

# Reading Genre: a new wave of analysis

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## Abstract

Genre based literacy pedagogy has been developed over twenty five years, in what has become known as the Sydney School (Green & Lee 1994, Martin 2000a&b), in collaboration with literacy teachers. The initial motivation was to improve the academic success of marginalised school students by giving teachers explicit tools to teach writing. In the 1980s the focus was on writing genres in the primary school, and in the 1990s on writing genres in secondary school, in university, and in English as a second language. The approach is now standard practice in Australian schools, and in many other contexts around the world. A new generation of literacy pedagogy is now focusing on teaching reading at all these levels, since reading is the basis of academic learning, and learning to write flows from learning through reading (Martin & Rose 2005). The new reading pedagogy uses genre as its starting point, but takes a more flexible approach to analysing patterns in each genre. One reason for this development is that reading texts in any curriculum are highly diverse, so that learners and teachers need a flexible set of tools for identifying how meanings unfold through them. While written genres tend to go through highly predictable stages to achieve their goals, that are well described for many genres, such as the Complication and Resolution stages of a narrative, the reading pedagogy focuses on smaller phases of meaning within each stage, that are more variable, and sensitive to register variations such as a text's field. Another wave of genre research is now needed to identify potential phase types for various genres and register variables, to systematically inform teaching of both reading and writing across academic curricula.

## 1 Introduction: genre and pedagogy

Work on genre in the early 1980s identified a small set of written genres that were highly valued in primary schooling, including recounts, narratives, procedures, reports, explanations and expositions (Christie 1992, Martin 1999a, Martin & Painter 1986, Martin & Rothery 1990). Over the following two decades this work has been recontextualised in a plethora of teaching materials that privilege the social purposes, staging and some typical lexicogrammatical features of these genres. These six genres are now legislated in the official syllabi in Australian education systems under the name 'text types'. The name change is a legacy of acrimonious resistance to explicit teaching of written genres, from progressivists in the educational faculties through the 1980s and 90s (Martin 2001). In the meantime, research on the privileged genres of schooling continued to expand, particularly the major secondary school literacy research project *Write it Right*, conducted in Sydney schools and workplaces through the early 1990s. This project described a much richer cross section of genres written in the curriculum areas of the secondary school and associated industry sectors, including science based manufacturing, mass media and government. Recontextualisation of this research as writing pedagogy in schools was delayed by restructuring of the education department in which it was conducted, as well as rearguard action from progressivist factions. However its findings have been widely published (e.g. Christie 1999, Christie & Martin 1997, Cope & Kalantzis 1993, Iedema 2003, Macken-Horarik

2002, Martin & Veel 1998, Unsworth 2000), and it has had a major influence in the field of academic literacy teaching in universities. One context in which this work is currently being applied is the literacy program *Learning to Read: Reading to Learn* (Rose 2004, 2006a, Rose et al 2004), which uses genre as a framework for training teachers in strategies for scaffolding reading and writing across curricula and education sectors. A summary used in this program, of the genres that learners meet in various subject areas, is given in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Genres across school curricula**

	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Stages</b>		
English	<b>Recount</b>	Recounting events	Orientation Record of events	Stories	
	<b>Narrative</b>	Resolving a complication in a story	Orientation Complication Evaluation Resolution		
	<b>Exemplum</b>	Judging character or behaviour in a story	Orientation Incident Interpretation		
	<b>Anecdote</b>	Sharing an emotional reaction in a story	Orientation Remarkable event Reaction		
	<b>Personal response</b>	Reacting emotionally to a text	Evaluation Reaction	Responses	
	<b>Review</b>	Evaluating a literary, visual or musical text	Context Description of text Judgement		
	<b>Interpretation</b>	Interpreting the message of a text	Evaluation Synopsis of text Reaffirmation		
	<b>Critical response</b>	Challenging the message of a text	Evaluation Deconstruction Challenge		
	Science	<b>Exposition</b>	Arguing for a point of view	Thesis Arguments Reiteration	Society & environment
		<b>Discussion</b>	Discussing two or more points of view	Issue Sides Resolution	
<b>Biographical recount</b>		Recounting life events	Orientation Record of stages		
<b>Historical recount</b>		Recounting historical events	Background Record of stages		
<b>Historical account</b>		Explaining historical events	Background Account of stages		
<b>Sequential explanation</b>		Explaining a sequence	Phenomenon Explanation		
<b>Factorial explanation</b>		Explaining multiple causes	Phenomenon Explanation		
<b>Consequential explanation</b>		Explaining multiple effects	Phenomenon Explanation		
<b>Descriptive report</b>		Classifying & describing a phenomenon	Classification Description		
<b>Classifying report</b>		Classifying & describing types of phenomena	Classification Description		
<b>Compositional report</b>	Describing parts of wholes	Classification Description			
<b>Procedure</b>	How to do experiments & observations	Purpose Equipment Steps			
<b>Procedural recount</b>	Recounting experiments & observations	Purpose Method Results			

Figure 1 outlines some basic parameters of the discursive resources that have evolved in industrial society for managing the natural and social worlds, and which are reproduced and expanded from one generation to the next in its education systems. Of course these resources are not equally available to all. Schooling affords most access to them to the 10-15% of students who will matriculate to university, to become the society's designers, managers and recontextualisers, some access to the 30% who will be trained as technicians and tradespeople, and limited access to the majority who will get no further education, but will instead be managed by their elite peers (ABS 1994, 2004, Rose 2004, 2006a). Genre research in the Sydney School has always been motivated by a desire to address these inequities, and the writing pedagogies developed from it have taken root because they demonstrably redistribute access to privileged genres to more students. These pedagogies focus on social purposes and staging as criteria for learners to recognise and successfully reproduce privileged genres, often with a secondary focus on some of their typical lexicogrammatical patterns, such as lexis, process types and Theme selections. These foci recontextualise the most prominent dimensions of the genre research on text staging, and the privileged status of grammar in academia vis a vis discourse semantics.

However when it comes to teaching reading across the curriculum, staging and grammar are no longer adequate tools in themselves for exploring patterns of meaning in texts. The genres and their stages displayed in Figure 1 do no more than sketch the outlines of these patterns, and grammar becomes both too little and too much for exploring them; too little because a bottom up perspective from grammar does not predict the patterns in which field and tenor unfold through a text, but only the wordings in which these discourse patterns are realised; too much because learning the grammar requires a major time investment, before it can be applied in teaching, without even touching on the complexity of discourse patterns. Nevertheless, the approach from grammar and staging works for many students (and teachers) because it focuses their attention on recognising meaningful patterns at different scales of discourse. Over time this explicitly acquired skill may come to be tacitly transferred to recognising and producing intermediate scales of discourse patterns, beyond clauses but within genres. In teaching reading on the other hand, it is these intermediate patterns that must be explicitly focused on, since learners cannot comprehend a text as a string of clauses, any more than we understand a clause as a string of words, or a word as a string of letters. Discourse semantic systems assumed here are set out in Table 1, with a gloss of their broad social functions (based on Martin 1992, Martin & Rose 2003), and the lexicogrammatical systems in which they are realised (based on Matthiessen 1995).

Table 1. Discourse systems and grammatical resources

social functions	discourse systems	grammatical systems
enacting exchanges between speakers	<b>NEGOTIATION</b>	MOOD, MOOD PERSON, VOCATION
expressing, grading and sourcing attitudes	<b>APPRAISAL</b>	MODAL ASSESSMENT, POLARITY
construing experience as activities with people, things, places, qualities	<b>IDEATION</b>	TRANSITIVITY, CIRCUMSTANTIATION, CLASSIFICATION, EPITHESES...
logically relating sequences of activities	<b>CONJUNCTION</b>	CLAUSE COMPLEXITY
introducing and keeping track of people and things	<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	PERSON, NUMBER, PROXIMITY, DEIXIS...
presenting enactments and construals as waves of information	<b>PERIODICITY</b>	THEME, INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION, INFORMATION FOCUS

In the *Learning to Read: Reading to Learn* program it is these six discourse semantic systems rather than the grammar that are the focus of the reading and writing pedagogy, and of the teacher training program. We have found this top down approach to be highly efficient at tuning learners and teachers into patterns of meaning in texts, and that these rapidly acquired skills are readily applicable to recognising salient grammatical patterns within clauses. In both the classroom and teacher training pedagogies, the details of discourse semantic systems are focused on in steps, from broader to finer patterns, and from ideational to textual and interpersonal patterns. The starting point is with the phases in which a text's field unfolds through its generic stages. This perspective on broad patterns of unfolding field is perhaps closest to our conscious recognition of how a text means, and thus the easiest discourse pattern to bring to consciousness. If we are asked to retell a text, it is the phases of its unfolding field that we are most likely to accurately reproduce, more than its interpersonal or textual patterns, or its wording within clauses. For these reasons, students are prepared for first comprehending a text in the reading pedagogy by the teacher orally summarising its phases, and these phases ultimately provide the framework for students to write successful texts using discourse patterns they have learnt from reading.

## 2 A discourse semantic rank scale

Also for these reasons, discourse phases are the focus of the paper here. We can begin by defining phases broadly as waves of information carrying pulses of field and tenor. Phases are intermediate in scale between stages that are defined from the perspective of genre, as highly predictable segments in each genre, and messages that are defined from the perspective of grammar, as non-dependent non-projected clauses, together with their associated dependent and projected clauses (cf Martin 1992: 235). Each generic stage consists of one or more phases, and each phase consists of one or messages. But like the grammatical rank scale, the relation between genres, stages, phases and messages is not simply compositional but also realisational. A genre is realised by its stages, stages by their phases, and phases by their messages. This discourse semantic rank scale is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: A discourse semantic rank scale

<b>genre</b>	minimal unit of text – in series in macrogenres such as textbooks, novels or conversations
<b>stage</b>	highly predictable segments in each genre
<b>phase</b>	more variable segments within each stage, carrying pulses of field and tenor
<b>message</b>	non-dependent, non-projected clause, together with associated dependent and projected clauses

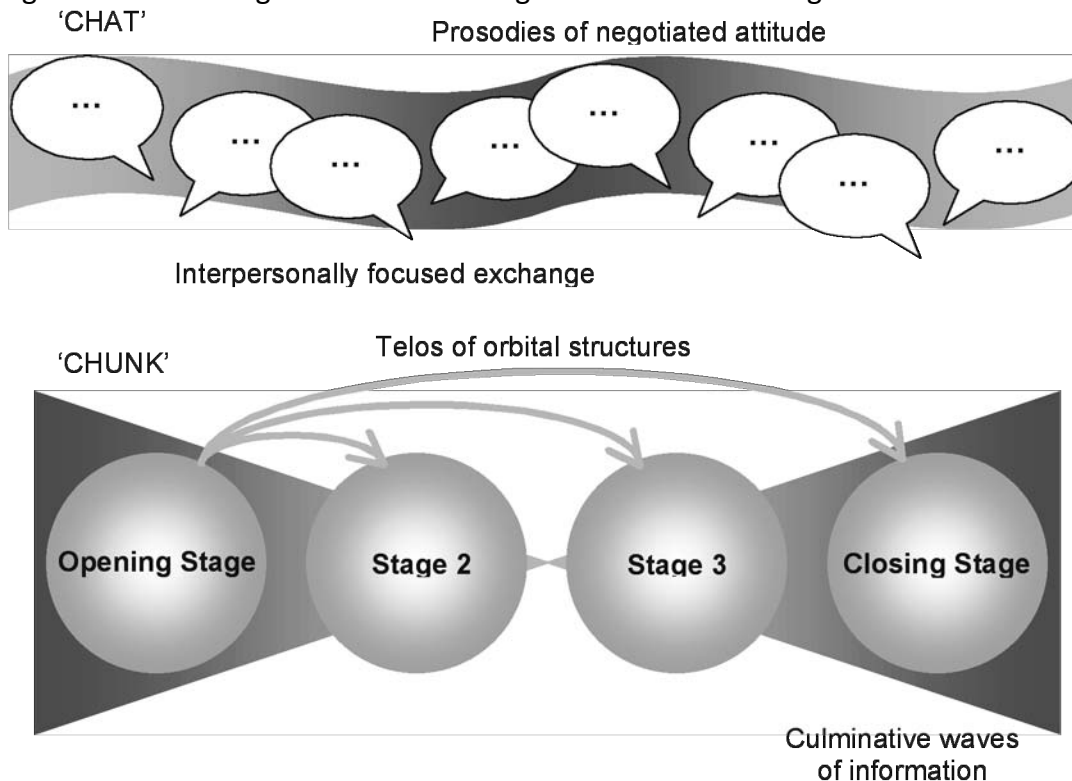
The segmental perspective of such a rank scale appears to privilege the segmental structuring of ideational meanings over the prosodic patterns of interpersonal and periodic patterns of textual meanings. This is perhaps one reason that this perspective is not foregrounded in descriptions of discourse semantic systems in Martin 1992 and Martin & Rose 2003, although it is implicitly assumed at many points. The rank of phases is most strongly articulated in this work in the description of hierarchies of periodicity. On the scale of phases, the first and final sentences in a paragraph/phase of written text may function as its hyperTheme and hyperNew, that predict and distil the field of the paragraph. On the scale of the genre, the first and last paragraphs of a written text may function as its macroTheme and macroNew, predicting and distilling the field of the text. In addition to the textual angle, Martin & Rose 2003 also discuss phases from the perspectives of APPRAISAL colouring phases of discourse, of IDEATION construing sequences of activity, and of CONJUNCTION organising texts as sequences of phases.

In their early work on phasal analysis, Gregory and Malcolm 1981 were also careful not to privilege field, defining a phase broadly as a stretch of discourse that displays at least partial registerial consistency, that is consistency from each angle of field, tenor and mode. Such an approach is open enough to net in both spoken and written discourse. Although we might imagine spoken discourse to display less segmental organisation than written texts, this is only a tendency. In their work on casual conversation, Eggins & Slade 1997 identified series of segments on the scale of genres, including stories and other genres that are also common in writing. Jordens 2002 also identified consistent generic segments in his analyses of spoken discourse in medical contexts, including types of stories and planning genres. On the scale of phases, Cloran 1999 analyses parent-child interactions in the home in segments she calls rhetorical units. The subject matter of these phases is consistent enough for Cloran to classify them on ideational criteria as a relatively small set of sub-types, such as 'commentary', 'reflection', 'observation', 'plan', 'prediction' or 'conjecture'. The discourse rank scale is also resonant with Martinec's 2002 description of a hierarchy of rhythmic segments in spoken English, that are distinguished by timing of segments and pauses between them. Messages may correlate with his third and fourth-level rhythmic waves, phases with his fifth and sixth-level, and stages with his seventh-level. The roles of intonation in presenting phases of oral stories is also explored for the Australian Western Desert language in Rose 2001a. In this analysis, messages may correlate with an 'information group' of adjacent clauses with lexically related New elements (i.e. elements with tonic focus). Phases may correlate with an 'information wave', a series of information groups that culminates, in stories, with a message that is strongly foregrounded by conflating New with Theme (i.e. the culminative message starts atypically with tonic focus).

In sum the tonicity wave organises two further levels of information above the tone group, in the discourse semantic stratum. The first is the information group which presents a coherent cluster of thematic and culminative elements. Information groups then function as constituents of a larger culminative structure I have called an **information wave**. A text consists of a series of such information waves (2001a:222).

Nevertheless, despite such commonalities in segmental structures of spoken and written discourse, there is no doubting that certain spoken genres, such as casual conversation, tend to foreground prosodic and exchange structuring, while written discourse tends to foreground particulate structuring (more specifically orbital and serial structures), as well as explicit hierarchies of information. These contrasting structuring tendencies of spoken and written genres are described in Martin & Rose 2006 as 'chat' and 'chunk' respectively, schematised in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Contrasting modes of unfolding in 'chat' and 'chunk' genres



This generic contrast may be primary in children's socialisation into the discursive resources of their cultures. In the transitional Phase II of language development, Halliday 1975:111 identifies "two generic structures: narrative and dialogue... Question and answer for example, is a form of texture that belongs to dialogue, whereas sequences of observations typically occur as narrative...sequences that have a semantic structure but not yet a grammatical structure, like 'tree, broken, take-away, all-gone, bye bye'; these are early narratives". Pre-empting the discussion of story phases that follows, we could also say that each of these observations in the narrative sequence are proto-phases, that is each one would be expanded to an episode in a mature recount, each consisting of a series of messages.

### 3 Phases in story genres

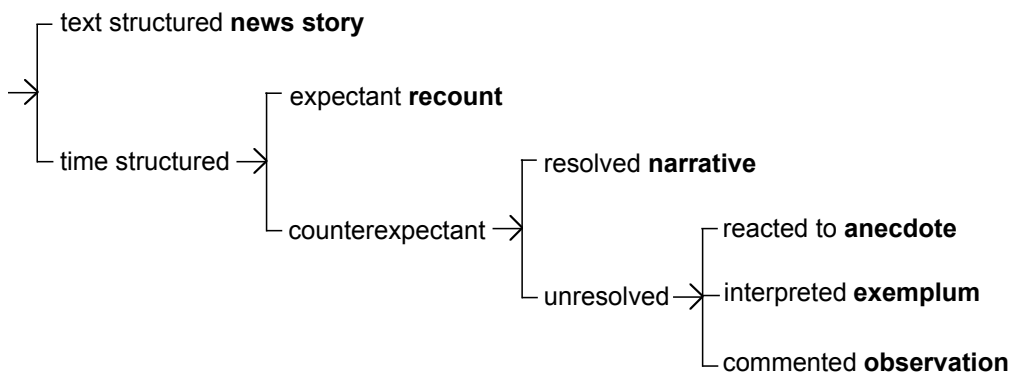
Phases in story genres are the starting point for the discussion here, as both the genres and their typical phases have been well researched from ethnographic and pedagogic angles, and they ably illustrate the interplay of field and tenor in phases as a story unfolds. Five major story types have been identified in the Sydney School work, with varying staging, in oral stories (Jordens 2002, Martin & Plum 1997, Plum 1988), children's written stories (Rothery 1990), casual conversation (Eggins & Slade 1997), literary fiction (Macken-Horarik 1996, 2003, Martin 1996), and traditional stories across language families (Rose 2001a&b, 2005). Each story genre typically but optionally begins with an Orientation stage that presents an expectant activity sequence, but varies in whether and how this expectancy is disrupted, and how the disruption is responded to. The first type are recounts which record a sequence of events without significant disruption, and events are typically appraised prosodically as the recount unfolds. Second are anecdotes, which involve some remarkable disruption to usuality, which is not resolved, but simply reacted to. The remarkable event may be tragic or comic, engaging or awful, so the ensuing reaction may be either positive or negative affect. Thirdly exemplums also involve a disruption, but this is interpreted rather than reacted to, and the type of attitude expressed in the interpretation tends to be judgement of people's character or behaviour. Fourthly, observations involve a description of a significant event, followed by a personal comment appreciating an aspect of it, again with either positive or negative value. Finally, in this work the term 'narrative' refers specifically to the generic pattern that resolves a complication. Evaluation of narrative complications can vary between affect, judgement of people, or appreciation of things and events. The Evaluation is often deployed to suspend the action, increasing the narrative tension, and so intensifying the release when tension is resolved. The options in staging in the story genre family, and tendencies in their appraisal, are set out in Table 3. These are the obligatory stages for each genre, each of which may also open with an Orientation stage, and close with a Coda.

Table 3: Story genres

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

In addition to these story genres, that are structured as sequences in time, the news story genre evolved in the late nineteenth century in the context of broadsheet newspapers (Iedema 1997). News stories are not structured in time, but in terms of significance of information, in order to attract and maintain the attention of readers. These six genres are set out as a system network in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Relations among story genres



Running through all these story genres we have identified a small set of phase types, that function to build the story within each stage. Work on phases in stories includes Hoey 1983 who describes patterns of problem-solution phase types, Jordan 1984 who extends these types to all manner of texts, and Macken-Horarik 1996, 2003 and Martin 1996, who describe phases in literary fiction, but do not attempt to develop a taxonomy of phase types.<sup>1</sup> Hoey's and Jordan's description of problem-solution phase pairs is strongly influenced by Labov & Waletzky's 1967 focus on the Complication-Resolution staging of narratives, and by grammatical relations of cause and effect. In fact the problem-solution pattern is a relatively minor motif in stories; Plum 1988 found that the Complication-Resolution narrative structure accounted for only 15% of the 134 stories he recorded. The range of phase types in stories is much richer than this, and is not necessarily predictable from the bottom-up perspective of grammatical categories. We have found these phase types in a wide range of oral and literate stories in English and other languages, from children's to adult literary fiction. Each phase type performs a certain function to engage the listener/reader as the story unfolds, by construing its field of activities, people, things and places, by evoking emotional responses, or by linking it to common experiences and interpretations of life. These basic building blocks of stories are manipulated by accomplished story tellers and writers to build, maintain and release tension, drawing readers into the imaginary realities they construe. Story phase functions are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Story phases

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

While some of the terms for story phases resemble those used to denote genre stages, stages are distinguished with Initial Capitals and phases with lower case. Importantly, these are general terms for phase types, but any phase may be labelled more specifically according



to its function in a particular story sequence, and there are undoubtedly other general phase types not covered here.

In terms of Halliday's 1994 model of logicosemantic relations, setting and description phases elaborate the story line, by presenting or describing people, places or activities. Event phases succeed in time ('then'), without the implication of consequence or concession. Effects and reactions are consequences of preceding phases ('so'): effects are material outcomes; reactions are participants' behaviour or attitudes in response to preceding phases. Problems and solutions are counterexpectant ('but'): problems create tension by countering a positive expectancy; solutions release tension by countering the negative expectancy created by problems. The relation of comment and reflection phases to the story is more like projection, as saying projects locutions and thinking projects ideas. Comments suspend the flow of activity to intrude the narrator's comments, while reflections intrude the thoughts of participants.

Shifts from one phase to the next are typically signalled to the listener by a significant change in the Theme of messages. This may be a switch in the major identity presented as Theme, a circumstance of time, place or manner, or an explicit conjunction (since conjunctive relations are more often left implicit). These thematic variations are indicative of shifts in field and tenor from one phase to the next. But these register shifts themselves are realised by lexical changes, in the activity, the people, places and so on, and by appraisals in the case of evaluative phases (reactions, comments, reflections). In the presentations below, Themes are underlined, to show their roles in signalling transitions from phase to phase.

Story phase patterns are first illustrated in a traditional oral narrative, text [1], the opening passage of the Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, in which King Shantenu falls in love with a woman who marries him but then throws all their children into a river.<sup>ii</sup> The story is translated from an oral version in the south Indian language Kodava (see Rose 2005a for more detailed analysis). The original discourse patterns are maintained as closely as possible in this translation.

[1] traditional oral narrative *Shantenu Raaje*

**Orientation**

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

**Complication**

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

**Evaluation**

reaction	Shantenu the king was <b>very sad</b> in the palace.
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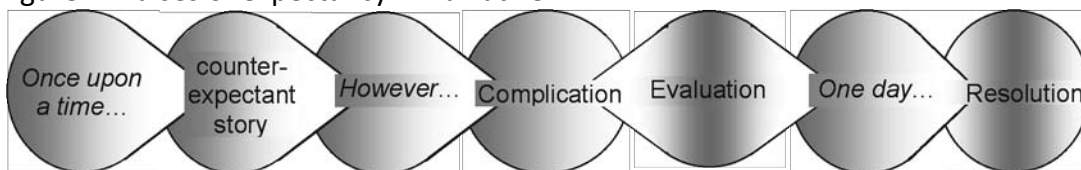
**Resolution**

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

from Ebert 1996

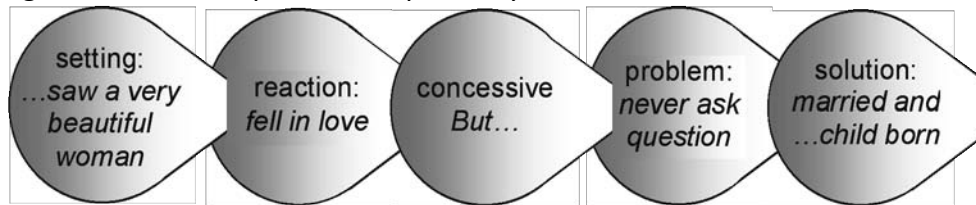
The narrative staging is clearly indicated for the listener in text [1]: the story genre is signalled by the marked Theme *Once upon a time*, and the Complication is signalled by the concessive conjunction *However*. Shantenu's intense sadness both evaluates the Complication and expects the Resolution, which is signalled by the time Theme *One day*. The key organising principle in the narrative sequence is expectancy - falling in love, marrying and having a child expect an ongoing series of happy events. Countering this expectancy with shocking behaviour, such as throwing the children in a river, creates tension that engages the listener. However the Complication is not entirely unexpected - the listener already knows that the story will involve counterexpectancy, because the genre is flagged from the opening phrase *Once upon a time*, so that concessive *However* signals to us that a disruption is imminent. What we don't initially know is what form the disruption will take, and what kind of counterexpectant story to expect - the complicating problems create a trajectory of bad news that may or may not be resolved. A Resolution must thus counter this gloomy expectancy. But like the Complication, it is not entirely unexpected; a Resolution is flagged by the Evaluation, so that the marked Theme *One day* signals it for us. This sequence is diagrammed as pulses of expectancy in Figure 4. *Once upon a time* expects the genre, which together with *However* expects the Complication. The Evaluation both appraises the Complication, and together with *One day* expects the Resolution.

Figure 4: Pulses of expectancy in narrative



This pattern of expectancy is repeated at the smaller scale of phases within each stage, as the narrative is carried forward by swings in expectancy from phase to phase. The Orientation begins with a setting phase involving Shantenu in two activities, hunting by the river and seeing a woman. This setting already expects a probable range of events, which Shantenu's reaction of falling in love narrows and intensifies. This happy expectancy is momentarily countered by a problem, the woman's odd proviso to never ask any question, signalled by counterexpectant *But*. This cannot be the story's Complication as the potential disruption is immediately countered by marrying and have a child. By mildly disrupting the happy course of events, the overall effect is to intensify expectancy for an idyllic outcome, while paradoxically encouraging the seed of doubt. These pulses of expectancy are illustrated in Figure 5. The setting expects Shantenu's reaction, which expects marriage, but this is countered by the problem of the woman's proviso, signalled by *But*. This negative trajectory is then countered by the solution of marriage and child.

Figure 5: Phases as pulses of expectancy



Likewise, the Complication involves two problems, and Shantenu's reaction to the first problem, by asking his wife the prohibited question, gives rise to the second problem of her leaving him. This chain of events invites us to identify with Shantenu's predicament and empathise with his *very sad* reaction. The listener thus expects and desires a Resolution, but tension is further strung out in the Resolution stage, by the problem of not recognising his son, making the final solution an even more satisfying release. There is thus a kind of fractal relation between narrative stages and phases, each a mirror of the other at different scales, in both structure and function. As text [1] shows, settings, problems, reactions and solutions may occur in any stage.

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

[2] written narrative from *A Good Tip for Ghosts*

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#### Complication

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

**Evaluation**

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

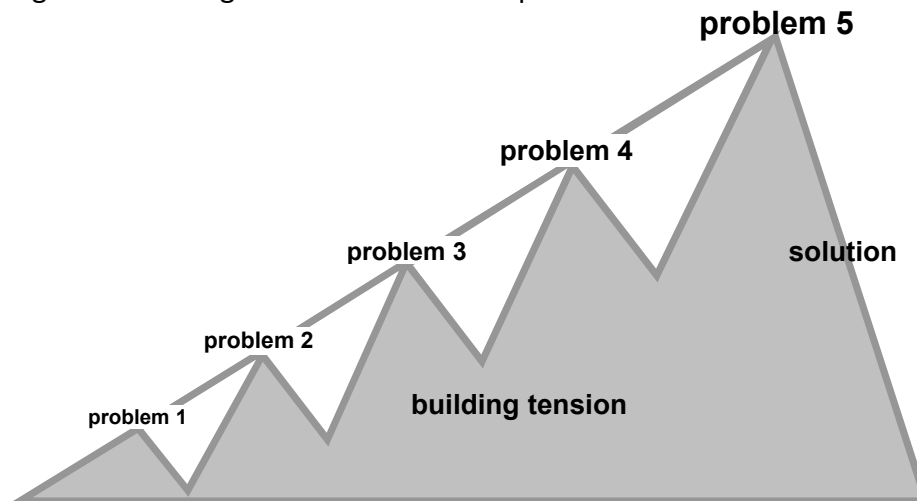
**Resolution**

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

Jennings 1997:53

In this extract the Complication and Resolution stages are strongly signalled by marked Themes. But within the Complication, Jennings expertly manipulates a series of worsening problems and intensifying reactions, to build tension that reaches a crescendo in the Evaluation, before release in the Resolution. While the sequence of problems and reactions carries the action forwards, Jennings also uses a description phase here, suspending the action and so contributing to the build up of tension. Description phases are common in longer stories; like settings, they elaborate the story line by evoking images of people, things or locations. This pattern of mounting tension is illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Building tension within a Complication



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

The problem-reaction series in text [2] also further illustrates the potential for fractal relations between patterns of phases and genre stages. The short story of which this is an

extract is a serial narrative with five Complications that build in intensity, and as the intensity builds, so too do the Evaluations, as do the problems and reactions in this extract, which is the fourth Complication in the story. Resolutions release the tension following each Complication, but like the one here they are only temporary until the last. This phenomenon may also be found on the larger scale of whole novels, which from this perspective are macro-genres consisting of series of stories and other genres. (See Martin 1994, Martin & Rose 2006, for descriptions of textbooks as macro-genres.) The following extract from the novel *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, text [3] illustrates how series of problems, descriptions and reactions can be subtly deployed in literary writing. This extract follows the pattern of an anecdote, dramatically recounting the removal of the author's Aboriginal mother and her sisters from their family, and the family's reaction.

[3] literary anecdote from *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*

**Orientation**

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

**Remarkable Event**

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

Then all eyes turned to the cause of the commotion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

problem "Come on, you girls," he ordered. "Don't worry about taking anything. We'll pick up what you need later....Hurry up then, I want to get started. We've got a long way to go yet. You girls can ride this horse back to the depot," he said, handing the reins over to Molly. Riggs was annoyed that he had to go miles out of his way to find these girls.

**Reaction**

reaction1 Molly and Gracie sat silently on the horse, tears streaming down their cheeks as Constable Riggs turned the big bay stallion and led the way back to the depot.

reaction2 A high pitched wail broke out. The cries of agonised mothers and the women, and the deep sobs of grandfathers, uncles and cousins filled the air. Molly and Gracie looked back just once before they disappeared through the river gums. Behind them, those remaining in the camp found sharp objects and gashed themselves and inflicted deep wounds to their heads and bodies as an expression of their sorrow.

reaction3 The two frightened and miserable girls began to cry, silently at first, then uncontrollably; their grief made worse by the lamentations of their loved ones and the visions of them sitting on the ground in their camp letting their tears mix with the red blood that flowed from the cuts on their heads.

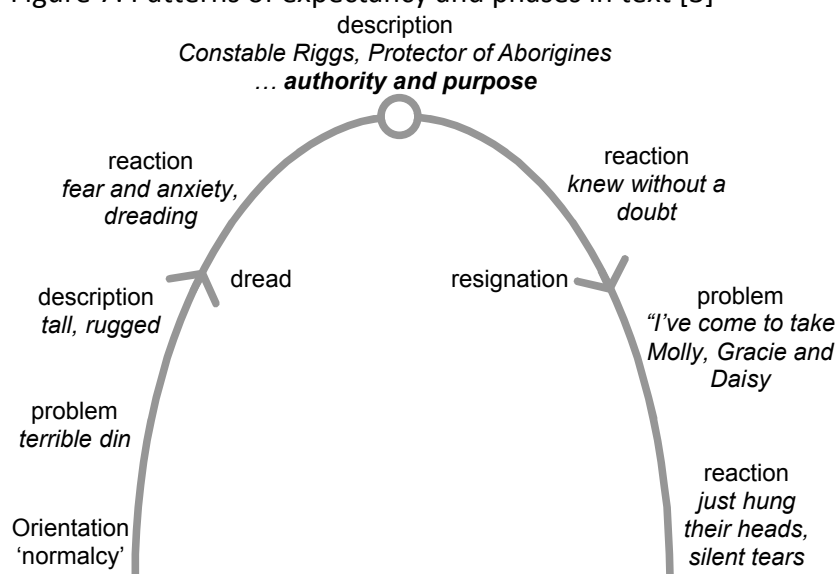
#### Coda

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

Pilkington 1996:43

The peaceful events of the Orientation are disrupted by the ominous portent of dogs barking, so that the following description of an anonymous white man expects the family's reaction of *fear and anxiety*. The description of Constable Riggs' identity and authority expects their reaction of certainty *without a doubt*, and then his intention to take the girls expects their reaction of *silent tears*. The author manages appraisal through these phases to account for the family's resignation to the abduction of their children. First there is a surge of attitude at the dogs barking, which then pauses to appreciate the white man as *tall and rugged*, but affect surges again in the family's reaction to recognising him. The next description is strongly marked by the circumstantial Theme *When Constable Riggs, Protector of Aborigines, finally spoke*. The judgement of his voice with *authority and purpose* thus serves as a pivot, from the family's fearful reaction, to resigned acceptance. Their next reactions go from certainty *without a doubt*, to resignation *just hung their heads*, to passive sorrow in *silent tears*. To this point the appraisals chart a parabolic rise to the first reaction and descent to the last, diagrammed in Figure 7. By means of these appraisals operating through phases of expectancy, Doris Pilkington conditions her reader to recognise that resigned acceptance was the family's only possibly response to the white man as he abducted their children.

Figure 7: Patterns of expectancy and phases in text [3]



But of course resigned acceptance was not the family's final reaction, as the white man disappeared with their daughters. The overall prosody of attitudes swell through the story's sequence of intensifying problems and reactions. The first is the appearance of the white

man and the reaction of *fear and anxiety*; the next is Riggs' announcement and the reaction of *silent tears*; and finally his taking the girls and the intense grief of the Reaction stage, which scopes back over the whole passage. These patterns are schematised in Figure 8. The affect of the reactions scopes back over the events, indicated by shading.

Figure 8: Affect in reactions scoping back over problems in text [3]

Orientation	
events	Molly and Gracie ... joined the rest of the family in the shade for lunch of tinned corned beef, damper and tea.
problem	<b>Event</b> The family had just finished eating when all the camp dogs began barking, making a terrible din. Then all eyes turned to the cause of the commotion. A tall, rugged white man stood on the bank above them...
reaction	<b>Fear and anxiety swept over them</b> when they realised that the <b>fateful day</b> they had been <b>dreading</b> had come at last...
problem	When Constable Riggs, Protector of Aborigines, finally spoke his voice was full of authority and purpose... "I've come to take Molly, Gracie and Daisy, the three half-caste girls..."
reaction	The old man nodded to show that he understood what Riggs was saying. The rest of the family <b>just hung their heads</b> , refusing to face the man who was taking their daughters away from them. <b>Silent tears welled in their eyes and trickled down their cheeks.</b>
problem	"Come on, you girls," he ordered. "Don't worry about taking anything. We'll pick up what you need later."... "Hurry up then, I want to get started... Riggs was <b>annoyed</b> that he had to go miles out of his way to find these girls.
reaction	<b>Reaction</b> Molly and Gracie sat silently on the horse, <b>tears streaming down their cheeks.</b> A <b>high pitched wail</b> broke out. The <b>cries of agonised mothers and the women</b> , and the <b>deep sobs of grandfathers, uncles and cousins</b> filled the air... those remaining in the camp found sharp objects and <b>gashed themselves</b> and <b>inflicted deep wounds</b> to their heads and bodies as an expression of their <b>sorrow.</b>
reaction	The two <b>frightened and miserable</b> girls began to <b>cry, silently at first, then uncontrollably; their grief made worse</b> by the <b>lamentations of their loved ones</b> and the visions of them sitting on the ground in their camp <b>letting their tears mix with the red blood that flowed from the cuts on their heads.</b>

While the phases discussed so far elaborate or enhance the sequence of activities in a story, the relation of comment and reflection phases to the story is more like projection. In comments, the narrator intrudes into the activity sequence to comment on the events or participants. This is a repeated motif in text [4], an historical narrative from the 'insideinformation' section of a glossy lifestyle magazine which is included monthly in the *Sydney Morning Herald* broadsheet. (See Martin 2006 for a multiperspectival analysis of this text.)

[4] historical narrative from *placeintime: Bondi Beach***Orientation**

- comment Ah, but those 35,000 Sydneysiders who were lying in those very spots on the afternoon of February 6, 1938, surely felt equally at peace.
- setting The day was, in the vernacular of the time, a "stinker", and some thought it was in fact a record turnout on the beach, with the numbers perhaps swelled by the fact that those bronzed boys of the Bondi Surf Bathers' Life Saving Club had turned up in force to have one of their popular surf competitions.
- comment At three o'clock there was still not the slightest clue that this afternoon would forever be known as "Black Sunday" in the annals of Sydney.

**Complication**

- problem1 Then it happened. With a roar like a Bondi tram running amok, an enormous wave suddenly rolled over the thousands in the surf, including those many standing on the large sandbank just out from the shore - knocking them all over as it went. And then another wave hit, and then another.
- problem2 The huge waves, just like that, piggy-backed their way further and further up the beach and grabbed everything they could along the way - from babies to toddlers to adolescents to beach umbrellas, to old blokes and young sheilas alike, and then made a mad dash for the open sea again, carrying all before it and sweeping everyone off the sandbank and into the deep channel next to it in the process.
- problem3 In no more than 20 seconds, that peaceful scene had been tragically transformed into utter chaos. Now, the boiling surf, with yet more large waves continuing to roll over, was filled with distressed folk waving for help.

**Evaluation**

- comment In their long and glorious history, this still stands as the finest hour of the Australian lifesaving movement.

**Resolution**

- solution1 For, ignoring their own possible peril, the Bondi boys now charged into the surf, some attached to one of the seven reels available, some relying only on their own strength. As one, they began pulling the people out.
- solution2 On the shore, many survivors were resuscitated, as the Bondi clubhouse was turned into a kind of emergency clearing house, and ambulances from all over Sydney town descended and carried the victims away.
- solution3 Finally, just half an hour after the waves hit, the water was cleared of bobbing heads and waving arms,

**Coda**

- comment and it was time to take stock: 250 people had needed the lifesavers to pull them out, of whom 210 were OK once back on land. Thirty-five needed mouth to mouth to be restored to consciousness, while five people perished.

Fitzsimmons 1995

Phases in text [4] are signalled by shifts in time, place and manner. As with the Coda in text [3] the function of the author's comments in this narrative is to interpret the events for the reader. While the affect in the reactions in text [3] scoped back over the preceding problems, it is appreciation and judgement that scope both forward and backward over the Orientation, Complication and Resolution here. The first comment expects the uneventful normalcy of the setting, but the comment that follows both evaluates this normalcy and expects the problem that follows. The Evaluation is a comment that scopes over the ensuing Resolution with strong positive judgement for the lifesavers, while the Coda is a comment appreciating the success of their exploits.

In contrast to comments, reflections intrude the participants' thoughts, either as dialogue, or as 'inner speech'; they are a pervasive feature of literary fiction, but are less common in oral stories and children's fiction. Here for example are the opening paragraphs from



Grahame Greene's novel *The Quiet American* text [5]. This segment of the novel is presented as a dispassionate recount. Like much literary fiction it begins without an Orientation, as though the reader is already familiar with the setting.

[5] literary recount from *The Quiet American*

**Record**

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

Greene 1955/73:11

As this example illustrates, reflections tend to be on the meaning of activities for the protagonist; the activity is construed as a token, and its value is given by the reflection. Although this example is in first person, reflections are equally common in third person. The following example [6] is from a short story that has been used for subject English examinations in Australian secondary schools.

[6] literary narrative from *The Weapon*

**Orientation**

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

Brown 1984

This example displays the contrast between a narrator's comments on a field of activity, and a protagonist's reflection on its meaning. This story is used in Martin 1996 to illustrate another level of phase analysis, in which two or more fields are woven into a literary narrative (see also Macken-Horarik 1996, 2003, Rothery 1994). While the phase types described above are used, as in other stories, to carry the story forward and engage the reader, they may also realise multiple fields in the story that are continually interrupted to manipulate expectancy. In the text [6] above, these include the field of Dr Graham's academic work, which is interrupted by the domestic field of reflections on his son, a disruption that is explicitly signalled by concessive *But*. As noted earlier, phases may be specific to the field of a particular story, and this is illustrated by the shifts in field in this literary narrative. The following extract [6'] shows both levels of phase analysis, along with

narrative staging. Each expected course, that is frustrated by the interruption, is also given in brackets.

[6'] from *The Weapon*

#### Orientation

##### work activity

setting The room was quiet in the dimness of early evening. Dr James Graham, key scientist of a very important project, sat in his favourite chair, thinking. It was so still that he could hear the turning of pages in the next room as his son leafed through a picture book.

comment Often Graham did his best work, his most creative thinking, under these circumstances, sitting alone in an unlighted room in his own apartment after the day's regular work.

[EXPECTING: and tonight he was working on a particularly interesting problem...]

##### interrupted by domestic activity

problem But tonight his mind would not work constructively. Mostly he thought about his mentally arrested son - his only son - in the next room.

reflection The thoughts were loving thoughts, not the bitter anguish he had felt years ago when he had first learned of the boy's condition. The boy was happy; wasn't that the main thing? And to how many men is given a child who will always be a child, who will not grow up to leave him? Certainly that was a rationalization, but what is wrong with rationalization when it...

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

#### Complication

##### interrupted by service activity

events - The doorbell rang. Graham rose and turned on lights in the almost-dark room before he went through the hallway to the door.

reaction He was not annoyed; tonight, at this moment, almost any interruption to his thoughts was welcome.

events He opened the door. A stranger stood there: he said, 'Dr Graham? My name is Niemand; I'd like to talk to you. May I come in a moment?'

description Graham looked at him. He was a small man, nondescript, obviously harmless - possibly a reporter or an insurance agent.

reaction But it didn't matter what he was. Graham found himself saying, 'Of course. Come in, Mr Niemand.' A few minutes of conversation, he justified himself by thinking, might divert his thoughts and clear his mind.

events 'Sit down,' he said, in the living room. 'Care for a drink?'

Niemand said, 'No. thank you.' He sat in the chair; Graham sat on the sofa.

The small man interlocked his fingers; he leaned forward. He said, ...

[EXPECTING: 'Dr Graham, it's a pleasure to be here this evening. Thank-you very much for agreeing to talk with me...]

##### interrupted by political activity

problem ...'Dr Graham, you are the man whose scientific work is more likely than that of any other man to end the human race's chance for survival.'

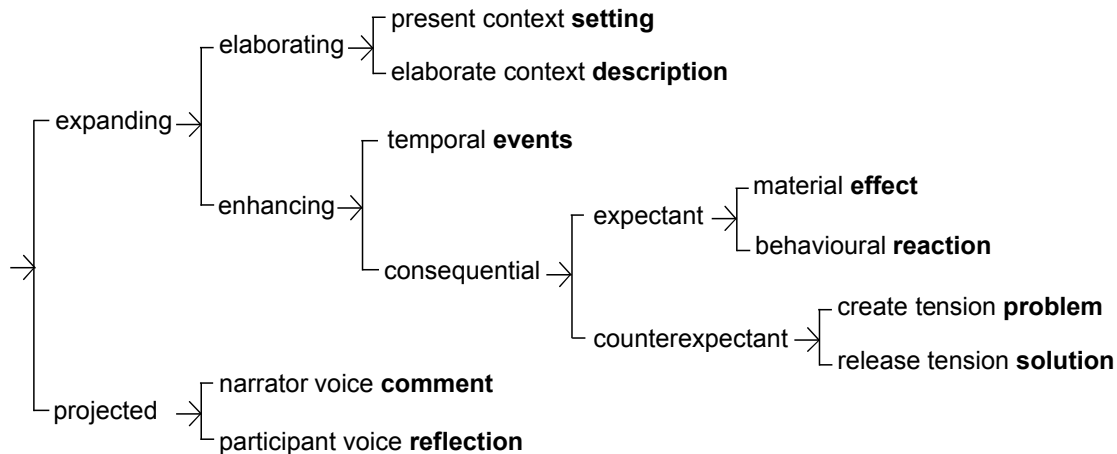
reaction A crackpot, Graham thought. Too late now he realized that he should have asked the man's business before admitting him. It would be an embarrassing interview - he disliked being rude, yet only rudeness was effective...

Brown 1984

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

These are a few brief examples of the application of story phase analysis, although many more are possible. The types of story phases described above are set out in Figure 9. They are grouped according to their logical relation to the preceding phase in the story sequence, using the logicosemantic categories of expansion and projection. They are distinguished firstly on whether they expand the activity sequence or are projected by it, secondly whether the type of expansion is enhancing or elaborating, and thirdly whether the type of enhancement is time or consequence. Within these groupings, each phase type is specified by its particular function.

Figure 9: Common options in story phases



Elaborating phases establish and expand contexts and characters, while enhancing phases carry the story forward in time. Events phases do so without an implication of consequence or concession. On the other hand, reactions are behavioural/attitudinal consequences that are expected by preceding phases, and effect phases are material consequences (less common in stories and not exemplified above). Problems counter positive expectancy, while solutions counter negative expectancy created by problems. In contrast to these expansions on the story line, projecting phases intrude into the sequence of activities, interrupting its flow to comment or reflect. While most story phases are equally common in oral and written stories, reflection often dominates in literary fiction, where the focus is on inner development of characters.

Larger phases, as illustrated in text [7] are perhaps best modelled as complexes of the phases set out in Figure 9. Alternatively, Gregory 1985: 204 suggests that the scales of phases identified in a text is a matter of delicacy. However if smaller phases are treated as more delicate specifications of larger phases, where does the analysis stop at either pole? Macro-genres may then be modelled as the most general categories, with messages, or perhaps grammatical elements as most delicate. Instead the rank hierarchy proposed above nets in multiple perspectives on structures at each discourse rank. Along the lines proposed in Martin 1994 and Martin & Rose 2006, of macro-genres as series of logically related genres, we might term larger segments at phase rank as 'macro-phases', consisting of series of logically related phases.<sup>iii</sup>

### 3 Phases in other genres

More work has been done to date on types of phases in stories than other genres, at least partly to meet the common expectation that the English curriculum is the primary site for teaching reading and writing. However descriptions of phases in other genres have also identified a range of types that are sensitive to variations in both genre and field. This work is exemplified briefly as follows, firstly with an exposition that illustrates textual, ideational and interpersonal patterns in phases, and secondly with a set of science reports and explanations that foreground patterns of field.

The exposition [7] is an extract from *Whitewash*, a collection of essays by liberal Australian historians, replying to the conservative Keith Windschuttle's attack on their revision of Australian history as a violent conquest, a revision that had contested the traditional history of European colonisation as a peaceful settlement of a vacant land. Windschuttle set out to demolish this revision, in his 2002 book *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, with the enthusiastic support of a neo-conservative government and media. This extract is from historian Robert Boyce's essay in reply. Boyce provides two supporting Arguments for his Thesis, and within each Argument stage there is a 'grounds' for it and a 'conclusion' (cf analysis in Martin & Rose 2003, of an exposition from Desmond Tutu's 1999 book *No Future without Forgiveness*). The Argument stages are explicitly signalled as two contrasting reasons, *First... And almost the opposite...* underlined below. But within the grounds phases, the two Arguments follow different courses. In the first, Boyce states his grounds up front, that *two decades of government records have enormous gaps*, supported with two sets of 'examples'. In the second, his grounds are more controversial, that Tasmania's exalted founding father Governor Arthur started to record frontier killings *to ensure that 'blame' was widely shared*. This grounds appears only at the end of an 'explanation', and is then hedged with a series of 'qualifications'.

[7] exposition from *Whitewash*

#### Thesis

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

#### Argument1

grounds First, despite *Fabrication's* claim that 'except for a handful of gaps, there are good records of the activities of almost the entire colonial population from 1803 to the 1840s', it was not until 1824 that Governor Arthur instituted a comprehensive system of public record-keeping. ***The preceding two decades of government records have enormous gaps.***

examples1 So few records of Governor Collin's time (1804-10) survive that in 1925 his burial cask was re-opened in a search for long-lost documents. In 1820, Commissioner Bigge heard many excuses about this topic. Governor Davey (1813-17) claimed he had sent most of the many documents missing from his term of office to the Earl of Harrowby. One senior civil servant gave the excuse to the commissioner that 'very considerable difficulties arise from the insufficiency of stationery.' Another claimed that 'about a year ago a case containing all my papers was stolen.'

- examples2 Government record keeping improves somewhat with the arrival of Sorrell in 1817, except in relation to documents pertaining to Aborigines. Sorrell virtually never mentions Aborigines in his dispatches to London and ignores them altogether in his lengthy hand-over report to Arthur in 1824. Even the meticulous Arthur largely followed the same practice of keeping London out of the Aboriginal issue until 1827. Quite simply, like any good administrator, neither Sorrell nor Arthur actively sought information in those areas they would rather not know about, let alone apprise a meddling London of the uncomfortable facts. Only when the level of killing became such a prominent public issue from 1827 onwards, with such a dramatic impact on profit, colonisation and the operation of the penal system, did Arthur change tack.
- conclusion Relying for the most part on the official government record for information on the Aborigines before 1827 is therefore grossly inadequate. *Fabrication's* claim that 'Few colonial encounters anywhere in the world are as well documented as those of Van Dieman's Land' is only true for the years 1827 to 1832.

### Argument2

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

### Reiteration of Thesis

By relying to such a degree on the government record of the time, Windschuttle remains ignorant of the period until 1827 and inherits This is true not only of the direct conflict with the Aborigines but also of the realities of European life outside the main settlements. The narrow selection of sources results in a profound ignorance of the basics of Van Demonian economy, society and politics, which in turn leads to a series of elementary errors.

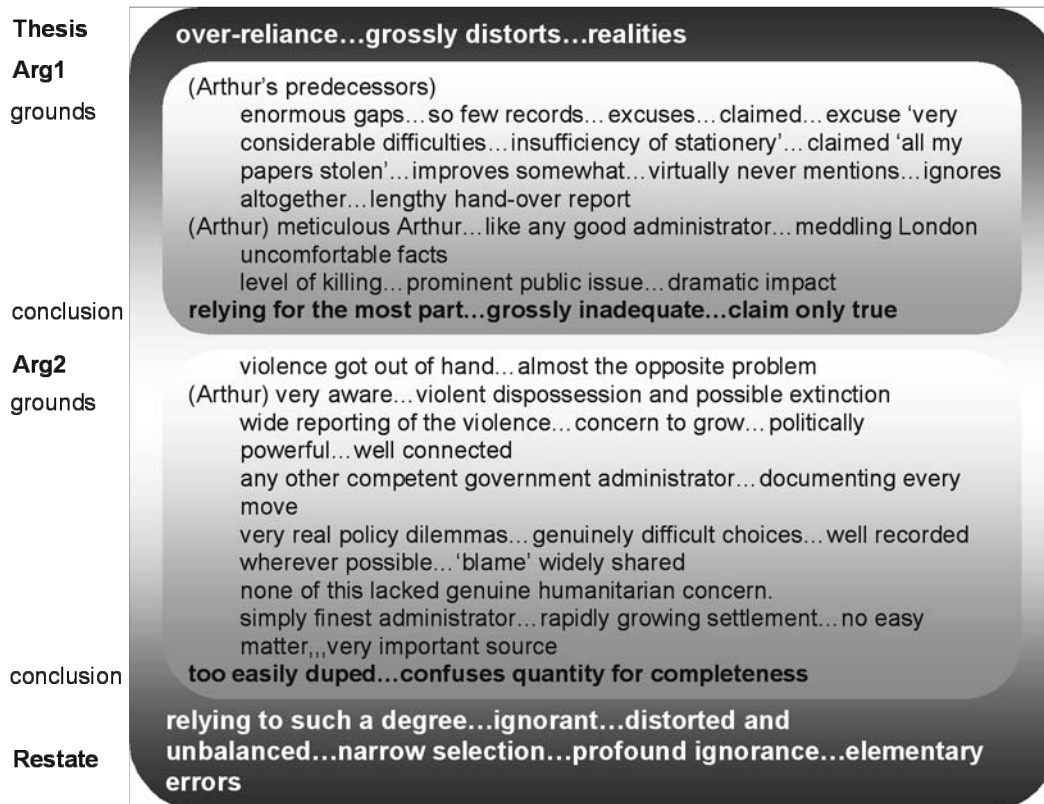
Boyce 2003: 27-29

From a textual perspective, the Thesis and Reiteration function as the macroTheme and macroNew of the text, predicting and distilling both its field and tenor. The grounds for each Argument might be termed a macro-phase, each including two phases logically related by elaboration (example1), time (example2), cause (explanation) and concession (qualification).

From an interpersonal perspective, Boyce's purpose is to expose Windschuttle as a dupe, from his Thesis that *over-reliance on government records grossly distorts Windschuttle's understanding*, to the Reiteration of Windschuttle's *profound ignorance*. In between he plays to Tasmanian readers' loyalties to Governor Arthur. In the first grounds phase, he judges Arthur's predecessors as dissembling, but praises Arthur as 'meticulous', before condemning Windschuttle's methods and claims in the first conclusion. The second grounds

are then liberally peppered with praise for Arthur, contrasting with the condemnation of Windschuttle in its conclusion. These patterns are displayed in an extract of the text's appraisals in Figure 10. The diagram illustrates how judgements of Windschuttle (in bold) in the Thesis and Reiteration scope forward and backward over the whole text (indicated by shading), while judgements of him in each conclusion phase scope back over the preceding Argument.

Figure 10: Pulses of attitude in phases of text [7]



For a rich description of such scoping prosodies of appraisal in academic writing, see Hood & Martin 2005. Phases in factual texts in the natural and social sciences are illustrated here with three types of reports and three explanations. The first is a descriptive report [8], from the field of zoology.

#### [8] Goannas

##### Classification

Australia is home to 25 of the world's 30 monitor lizard species. In Australia, monitor lizards are called goannas.

##### Description

###### appearance

Goannas have flattish bodies, long tails and strong jaws. They are the only lizards with forked tongues, like a snake. Their necks are long and may have loose folds of skin beneath them. Their legs are long and strong, with sharp claws on their feet. Many goannas have stripes, spots and other markings that help to camouflage them. The largest species can grow to more than two metres in length.

###### diet

All goannas are daytime hunters. They run, climb and swim well. Goannas hunt small mammals, birds and other reptiles. They also eat dead animals. Smaller goannas eat insects, spiders and worms.

###### reproduction

Male goannas fight with each other in the breeding season. Females lay between two and twelve eggs.

The Description phases 'appearance', 'diet' and 'reproduction' are highly predictable in zoological reports, at least in pedagogic texts. Descriptive reports in other fields also often have predictable but different phase types. Ethnographic reports about groups of people are likely to include phases such as 'location', 'means of production', 'social organisation', 'religion' and so on. Geographic reports about countries typically include 'location', 'climate', 'population' etc. While the phases of the Description stage in descriptive reports vary with the field, Description phases in classifying and compositional reports are predicted by the genre: phases in classifying reports [9] are 'types' of the phenomenon described, and phases in compositional reports [10] are its 'parts'.

#### [9] classifying report *Producers and consumers*

##### **Classification: class**

We have seen that organisms in an ecosystem are first classified as producers or as consumers of chemical energy.

##### **Description: types**

- type1 Producers in ecosystems are typically photosynthetic organisms, such as plants, algae and cyanobacteria. These organisms build organic matter (food from simple inorganic substances by photosynthesis).
- type2 Consumers in an ecosystem obtain their energy in the form of chemical energy present in their 'food'. All consumers depend directly or indirectly on producers for their supply of chemical energy.
- type3 Organisms that eat the organic matter of producers or their products (seeds, fruits) are called primary consumers, for example, leaf-eating koalas (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), and nectar-eating honey possums (*Tarsipes rostratus*).
- type4 Organisms that eat primary consumers are known as secondary consumers. Wedge-tailed eagles that prey on wallabies are secondary consumers.
- type5 Some organisms consume the organic matter of secondary consumers and are labeled tertiary consumers. Ghost bats (*Macroderma gigas*) capture a variety of prey, including small mammals.

Kinnear & Martin 2004: 38

#### [10] compositional report *Transport in the body*

##### **Classification: whole**

Transport systems are needed inside the body of all living things. In humans the blood or circulatory system carries digested food and other materials around the body.

##### **Description: parts**

- parts The blood contains 20 billion tiny cells floating in a liquid called *plasma*. The cells are of two different kinds *red cells* which carry oxygen and *white cells* which attack germs. Platelets which are microscopic discs, help in blood clotting.
- parts Red blood cells are made in bone marrow. They live for about 100 days and then they are destroyed by the liver. The bone marrow makes new cells to replace the destroyed cells. White blood cells protect the body against toxins and infections.
- parts The chemicals into which food has been broken-down are carried to all the body's cells in the blood. Blood also carries waste away from the cells.
- parts The blood moves through a series of tubes called *blood vessels*. The tubes could be compared with the road network of a country. However there are no head-on crashes as the tubes are strictly one-way.
- parts Blood is pumped around the body by the heart. Tubes called *arteries* carry blood away from the heart. Except for the artery to the lungs they carry bright red blood, rich in oxygen. Tubes called *veins* bring blood back to the heart. Except for the vein from the lungs they carry dark red blood, short of oxygen.

parts The smallest arteries and veins are linked by tiny tubes called *capillaries*. Through their fine walls, oxygen and the chemicals from food are delivered to the cells all over the body, and waste products are collected.

Watson 1999:94

The anatomical report [10] illustrates a common pattern of compositional reports, decomposing the structure and function of a whole system into its component structures and their functions, often from largest to smallest.

Explanation genres vary in the logical relations between phases of the Explanation stage and the Phenomenon it explains. Sequential explanations involve a series of implicational steps unfolding in succession. In factorial explanations the Phenomenon is an outcome from multiple contributing factors. In consequential explanations it is an input leading to multiple consequences.

### [11] sequential explanation *Fire – a natural process*

#### Phenomenon

Since the advent of the present vegetation pattern around 10,000 years ago, fire has been crucial in modifying the Mallee environment. Regeneration of the Mallee depends on periodic fires.

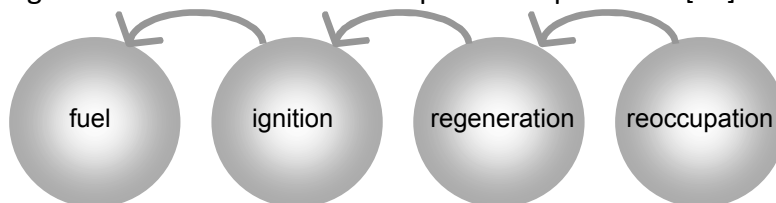
#### Explanation: sequence

- step Old mallee produces a build-up of very dry litter and the branches themselves are often festooned with streamers of bark inviting a flame up to the canopy of leaves loaded with volatile eucalyptus oil.
- step A dry electrical storm in summer is all that is needed to start a blaze, which, with a very hot northerly wind behind it will race unchecked through the bush.
- step The next rain will bring an explosion of ground flora; the summer grasses and forbs not able to compete under a mallee canopy, will break out in a riot of colour. New shoots of mallee will spring from the lignotuber and another cycle of succession will begin.
- step The dead branches become hollows for Major Mitchell cockatoos and other birds on whose eggs the goanna feeds. The more open bush provides green 'pick' for kangaroos and emus. The low shrubs give a home for zebra finches, but the abundant litter need by the mallee fowl to build a nest is no longer available.

Corrigan et al 1991:100

The serial structure of the explanatory steps in text [11] is diagrammed in Figure 12, with each implicational step dependent on the preceding step.

Figure 12: Serial structure of sequential explanation [11]



### [12] factorial explanation *The mulga tree*

#### Phenomenon: outcome

How can plant life grow so well in such dry, hot and infertile places? The mulga tree likes long droughts – if it is too wet mulga trees will not grow.

#### Explanation: factors

- factor The shape of the mulga tree is the key to it surviving dry times. The branches of the mulga fan out from the bottom – like a huge half moon. The branching leaves and stem catch the rain and it



trickles down to the soil. This traps more rainfall than if the tree grew straight up. The mulga catches more water than a gum tree. The water is stored in the soil to be used by the tree during the next drought.

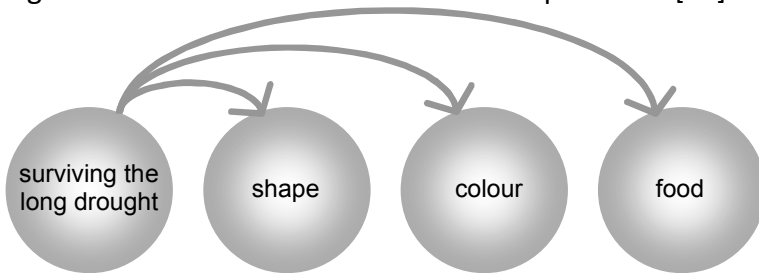
factor Even the mulga’s leaves help it to survive the drought. They are a silvery grey colour. The sun’s rays bounce off the leaves helping the plant to stay cool.

factor Also the mulga tree makes its own food by dropping thousands of leaves.

Scott & Robinson 1993: 22

The structure of factorial explanations is orbital rather than serial, as the outcome is the nucleus of the structure, which is separately dependent on each of the contributing factors, diagrammed for text [12] in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Orbital structure of factorial explanation [12]



[13] consequential explanation *Woodlands of the south*

**Phenomenon: input**

In southern Australia the woodlands have been cleared to plant crops like wheat and other cereals. Sheep and cattle are grazed on introduced pastures.

**Explanation: consequences**

consequence When the land was first cleared small clumps of trees or single trees were left for shade. Today these trees are reaching the end of their lives and dying.

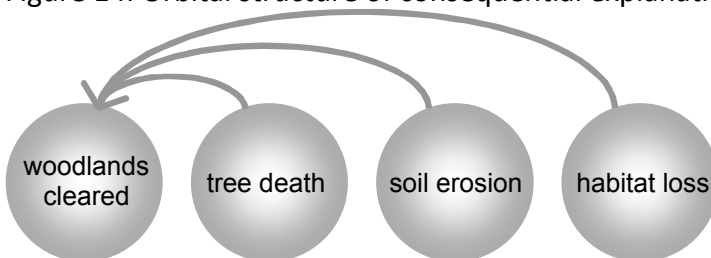
consequence The clearing of the trees has caused problems in using the land for farming. Without trees the land has been eroded by wind and rain. Today farmers are replanting the trees to try to stop this erosion.

consequence Animals like the common dunnart rely on the fallen logs for shelter. The logs of old trees have hollows in them and the small animals of the woodlands hide in these. If these logs are cleared and removed the animals no longer have places to shelter.

Scott & Robinson 1993: 114

The structure of consequential explanations is likewise orbital rather than serial, but in this case each consequence is separately dependent on the input, diagrammed for text [13] in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Orbital structure of consequential explanations



## Conclusion

In the act of teaching reading across curricula and educational sectors, it has become necessary to refine and extend our analysis of genres. The entry point for teaching reading is through the phases in which a discourse unfolds. These phases are used to scaffold learners into recognising patterns of field and tenor unfolding through a genre, and to produce such patterns in their own writing. Descriptive research across genres has revealed types of phases that are consistently predicted by genre and field. The best described are those for stories, in which a small set of story phases have been found to constitute the basic building blocks with which storytellers and writers construct their texts, from the simplest oral stories to elaborate literacy fiction. More work is required to expand this research across other genres, but a number of common phases types have been established for genres in the natural and social sciences. This descriptive work has in turn required development of our theoretical models, particularly with respect to discourse semantic structures. Work on discourse semantic systems has frequently assumed various scales of discourse structure, through which other systems are realised. Theorising the position of phases in the model has suggested a discourse semantic rank scale, in which phases are intermediate between generic stages and messages. They are construed in the model as information waves carrying pulses of field and tenor; so they can be analysed from the metafunctional perspectives of IDEATION and CONJUNCTION, as sequences of activities and lexical relations construing an unfolding field; of APPRAISAL as concentrations of attitude that scope over adjacent phases and stages; and of PERIODICITY, as the initial and culminative phases that predict and distil a text's field and tenor, or as the initial and culminative messages in a phase predict and distil its own pulse of field and tenor.

These discourse semantic patterns are the focus of attention in the reading pedagogy designed from this theoretical base (Martin & Rose 2005). The entry point from genre, field and phases opens the door for all students to rapidly learn to read and write texts at the level of complexity expected of their level of academic study. This pedagogy has been explicitly designed for all learners to access the meaning patterns of literate texts, and so has significant potential for redistributing access to the discursive resources of their society. This action research program and the genre based writing projects from which it grew, are outstanding examples of the power of pedagogic practice that is grounded in a functional theory of language, that is in turn informed by careful observation of language learning in home and school (Halliday 1975, 1993, 2004, Martin 1998, 1999b, 2000, Martin & Rothery 1990, Painter 1984, 1989, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2004, Rothery 1989, 1996). Systemic functional linguistics is the paradigm example of such a dynamic theory, that continues to evolve in the contexts of the action research it informs.

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<sup>i</sup> Phase transitions in stories are also identified in a pragmatic analysis by Ji 2002, using marked Themes as criteria, although without using Halliday's terms, approximately at the stage SFL genre research had reached around 1980. Ji's analysis of story phases is no more delicate than 'episodes'.

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

<sup>iii</sup> The term macro-phases was suggested by Sally Humphrey in personal communication.