal of this information e.g. kin relation, becomes available only retrospectively and some e.g. the actual age of the child, is never provided in the dialogue from which example C is extracted; my source of information is extra-textual.
30. Note that C does not contain as much meta-text as B does, since the analysts were not co-present with the recorded subjects.
31. For further continuation of this dialogue see especially tables 10 and 11 in Cloran, this volume, who has used the larger portion of this interaction (though not all) to illustrate her analysis of rhetorical units as the immediate constituents of text. As will be noted her analysis and that presented here complement each other.
32. The identification of this "substantial portion" is made by reference to the meaning potential specific to the register/genre in question (for *genre specific meaning potential* see Hasan 1985b; further comments in Section 3.4).
33. A comparable contribution is made by the optional elements of text structure: texts whose actual structure contains only obligatory elements will normally appear more busque than texts which contain (some) optional elements in addition to the obligatory ones. (For actual examples of both, see Hasan 1978, 1985b).
34. Note the significant fact that in this case of speaking, the determination of Stephen's lunch menu is completed almost immediately after the successful search of the missing passionfruit.
35. There are most probably other principles for the production of text, e.g. the artistic principle which would exploit all known principles of text production in the interest of realising the deepest theme of the work (Hasan 1964, 1971, 1985c, 1996c).
36. I suspect that the most complex forms of text structuring are to be found in the domain of literature and religious registers. The generalisations and discussions offered here are not expected to cover all forms of text structuring in these two domains, though the principle of unity (with varying manifestations) is expected to hold.

37. For a discussion of these terms, see Hasan (1995), and Section 3.
38. see Bernstein (1975, 1990) and elsewhere for the concept of framing and its relevance to the creation and maintenance of social relation as well as its activation by speaker' ideological orientation.
39. Although in this volume Cloran has presented a chain interaction analysis that stops at the close of segment (vi), she has in fact analysed the chain interaction right up to line 88. Even with the reduced presentation in her Appendix 1, it is clear from a look at her Table 2 that sub-texts4 (lines 54-59), occurring after segment (vi), is nonetheless connected by chain interaction to the other parts of example C without showing much textual unity with segment (vi) (see Table 3 for their relative location).
40. For the notion of identity and similarity chain and for chain interaction, see Hasan (1979, 1984c). For the display of chain conjunction and disjunction in the identity chain referring to Stephen and his mother, see Table 2 in Cloran, this volume.
41. One may of course argue that the problem is not worth addressing, that in this fragmented, post-modernist universe the idea of attempting to specify the definition and recognition criteria for text-hood is a pointless pursuit. But this is quite another debate which cannot be developed in any detail here, though it is worth pointing out that if the notion of genre is important as it seems to be in the different varieties of post-modernist discourses then criteria for text-hood are obviously a relevant concern.
42. I find this requirement interesting in view of the notion of "secondary intersubjectivity". According to Trevarthen and Hubley (1978), the baby moves from "primary intersubjectivity" where interaction concerns only the interactants themselves to "secondary intersubjectivity" at which stage she is able to interact with another person by bringing into their 'conversation' a third entity: this move represents a major maturational step. Textual integration too appears to demand a coming together of interactants around a third relevant object.
43. Some of these points are discussed in Hasan (1994) *Situation and the definition of genre*, the revised version of which was submitted to the editors soon after the MAP conference at the University of Pennsylvania in 1982.
44. The same/similar similarity chains are logically expected to occur in texts instantiating the same register, especially where the domain of signification (Hasan 1985b) is same/similar. For this reason, I have suggested elsewhere (Hasan 1979) that similarity chains constitute part of the recognition criteria for a register, whereas a specific sub-class of identity chains (those not referring to the interactants) constitute part of the recognition criteria for language functioning as one text within one interaction. These principles are not affected by whether texts are co-located or not.
45. For further comments on text sequencing, see the discussion of supplanting texts below.
46. Shifts in tenor are easier to notice where tone setting is negative rather than positive (for discussion, see Section 2.3.2). It is not easy to determine if a generalisation of this kind is ideologically conditioned whereby conflict becomes more noticeable than conformity.
47. See, however, the discussion of *supplanting* in the following paragraph.
48. Reflection based activity may be facilitated by an action based one, as for example in guiding pupils to physically carry out an experiment or in helping them make groupings of objects as a step toward classification. For the terms action, reflection and relation based, see Hasan (1995).
49. See Table 10 in Cloran, especially lines 67-69 which she analyses as a rhetorical unit with the function of generalisation; this, she suggests, construes an instructional context (cf her Table 1).

50. See Painter (1996). Though the focus of her study is somewhat different, her account of how children begin to use language for learning agrees with my analysis, and her data would corroborate the claims I am making here.
51. What we call a casual conversation is often more accurately describable as a dialogue which is co-extensive with one interaction (on the distinction between dialogue and conversation, see Hasan 1994): in fact the dialogue consists not of one conversation but many, where one conversation supplants another, which then is supplanted by a third, and so on. This is not to say that other co-locational arrangements may not be present.
52. There seem to be good reasons for this. First, facilitation is typically action based, even though it is accompanied by language; secondly, it involves undertaking some action which is deemed essential to the conduct of the activity in the main context. This implies a delay, a fracturing, so far as the latter is concerned until this subsidiary essential act is completed. And this is the essence of arrestive contact.
53. See Lemke (1990), especially Chapter 3 for good examples of such tone setting sub-texts and for an interesting discussion. Lemke refers to such sub-texts as "admonitions of sidetalk" (ibid p 73).
54. Needless to say that in my view the analysis of classroom discourse is lacking both in critical insight and methodological finesse if it stops at this attribution.
55. In practice this option is never explicitly adopted in SFL, though most probably it is implied in certain descriptions where mode takes over in lieu of activity.
56. Of course we may say that *narrative* in the sense of *narrating a story* is really the mode; the real activity is that of, say, *enterprising or teaching*. But this is really treating the goal/outcome of an activity as the activity itself and that has its own set of attendant problems, attention to which was drawn earlier (see Section 2.1.2 above). Besides, to maintain consistency of analysis, we could argue that the activity in text B should be described not as that of *buying postal goods* but of *maintaining an economic institution*, and buying postal goods is a mode of such maintenance. That solution would really put us in a quandary!
57. The conference with the title *Writing to Mean* was held in 1985 at Sydney University; the title of my talk was *Shapes in Narrative*. The proceedings appeared as Painter and Martin (eds 1986) though due to certain unfortunate circumstances, my own contribution was never written up for publication.
58. To make this evaluation is not to deny that in our understanding of the conceptualisation of context, each of these frameworks/tools has represented an important step when it was first introduced. I would acknowledge my debt to both Martin and Ventola: Martin's idea of genre combination (1985) and Ventola's methodological tool of flowcharts (1984, 1987) at once drew attention to problems in SFL text analysis — specifically GSP analysis (Hasan 1978, 1979 etc) — and at the same time gave rise to new problems.
59. At the level of context, representation of description in terms of system networks is not as common as it is at the level of lexicogrammar. Nonetheless there have been sporadic attempts since the late 70s. In recent years Martin and colleagues have presented many system networks purported to be at the level of context (see especially Ventola 1987 and Martin 1992).
60. From now on I shall use the term social activity as a concept that is at the same level of abstraction as field of discourse; social action, on the other hand, is a vector for the description of field/activity. Thus action is a lower order concept than activity.
61. I am thinking here of such critiques of linguistics which find fault with it for focussing on language.

62. As a semiotic system, language seldom operates in independence from other semiotic systems: in fact this statement is generally true of *all* semiotic systems; they work co-operatively, as I have argued elsewhere (1973, 1996b, in press). I will henceforth take it as given that wherever the term "verbal" is used the possibility of such "collaboration" between the various modes of semiosis is assumed. See also footnote 65 below.
63. Given our declared perspective, we have already excluded from the purview of linguistics those cases where there is only material action *without any verbal action whatsoever* — without doubt such cases exist and they most probably are socially significant, but the tools of linguistics are not competent to describe or analyse them. It is possible of course that the basic concepts of some linguistic theory may be useful in suggesting a framework for the description/analysis of such purely material action, but this would not make the derived theory "linguistics".
64. It is not an accident that vending machines or super markets can be used for selling certain categories of goods. The speaking relevant to material action is typically minimal and routinised; consider for example Wittgenstein's bricklayer. Routinised verbal action can be "mechanised" fairly easily. Compare this with some imaginary device for lecturing which excludes and/or minimises verbal action. Any such device with the least chance of success will have to utilise other semiotic systems and even then it is highly doubtful that lecturing could be accomplished without a good deal of verbal action.
65. The fact that in such environments verbal action is ancillary is significant: being ancillary to a material action, the language is likely to carry some evidence of its nature. So although the recognition of the activity on the basis of language alone may be problematic in such cases, it is a fair assumption that it would not be always impossible.
66. I use this term interchangeably with my earlier term generic structure potential (GSP), for a discussion of which see (Hasan 1978, 1979, 1980, 1984d, 1985b, 1994).
67. It is interesting to compare the semantic unit *text* with the lexicogrammatical unit *clause*. The structure potential of clause types can be stated quite confidently by reference to fairly primary systemic choices in, say, the system of TRANSITIVITY, just as the structure potential of a text-type can be stated fairly confidently by reference to primary choices of field, tenor and mode. However, specifying the lexical shape of a clause calls for infinitely more work, just as specifying the textural content of a text calls for a much more delicate description (Hasan 1995).
68. According to Halliday (1985b p 12) "mode of discourse refers to what part the language is playing; what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation"; the concept of mode includes "the rhetorical mode, what is being achieved by the text in terms of such categories as persuasive, expository, didactic, and the like." (Ibid.) For statements in agreement with this position, see also Hasan 1985b, 1995, and for genres based on mode, see Martin (1992).
69. For illustration of this point see Hasan (1995). For actual descriptions of ideational lexicogrammatical patterns implicated in the realisation of, say, definition or generalisation, see Martin (1992).
70. I say these are 'unanalysed' because we do not appear to have asked: what kind of activity these are.
71. Cloran makes very fine distinctions across rhetorical units (see her Table 9 in this volume); it is however likely that underlying some of her rhetorical units which involve future action is the feature [practical].
72. Though I am under the impression that the presence of specifically material action is not a necessary condition so far as Cloran's rhetorical unit called plan is concerned.
73. From: SynMaster 500s Color Monitor: Owner's Instructions. Samsung Electronics (Australia) Pty Ltd.
74. For example Cross (1991) has shown convincingly that the semantic and lexicogrammatical potential of registers/text types/genres — call it what you will — is just as clearly activated by the features of tenor.
75. I believe this term was later adopted in the genre based model under the label (*social*) *context*.
76. In commonsense terms, only a very small proportion of our actions are *purely* for making someone feel good or bad, though clearly flattery and condemnation could obviously occur as features of the main context.
77. For an early indication that mood and modality might be pertinent to the realisation of certain activity types, see Hasan (1995).
78. I first presented this system in essentially this form in my paper called Shapes in Narrative at a conference convened by Martin in 1985 with the title Writing to Mean. See for further details footnote 57. For a system network in roughly comparable area, see Martin (1992: 522 Figure 7.11).
79. Clearly these terms are not very desirable now in view of the development of the notion of simple and complex text as discussed in Section 2 above; I leave the terms here just to indicate the ideas introduced in my (1985) presentation.
80. I believe this characterisation of [commenting] verbal action is applicable to Cloran's (1994, 1995) rhetorical unit which she refers to as *commentary*, though the categories she suggests are generally more delicate (cf her distinction between commentary and observation).
81. These are just the immediate "relatives" of a legal trial. In discussing the lexicon, linguists often talk about the complex mosaic of lexical relations: however, this complex mosaic is far surpassed in complexity by the mosaic of the inter-connectedness of discourse types and institutions where the field is specialised.
82. While I did not use the terminology of textual co-location and integration, Hasan (1980) was very much concerned with an objective theory of the conditions where such patterns may be said to be at risk.
83. Needless to say that such generalisations are also possible with respect to tenor and mode. Thus minimal social distance in tenor and phonic channel with dialogue are relatively more hospitable to co-location and/or integration (for early discussions, see Hasan 1980).
84. Note that the condition of "same interactant" is not met in the second case, or at least met only partially.
85. Halliday (1977) draws a similar distinction, but perhaps because his point of departure is textual, he refers to the material action of the game as *secondary field* and to the constitutive verbal action (e.g., a commentary or instructions on playing the game) as the *primary field*, the one that language-wise is far more substantial.
86. In actual practice it usually turns out to be complex because there is usually more than one commentator and exchange of opinions between them, banter and joint recall contribute to the design of the commentary turning it into a complex text.

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