‘MANAGING EXPECTATIONS’: SOME REFLECTIONS ON A HYBRID GENRE

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Abstract

Through a sociosemiotic analysis of two, brief, illustrative texts drawn from the discourse of professional English language teaching—one text being a private language school's teacher recruitment advice, the other a governmental handbook's statement on quality teaching—the paper presents the principal grammatical features of an important, hybrid genre that might be termed ‘managing expectations’.

Formally manifesting itself as a hybrid of Report and Exposition, with hortation and analysis as variable rhetorical elements, this composite genre is shown to be both heteroglossic and tenor-oriented, with language users able to invoke noticeably different interpersonal resources to manipulate their respective audiences in comparable ways.

Variability in the use of the interpersonal metafunction (demonstrated through register analysis) is then correlated with opposing ideological standpoints, ideology being an important but relatively underdeveloped model of context within the systemic functional linguistic approach to discourse analysis.

The interrelationship between shared genre and the specific, tenor-based difference in register becomes enough to validate Martin’s early model of ideological crisis: in ‘managing expectations’, the governmental text is creating an issue to preserve its dominant power base, while the private language school’s text is resolving (or diffusing) an issue to enhance its emergent power base.

Keywords: discourse, grammar, genre, register, heteroglossia
Introduction

This paper invokes two representative texts from the discourse of professional English language teaching (ELT) to illustrate and evaluate some of the techniques systemicists use to analyse discourse and model context. In the process, various reflections will be made concerning an important hybrid genre, termed here ‘managing expectations’.

To begin, it is a fundamental principle of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) that an understanding of context is essential to understanding language use (Eggins, 1994), and considerable efforts have been made to articulate the relationships between texts and the several connotative semiotic systems (context per se) that texts help to realise (Martin, 1984, 1985, 1992) or instantiate (Martin, 2006).

The two main theoretical constructs developed to model context are genre and register, and their accompanying analytical procedures are termed, unsurprisingly, genre analysis and register analysis (Martin & Rose, 2003). Less assuredly, analytical techniques to enable the employment of a third construct—ideology (Martin, 1992, 2006)—are still emerging, though, fortunately, there is enough consistency of meaning displayed in the two chosen texts to support a prototypical ideological analysis as well.

Following the analyses, a few comments will be made concerning their applicability within educational contexts, particularly as they relate to the professional formation of English teachers.
The two chosen texts embody discourse circulating within the ELT profession. The first text (designated ‘Text One’, abbreviated ‘T1’) is an Internet web page published by a English language school operating in Prague, Czech Republic (see Figure 1). A cursory reading would suggest that T1 is designed ostensibly to recruit self-motivated teachers with prospects of professional development and work-schedule flexibility as major incentives.

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**THE JOB OF A TEACHER**

We consider teaching to be a prestigious job. We adhere to the well-known motto: Those who have knowledge become teachers.

*Become a teacher and show us what you can do ...*

- **Be IN!**

Both we and our students will appreciate your knowledge of a foreign language and your active command of it. Teaching, however, is not just explaining grammar and new words. It is a combination of a personal approach, presentational skills and flexibility.

- **Be COOL!**

Our language agency will give you the opportunity to further develop your skills. We will be glad to give you feedback and an opportunity to attend a myriad of our specialized training sessions. You can test the newly received knowledge in practice immediately.

- **Be FREE!**

You create your own schedule. Everything is up to your time possibilities.

*Figure 1. Text One (James Cook Languages, 2008).*
The second text (designated ‘Text Two’, abbreviated ‘T2’) is extracted from a United Kingdom guidebook (instantiating a macro-genre) designed to help improve teaching standards across various social contexts (see Figure 2). The context chosen here is the voluntary and community sector.

**PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING**

The best teachers often seem to know what to do, how to inspire learners and achieve good results, almost by instinct. Sound instincts however, are usually developed by those who plan effectively, who are well-trained and knowledgeable and confident in their fields. A teacher in the voluntary and community sector may be working in a more traditional setting in a learning centre, they may be working in a learner’s home or in the middle of a housing estate or on an environmental project in a rural area. Wherever they are working, they need the flexibility, interpersonal skills and appreciation of the way in which learners develop literacy, numeracy and language learning skills that can help to make a difference. The best teachers understand the relationship between what they teach, how they teach it, and how and why the learner learns.

*Figure 2. Text Two (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008).*

Superficially, the two texts appear to have little in common, aside from the shared topic of teaching. The social purposes of the texts seem quite different (recruitment as opposed to promoting teaching standards), and the lexicogrammatical choices made are mostly dissimilar. T1 is relatively informal and personable for a written text, with numerous personal Subjects and frequent
changes in Mood, alternating between declarative and imperative. T2, on the other hand, is relatively formal and impersonal, with abstract Subjects and a consistent Mood (Halliday, 2004).

Actually, this strong contrast is quite misleading.

Although both texts differ markedly when basic lexico-grammatical elements are compared (drawn so far from the grammar of interpersonal meaning), it is fundamentally the case that both texts are tenor-oriented: that is, the texts are invoking different resources from the interpersonal metafunction (Halliday, 2004, p. 61) to manipulate their respective readerships (or implied audiences) in intuitively comparable ways.

To see how this works requires moving beyond rudimentary analyses of the texts' lexico-grammatical structures, to an application of the two principal models of context: genre and register.

**Genre**

In the SFL tradition, genre is usually considered to be any ‘staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity’ (Martin, 1984, p. 25) that people use to ‘get things done’ within their particular cultural settings.

One of the advantages of this sociosemiotic construct is that it offers a means of linking a text to its context. By correctly identifying the genre a text might be adhering to, it is possible to reveal the broader social activities being enacted. In discussing how to identify the generic constitution of any particular text, Martin and Rose (2003, pp. 206–217) recommend following a reasonably methodical approach, with two techniques of analysis proposed. Actually, a text
may embody one, several, or a pattern of genres—the latter scheme is termed a macro-genre (p. 210)—so the idea is to avoid haphazard and often deceptive searches for ‘similar’ texts and ‘recognisable’ genres based simply on format (cf. Swales, 1990, p. 51).

‘Outside-in’

The first technique of genre analysis involves working with the text ‘outside-in’ (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 210). The emphasis here is on the semantic resources operating ‘beyond the clause’—at the level of discourse (p. 206). Relevant discourse systems include: conjunction, which connects separate ‘events’ (p. 110); identification, embracing Halliday and Hasan’s system of reference (1976); and periodicity, which is one of three complementary perspectives on textual patterning (Martin, 1992, p. 548; Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 210). Regrettably, though, on this occasion, there is space enough to consider only the first of these discourse systems in any detail—conjunction.

Neither text uses conjunctive resources extensively, but the uses are telling, nonetheless. Reticula displaying the conjunctive structures of each text (Martin, 1992, p. 248) are shown in Tables 1 and 2 (Martin & Rose, 2003, pp. 133–134).
Table 1

*Reticulum of conjunctions (Text One)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chain</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Conjunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>external/cause/concessive</td>
<td>however</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

*Reticulum of conjunctions (Text Two)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chain</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Conjunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>external/means/expectant</td>
<td>by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>external/cause/concessive</td>
<td>however</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>external/means/expectant</td>
<td>by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>(and)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>external/addition/alternative</td>
<td>(or)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>external/addition/alternative</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>external/addition/alternative</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>external/addition/additive</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
T1 uses the additive ‘and’ almost exclusively, with one exception, a single causal concessive ‘however’ (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 133). Concession normally signals two things: counter-expectancy and heteroglossia (p. 51). In other words, the designer of T1 might be trying to alter readers’ expectations, an implicit acknowledgment of multiple attitudes towards the subject matter: teachers’ work. (More on this point below.)

T2 uses the same conjunctive resources as T1—several uses of ‘and’ and a solitary ‘however’—to which is added several instances of ‘or’ (some implicit) signalling alternatives (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 114); also two uses of ‘by’, a consequential conjunction indicating the means by which something is occurring (p. 118): in this case, how to attain good teaching. So the second text appears to be altering readers’ ideational expectations with the aid of explanation.

Using Martin’s classification of factual genres (Martin, 1992, p. 563), it would appear that neither text is activity-structured (Martin, Wignell, Eggins & Rothery, 1988, p. 142), nor restricted to a ‘specific manifestation’ of culture (Martin, 1992, p. 562). This would make Report and Exposition (cf. Paltridge, 1996, p. 239) as the two most likely candidate genres for these particular texts. The discriminating factor is whether there is explanatory structuring involved (Martin, 1992, p. 563). This is partially the case in T2 (the first two sentences), and barely the case in T1, on the basis of a single concessive causal
conjunction (the ‘however’). Both texts, therefore, are hybrid texts, drawing on features from both the Report and Exposition genres.

Referencing Martin’s further distinction (Martin, 1985) between analytical and hortatory varieties of expository writing, it would appear that both texts, again, have an element of hybridity, with unequal measures of hortation (calling to action) and analysis: T1 with more hortation and far less analysis; and T2 with a little hortation and more analysis.

‘Inside-out’

The second technique of genre analysis followed here is to consider the texts from the ‘inside-out’ (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 213). Here, the aim is to consider the way meaning is realised ‘in and around’ clausal structures. Traditionally within SFL, this would be done as a systematic micro-analysis (Halliday, 2004), with pertinent patterns subsequently identified and compared (e.g. see the appendix to Eggins, 1994): this is alluded to in the section introducing the texts, above. While this approach can produce interesting results—given enough time and patience—it is often impractical as a general analytical approach given the voluminous data generated by even the briefest authentic text. To ameliorate this situation, Martin and Rose (2003, p. 214) recommend using selected analyses that illustrate pertinent features without unnecessary thoroughness. Of course, knowing in advance which analyses are relevant can be difficult, but guidelines are available to help discourse analysts make informed (and hopefully propitious) choices.
A useful heuristic is to look for the ‘foregrounding’ of meanings and the ‘co-articulation’ of lexico-grammatical systems.

Foregrounding involves the identification of unexpected groupings or heightened frequencies of meanings when compared to the ‘general predisposition of English clauses’ (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 214). This ‘predisposition’, the authors suggest, is something experienced language users acquire over extended periods of time while working with a variety of genres.

Extracts from the texts with foregrounded meanings highlighted appear in Figures 3 and 4.

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We consider teaching to be a **prestigious** job. We adhere to the well-known motto: Those who have **knowledge** become teachers.

... Both we and our students will appreciate your **knowledge** of a foreign language and your **active command** of it. Teaching, however, is not just explaining grammar and new words. It is a combination of a **personal** approach, presentational **skills** and **flexibility**.

... 

**Figure 3.** Foregrounding of meanings (Text One).

Foregrounded meaning is in bold.
The best teachers often seem to know what to do, how to inspire learners and achieve good results, almost by instinct. Sound instincts however, are usually developed by those who plan effectively, who are well-trained and knowledgeable and confident in their fields.

... Wherever they are working, they need the flexibility, interpersonal skills and appreciation of the way in which learners develop literacy, numeracy and language learning skills that can help to make a difference. The best teachers understand the relationship between what they teach, how they teach it, and how and why the learner learns.

Figure 4. Foregrounding of meanings (Text Two).

Foregrounded meaning in bold.

Considering the foregrounding of meaning in T1, the text is clearly emphasising quality and desirable attributes of teachers—signalled by words and phrases such as ‘prestigious’, ‘knowledge’, ‘active command’, and so on. Interestingly, the foregrounding in T2 is virtually identical, with a comparable set of terms denoting quality and desirous teacher characteristics: ‘best’, ‘sound’, ‘well-trained’, ‘appreciation’ among them. What this means, of course, is that in both texts, teacher quality is being established as the basis for exhortation—and, perhaps, as a component of the initial stage of a common genre. (See the Summary below.)

A second heuristic, co-articulation, involves looking for distinct lexico-grammatical systems that are invoked in close proximity to achieve a stronger semantic outcome.
In T1, there is a crucial co-articulation of systems (Figure 5) in the clause beginning ‘teaching, however, is not just explaining …’

... Both we and our students will appreciate your knowledge of a foreign language and your active command of it. Teaching, however, is not just explaining grammar and new words. It is a combination of a personal approach, presentational skills and flexibility ...

*Figure 5. Co-articulation of systems (Text One). Active lexico-grammatical items are in bold.*

Here, concentrating on the interpersonal metafunction (Halliday, 2004), the designer is using: an adversative conjunctive adjunct ‘however’ (p. 82) (note that at the previous, conjunctive level of discourse semantics, ‘however’ was considered as a concessive causal conjunction); a negative modal operator ‘not’ (p. 116), rather than simply negative polarity (p. 143); and a limiting, counter-expectant mood adjunct ‘just’ (p. 129)—all positioned within the clause’s Mood element. This striking combination (co-articulation) of resources has the effect of adjusting readers’ initial views on teacher quality, the topic brought to prominence through the interpersonal foregrounding that is occurring in the surrounding text.

The co-articulation of systems in T2 (Figure 6) is less dramatic, but achieves similar ends.
The best teachers often seem to know what to do, how to inspire learners and achieve good results, almost by instinct. Sound instincts however, are usually developed by those who plan effectively, who are well-trained and knowledgeable and confident in their fields ...
Wherever they are working, they need the flexibility, interpersonal skills and appreciation of the way in which learners develop literacy, numeracy and language learning skills that can help to make a difference ...

Figure 6. Co-articulation of systems (Text Two). Active lexico-grammatical items are in bold; hyperTheme is underlined.

An adversative conjunctive adjunct ‘however’ is proximate to a mood adjunct of median modality, ‘usually’ (Halliday, 2004, p. 128), which is coupled, later in the text, with the highly modulated (p. 147) modal operator ‘need’. The strong degree of obligation chosen there is tempered by a low modulation modal operator, ‘can’ (p. 116). Another moderating feature of interest is the opening sentence, which uses interpersonal metaphor (‘seem to know’) to ‘upgrade’ (p. 646)—in this case, project (p. 377) and render subjective—the grammatical status of the Residue of the clause. The Residue (‘what to do, how to inspire …’) happens to be the text’s hyperTheme, an element of periodicity (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 181), and as a result, the entire text acquires a trace of subjectivity, even though, lexico-grammatically, there is a complete absence of personal Subjects.
Summary

Summarising the results arising from both analytic techniques, the common genre of the two texts is more than simply a hybrid mixture of Report cum Exposition. Returning to the definition of genre, the staged, goal-oriented activity being undertaken here—and therefore the texts’ shared genre—is ‘managing expectations’ about teacher quality. Synoptically (Martin, 1992, p. 551), the genre’s stages could be represented as outlined in Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State common understanding ^</td>
<td>&lt;project voice to be countered&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag adversarial posture ^</td>
<td>&lt;tenor orientation&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State uncommon understanding ^</td>
<td>&lt;countering voice&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restate common understanding</td>
<td>&lt;countering voice&gt;, &lt;altered connotations&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ^ = sequence; <...> = comment on element.

To transition between the stages, both T1 and T2 actively use the resources of the interpersonal metafunction—though they do so in slightly different ways. (Scrutinising the precise alterations in the Mood element is the key to understanding these transitions further). Overall, the shared goal of the genre is to be able to restate the common understanding held by other voices in the discourse, but in a such a way that the initial connotations change owing to
a deliberate alteration of the text’s semantic network (cf. Hudson, 2007), towards a configuration more favourable to the designer’s own voice.

Tables 4 and 5 show the generic staging realised in the two representative texts.

Table 4

*Generic structure of Text One: ‘managing expectations’*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clausal sequence</th>
<th>Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We consider teaching to be a prestigious job. We adhere to the well-known motto: Those who have knowledge become teachers ...</td>
<td>State common understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, however, is not just explaining grammar and new words.</td>
<td>Flag adversarial posture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a combination of a personal approach, presentational skills and flexibility ...</td>
<td>State uncommon understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You create your own schedule. Everything is up to your time possibilities.</td>
<td>Restate common understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* In this text, the final stage combines hortation and analysis.

Table 5

*Generic structure of Text Two: ‘managing expectations’*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clausal sequence</th>
<th>Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The best teachers often seem to know what to do, how to inspire learners and achieve good results, almost by instinct.</td>
<td>State common understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound instincts however, are usually developed by ...</td>
<td>Flag adversarial posture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
... those who plan effectively, who are well-trained and knowledgeable and confident in their fields ...

The best teachers understand the relationship between what they teach, how they teach it, and how and why the learner learns.

Note. In this text, the final stage is expository, and restates the Theme of the first stage. The connotations of the final Rheme have been altered (or semantically reconfigured) by the elaborations in the third stage.

Register

As the second sociosemiotic construct used to model context, register deals with the immediate circumstances of language use: ‘what is happening’, ‘who is taking part’, and ‘what part the language is playing’ (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 12). These three ‘register variables’, known respectively as field, tenor, and mode, combine to form patterns of language use, which, depending on their degree of generality, contribute to the formation of genres: genres, in other words, display clear patterns of register patterning (Martin, 1992, p. 506).

Although the three register variables are always encountered in combination, they can still be profitably considered in isolation, as a point of analytical emphasis. In keeping with the interpersonal focus of the texts, the corresponding register variable, tenor, permits an important additional analysis. According to Martin and Rose (2003, p. 248), tenor possesses two variables of its own, power and solidarity (cf. Hudson, 2007, p. 236), which, when considered in tandem, say much about the way texts construct and position their readerships.
The power variable finds an important basis in the societal dimension of inequality (Béteille, 1969). As Martin and Rose (2003, pp. 248–249) explain, a useful test of whether this dimension is active in a text is for readers to ask themselves if reciprocation is an option available to them. Certainly, this is possible in the case of T1—the personable discourse even invites it. T2, on the other hand, does not invite reciprocity, and the prevalence of abstract, impersonal Subjects means that the contextual inequality is at the readership’s expense.

Solidarity, as the second variable of tenor, is partitioned into two realising principles, ‘proliferation’ and ‘contraction’ (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 250). The first principle tries to account for the range of meanings able to be communicated in a situation, while the second principle deals with the degree of effort required to interpret meaning.

T1 exhibits a reasonable proliferation of attitude through three informal imperatives interspersing the text (‘Be IN!’, etc.). Considerable contraction is also indicated (Figure 7) through the use of ‘communal reference’ (homophora) (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 159): content-area specific items such ‘teaching’, ‘feedback’, ‘practice’ and the nominal groups ‘explaining grammar and new words’ and ‘specialized training sessions’. Together, the two principles show that the text is attempting to construct a restricted community (cf. Swales, 1990, p. 24)—here, a community of prospective language teachers.
We consider teaching to be a prestigious job ... Both we and our students will appreciate your knowledge of a foreign language and your active command of it. Teaching, however, is not just explaining grammar and new words. It is a combination of a personal approach, presentational skills and flexibility ... Our language agency will give you the opportunity to further develop your skills. We will be glad to give you feedback and an opportunity to attend a myriad of our specialized training sessions. You can test the newly received knowledge in practice immediately ... You create your own schedule. Everything is up to your time possibilities.

Figure 7. Homophoric referencing (Text One). Homophora in bold.

T2, on the other hand, is devoid of proliferation, and regarding contraction, the open-classed lexical items (Halliday, 1985, p. 63) are so general as to not need restricted communal referencing (Figure 8). So, rather than building solidarity amongst its readership, the second text is strengthening the notion of a general public, the implied audience of governmental policy.
The best teachers often seem to know what to do, how to inspire learners and achieve good results, almost by instinct. Sound instincts however, are usually developed by those who plan effectively, who are well-trained and knowledgeable and confident in their fields. A teacher in the voluntary and community sector may be working in a more traditional setting in a learning centre, they may be working in a learner’s home or in the middle of a housing estate or on an environmental project in a rural area. Wherever they are working, they need the flexibility, interpersonal skills and appreciation of the way in which learners develop literacy, numeracy and language learning skills that can help to make a difference. The best teachers understand the relationship between what they teach, how they teach it, and how and why the learner learns.

Figure 8. Lexical items conveying specific content (Text Two).

Specific content in bold.

Building on the earlier genre analysis, this brief register analysis (using tenor alone) suggests that T1 is trying to manage the expectations of prospective teachers on the basis of equality; T2, by contrast, is attempting to manage the general public’s expectations of teaching from a position of power (as might be expected in an official guidebook).

Ideology

A third model of context is ideology.

Martin (1985, pp. 33–38, 1992, p. 582) offers a rudimentary system for representing the ideological tension implied in heteroglossic texts (Ivanov,
Both T1 and T2 exhibit heteroglossia internally though the use of counter-expectancy, but there is also another sense of heteroglossia being present (Martin, 1990, p. 122), within the discourse of professional ELT itself.

Martin’s system of ideology is based on two binary oppositions: left/right (those with power to gain, and those with power to lose) and antagonists/protagonists (those creating issues, and those resolving issues).

From the foregoing analyses, it is apparent that the left/right opposition is especially apposite: T1 is assignable as ‘left’ (power to gain) and T2 as ‘right’ (power to lose). The antagonist/protagonist opposition also applies: T2 is creating (or promoting) the issue of teaching standards without hinting at its resolution, thereby antagonist; T1 acknowledges the issue of teacher standards, but seeks to address it through an offer of professional development. (See Table 3.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Left (power to gain)</th>
<th>Right (power to lose)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antagonist (creating issues)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Text Two (government department)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protagonist (resolving issues)</td>
<td>Text One (language school)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question, though, is why would the designers of T2 want to adopt the role of ‘right’ antagonist? There are many reasons, of course, but a principal reason is the need to discourage the burgeoning, largely self-regulating ELT
sector from encroaching on domains closely guarded by governments. In the case of the voluntary and community sector, governments use tightly-managed fiscal policies to harness the efforts of volunteers, poorly-recompensed community groups, and not-for-profit organisations (cf. Dollery & Wallis, 2003), arguably to ensure that their efforts are directed towards government-desired outcomes (Lewis, 2004). Therefore, any perceived threat to this governmentally sponsored apparatus (cf. Althusser, 1971) is likely to generate a significant ideological contest.

**Education**

Discourse analyses such as these have direct application in educational contexts.

Although this claim might be contested, it is important for language teachers to understand the way insipid texts such as T2, largely bereft of meaning from an experiential perspective (Halliday, 2004, p. 169), can nonetheless marshal considerable interpersonal resources to create, universalise, and dominate its readership, while at the same time purveying a divisive ideological viewpoint to bolster its position of power.

This understanding is important, for several reasons.

Firstly, language teachers should be able, using textual means, to substantiate that the nature of their profession (Nunan, 2001) is being actively contested, and that government is one of the antagonists.

Secondly, the techniques used to reach this understanding, while admittedly not straightforward (Rothery & Macken, 1991, p. 209), are definitely
teachable (or otherwise amenable to acquisition), and with practice, can be applied to a range of texts and contexts. Certainly, there are elements of the analyses undertaken here that could be employed by novices (such as the reticula of conjunctions) with benefits both for understanding and language use. Some of the analyses of mood could also fit (modified appropriately) into the secondary school English curriculum, as an aid to its recurrent focus on critical literacy (Misson & Morgan, 2006; Morgan, 1997).

Thirdly, and lastly, the kind of ideological analysis performed here (using Martin’s skeletal system) offers a useful counter to the often one-sided (and arguably negative) analyses found in some competing approaches to discourse analysis—for instance, Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2003), which, incidentally, invokes some of the techniques used in this approach to SFL (derived substantially from Martin, 1992). Martin’s early model of ideology (1985), although requiring elaboration, concentrates on the heteroglossia implicit in ideological conflict: rather than a singular hegemonic process, there are always multiple points of view in operation (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 264).

Conclusion

It is time to recapitulate the methods and results of the analyses just performed.

The initial genre analysis employed dual outside-in/inside-out techniques (with foregrounding and co-articulation organising the latter) to reveal that the two texts are implementing a common ‘managing expectations’ genre on the subject of teacher quality. Formally, from the perspective of prototypical genres,
this genre manifests itself as a hybrid mixture of Report and Exposition, with hortation and analysis combinable to varying degrees.

The subsequent register analysis focused on the register variable ‘tenor’, then within tenor, on the further variables of power and solidarity, and within these variables, on the principles of reciprocity, proliferation, and contraction. It was through these three principles that the texts were clearly differentiated, with the first text emphasising equality and solidarity among a restricted community of language teachers, and the second text exercising power over the general public, albeit with a moderating, subjective element—projection of the text’s hyperTheme.

This similarity in genre and the specific, tenor-based difference in register were enough to instantiate (and therefore partially validate) Martin's early model of ideological crisis, with the first and second texts engaged, respectively, in the roles of ‘left protagonist’ and ‘right antagonist’: T2 is creating (or promoting) an issue to preserve its dominant power base while T1 is resolving (or diffusing) an issue to enhance its emergent power base.

As a final remark, the author would like to encourage closer engagement with broader debate concerning ideology within the humanities generally (e.g. Balkin, 1995; Goatly, 2007; Melrose, 2005; Žižek, 1994) in the hope that a more sophisticated, compelling, and widely applicable model of ideology can be developed for discourse analysts working within the SFL tradition.
References


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