A person in a white shirt is standing on the left side of the frame, gesturing with their right hand towards a large screen. The screen displays a green field with a white box containing the text 'Challenges our social structure?'.

Research-based Academic Writing: Focus on Practice

Writing Workshop
UBC LLED, Faculty of Education
January 17, 2014

Alfredo A. Ferreira
PhD Candidate
Language & Literacy Education Department

Workshop Aims and Process

- support students' research-based academic writing with opportunities for participants to read, reflect on, and revise their writing using explicit knowledge of academic genres and language.
- increase participants' awareness of the links in highly-valued writing between purpose, meaning, and wording.
- to be practical and focused. *Participants will work with a sample of their writing they bring to the workshop (hard or digital copy).*

Process:

- identify the purpose of the writing in context (e.g., narration, description, explanation, argument, discussion, etc.)
- link this with the overall staging of the writing, and its wording at micro level.
- looking for ways to support the message by applying wording strategies in
 - organizing the text,
 - packing/unpacking of the ideas,
 - if time permits, evaluating knowledge claims

PART 1:

The purpose of the writing in context (e.g., narration, description, explanation, argument, discussion, etc.) is inscribed in the way the text reflects and enacts its context

Preview:

Text-types or genres are idealized/conventionalized for convenience of recognition (and so, for instruction)

Actual texts are complex in their purposes

However, identifying the main and embedded types of genres that go into a text can highlight its main purposes and sub-purposes.

Situated Cases:

identifying features of context of writing

You have had an accident while walking between classes and you need to write a short incident report.

1. What's the content of the report ie the representation of what's going on, with who, under what circumstances? (FIELD)
2. What is the nature of the social relations between writer and readers, and how will the writing affect these? (TENOR)
3. What meaning-making modality/ies is involved (speech, writing, visuals)? How will the organization of the report support its Field and Tenor features in order to achieve a coherent message? (MODE)

SUMMARY Question: what is the purpose of the report and how might its F, T, M features support the purpose?

Situated Cases:

identifying features of context of writing

You have had an accident while walking between classes and you need to write a short incident report.

The accident took place in the foyer of the Scarfe Bldg. I was doing some last minute research on my iphone as I was walking to class. Because of this distraction, I did not notice the librarian's cart, which I ran into and toppled over. This resulted in slight damage to several books, a twisted ankle, and a useful new insight from an open sociology book on which my head had landed. I was helped to the nurse's station by several students, where my ankle was wrapped and I quickly jotted down the new insights.
Stupid iphone ;) !

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What is the purpose of this report?
Consider its (1) FIELD and (2) TENOR features.

Situated Cases: identifying features of context of writing: **MODE, macro**
How does **the organization** of the report in terms of **macro stages** determine its purpose in context, and generate a coherent message? Is it a info report, explanation, discussion, etc..?

The accident took place in the foyer of the Scarfe Bldg.

Descriptive report of ~ ?

I was doing some last minute research on my iphone as I was walking to class.

Description, event/time (1)

Because of this distraction, I did not notice the librarian's cart,

embedded explanation (a)

which I ran into and toppled over.

Description, event/time (2)

This resulted in slight damage to several books, a twisted ankle, and a useful new insight from an open sociology book on which my head had landed.

embedded explanation (b)

I was helped to the nurse's station by several students, where my ankle was wrapped and I quickly jotted down the new insights.

Description, event/time (3)

Stupid iphone ;)!

embedded narrative coda (a)

TASK: EVALUATE the appropriateness of the writer's choices of staging the text

TASK:

Using the context factors of FIELD, TENOR and MODE, and descriptions of genres (explanation, exposition etc)

Identify:

- (a) the text-types/genres of your sample writing and
- (b) its purpose(s) as reflected in the draft

Consider:

How well do your choices of text staging reflect the purposes you aim for in your text, given its readership and other features of its context.

Specifically, does the opening section of the writing signal to the reader the purpose of this section, giving some indication of the method of development of the idea (ie by description of something, arguments for a position, comparison of views etc)?

Situated Cases:

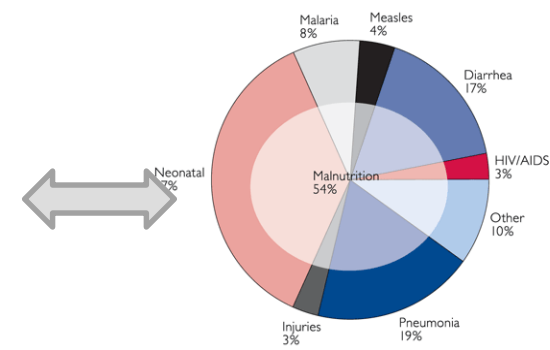
identifying features of context of writing

You have been asked to write a report about power is organized in a workplace you visited in case study research for your thesis.

1. What's the content of the report ie what's going on, with who, under what circumstances? (FIELD)
2. What is the nature of the social relations between writer and readers, and how will the writing reflect and affect these relations? (TENOR)
3. What meaning-making modality/ies is involved (speech, writing, visuals)? How will the form of the report support its Field and Tenor features in order to achieve a coherent message? (MODE)

Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”

Exploring variation in the packing of information and logical relations

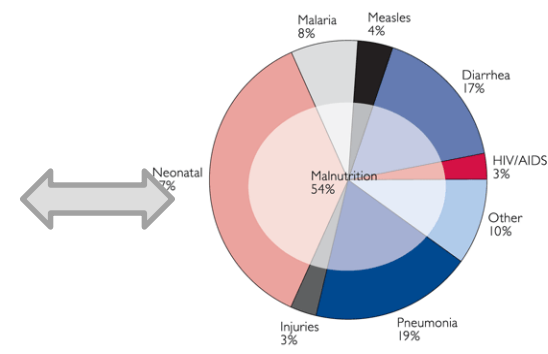


speech

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES			sentence			
1 st clause				2 nd clause		
noun phrase: subject of 1 st clause	verb	adverb phrase / circumstance		noun phrase subject	verb	noun phrase object
1. The children	are growing	well	because	they	have received	medical treatment.

Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”

Exploring variation in the packing of information and logical relations



speech
writing
science

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES			sentence			
1 st clause				2 nd clause		
noun phrase: subject of 1 st clause	verb	adverb phrase / circumstance		noun phrase subject	verb	noun phrase object
1. The children	are growing	well	because	they	have received	medical treatment.
2. Children's growth rate	benefits	from medical treatment.	<i>Space for making meaning in clauses & sentences that is freed up by using grammatical packing</i>			
3. The benefits of medical treatment to children's growth rate ...						

Micro: representing information (ie content & reasoning) at an appropriate degree of density

Calculate grammatical intricacy

But considering the Japanese experience, this interpretation of the liquidity trap is counter-intuitive. So what is wrong with the Friedman rule? In fact, in this analysis, we assume that prices are perfectly flexible, so food in restaurants and haircut services have their prices changes only infrequently, which means that people will care about changes in prices because it influences what firms decide in terms of demand and production. In this case, monetary policy has a stabilizing role, because it adjusts the level of interest rate. But as I explained before, ZLB creates a lot of trouble for the central bank as it tries to carry this stabilizing role through monetary policy.

Sentences:

Clauses:

GI:

This interpretation of the liquidity trap is counter-intuitive in view of the Japanese experience, highlighting the shortcomings of the Friedman rule. Under the assumption of perfectly flexible prices, with infrequent price changes in services such as hospitality and hairdressing, consumer concern about price change influences both demand and production decisions of firms. In this case, however, as noted above, the stabilizing role of central bank monetary policy through interest rate adjustment is seriously hampered by ZLB.

Sentences:

Clauses:

GI:

Micro: representing information (ie content & reasoning) at an appropriate degree of density: Calculate grammatical intricacy

KEY: Boundary between clauses: /
Boundary between sentences: //

But considering the Japanese experience, /
this interpretation of the liquidity trap is
counter-intuitive. // So what is wrong with
the Friedman rule? // In fact, in this analysis,
we assume that prices are perfectly
flexible, / so food in restaurants and haircut
services have their prices changes only
infrequently, / which means that people will
care about changes in prices, / because it
influences what firms decide in terms of
demand and production. // In this case,
monetary policy has a stabilizing role, /
because it adjusts the level of interest rate. //
But as I explained before, / ZLB creates a lot
of trouble for the central bank, / as it tries to
carry this stabilizing role through monetary
policy. //

Sentences: 5 Clauses: 11

$11/5 = 2.2$ GI: 2.2

This GI suggests that the register/style of the writing is close to speech-like (ie not sufficiently dense with info, chatty with the info flow too frequently broken up with logical connectors).

This interpretation of the liquidity trap
is counter-intuitive in view of the
Japanese experience, / highlighting
the shortcomings of the Friedman
rule. // Under the assumption of
perfectly flexible prices, with
infrequent price changes in services
such as hospitality and hairdressing,
consumer concern about price
change influences both demand and
production decisions of firms. // In this
case, however, as noted above, / the
stabilizing role of central bank
monetary policy through interest rate
adjustment is seriously hampered by
ZLB. //

Sentences: 3 Clauses: 5

$5/3 = 1.6$ GI: 1.6

In terms of GI, this text has a more appropriately dense level of information, with logical relations packed into the noun phrases rather than worded explicitly in conjunctions such as 'so, because, but, as' etc, as in the first version

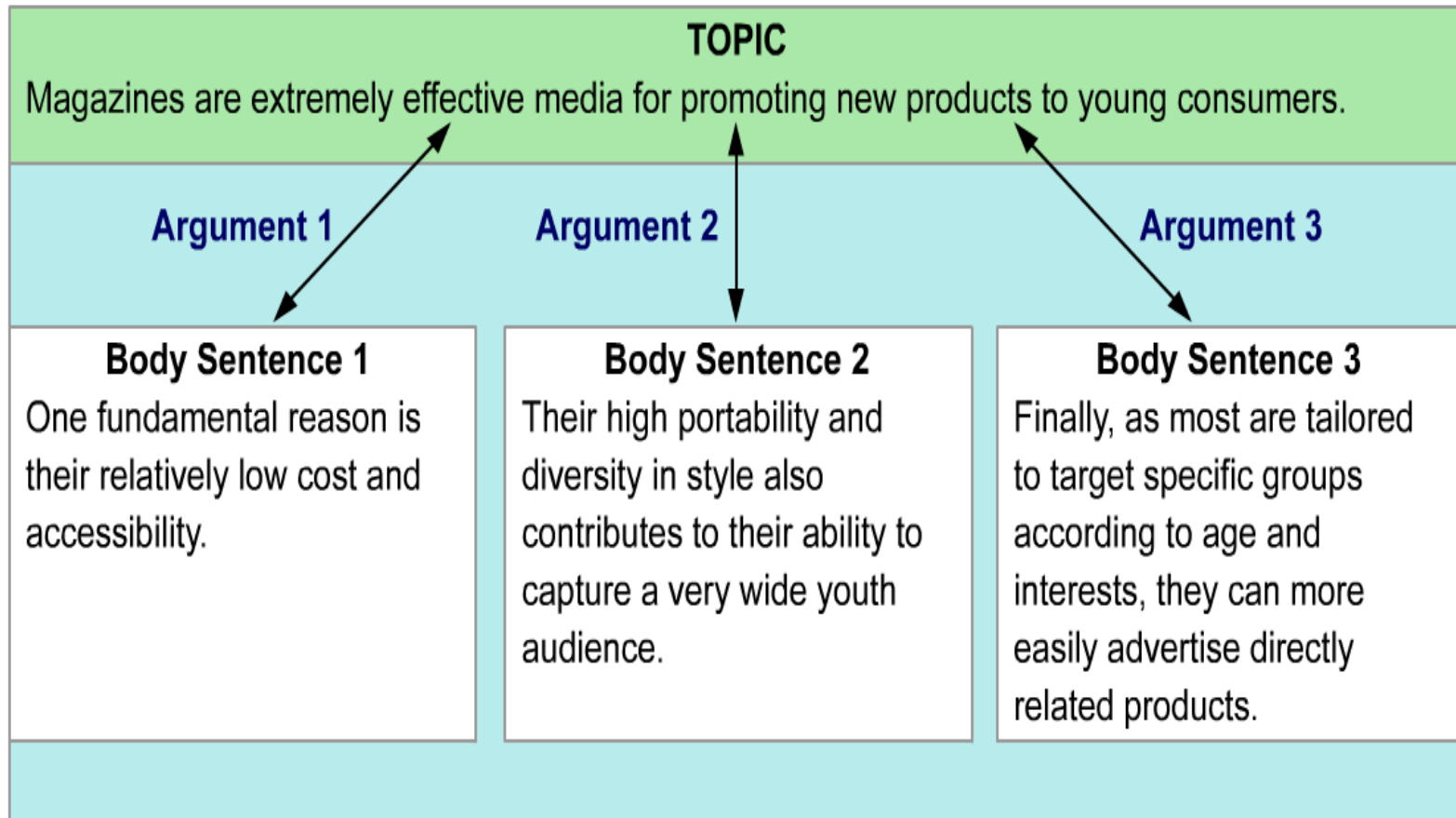
MODE: the medium of language and its organization.

Using Hyper-Themes or topic sentences

TASK:

- a. which part of the text below previews its contents, purpose?
- B. what might be an appropriate REVIEW of this section? Write.

Preview;
topic
sentence



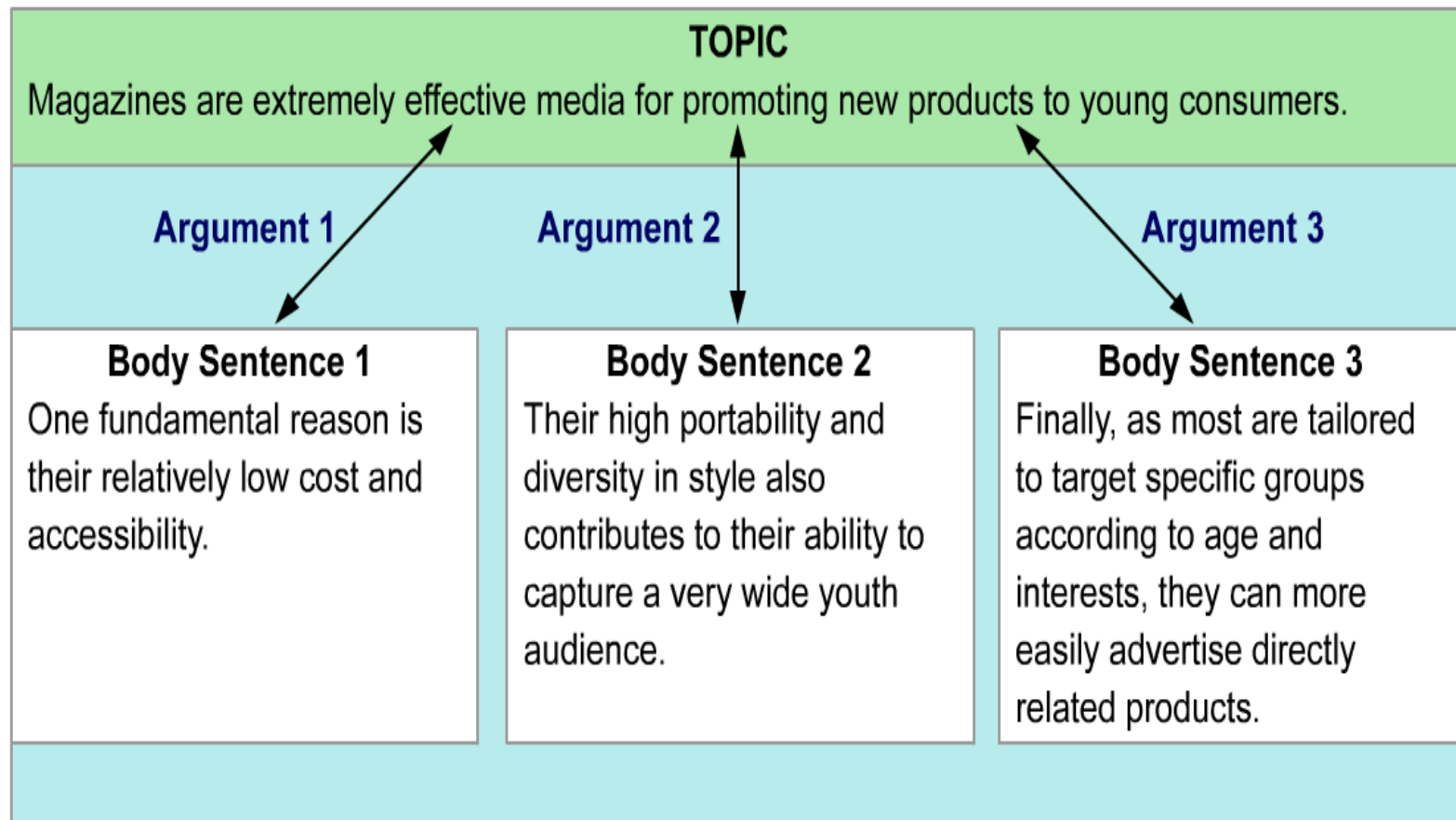
Hyper-Theme or topic sentences

TASK:

a. Are topics, issues etc previewed in your sample text?

B. Are they reviewed in any way at the end of the stage? If so, how does the review reflect what has been learned in the section?

Preview;
topic
sentence



THEME / NEW information order: organization at the clause level

KEY: **green highlighting** = clause themes (subject of the main verb), which should be information that is known to the reader.

Constant Theme



World of our senses 1

Our sensory experience of the world is complex, rich, detailed and immediate.

Most sensory experience through all five of our senses, appears to be effortless except under the most extreme conditions.

It is continuous and generally coherent during our waking lives, no matter what they are.

Experience of the material world is however, personal and individual; it becomes the person's own.

Linear Theme

World of our senses 2

Our experience of the material world is immediate, rich, detailed and complex.

This complexity is partly due to the information received through our different senses.

All five senses- sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste- work continuously and coherently in any individual's waking life.

This personalising of all sensory experience is what makes the outside material world our own.

Explanation

This is Pattern 1 where each sentence Theme develops given information from the previous Theme. This progression of an idea through all Themes shows the paragraph's focus.

Explanation

In Pattern 2 each Theme develops given information in a part of the previous New. This progression, New to Theme, builds up to the main point of paragraph.

Clause-level themes in academic texts

nb: Themes may seem New to *non-target* readers, but to readers in the field they will be either known or expected. Here's an example from a very technical text:

‘Severe Infections in HIV-Exposed Uninfected Infants: Clinical Evidence of Immunodeficiency’ Slogrove, A.L. et al (2010), *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics*, 56 ,2

KEY: clause-level themes in red

Methods

[...]

Pneumocystis jiroveci pneumonia (PCP) was diagnosed by immunofluorescence microscopy.

All infants with PCP were investigated for cytomegalovirus infection.

Whole blood was assayed for the pp65 antigen and **urine** was submitted for CMV culture.

Blood lymphocyte immunophenotyping for subset enumeration

was done on a Becton Dickinson FACSCalibur 4 color flowcytometer with a standard Becton Dickinson MultiTEST reagent panel of monoclonal antibodies (BD Biosciences, Rivia, South Africa)

Permission to publish was obtained from the Committee for Human Research, Stellenbosch University.

Given info

Given info

Biology: known part/
whole relation

Expected research
procedure

Expected ethics
procedure

Situated Cases: identifying features of context of writing: MODE, micro

TASK: discuss the writer's choice of clause-level themes (underlined below) in the incident report. How do these choices reflect the reader's expectations and knowledge about this text?

The accident took place in the foyer of the Scarfe Bldg.

I was doing some last minute research on my iphone
as I was walking to class.

Because of this distraction, I did not notice the librarian's cart,
which I ran into and toppled over.

This resulted in slight damage to several books, a twisted ankle, and a useful
new insight from an open sociology book on which my head had landed.

I was helped to the nurse's station by several students,
where my ankle was wrapped
and I quickly jotted down the new insights.

[It is a] Stupid iphone ;)!

Situated Cases: identifying features of context of writing: MODE, micro

TASK: discuss the writer's choice of clause-level themes (underlined below) in the incident report. How do these choices reflect the reader's expectations and knowledge about this text?
(answer: the themes, or points of departure of the message, are "The accident", the "I" who had the accident, the "ankle", all of which are appropriately predictable themes; the complex theme starting with the "Because..." phrase, naturalizes the cause of the accident as the "distraction" since what we place in the clause-initial theme position is made to appear as useful background information for whatever the clause presents as new info (new info in the clauses is shown below in red (verbs) and blue))

The accident took place in the foyer of the Scarfe Bldg.

I was doing some last minute research on my iphone
as I was walking to class.

Because of this distraction, I did not notice the librarian's cart,
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[It is a] Stupid iphone ;)!

TASK

(a) Read and discuss this paragraph for any strengths and weaknesses in information order.

(b) If there are problems, how can they be addressed?

(c) Read your text for info order, and revise as necessary

Several gaps may be identified in the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) research comparing organically grown and non-organically grown vegetables (FDA 2012).

Residues from fertilizers and pesticides found in non-organically grown vegetables are not considered by the FDA's study.

The higher quantity of beta-carotene found in the majority of organic vegetables is not reported in the main findings of the study.

The lack of a comparison of the same kinds of vegetables, grown organically and non-organically presents another serious flaw in the study.

Noticing and Fixing Problems with Flow

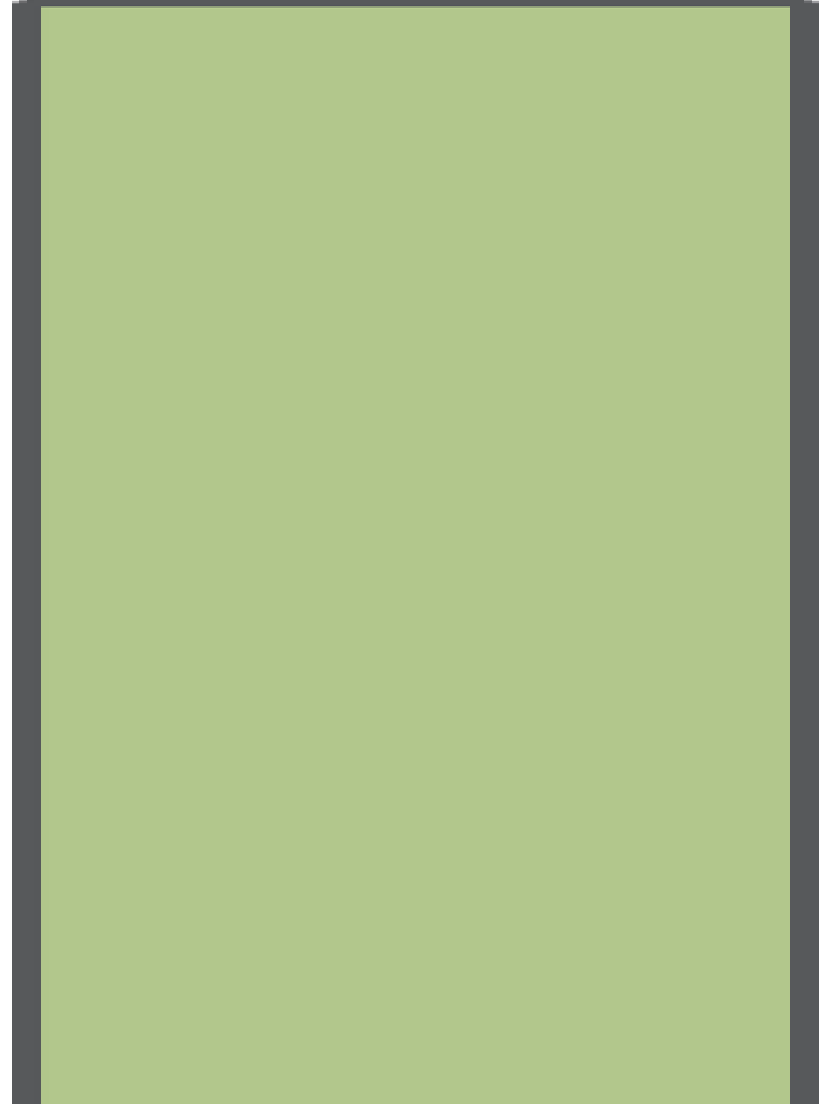
When you edit your writing, you may find that some sentences in the paragraphs don't flow easily. The paragraph may sound disjointed when read.

In this case, check if the Themes in the sentences have been given in a previous part of the text – especially in the News parts.

If there is information that is New to the reader in the Theme position, this may well be the source of the disruption in flow.

Strategy: Move information around in your sentences so that they maintain the structure of Known Information in the subject position and New information in the remainder of the sentence.

THANKS and all the best in your
writing careers!



Additional slides

Patterns of language in a message/text
correlate with its social context



*‘Yes well, legibility and correct punctuation might not
be “street”... but*

Systemic Functional Linguistics:

A theory of language

- Language is a resource for mediating social life, interpersonally and intrapersonally
- Language emerges from and evolves with meaning-making in human society
- Meanings are reflected in the functional structure of language at various scales of practice, from instances of meaning-making in texts to the open system of language as a meaning potential.

APPLICATIONS

Education/Literacy

- language & content
- language & context

Discourse analysis

- pragmatics & semantics
- sociological analysis
- legal
- clinical
- multimodal

Computer-aided communication

- text scanners
- automatic text generation

...

Co-dependency of language use & context

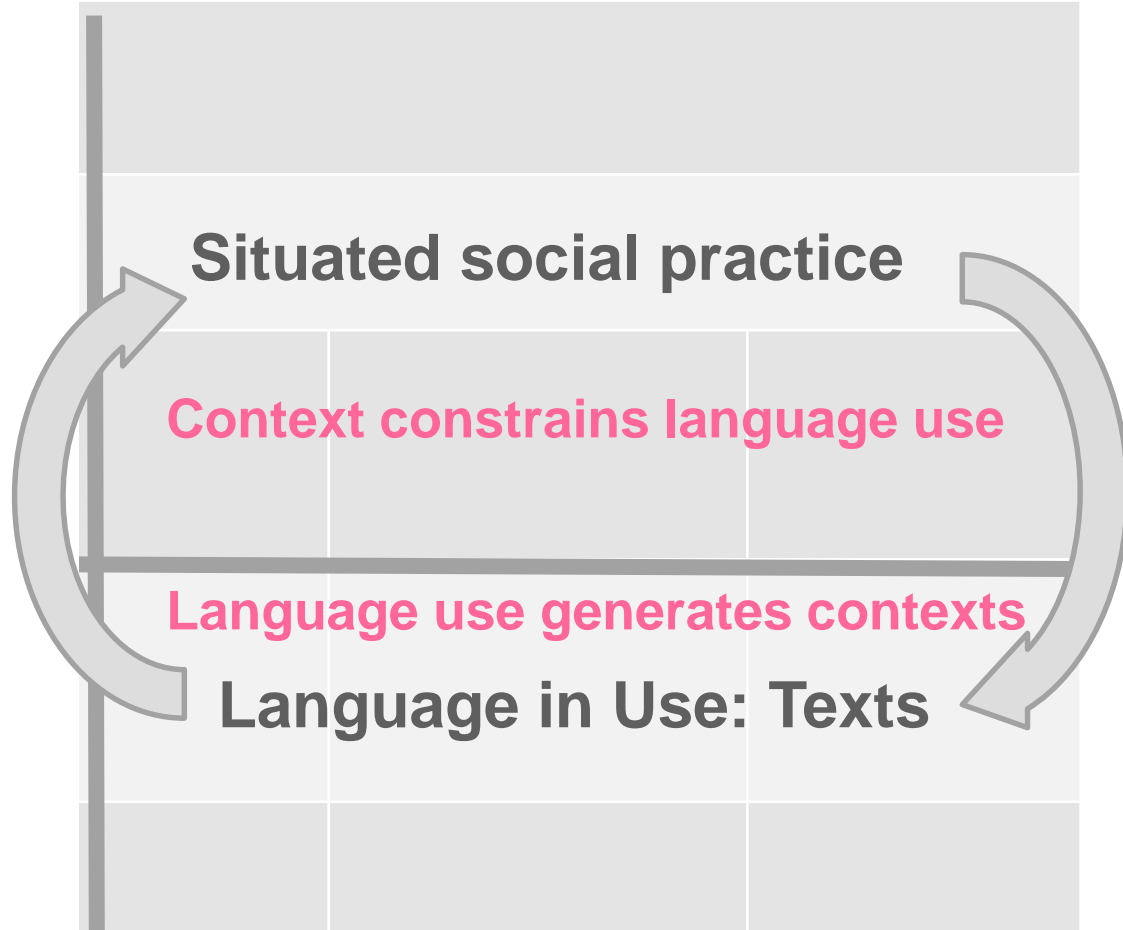
(Derewianka, 2012, p.133 - 137)



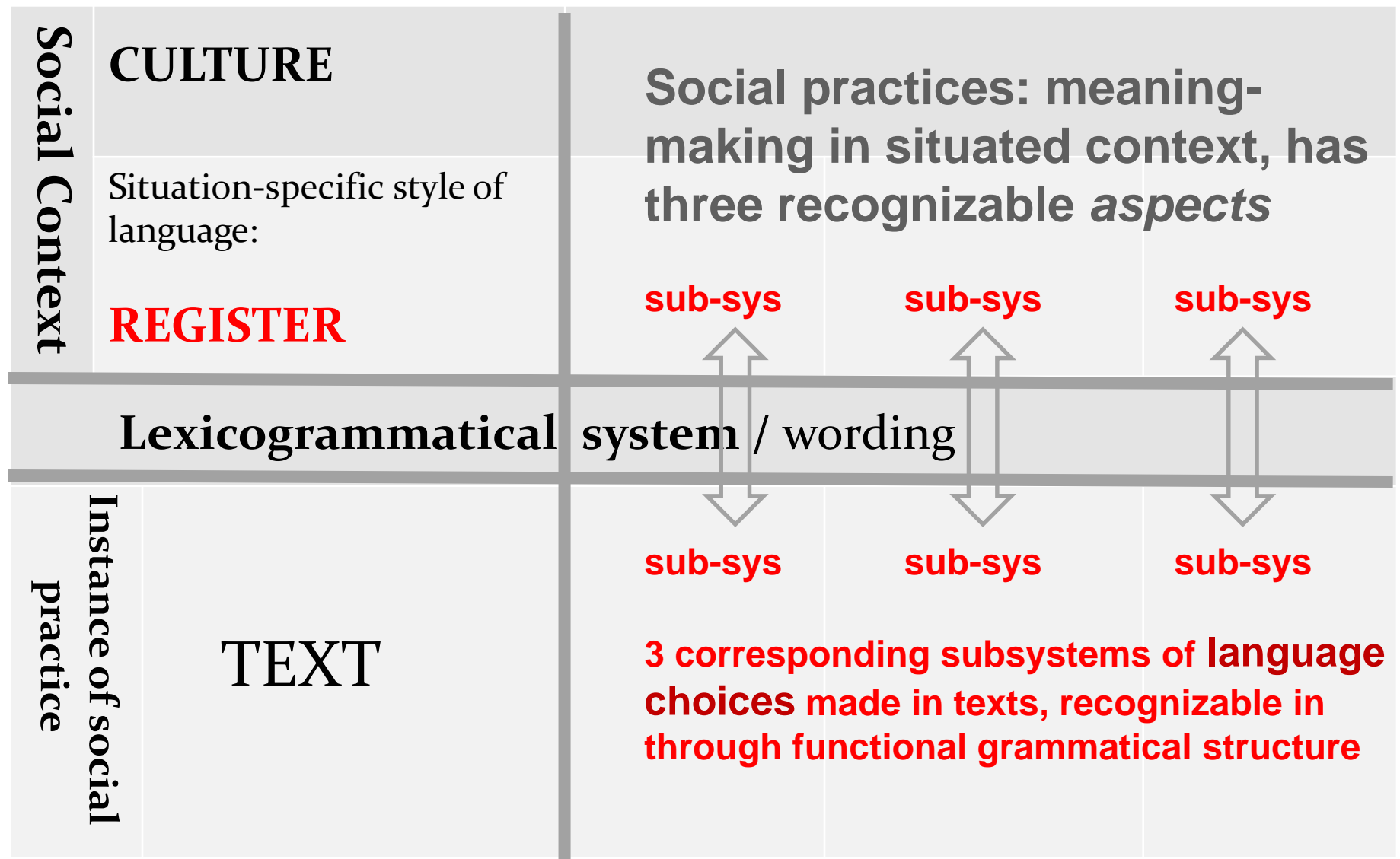
Well legibility and
correct punctuation
might not be “street”...
but that’s how I roll.

CONTEXT

TEXT



Well legibility and correct punctuation might not be “street”... but that’s how I roll.



Well legibility **and** correct punctuation might not **be** “street”...

(=)

but that 's [how I **roll**].

(=) CARRRIER ATTR VRB ATTRIBUTE (MATERIAL VRB: “I” =ACTOR)

Social context	CULTURE	Social practices: meaning-making in situated context, has three recognizable <i>aspects</i>		
	Situation-specific ways of using language: REGISTER	FIELD What's going on	Context sub-sys	Context sub-sys
Texts as <i>instances</i> meaning-making practice in context		Construing Experience Kinds of verb + related partic + circum Abstraction Logic	Language subsys	Language subsys

Well legibility and correct punctuation **might** not be
“street” ...

but that's how I roll.

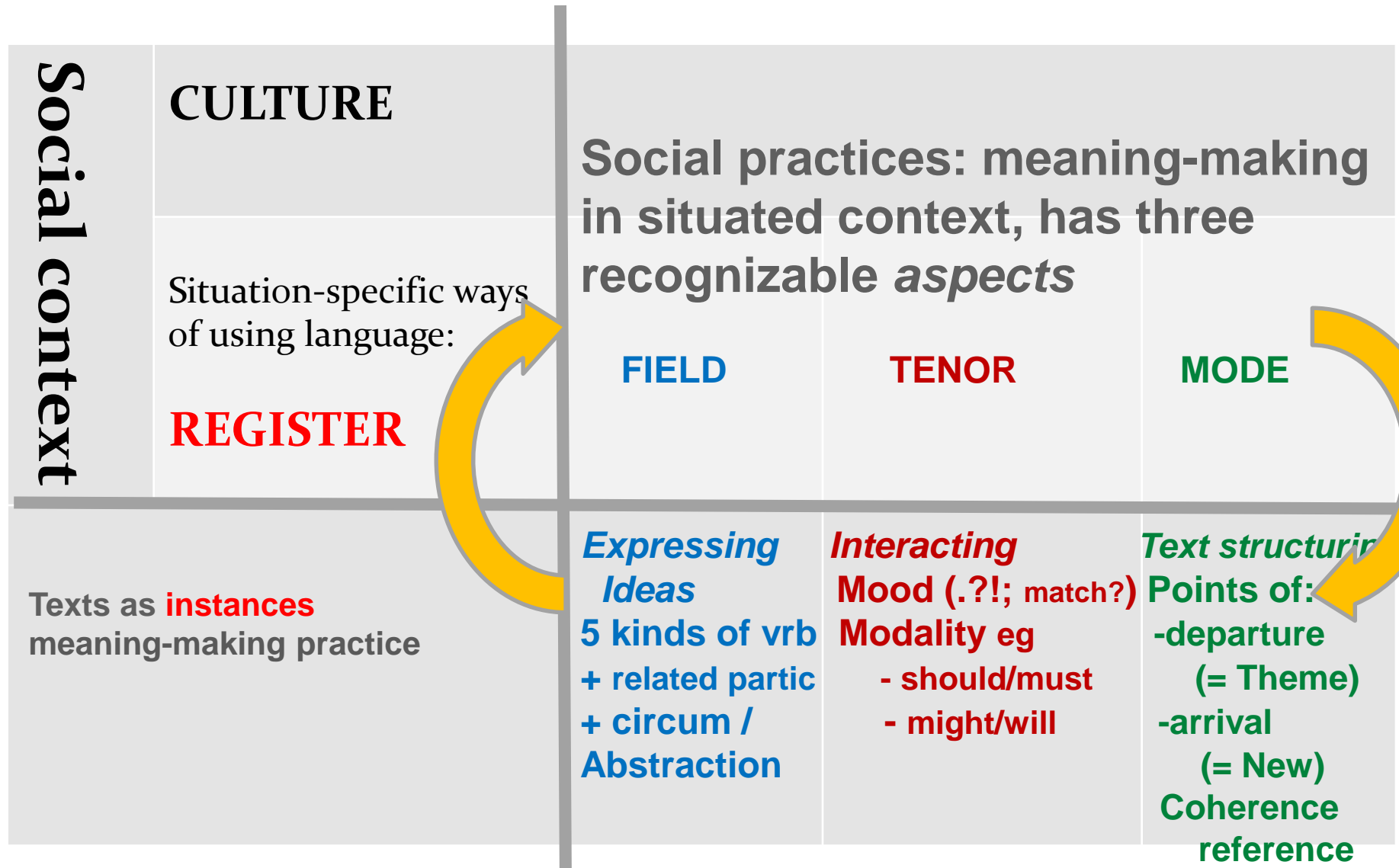
Social context	CULTURE	Social practices: meaning-making in situated context, has three recognizable <i>aspects</i>		
	Situation-specific ways of using language: REGISTER	FIELD What's going on	TENOR social relations	Context sub-sys
Texts as instances meaning-making practice		Construing Experience Kind of verb + related partic + circum Abstraction Logic	Interacting Mood (.?!; match?) Modality eg - should/must - might/will	Language subsys

Well legibility and correct punctuation might not be “street”... **but that**’s how I roll.

Social context	CULTURE	Social practices: meaning-making in situated context, has three recognizable <i>aspects</i>		
	Situation-specific ways of using language: REGISTER	FIELD What’s going on	TENOR Social relations, how maintained	MODE Speech/writing, how message coheres
Text	Texts as instances meaning-making practice	Construing Experience Kind of verb + related partic + circum / Abstraction Logic	Interacting Mood (?!; match?) Modality eg - should/must - might/will	Text organization Points of: -departure (= Theme) -arrival (= New) Coherence reference

Well legibility and correct punctuation might not be
“street”...

but that’s how I roll.





'Yes well, legibility and correct punctuation might not be "street"... but that's how I roll.'

Post-workshop reflection: What is “correct?”

Two meanings of ‘correctness’ are in play in context of second-language writing:

1. One is based on criteria of formal grammar in which language is understood as a system of rules that are either followed or broken.
2. The other is based on criteria of meaning in context, in which language is understood as a meaning-making resource: choices of language are more or less appropriate to their context.

Edward judges the correctness based on #2 meaning. How do we know?

He calls his use of a period “correct punctuation”. However, in rule-based notions of language, a period after anything but a complete sentence would be “incorrect”. In Edward’s context, however, he is “tagging” the wall with his name, asserting his presence in the urban territory. In this case, the period, which can be seen as meaning “a complete statement has been made”, aligns with the social act that Edward is carrying out through language. Furthermore, by using the period to re-assert the statement made in his tag, Edward not only shows that he understands the meaning-making potential of the period in context of social life (rather than, for example, in a grammar rules book), he also puts pressure on society (or at least the young man) to accept that a period in this context is appropriate: Edward is a dynamic force in language and society. Interestingly, Edward is of course fictional; however, the cartoon itself is real. It is the cartoonist and by extension the publication, then, that are leading this small but real change.

Bi-directional REALIZATIONAL Relation between Wording & Context (ie not causal)

DYNAMICO!

CULTURE

Situation-specific style:
REGISTER

CONTEXT

constrains

realize

WORDING

Language choices
in a text

Possible &
& appropriate
WORDING

Choices of
WORDING
in texts

Different rates of change: dynamics of meaning across timescales



The diagram consists of three nested ellipses, each with a different wood-grain texture. The innermost ellipse is light tan and labeled 'logogenesis'. The middle ellipse is a medium tan and labeled 'ontogenesis'. The outermost ellipse is a darker tan and labeled 'phylogenesis'. Each ellipse is partially overlapped by the one it contains, creating a sense of depth and nesting.

logogenesis

Development of message in text

Development of individual's
repertoire for social agency

ontogenesis

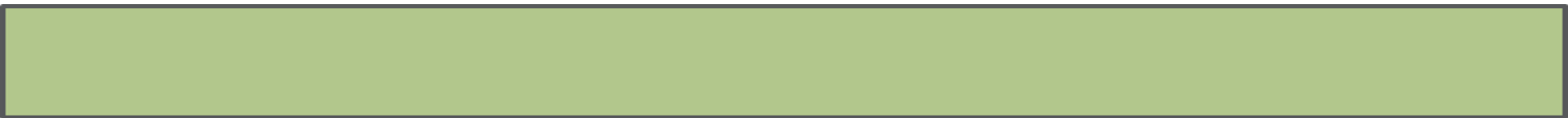
Evolution of discourse formations,
society & culture

phylogenesis

Controlled text analysis practice: Discriminating between meanings most relevant to Field, Tenor or Mode

Task in university course quiz: Define “ergonomics”
Model “textbook” answer:

Ergonomics is defined as the design of workspaces so that the best is made of human capabilities without exceeding human limitations.



Ergonomics is defined as the design of workspaces so that the best is made of human capabilities without exceeding human limitations.

The model answer achieves appropriate links between meaning in context (F, T, M) and wording ie choices in Ideational, Interpersonal, & Textual functions of language.



FIELD

what's going on with who or what?

IDEA – TIONAL

Function

Transitivity
Logic

TENOR

social roles & interests of interactants?

INTER- PERSONAL

Function

Mood
Modality

MODE

how's the message organized?

TEXTUAL

Function

Reference
Theme/New

Choices in two metafunctions enact meaning in context appropriately. But choices in one of the metafunctions are **not so productive: which one?** Field, Tenor, or Mode?

Ergonomics is the appropriate design of work.
The best of people's capacities can be achieved through it. People's limitations, however, are not exceeded with ergonomic design.



FIELD what's going on with who or what?	TENOR social roles & interests of interactants?	MODE how's the message organized?
IDEA – TIONAL Function Transitivity Logic	INTER- PERSONAL Function Mood Modality	TEXTUAL Function Reference Theme/New


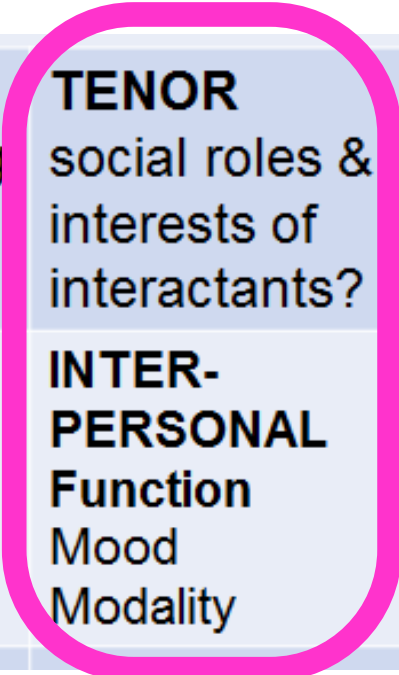

Choices in two metafunctions enact meaning in context appropriately. But choices in one of the metafunctions are **not so productive: which one?** Field, Tenor, or Mode?

Ergonomics makes the design work well and people make the best of what they are capable of and they made this without going over our limitations.



FIELD what's going on with who or what?	TENOR social roles & interests of interactants?	MODE how's the message organized?
IDEA – TIONAL Function Transitivity Logic	INTER- PERSONAL Function Mood Modality	TEXTUAL Function Reference Theme/New

Why not design our work using ergonomics? It should make people use the best of their capacities and really does this without exceeding people's limitations at all. Try it!

			
FIELD what's going on with who or what?	TENOR social roles & interests of interactants?		MODE how's the message organized?
IDEA – TIONAL Function Transitivity Logic	INTER-PERSONAL Function Mood Modality		TEXTUAL Function Reference Theme/New

A matrix for connecting syllabus aims with instructional support and assessment in L2 university writing in English

Managing the complex functions of language in academic writing

Rows A, B, C show how three aspects of academic context are realized in our language choices

Columns 1, 2, 3 show how these language choices operate at three levels in academic texts

Adapted by A.A.Ferreira from Humphrey & Dreyfus (2010) Available:
http://dlc5.lled.educ.ubc.ca/ISFC_presentations/index.html

Academic Writing Matrix	1. Text (whole text level)	2. Text phase (section/paragraph)	3. Grammar & Vocabulary (clause/word levels)
A. Ideational Meanings What's going on, with who/what, and in what circumstances? Resources for constructing technical, specialised and formal knowledge of discipline area (<i>field</i>)	i. Do the beginning, middle and end stages of the text build knowledge relevant to the discipline specific topic and purpose? ii. Are tables, diagrams, examples and quotes logically integrated with verbal text (eg. to extend, report, specify or qualify points)?	i. Are topics defined and classified according to discipline-specific and/or clearly presented criteria? ii. Is the information within each paragraph or stage related in logical relationships (eg. time, cause, consequence, comparison)? iii. Is grammatical packing/metaphor used to rework processes, qualities and logical relations as abstract entities and relationships? (eg. logical relations as verbs rather than conjunctions; processes as nouns rather than verbs)	i. Are expanded noun phrases used to describe and classify technical and specialised terms? ii. Is each noun phrase constructed (using choices of head noun and pre- & post- modification) to facilitate understanding of the entities in question, and does this match the reader's knowledge at that point in the text? iii. Do verb groups express relevant processes (eg. defining, classifying, concrete or abstract actions) iv. Is the vocabulary appropriately formal?
B. Interpersonal Meanings How does writer position themselves in relation to their claims and to the reader? Resources for convincing the reader and negotiating knowledge construction fairly and reliably (<i>tenor</i>)	i. Does the text build on points or positions across its beginning, middle and end stages? (eg. by amplifying or reinforcing) ii. Does the text show a critical perspective where required? (eg. by making visible and challenging assumptions)	i. Does the text evaluate subject matter reliably and fairly (eg. according to value, benefit, relevance, validity, significance)? ii. Does the student writer control the argument, using authoritative sources for support? iii. Are a range of perspectives introduced? iv. Does the writer direct the argument & the reader in a preferred direction?	i. Does clause structure follow recognisable and appropriate patterns of English? ii. Is there subject and verb agreement? iii. Are tense and voice choices appropriate and consistent? iv. Are 1 st and 3 rd person pronouns used appropriately? v. Are sources referenced according to discipline specifications (eg. APA)?
C. Textual Meanings How is the message organized at clause, paragraph & text levels? Resources for organising clearly signposted and abstract texts (<i>mode</i>)	i. Is the content previewed in the beginning stage (introduction) and reviewed in the end stage (ie. conclusion)? ii. Are global headings and abstracts used to signal layout of longer texts?	i. Is there a logical flow of information from sentence to sentence across paragraphs? Are points of change in the flow signalled? ii. Do Theme choices reflect paragraph focus? iii. Are individual entities easy to track in the text through cohesive resources such as pronouns, repetition, synonyms? iv. Is information referred to in more abstract terms in topic sentences and expanded in more concrete terms within the paragraph?	i. Do choices of Theme (the subject of the main verb) reflect the topic focus of the sentence, in the sense of being a shared point of departure between the writer and reader? ii. Is known or background information in the Theme (before the main verb), and new information (new to the reader) in the main verb and the rest of the main clause? iii. Are articles used appropriately? iv. Does punctuation assist information structure?

Theme: organizing ideas

Theme: first participant; point of departure for the clause, usually Given info

New information: the end point, typically unknown to reader/listener

The tasks below are drawn from the “clearer writing” website

http://learningcentre.usyd.edu.au/clearer_writing/

CLEARER WRITING WEBSITE

http://learningcentre.usyd.edu.au/clearer_writing/

Clearer Writing

Clearer Writing Home Page

Paragraph Structure

Paragraph Stages

The Topic

The Body - elaborating on the topic

The Body - signalling the elaboration

The Body - summarising the Topic

The Body - discussing the Topic

The Body - developing the Topic

The Conclusion

Paragraph Analysis

Information Structure

Vocabulary & Reference

Example 1a

Example 1b

Diagram

Exercise 1a

Exercise 1b

The Body: Part 4 Example 1a

Some Body sentences directly elaborate
Click on the sentences in the paragraph to

Media 5

Magazines are extremely effective media consumers.

One reason for this is the high proportion
For example, the popular music magazine
to advertisements. However, many youth
as well as in advertisements. In particular
accompanying stories has become common
magazines are a medium viewed much more

Multiple Themes

Any sentence (or clause) can have a single or multiple Theme. So there may be one or more word groups in Theme position, as you have seen in previous examples in this unit.

Single THEME (1)

The mechanism	failed
Subject	Verb

Multiple THEME (5)

Also,	last month,	unfortunately,	in the trials,	the mechanism	failed.
Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	

A Multiple Theme can contain two or more words or word groups in Theme position. The sentence above has 5 word groups, each functioning as a separate Theme element. Only the last word group is the subject.

Recent social science research has carried out studies into unsupervised children's games. This research has found out that such games have changed dramatically. Recent studies into group games have shown significantly, that some which have been played for centuries, even millennia in our culture, have all but disappeared. One study tracing specific games found that today, no girls' skipping games were played at all in Sydney.

The unsupervised games children play have changed dramatically, recent social science research has revealed.

Group games played for centuries, even millennia in our culture, have all but disappeared, notes the studies' most significant discovery. Girls' skipping games are not played at all in Sydney today, found one study tracing specific games.



EXPLANATION

1

THEME

Recent social science research

This research

Recent studies into group games

One study tracing specific games

NEW

has carried out studies into unsupervised children's games.

has found out that such games have changed dramatically.

have shown significantly, that some which have been played for centuries, even millenia in our culture, have all but disappeared.

found that today, no girls' skipping games were played at all in Sydney.

2

THEME

The unsupervised games children play

Group games played for centuries, even millenia in our culture,

Girls' skipping games

NEW

have changed dramatically, recent social science research has revealed.

have all but disappeared, notes the studies' most significant discovery.

are not played at all in Sydney today, found one study tracing specific games.

Explanation Child's Play 1 and 2

EXPLANATION

Both Child's Play 1 and 2 have clear, but different Information Structure. Although information in each paragraph is very similar, it is staged differently in each sentence.

Thematic Patterns in paragraphs

TASK: Analyze for Theme/New

Thirty years ago, Rudd (1982) concluded that integrating environment, social or governance (ESG) criteria in investment processes worsen portfolio diversification. This conclusion about ESG criteria is questioned in the present study using a new portfolio diversification strategy.

Is the Theme consistent across both sentences?
Where is the Theme in the 2nd sentence drawn from?

Thirty years ago, Rudd (1982) concluded that integrating environment, social or governance (ESG) criteria in investment processes worsen portfolio diversification. This conclusion about ESG criteria is questioned in the present study using a portfolio diversification strategy of reducing the average stock's specific risk.

Linear Thematic Pattern:

Themes pick up from previous News

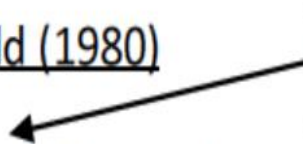
THEMES

Thirty years ago, Rudd (1980)

This conclusion about ESG criteria

NEWS

concluded that integrating environment, social or governance (ESG) criteria in investment processes worsen portfolio diversification. is questioned in the present study using a portfolio diversification strategy of reducing the average stock's specific risk.



Theme in academic texts: Themes drawn from disciplinary practice:
nb: Themes may seem New to **non-target** readers, carry implicit disciplinary ideology

'Severe Infections in HIV-Exposed Uninfected Infants: Clinical Evidence of Immunodeficiency'

Slogrove, A.L. et al (2010), *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics*, 56 ,2

Methods

[...]

Pneumocystis jiroveci pneumonia (PCP) was diagnosed by immunofluorescence microscopy.

All infants with PCP were investigated for cytomegalovirus infection.

Whole blood was assayed for the pp65 antigen and **urine** was submitted for CMV culture.

Blood lymphocyte immunophenotyping for subset enumeration

was done on a Becton Dickinson FACSCalibur 4 color flowcytometer with a standard Becton Dickinson MultiTEST reagent panel of monoclonal antibodies (BD Biosciences, Rivia, South Africa)

Permission to publish was obtained from the Committee for Human Research, Stellenbosch University.

Given info

Given info

Biology: known part/
whole relation

Expected research
procedure

Expected ethics
procedure

Constant Theme

World of our senses 1

Our sensory experience of the world is complex, rich, detailed and immediate.

Most sensory experience through all five of our senses, appears to be effortless except under the most extreme conditions.

It is continuous and generally coherent during our waking lives, no matter what they are.

Experience of the material world is however, personal and individual; it becomes the person's own.



Linear Theme

World of our senses 2

Our experience of the material world is immediate, rich, detailed and complex.

This complexity is partly due to the information received through our different senses.

All five senses- sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste- work continuously and coherently in any individual's waking life.

This personalising of all sensory experience is what makes the outside material world our own.

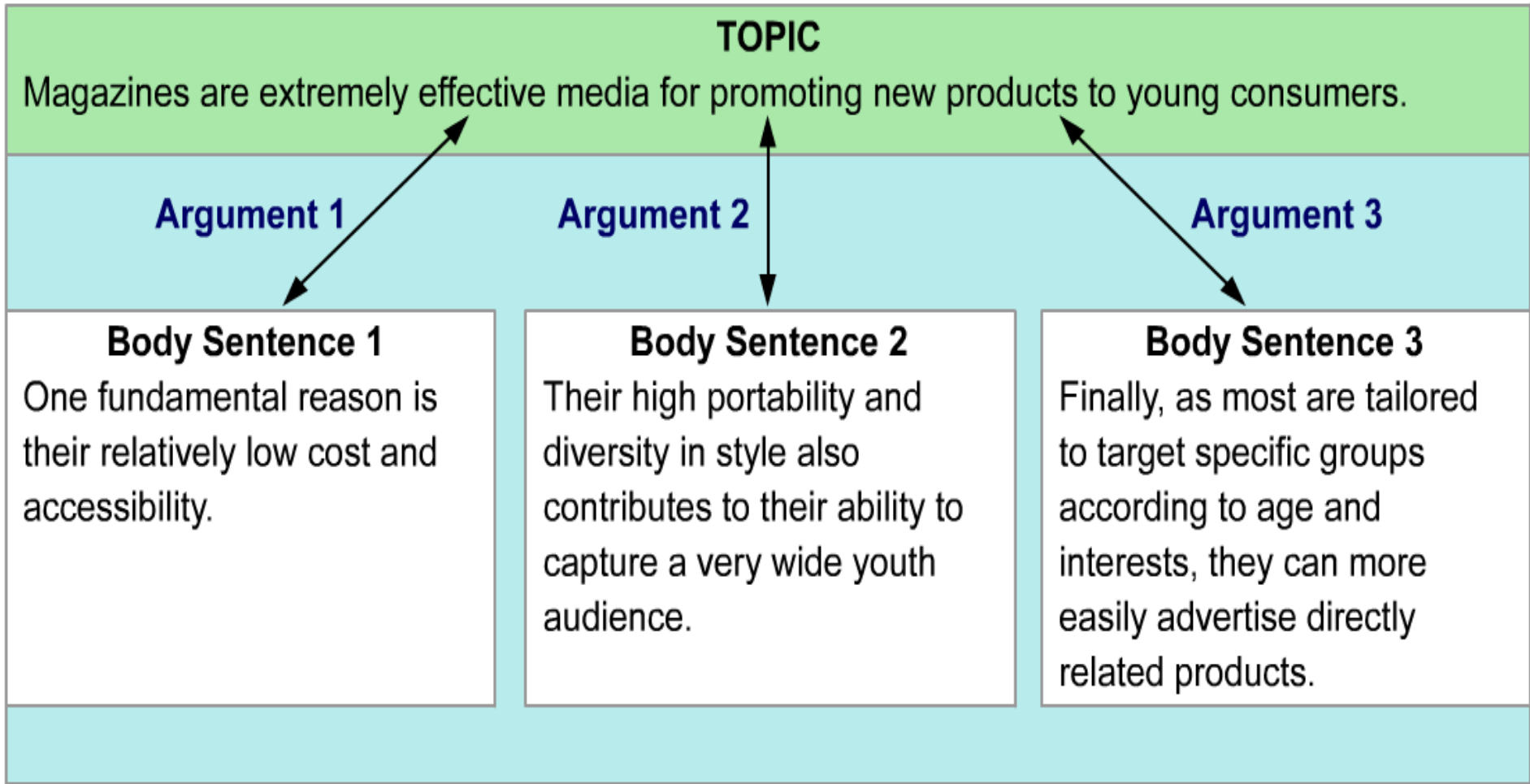
Explanation

This is Pattern 1 where each sentence Theme develops given information from the previous Theme. This progression of an idea through all Themes shows the paragraph's focus.

Explanation

In Pattern 2 each Theme develops given information in a part of the previous New. This progression, New to Theme, builds up to the main point of paragraph.

Hyper-Theme: Theme is drawn from topic sentences
aka “hyper-themes”



Noticing and Fixing Problems with Flow

When you edit your writing, you may find that some sentences in the paragraphs don't flow easily. The paragraph may sound disjointed when read.

In this case, check if the Themes in the sentences have been given in a previous part of the text – especially in the News parts.

If there is information that is New to the reader in the Theme position, this may well be the source of the disruption in flow.

Strategy: Move information around in your sentences so that they maintain the structure of Known Information in the subject position and New information in the remainder of the sentence.

Two Strategies for Switching Theme and New

1. Swap elements within the sentence
2. Switch from active voice to passive voice (or v.v.)

eg They built bridges - Bridges were built (by them)

TRY:

Strategies for Improving Flow by Re-ordering Theme and New. WHY? Because the order of information is weak

TASK: Check the context of the following 2 sentences and improve the information order as necessary.

Sentence 1: This text has been discussing (ie the reader already knows about) “Lenin’s contributions”

The events of October 1917 would have been very different without Lenin's contributions.

Sentence 2: The text has been discussing “Early infrastructure development”

Convicts built many new bridges, tollgates and miles of new and improved roads throughout the colony.

1. Swap elements
2. Use passive voice eg Bridges were built (by them)

Examples:

The events of October 1917 would have been very different without Lenin's contributions.

Without Lenin's contributions the events of October 1917 would have been very different.

(elements swapped)

Convicts built many new bridges, tollgates and miles of new and improved roads throughout the colony.

(active voice)

Many new bridges, tollgates and miles of new and improved roads throughout the colony *were built by convicts*.

(passive voice construction)

**Read and
discuss this
paragraph for
any
strengths
and
weaknesses**

This review has identified a number of gaps in the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) research. About this research, it compares organically grown and non-organically grown vegetables (FDA 2012), comparing with a focus on nutritional benefits.

Residues from fertilizers and pesticides that are found in non-organically grown vegetables are not considered by the FDA's study. The lack of a comparison of the same kinds of vegetables, grown organically and non-organically, may be considered the most serious flaw in the study.

The higher quantity of beta-carotene found in the majority of organic vegetables is not reported in the main findings of the study.

The study raises and highlights questions about how rigorous the FDA's research is, while also drawing our attention to what we need, a call for systematic peer review in the research in the area of how food is produced.

**Read and
discuss this
paragraph
for any
strengths
and
weaknesses**

Several gaps may be identified in the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) research comparing organically grown and non-organically grown vegetables (FDA 2012).

Residues from fertilizers and pesticides found in non-organically grown vegetables are not considered by the FDA's study.

The higher quantity of beta-carotene found in the majority of organic vegetables is not reported in the main findings of the study.

The lack of a comparison of the same kinds of vegetables, grown organically and non-organically presents another serious flaw in the study.

Packing information:
information density
and grammatical packing
(technically, grammatical metaphor)

Lexical and Grammatical Metaphor

- In lexical metaphor (LM), an **alternative domain of experience** is used in wording a meaning.
- In grammatical metaphor (GM), an **alternative domain of language** is used in wording a meaning.



Lexical and Grammatical Metaphor

- In **LM**, an **alternative domain of experience** is used to word a meaning
- In **GM**, an **alternative domain of language** is used to word a meaning.

meaning:



**Non-metaphorical /congruent
wording:**

*He was playing on the tire
and he became exhausted.*

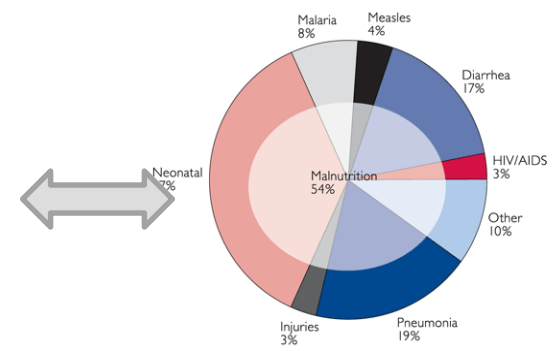
LM: He was *blasting around* on the tire... [explosives > play]

GM: His playing on the tire... [noun phrase > clause]

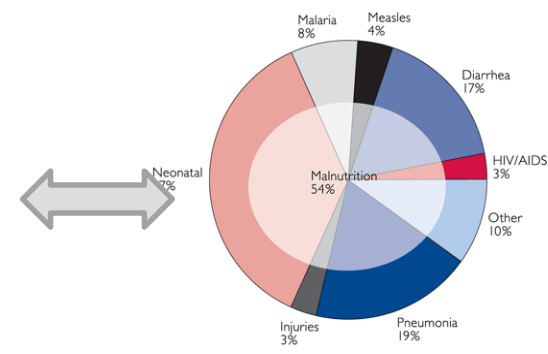
GM/LM : He was **tire-blasting**... [verb > adverbial of place]

GMX2/LM: His **tire-blasting** ... exhausted him.

Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”



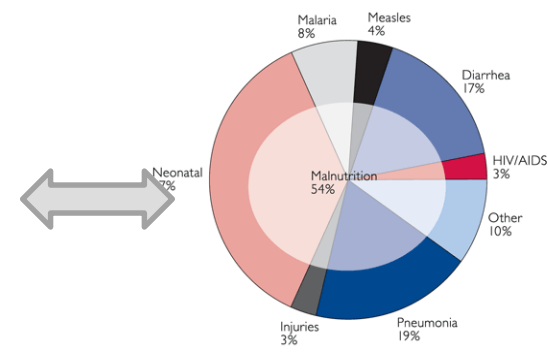
Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”



speech

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES			sentence			
1 st clause				2 nd clause		
noun phrase: subject of 1 st clause	verb	adverb phrase / circumstance		noun phrase subject	verb	noun phrase object
1. The children	are growing	well	because	they	have received	medical treatment.

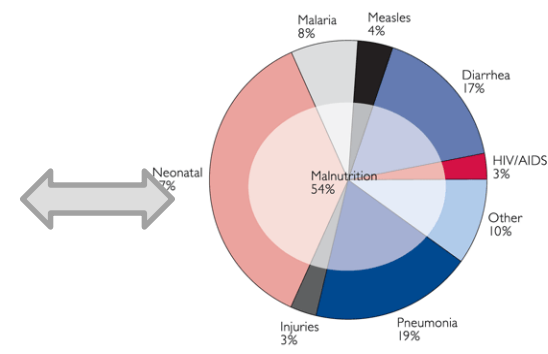
Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”



speech
writing

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES						
1 st clause			sentence	2 nd clause		
noun phrase: subject of 1 st clause	verb	adverb phrase / circumstance		noun phrase subject	verb	noun phrase object
1. The children	are growing	well	because	they	have received	medical treatment.
2. Children's growth rate	benefits	from medical treatment.				

Shifting register using “Grammatical Un/Packing”



speech
writing
science

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES			sentence			
1 st clause				2 nd clause		
noun phrase: subject of 1 st clause	verb	adverb phrase / circumstance		noun phrase subject	verb	noun phrase object
1. The children	are growing	well	because	they	have received	medical treatment.
2. Children's growth rate	benefits	from medical treatment.	<i>Space for making meaning in clauses & sentences that is freed up by using grammatical packing</i>			
3. The benefits of medical treatment to children's growth rate ...						

Critiques of SFL in education

The postmodernist insistence on indeterminacy and de-centering—the play of difference—in the production of both meaning and subjectivity has cast doubt on the ability of projects such as that of [SFL] ... to address issues of agency and transformative discursive practice.

For example, registers and genres are in constant flux in society, and cannot therefore be formalized into predictable functional patterns and stages.

Teaching based on such formal models of genres leads to reproductive literacies.

Critiques of SFL in education

- **Registers & genres and the language choices that realize them serve as points of orientation in negotiating social tasks in ways that are meaningful**
The postmodernist insistence on indeterminacy and de-centering—the play of difference—in the production of both meaning and subjectivity has cast doubt on the ability of projects such as that of [SFL] ... to address issues of agency and transformation in discursive practice.
- **SFL accounts for both System & Instance**
For example, registers and genres are in constant flux in society, and cannot therefore be formalized into predictable functional patterns and stages.
- **Taught for their generative potential**
Teaching based on such formal models of genres leads to reproductive literacies.

SFL resources

Books: SFL in Education

Unsworth, L. (Ed.) (2000) *Researching language in schools and communities: functional linguistic perspectives*.

London: Continuum. AVAILABLE ONLINE UBC LIBRARY: Excellent chapters on social role of education and 'getting started with the functional analysis of texts'. For researchers but also teachers.

Jones, R.H. & Lock, G. (2011) *Functional grammar in the ESL classroom: noticing, exploring and practicing*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gibbons, P. (2009) *English learners, academic literacy and thinking*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinmann.

FOR ELL/SCHOOL TEACHERS, PRIMARILY. Gibbons specializes in Vygotskian approaches

Gibbons, P. (2006) *Bridging discourses in the ESL classroom: students, teachers and researchers*. London:

Continuum. FOR RESEARCHERS AND TEACHERS. Gibbons specializes in Vygotskian approaches

Martin, JR. & Rose, D. (2008) *Genre relations: mapping culture*. London: Equinox. EXCELLENT RESOURCE FOR TEACHING A WIDE RANGE OF SCHOOL GENRES

Books: Functional Grammar of English

Fontaine, L. (2013). *Analysing English grammar: a systemic functional introduction*. Cambridge: CUP.

Thompson, G. (2013) *Introducing functional grammar* (3rd Ed). London: Routledge.

Online: Free Booklet on functional grammar for late elementary level and higher

<http://www.mourass.eq.edu.au/Documents/Functional%20Grammar%20Introductory%20Booklet.pdf>

Book: SFL-based Discourse Analysis

Young, L. & Fitzgeral, B. (2006) *The power of language: how discourses influence society*. London: Equinox.

Marin, J.R. & Rose, D. (2007) *Working with discourse: meaning beyond the clause*. London: Continuum.

SFL main website

<http://www.isfla.org/Systemics/>

On-line self-access resource for sr high-school, undergrad uni writing

General academic writing

http://learningcentre.usyd.edu.au/clearer_writing/

Science writing

<http://learningcentre.usyd.edu.au/wrise/>