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CHAPTER TWO

DEBATING APPRAISAL: ON NETWORKS AND NAMES

CATE POYNTON AND ALISON LEE

Introduction

This chapter takes up a set of critical questions about the body of work known as 'appraisal theory', developed over the past 15 or so years within the framework of systemic functional linguistics. Specifically, we are concerned to address two core aspects of this body of work. First, we question the methodological appropriateness of the analytic apparatus, specifically the way in which the formalisation of system networks is deployed in a context far removed from its original role in mapping clause-level grammar. What are the effects of arranging meanings outside this realm in what we argue are overly-specified relations to each other? Second, in relation to the epistemological basis of the terms within the network, we want to ask: Where do the terms come from? How have they been derived? What is their status? And their warrant? Together, these two aspects raise concerns over the nature of the knowledge claims that are being made through 'appraisal theory' as it currently stands.

Locating appraisal within systemic-functional linguistics

Appraisal theory belongs within the broad tradition of systemic-functional linguistics (hereafter SFL), specifically as developed in the work of M.A.K. Halliday. The 'Hallidayan' base of this work is summed up in two publications from the mid 1980s. First, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (hereafter *IFG*) presented a comprehensive grammar of English as a descriptive resource for understanding structural features of clauses (hence sentences) from a functional perspective. (*IFG* was first published in 1985 and has been progressively updated, most recently as

Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). Second, *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective* (Halliday and Hasan 1985, building on Halliday 1978 and Halliday 1979) presented a succinct account of the approach to context, or situation, with which language itself has to be articulated, via the concept of register, if its actual working is to be understood.

This articulation is managed in terms of a motivated relationship between language, on the one hand, and context, or situation, on the other. Language is understood to be organised in terms of three constitutive general (or meta-) functions of human language: the *ideational* (concerned with representing the world of entities and events), the *interpersonal* (concerned with roles and relations between participants in interaction) and the *textual* (concerned with integrating the ideational and the interpersonal into coherent text). Context, or situation, has progressively been theorised in terms of the categories of *field* (the what), *tenor* (the who) and *mode* (the how) relevant to language. Thus, field is realised in terms of ideational structures (usually discussed in terms of the experiential sub-component), tenor in interpersonal structures and mode in textual structures.

Martin's elaboration of this base is most widely available via two major publications. The first, *English Text* (Martin 1992), is both an updating and a rewriting of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) account of cohesion in English. The second, *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*, breaks new ground within SFL in its focus on what Martin and his co-author call *appraisal* – resources concerned with the articulation of judgments and feelings (Martin and White 2005; White 2004). SFL has been notable for the incorporation into its basic framework of a focus on interpersonal alongside experiential meaning, in comparison with other forms of linguistics where experiential meaning is the primary focus (Poynton 1990a). The orientation of this focus on the interpersonal, however, has been more towards the 'inter' than the 'personal': i.e. more with roles taken up and relations between speakers/writers and hearers/readers. Such relations have been understood as managed centrally through dialogue and the positioning work done by progressive choices of speech act/speech function in dialogue. Martin's (1992) elaboration of this area in terms of *negotiation* is the most extensive account.

The 'personal' side of interpersonal meaning has been addressed much less systematically within SFL, notably by means of such categories as *attitude* (with respect largely to lexical choice) and *key* (intonation). Recent work on *appraisal* is a major development, involving accounting for linguistic features at all levels, from phonology through lexis and

grammar to discourse, as realisations of categories of meaning concerned with the judgments made or the feelings articulated by individual speakers/writers. Early stages of this work (e.g. Martin 1992; Martin and Rose 2003) focused almost entirely on lexical choices. More recent work, including a major study applying and extending appraisal to academic literacy (Hood 2004), has paid growing attention to grammatical realisations.

The apparatus of grammatical description within SFL has traditionally involved systematic descriptions of linguistic choices, where sets of related meanings (and their accompanying realisations, or linguistic 'forms') were laid out in the form of paradigmatic displays known as system networks. This technology has come to be progressively extended beyond the grammatical in the work of Martin and others from the 1980s onwards. *English Text* makes extensive use of system networks throughout to represent meanings not only in relation to discourse but also to register.

The specification of the grammatical dimensions of appraisal draws on existing grammatical networks, the categories and relations of which in turn draw on long traditions of grammatical description. Analogous networks mapping the patterns of meaning at work in the lexical manifestations of appraisal that have been such a feature of this work, however, have had to be constructed from scratch. This has involved a proliferation of what have been presented as the semantic categories underlying the linguistic choices available to speakers: the categories as names and their relations spelt out in (system) networks.

In this chapter we question the appropriateness of this extension of the use of system networks from their original role in mapping (clause-level) grammar into work on discourse and ultimately on context/situation. Our concerns are with both this particular way of mapping the relevant semiotic terrain, involving the arrangement of key terms in what we argue are overly-specified relation to one another, and with the choice of the terms themselves. In what follows, we will begin with the technology – the networks. The subsequent exploration of the problem of names will proceed by means of an exemplary instance – the use of the term *affect* and its subcategories of emotion as specified in appraisal networks. The problematic interrelationship this exploration opens up between epistemology and methodology, between what it is that is claimed to be known and the means by which it came to be known, suggests the need for caution about the take-up and application of this body of work.

The problem of system networks

The SFL project is predicated on the principle that, in order to understand what human language is and how it works, it is necessary to understand the relationship between persons and the language they use as speakers and as writers: to understand language as situated. It is a project that has necessarily always had a strong functional orientation, concerned with application, with a commitment to understanding language in relation to the social and with a continuing history of essentially Marxist understandings of both the social underpinnings of all cultural phenomena (including, by definition, language itself) and of commitment to social change.

Grammatical work within the SFL tradition has been characterised by the detail and extent of its descriptions and by the formalisation of those accounts via the technology of system networks: essentially paradigmatic arrays of 'choices' available in language regarded as a resource, organised in terms of levels of 'delicacy' (the availability of further options once initial entry into a system had been made). Thus, for example, entry into the mood system of English makes available choices among traditional categories such as indicative, imperative, interrogative in an orderly relationship to one another.

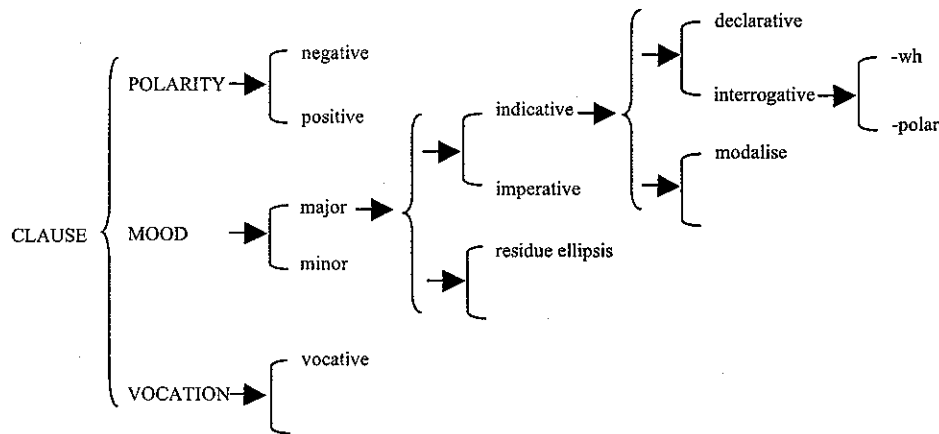


Figure 1.2-1 Clause options in English: interpersonal orientation (Martin 1981, 52)

Although Halliday deliberately eschewed the use of system networks in the *IFG*, in the interests of accessibility, they have been a characteristic feature of his work, and the work of other scholars working within SFL, over a long period (see, for example, Halliday 1976). The *IFG* uses diagrammatic displays to present essentially the same information, as do many other SFL accounts of linguistic resources, but the system network is implicit in all such work. Martin's work, extending the technology of system networks from grammar into discourse, uses both forms of representation. Below is the network specification of the basic dimensions of appraisal.

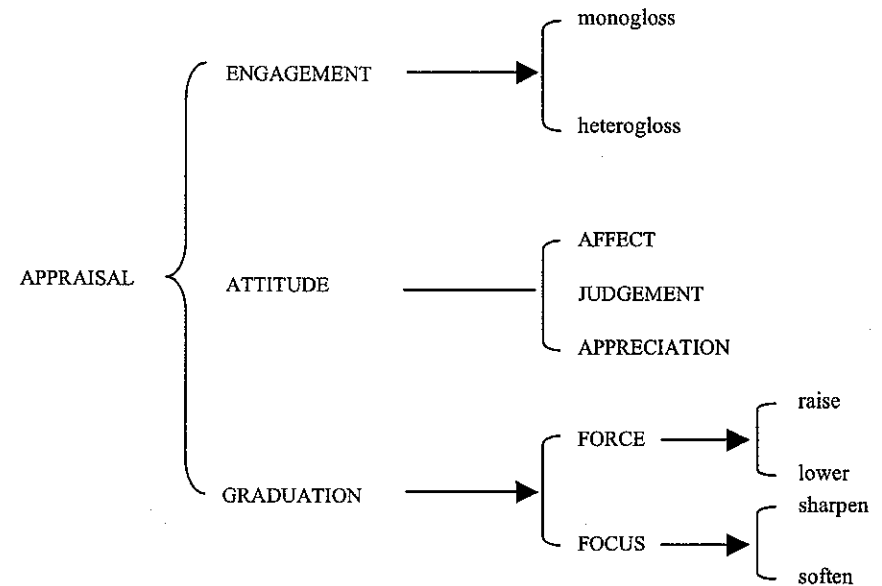


Figure 2.2-2 Appraisal network (Martin and White 2005, 38)

Work on register, going beyond both grammar and discourse to the level of context, or situation, was primarily descriptive in orientation until the 80s. The work of the Register Working Group, consisting of a group of graduate students under the leadership of Martin, at the University of Sydney, extended that technology. They systematically developed and formalised their work on the contextual categories of field, mode and tenor, and on genre, using the technology of system networks. This move towards a particular kind of formalisation identifies the work on register as unmistakably belonging within the SFL tradition but within a particular version of it – a version that is elaborated, in its distinctiveness from

Halliday's work on register, in *English Text* (Martin 1992, Chapter 7). Register (including tenor), in Martin's model, becomes a 'connotative semiotic level' in its own right. This means that it is possible, and appropriate, for its categories and their relations to be represented in the same way as lexico-grammatical categories and their relations, because they are of the same kind. They both involve relations of meaning.

The contextual category relevant to interpersonal meaning is tenor, the focus of work undertaken by Poynton as a member of the Register Working Group (Poynton 1985, 1990b). This work identified three dimensions of tenor (named in the later work *power*, *social distance* and *affect*) and formalised them in a system network as three simultaneous semiotic 'choices' available to speakers/writers. This work led directly, via the third dimension, *affect*, into what became appraisal in the 90s.

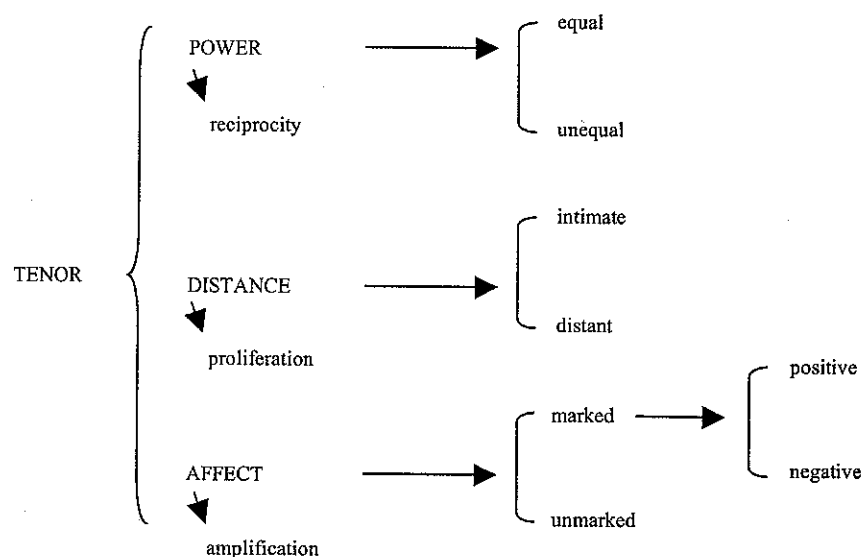


Figure 3.2-3 Tenor network (Poynton 1990b, 91)

Whereas at the level of grammar, system networks are extremely useful as a technology, when their use is extended beyond the grammatical they become problematic. Grammatical system networks are a procedure for laying out the kinds of meanings involved in a particular area (such as transitivity or modality) in a way that gives names, with some degree of transparency, to the levels of differentiation involved in moving from the most general to the most specific aspects of meaning. At every level of

'delicacy' (i.e. specificity) names for 'meanings' are tied to linguistic forms – to realisations. Taking such a paradigmatic perspective on language as *langue*, as Saussure (1959) called it, where terms in systems have meaning, not in themselves, but only in relation to one another, this form of representation works well. It is less clear that it is going to work with respect to other kinds of semiotic or 'super-linguistic' meaning – especially contextual categories. There is undoubtedly an issue with the terms themselves, which we take up in the next section. But there is a prior problem with the location of such terms within system networks.

The first task of a system network is to specify all dimensions operative in a particular area of meaning, usually involving several parallel choices (this AND that AND the other). So *mood*, *polarity* and *vocation* are the relevant initial dimensions for an interpersonal perspective on the English clause in Figure 1.2-1 (above). Beyond this initial specification, further terms in system networks always contrast with other terms at the same level of 'delicacy', that is, they involve a choice: 'this OR that'. The choices are commonly binary (two options), sometimes more than two. The logic of Poynton's early tenor network (Figure 3.2-3 above) was different, however. The network begins with what looks like a familiar pattern, in its initial specification of the significant overall dimensions (*power*, [*social*] *distance*, *affect*). The more delicate options were (mostly) organised in pairs, so as to appear to be binary systems. However, the terms were related not as oppositions but as clines or scales: the relations between terms needed to be understood not in terms of 'this OR that' but in terms of 'MORE OR LESS of this or that'. Thus *power* as a term in the tenor network involved greater or lesser degrees of *equality* or *inequality* (the terms of immediate sub-categorisation), not a choice between one or the other.

The need for a different understanding of the relation between terms in this kind of network was recognised by Poynton (1990b, 88), as by Martin and White (2005, 16-17), facing the same issue in their work on appraisal. Both found a solution in taking up a more 'topological' rather than 'typological' approach to formalisation: that is, a move from categorical to graded representation. The problem was (and is) that the seduction of the apparent simplicity of the conventional formalisation is such that networks, with all their built-in assumptions of categoricity, are always available to be used reductively. What flows from this is the potential for encouraging habits of thinking which, however appropriate they may be for one semiotic domain, are positively misleading in others. This, we would maintain, is particularly the case when dealing with the realm of 'the interpersonal'.

Reading the socially-oriented names given to the options or nodes in such networks in terms of actual forms of relationality is easier than reading them as meaning potentials. The most widely available version of Poynton's tenor network (Poynton 1985, 77: Figure 6.1), for example, is particularly susceptible to such readings, locating four factors relevant to *power* (force, authority, status, expertise) in a system parallel to the equal/unequal system. It is all too easy to read 'actual' social relations off the system network.

The formalisation procedures of system networks need to be seen as a manifestation of the process of '*langue*-isation' characteristic of all linguistics: the privileging of Saussure's category of *langue* (language as system) over *parole* (language in use). Such procedures do not allow for the inevitable 'leakages' that, as Sapir so aptly noted, characterise all grammars (Sapir 1921, 39). System networks certainly work better with respect to grammar than to other semiotic 'systems'. Apart from the problem of either/or mechanisms, there are two further significant problems. First, networks reify terms, leading to reductive understandings of the phenomena under investigation. This may be less of a problem with the more straightforward realisatory mechanisms of grammar and the long tradition of use of much of the grammatical terminology employed. Second, networks 'linguisticise' terms, that is, make terms available for interpretation as purely linguistic phenomena. The proponents of appraisal may not see this as a problem: the names in the networks, after all, refer to semiotic categories and not phenomena in the world. But, as we will argue below in relation to the incorporation of the term *affect* in the appraisal network, there is a problem when the terms are drawn from outside the traditional vocabulary used for language itself. The word and the world are intimately interconnected but they are not identical.

The choice of terms for systems is not merely a matter of convenience but has considerable theoretical significance. The terminology of SFL grammar is a predictable mix of traditional and relatively transparent, 'functionally' oriented terms. Beyond the level of grammar, in contrast, terminology is necessarily drawn from other disciplinary frameworks but in ways that may not acknowledge the heritage of such terms, much less suggest an understanding of the implications of these terms in relation to those original theoretical frameworks. To take one example, it is unsurprising that *power* and *solidarity* came to be used in relation to tenor, given the impact on socially-oriented linguistics more broadly of Brown and Gilman's influential 1960 paper, 'The pronouns of power and solidarity'. However, the relation of these terms to available theorising within social psychology (Roger Brown's disciplinary 'home') has been of

little interest to linguists, whether SFL or any other kind. A Saussurean paradigmatic perspective stops at the boundaries of linguistics, it would seem.

And this raises a problem, not just for SFL, but more generally for linguistics, in its search for terminology for the new kinds of epistemological work being done as the discipline expands beyond the boundaries of *langue*. The problem is that names are never simply names: they have histories. They come with epistemological baggage when they are 'borrowed' across disciplinary boundaries. In the next section, we will pay particular attention to one term – the term *affect*, as an instance of the problem of naming. This term was initially borrowed from psychology to do a particular kind of work as part of a network formalising tenor, a contextual/situational category. It was subsequently excised from this semiotic location and relocated as a category of appraisal. That is, it came to be used as a linguistic category. Both these appropriations raise issues that epitomise the problem of naming in system networks.

The problem of naming: *affect*

In the model of tenor developed by Poynton (1985, 1990b), the names for two of the three dimensions have a long history of use within linguistics. As *power* and *solidarity*, these dimensions are sourced by linguists to Brown and Gilman (1960), but have an extensive history as dimensions of interpersonal conduct under various names, particularly *control* and *affiliation*. (see, for example, the account of social psychologist Smith [1985, 137ff]). The third dimension emerged from the recognition that *solidarity* in fact was not a unitary dimension but involved two components: a social distance component (intimacy/distance) and another component concerned with feeling/emotion, either positive (liking/affection) or negative (dislike/hatred). This third dimension was named *affect*.

The original choice of *affect* as the name for this third dimension of tenor was largely a matter of choosing a term with sufficient *gravitas* to stand alongside Brown and Gilman's *power* and *solidarity*. The fact that the term had some currency within psychology, as a basic category contrasted with cognition, made the choice plausible. Terminological appropriations of this kind can be understood as arising basically from long-standing practices within SFL – and indeed within linguistics more broadly. In the absence of any reflexive accounting for the effects of such migrations, however, such practices appear to operate as if it is possible to generate a theory of the world (of persons, of relations and of knowledge)

from a theory of language. It is as if the fundamental Marxist ordering of base and superstructure has been inverted, with language treated as the base, generating the superstructure of itself. It is this perspective which we see as informing key aspects of the apparatus of appraisal, particularly the relocation of affect from a dimension of tenor to a dimension of discourse – from a contextual category to a linguistic one.

Such terminological appropriations are by no means unique to linguistics, however. Massumi discusses at some length the implications of using scientific concepts in the humanities, warning against the dangers of such concepts ending up ‘tamed, a metaphorical exhibit in someone else’s menagerie’ (Massumi 2002, 20). But this is not the only possible outcome of such ‘borrowings’. He advocates a more creative approach, grounded in understanding the original concept in the context of the system to which it belongs and its relations with the other terms in that system – a thoroughly Saussurean perspective:

A concept is by nature connectible to other concepts. A concept is defined less by its semantic content than by the regularities of connection that have been established between it and other concepts: its rhythm of arrival and departure in the flow of thought and language; when and how it tends to relay into another concept. When you uproot a concept from its network of systemic connections with other concepts, you still have its *connectibility*. You have a systemic connectibility without the system. In other words, the concept carries a certain residue of activity from its former role. You can think of it as the rhythm without the regularity, or a readiness to arrive and relay in certain ways. Rhythm, relay, arrival and departure. (Massumi 2002, 20)

Massumi’s discussion continues in terms of an exploration of such rhythms as constituting *affect*, the term here understood in terms of ‘relations of motion and rest’. This understanding has more in common with philosophical, especially Spinozan and Deleuzian, conceptions of affect as force or movement than with contemporary psychological uses of it as equivalent to emotion (the focus of its deployment in both Poynton’s tenor and Martin et al.’s appraisal). Massumi’s reminder of a further epistemological system in which this term has been historically embedded will not be pursued in detail here but is taken up in a subsequent paper (Poynton and Lee 2007).

A similar conception of affect as movement and force, but operating in relation to persons or subjects, rather than knowledges, is to be found in recent work on affect outside psychology in areas such as cultural studies, feminist theory, pedagogy and media studies (see for example Massumi 2002; Gibbs 2002; Boler 1999; Sedgwick 2003; Watkins 2006).

Characteristic of such work is a strong emphasis on embodiment and Poynton’s tenor work on affect shares this perspective. She was prompted by the nature of the data she was exploring to an initial realisation of the embodied nature of *affect* via its (linguistic) basis in phonology. This insight is not as clearly elaborated in the 1985 account, which has been the primary reference for the work on appraisal, as it is in the more extensive account of five years later:

The basis of amplification is not in fact linguistic at all but physical, involving the exaggeration of regular behavioural patterns with respect to one or more of a range of forms of physical behaviour such as facial expression, gesture, body stance, proxemic behaviour, rate of movement. This exaggeration can operate in two directions, so that behaviour can be ‘larger’ or ‘smaller’ than usual: smiles can be jaw-cracking and frowns thunderous, or the face can be almost entirely blank; the whole or part of the body can be moving rapidly and with sweeping gestures, or remain unnaturally still (Poynton 1990b, 83).

The force realised in such bodily phenomena may subsequently spill over into linguistic forms of realisation, initially at the phonological level (in terms of exaggerated forms of intonation, voice quality, lengthening, etc.), subsequently lexically and, most tenuously, at the grammatical level in various forms of repetition.

The earlier account saw the category of affect largely in terms of feeling/emotion, whereas the later account pushed on quite considerably towards understandings not so immediately interpretable in terms of linguistic categories. The later account of affect speaks in the following terms of its status parallel to, rather than subordinate to, the other dimensions of tenor:

... the organisation of social space certainly involved the intersection of two dimensions but ... the person, self or subject located at any of the possible points of that intersection is not only ... a product or function of that intersection, but simultaneously ... plays an active role (as agent not merely subject of/to) in the further negotiation of social space and hence the further production of its own conditions of being a subject/agent. The question of affect, read either as personal emotion or as evaluation from an ideological perspective (the two end up interrelated), is central to this complex two-way process insofar as it is simultaneously reactive and active, serving either to fix the subject at a particular point in social space or to motivate the rejection of that location and hence lead to further active negotiation. Affect attaches individual subjects to discourse, conceived of simultaneously as both interpersonal and experiential meaning. The focus here has been on the interpersonal aspects of discourse, but these

ultimately are intertwined with the experiential as far as the social production of individual subjects is concerned (1990b, 96-7).

Such a perspective is a long way away from the current use of affect within appraisal. Appraisal has carried out a further appropriation of affect, excising it from its earlier place as a contextual category and relocating it within a level of language, as discourse. The move itself has been made more predictable by the strong focus on written language in the data utilised in the development of appraisal, for example the work of White and others in the Write-It-Right project (e.g. Iedema 1994; Iedema et al. 1994) and work on academic literacy (e.g. Hood 2004). Such a focus inevitably backgrounded the embodied dimension of language itself, most strongly evident in the rhythms, intonations and other physical patterns of spoken language. It also guaranteed that the exploration of attitude would primarily focus on issues of lexis and grammar. As a consequence, affect as part of appraisal has come to be a more linguistic phenomenon. It has become progressively '*langue*'-ised. The effect of scanning linguistic phenomena to try and understand 'meanings' that lie behind them inevitably produces categories on the basis of the linguistic evidence, categories that are essentially linguistic categories. The epistemological consequence is that linguistic phenomena have become proxies for experiential phenomena.

The most problematic example of this move occurs in the footnote to the chapter on appraisal in Martin and Rose's (2003, 65) textbook on discourse, which formalises Martin's observations of his young son's behaviour during 'temper tantrums' around the age of two. Three kinds of demand (for security blanket, bottle and whichever parent was not present) are identified and then interpreted as providing a fundamental framework of 'primitives' (presumably emotional and/or semantic primitives of some kind, but no explanation is provided). These three basic positions are identified as in/security, dis/satisfaction and un/happiness. These terms are glossed as follows:

The in/security variable covers emotions concerned with ecosocial well-being – anxiety, fear, confidence and trust; the dis/satisfaction variable covers emotions concerned with telos (the pursuit of goals) – ennui, displeasure, curiosity, respect; the un/happiness variable covers emotions concerned with 'affairs of the heart' – sadness, anger, happiness and love (Martin and Rose 2003, 65).

The footnote continues:

Unfortunately we have not been able to develop a more principled basis for classifying emotions and take little comfort from the array of divergent frameworks available elsewhere in the literature (including the evolving variations in Martin (1992, 1996)).

The 'array of divergent frameworks' referred to (but never cited) brings into question the appropriateness of the whole enterprise. Simply counting the categories available in different systems of classifying human emotions merely makes clear, as Dixon (2003, 18) notes in his historical account of the term *emotion*, that 'there has never been any consensus about the number of passions or emotions, nor about the number of "basic" or "principal" passions or emotions'.

Dixon's genealogical study makes clear that there is not, and never has been, any 'is-ness' about the categorisation of emotion. All categorisations are a product of particular discourses (theological, philosophical, psychological, etc.) and a linguistic categorisation is simply the operation of yet another discourse – another way of framing the world so that, by 'knowing' it, we can exercise power over it.

Conclusion

In concluding, we return to the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter. With respect to methodology, we asked: What are the effects of arranging meanings outside the realm of lexico-grammar in overly-specified relation to each other in the form of system networks? The answer seems to be that doing so is an essentially reductive process: the 'maps' generated from this process carve up a particular part of the universe of experience in ways which claim to represent 'knowledge' – the way things are. Moreover, the knowledge being represented is simultaneously knowledge about the world and knowledge about language, with no real distinction made between them. This seems particularly reductive. While there may be a basis for seeing the world (or at least our frameworks for dealing with it) in terms of semiosis, language after all is only one form of semiosis. Moreover, it exists in a complex and non-determined relationship with the world.

With respect to epistemology, focusing on the names for terms in the networks, we asked: Where do the terms come from? How have they been derived? What is their status? And their warrant? Answers to questions about the source of terms begin with the process of 'borrowing' or appropriation from other disciplinary frameworks, discussed above. The literature on appraisal also includes reference to empirical observation and

to literature within the SFL tradition as well as to extensive reliance on thesaurus categories. All are problematic.

Tenor is a virtual category but it is virtual as a plenitude or a space of potentiality, a mediating space between language and the social, within a long tradition of post-Saussurean semiotics. Halliday knew and drew on a range of social theory, mainly sociology and anthropology, in his imagining of the various domains of the social that became field, tenor and mode. Martin appears to construe tenor as a kind of absence: much of his work, especially the work on appraisal, has pulled many of the social dimensions of interactions 'down' into language. Hence, appraisal has become a part of what he terms 'discourse semantics'. The difficulty with this, and the consequences of this kind of formalisation and fixing, become very apparent in the inclusion and the specific location of affect in the apparatus of appraisal.

Mindful of compelling contemporary work on affect, theory and application, we would speculate on a different conception of it. Such a conception would not simply conflate a set of explicit lexical or grammatical realisations coded as affect with the phenomenon of affect itself, nor one that is based on a static individualised sense of personhood. Rather, we look towards a perspective that acknowledges the role of affect as productive: as fundamental to human action and hence to the ongoing production of relationships, of knowledges, and of selves.

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CHAPTER THREE

DOING NORMAL: DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF YOUTH IN TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

CONSTANCE ELLWOOD AND CATH LAWS

Introduction

This chapter discusses interview and observation data from a number of research projects which investigated strategies aimed at making a difference to the lives of young people considered to be 'at-risk'. It looks at the linguistic devices and discursive strategies which were employed in the dominant discourses to construct the identities of these young people and their capacity for change. Data was collected from an educational institution for homeless young people; a pilot research project into anti-bullying strategies in mainstream schooling; and research with marginalised children in a special school for the 'emotionally/behaviourally disordered'. In order to discuss the discursive constructions of these young people in these sites, the chapter draws on a conception of discourse (c.f. Foucault 1981) as one which works to define and police the boundaries of normalised understandings. The chapter considers the ways in which discursive constructions of these young people produce or foreclose possibilities for change.

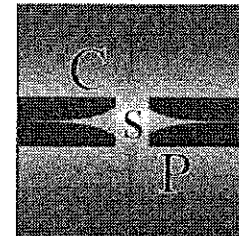
Speaking of change and difference

Discourse can refer to "a cluster or formation of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of thinking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic" (Hall 1997, 6). In other words, in the case of our topic, 'at-risk' young people, discourses both construct

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