

A GRAMMAR FOR THE NATIONAL ENGLISH CURRICULUM TRADITIONAL, FUNCTIONAL, STRUCTURAL, OR WHAT?

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Introduction

This paper explores some possible approaches to grammar teaching and its role in the study of language as prescribed by the framework of the National English Curriculum (NEC). This framework provides a common base from which state education systems and schools can develop a curriculum along national guidelines, for years 1 to 12. At the time of writing, three frameworks for each area of learning, including English, were still under consideration for incorporation into state curriculums. The paper divides into six sections. Section 1 outlines the topic and scope of the paper; section 2 sets the background and provides some general criteria for evaluating the grammars under consideration; sections 3, 4, 5 respectively, examine three approaches to grammar, traditional, functional and structural; section 6 discusses the findings and suggests directions which may best serve students' interests.¹

2. Background

The content document for the NEC, *A statement on English for Australian Schools (Statement)*, states that "students should know about the structure and features of written spoken and visual language and the ways in which the use of English varies according to situation and social or cultural context" (Australian Council [AEC] 1994:10) Through the texts² studied and composed, knowledge about language structure and its use, is to be formally taught at the point of need. The grammar advanced should have the capacity to support every relevant facet of the curriculum.

It is a state responsibility to formulate guidelines, from which individual schools can make so-called choices. However, implementing a new curriculum with considerable focus on knowledge about language, requires of English teachers a considerable linguistic knowledge many of them do not possess (Hannan 1992; Dowse 1988; Piper 1983). Investigating the background to English language teaching practice in Australia, Piper (1983:9) observes "the general lack of training in any form of systematic language study of most English teachers". Personal communication suggests the current situation is little changed. Until intensive in-service teacher education becomes a widespread reality, this factor must have an influence on decisions concerning the implementation of the NEC, both at the school and state level.

A model of language study based primarily on systemic functional grammar, can meet the demands of the linguistic component *of* the NEC. This paper aims to critically evaluate some options, which might challenge that notion. Section 2.1 sets out some general criteria for assessing the grammars under review.

2.1 Criteria determinations for assessing the grammars

The *Statement* outlines general linguistic requirements of the curriculum. I have identified those requirements principally associated with grammar, discourse and language variation, and translated these into criteria by which the grammars under discussion can be assessed for

¹ This paper is an expanded and revised version of a paper presented at the 1994 Melbourne University Postgraduate Linguistics Conference. Special thanks are due to Kate Burridge for her good-humoured advice and painstaking comments for revision.

² Text is defined broadly as "any communication, written, spoken or visual, involving language" (AEC 1994:6).

potential use in the school curriculum. For example, the term ‘grammar’ taken from the NEC, translates into this paper as the criterion ‘category’ and the criterion ‘function’. The criterion ‘category’ is used for all grammatical classes and other features such as tense and agreement, and the criterion ‘function’ represents grammatical function; they are listed respectively as criteria (a) and (b) below. The Statement makes it clear that learning associated with grammatical knowledge must be linked to language use, including strategies for making texts cohere and recognition of ways in which language is manipulated. These entail such skills as reorganisation of the syntactic structure of sentences to produce different thematic meaning as part of the creation of texture. It follows then, that any framework posited for school grammar must have the capacity to support features of discourse analysis as listed in criterion (c) below. Deliberate placement of thematic reordering³ within this criterion extends the boundaries of sentence grammar into discourse or text analysis. The NEC also requires of students the ability to “discuss and analyse the linguistic structures and features of texts in relation to their use” (AEC 1994:12) The grammar must therefore accommodate language variation. In particular students must learn, “the linguistic structures and features of written standard English” (AEC 1994:12) and “know about the structure and features of written [and] spoken ... language and the ways in which the use of English varies according to situation and social or cultural context” (AEC 1994:10) These requirements are encompassed by criterion (d) below. The focus will be on elements that might present problems in the school context.

2.1.1. Criteria

- (a) Categories - word classes (parts of speech), phrases, clauses, tense, agreement
- (b) Functions - subject, object, complement, determiner, modifier, auxiliary
- (c) Discourse analysis - textual cohesion: reference, conjunction, ellipsis
 - thematic variation and reordering: voice: active and passive
 - extraposition, fronting, cleft construction, nominalisation
- (d) Language variation – style - formal, informal, mode spoken, written
 - situation/context
 - standard Australian English.

3. Traditional grammar

Traditional grammar takes the word as the basic unit, and for that reason is considered a word based grammar. The principle of a word based grammar, according to Blake (1988:8), is that the important constituents of a language are the words, which join together to form larger units, such as phrases, clauses and sentences. Depending on their function in higher groupings, words can be divided into classes, the set of terms known in traditional grammar as ‘the parts of speech’. They are the elements common to all three grammars under review. Garner (1989:218) refers to them as ‘a sort of *lingua franca* used by linguists subscribing to different theories, when discussing language. Huddleston employs many of these terms in his account of modern structural grammar, stating “that from a pedagogical point of view the traditional scheme arguably provides the best starting point for discussion” (1984:98). Halliday (1985a:28) also sees merit in many of these terms “that have become familiar in everyday use”.

With the move away from traditional concepts of language education in the late 1960s and early 1970s, traditional grammar was no longer a compulsory unit of the English syllabus of Australian secondary schools (Piper 1988:7). However, Piper (p.86) finds that although most

³ This term is used by Huddleston (1984); examples appear in 2.1.1 (c)

teachers do not accord grammar the central place **it** had thirty years ago, there is still reliance on the same or similar textbooks. This claim is supported by Huddleston’s (1989) review of English grammar texts currently published and presumably used in Australian schools. This being so, and taking into account teachers general lack of linguistic training as established above in section 2, the question is, whether these longstanding experiences with traditional grammar can be exploited in the implementation of the NEC.

Traditional grammar typically has eight parts of speech, as set out in Figure 1:

FIGURE 1: **Traditional parts of speech**

Noun	<i>boy, woman, cat, apple, truth</i>	
Pronoun	<i>I, he, everyone, nothing, who</i>	
Verb	<i>he, become, come, die, believe, jump, take</i>	
Adjective	<i>big, happy, old, wooden, some, few</i>	
Adverb	<i>quickly, very, here, afterwards, nevertheless</i>	
Preposition	<i>at, in, on, by, for</i>	
Conjunction	<i>and, but, because, although, while</i>	
Interjection	<i>ouch, oh, alas, grr, psst</i>	
	(based on Huddleston 1984:90)	
Article	<i>a(n) the</i>	(Blake 1988:8)

3.1 Traditional grammar: criteria (a) and (b): criticism

A number of criticisms of traditional grammar pertain to the parts of speech and other categories and functions. Many apply directly to the definitions.

3.1.1 Notional definitions

The traditional approach to defining categories is a notional one. Definitions are typically based on meaning, that is, semantic properties. It is important to distinguish between these notional definitions found in most pedagogical ‘school’ grammars, and those definitions found in more scholarly works of Traditionalists (Long 1961, LaPalombara 1976, Blake 1988, and Garner 1989), that include grammatical properties in their Criteria.

In his survey of school grammar texts, Huddleston (1989), found that notional definitions predominated for the traditional parts of speech representing word classes, as well as other grammatical categories, such as tense, phrase and syntactic function (p.4). Cited here are some typical examples from one of the texts reviewed, *Living English* (1985). A noun is the name of a person, animal, place or thing; A verb expresses an action or state”; “The part of a sentence which tells us who or what does the action is called the subject”; “The complement ... completes the sense of the sentence”; The possessive case shows ownership; Tense means time.

Criticism of the semantic definitions of traditional grammar is not new. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik (1985:74), Garner 1989:24), LaPalombara (1976:54), and Huddleston (1984, 1989) all consider these notional definitions inadequate. How are they inadequate? This question will be taken up in 3.1.2, points (i) to (v) below As to why they are inadequate, the answer is well documented in Huddleston (1994, 1989). Notional definitions are useful for identifying the ventral members of a class for cross-linguistic purposes, after classification for each language has been assigned through grammatical properties. School grammar is not concerned with comparing classes across languages. Its focus is surely on the

language-particular level, for learning about the English language or any other language. And at the language-particular level notional definitions are not well suited to identifying classes from particular languages. For example, the notional definition of noun does not include the many nouns that fall outside the semantic criteria (person, animal, place, thing). nouns such as *acceptance, knowledge, jump* as in *That jump was a winner*.

The inadequacy of the notional definitions is manifested in at least five ways. To illustrate, a small but significant sample adapted from Huddleston's (1984: 1989) accounts is set out below.

3.1.2 Inadequacy of notional definitions

- (i) Notional definitions are inadequate for recognizing categories because they fail to provide clear criteria for assigning words to the class designated for traditional grammar.

A common definition offered for a verb is that 'a verb denotes action or being, or 'action or a state of being. Consider the first of these two definitions, 'action', in (1). A valid interpretation must include not only the verb *destroyed*, but also the noun *destruction*. Bold type is used throughout this paper for elements under scrutiny.

- (1) a. they **destroyed** the city unnecessarily
- b. The **destruction** of the city was unnecessary

The second definition, 'state of being' includes the verbs *know* and *like* but does not exclude the adjectives *knowledgeable* and *likeable*.

Again, if adjectives are said to describe nouns, what criteria decide that in *Joyriders are idiots* the word *idiots*, which can be said to describe the noun *joyriders*, is a noun and not an adjective like *idiotic*, as in *Joyriders are idiotic*?

- (ii) The definitions can be misleading because the relation between grammatical form and meaning is rarely one-to-one.

Traditionally, the possessive construction with its marker, the apostrophe, indicates possession or ownership; yet, by including examples such as *a month's training*, or *the firm's failure* which clearly don't express ownership, the traditional definitions discourage any investigation of the range of interpretations that can be associated with the possessive construction.

Other examples include: "Tense refers to time" (Winch & Blaxell 1994:27). This, and similar definitions, categorically correlate the category present tense with present time, which is not always the case. Although primary past and present tense refer to past and present time respectively, as an example of secondary use, present tense commonly denotes future time *I go tomorrow* (cf. 4.1 iii [18]) (Huddleston 1989:11).

- (iii) The definitions for each category are not all of the same kind.

Some categories, such as noun, are defined independently by their inherent semantic properties as a class, as in: 'a noun is the name of a person, place or thing' (Winch & Blaxell 1994:7), while others, such as adjective, are defined in terms of their semantic relation: 'an adjective describes a noun' or, Bernard (1975/1986:42),⁴ 'an adjective modifies or adds to the

⁴ In this paper the reprint publication date for school texts is significant, because it signifies more current usage than the earlier edition date. Accordingly, the edition date and the reprint date will be linked by /, for example, 1965/1986.

meaning of nouns'. This type of definition, dependent on a knowledge of other categories, is also applied to pronouns, adverbs and prepositions, and unless introduced in logical progression, can lead to circularity that the independent definitions avoid. Bernard (1975/1986:11) also draws attention to this same lack of consistency in the system of classifying in traditional grammar.

- (iv) The definitions are not all mutually exclusive.

Consider the noun phrase: *the woman senator*. For this and similar examples Huddleston (1984:9 3) argues: *woman* as the name of a person, satisfies both the definition of a noun by denoting a person, and also the definition of an adjective by modifying *senator*. With further analysis, such as applying adverbs of degree, we can say the *rather worthy senator but not *the rather woman senator* (*rather* modifies adjectives but not nouns: and a sequence of two adjective modifiers allows *the worthy new senator* but not **the woman new senator*. For our purposes it is sufficient to say that here, *woman* differs in class from the adjective *worthy* in the *worthy senator*, and both should be assigned to different classes, while still performing the same function, that of modifier to a noun.

- (v) Notional definitions for grammatical functions are generally underdeveloped..

Definitions for subject, object, determiner or auxiliary are either indeterminate, such as for subject, or nonexistent, as for determiner.

Consider the grammatical function subject. Winch & Blaxell's definition (1994:138): "The subject is the subject of the verb" is very indeterminate. Clutterbuck (1989/1990:103) defines it thus: The subject "tells us who or what performed the action of the verb", which only provides part of the semantic function, and is therefore misleading Bernard (1975/1986:59) has the subject as: "the words which tell us the thing, the topic being discussed." Huddleston (1984:58) considers that the standard notional definition "equates it with the 'topic' of the sentence, that is, what the sentence is about." It does not acknowledge that identification of the topic is often dependent upon a wider context than the clause or even the sentence, whereas the subject is not. Consider (2) below, where *she* stands for *Liz* and *him* stands for *intruder*.

- (2) She shot him (Huddleston 1984:58)

The topic may vary according to different views of the event. Responding to the question *What did Liz do?*, the topic would be *she (Liz)*, which is the subject, but in answer to *What happened to the intruder?*, the topic may become *the intruder* which is the object *him*. Again, it is possible to find many sentences whose subject is unlikely to be recognized as topic, or what the sentence is about', exemplified in the following:

- (3) **Nobody** likes John
(4) **It** turned out that she was related to him
(5) **There** should be at least one student on the committee
(6) The remaining issues **they** have left till the next meeting

(Huddleston 1984:59)

The bolded subjects of the examples above do not convey information on what the sentence is about. For instance, in (3), it is unlikely that the sentence is about nobody, similarly for the 'dummy' subject *there* in (5); and in (6), rather than *they*, the topic is surely the fronted element *the remaining issues*. In 5.1 .1 it will be shown that independent criteria are more reliable for identifying all subjects, including ones that are not topic-like, in examples (3) to (6).

3.1.3 Membership of categories

Further criticism applies to membership of the categories. The membership of the parts of speech in traditional grammar is in many cases too heterogeneous. This is true of the class of adverbs, prepositions, adjectives and others. Consider the class of adjectives. Some grammars include in this class, what are known in traditional grammar as articles, a(an) and *the*. Blake (1988:14) notes that articles were not considered at all in some earlier grammars because there was no class of articles in Latin. However, even in some current school grammars, such as Winch & Blaxell (1994:40), articles appear as “adjectives of a special kind”, which, cannot be said to describe a noun. Other words such as *this, each, some, few*, which also appear in the adjective class along with prototypical ones like *big, grumpy, real*, are more like the articles, and as Huddleston (1984:97) suggests, could be assigned to a class of their own.

4 Concept of phrase

A further important area for criticism concerns the concept of some classes, such as phrase. The concept of phrase represents a complex area in traditional grammar and deserves particular study because of the difficulties it presents for the school curriculum. For this paper a brief look at the class phrase will illustrate some of the inexactness in this area, which is continued on through school texts.

Firstly the definitions for the class phrase are found to be inconsistent: Waldhorn & Zeiger (1967/1986:46): “A phrase is a group of words which acts as a single part of speech”; Clutterbuck (1989/90:81): “A phrase is group of words without a verb”; Winch & Blaxell (1994): “A phrase is a group of words that has no finite verb”. An examination of the validity of these definitions is the scope of this paper.

Secondly, the classificatory system found in current school grammar texts is confusing. Phrases can be classified by two different criteria. The first is by function, that is, phrases classified according to what is believed to be their functional equivalent in the word class, as exemplified in (7-9).

- (7) The filmstar **with large sunglasses** visited our school (ADJECTIVAL PHRASE)
(Clutterbuck 1989/1990:84)
- (8) We often eat our lunch on **the school bus** (ADVERBIAL PHRASE)
- (9) I love **eating baked beans** (NOUN PHRASE)
Winch & Blaxell 1994:49)

The prepositional phrase a *with large sunglasses* in (7) is traditionally classified as an adjectival phrase because it functions as modifier to a noun (*filmstar*), a function characteristically performed by an adjective. In (8) the prepositional phrase *on the school bus* is classified as an adverbial phrase because it is said to function as modifier to the verb (*eat*), a function characteristically performed by an adverb. In (9) the gerund (or more properly the structure containing it) *eating baked beans* is classified as a noun phrase because it is said to function as a noun.

The second criterion for classification is according to ‘form’, a term which follows Waldhorn & Zeiger (1967/1986:49), who claim that phrases can be classified according to their “introductory or pivotal word as prepositional, participial, infinitive or gerund”, which “does not contradict the classification according to use”. By this criterion the prepositional phrase in (10) is so classified because it begins with a preposition; in (11), the reduced or non-finite clause of standard modern classification is classified as a participial phrase because it begins with a participle, and so on with (12) and (13):

- | | |
|---|--|
| (10) Let us eat in silence | (PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE)
(Waldhorn & Zeiger 1967/1986:49) |
| (11) The boy kicking the football is my nephew | (PARTICIPIAL PHRASE)
(Clutterbuck 1989/1990:81) |
| (12) To do is to learn | (INFINITIVE PHRASE) |
| (13) Reading books enlarges ones horizons | (GERUND PHRASE)
(Waldhorn & Zeiger 1967/1986:49) |

Some texts, such as Winch & Blaxell (1994:48), recognise phrases by both form and function, with function usually taking precedence over form. Others, such as Clutterbuck (1989/1990:81) use a mixture of the two, marking the so-called verbal phrases of (11-13) by their form, and the prepositional phrases of (7-10) by their function. It should be noted that classifying by form bears no relation to the head-based system of analysing phrases, in which a noun acts as head constituent in a noun phrase, and an adjective heads an adjective phrase.

To further complicate the classificatory system, many of the more scholarly works on traditional grammar, such as Blake (1988) and LaPalombara (1976), choose to classify a phrase by its head constituent, thus applying the standard modern approach.

Given that this is a reasonably consistent method, with the exception of prepositional phrases, this could be a partial solution to the problem. However, there still remains the problem of the verbal phrases discussed above. Blake (1988:111 f.) himself suggests a solution. Many of these constructions appear to occupy the same role as that filled by clauses; they can take objects (*reading books*) and even subjects (*anyone writing graffiti*). Therefore Blake advocates reclassifying them as non-finite clauses even within the framework of traditional grammar,

Further problems exist within the class of clause, but the only revision recommended at this stage is the transfer of verbal phrases to the clause Class as non-finite clauses.

3.2 Criteria (a) and (b): assessment

The main recommendation arising from the discussion in 3.1 to meet criteria (a) and (b) is a revision of the definitions from four aspects. Firstly, the definitions should follow a consistent set of criteria. Secondly, the criteria should ensure consistent distinction between syntactic class and syntactic function. Thirdly, a system that largely defines categories independently of others could be explored. Fourthly, the system must provide definitions that are clear, have mutual exclusivity, and must be appropriate to the understanding of school students. Further recommendations involve revision of the classes, such as the class of adjectives, adverbs and phrases, to establish more homogeneity. This could also entail re-assignment of some class members to other classes, such as pronouns to noun class and 'verbal' phrases to clause class; others, such as articles, would be assigned to new classes, in this case, the more modern class of determinative. Blake (1988) shows that modifications founded on traditional features, but amplified by modern terms, are possible. This is apparent, as we have noted above in 3.1.4, in his more modern structural approach to the class of phrase. The head-based structure he advocates, relates phrase class to word class, thus extending the traditional word-based grammar to now include such phrases as the N(oun) P(hrase) with the functions determiner and modifier, and the V(erb) P(hrase) with modal auxiliaries, functioning as a modern predicator.

Further criticism arises with discussion of each of the remaining criteria.

3.3 Criterion (c): assessment

Incorporating the components of the discourse analysis criterion (c) into the curriculum, through the medium of traditional grammar, requires an innovative approach, since there is little historical evidence of any such endeavour. It is generally agreed that traditional grammar does not reach beyond the sentence (Blake 1988; LaPalombara 1976). However would like to suggest a basis from which an analysis may evolve. The analysis of texts for school students may require the introduction of some additional discourse terms such as topic, referent, text, context, connector. To minimise the size of the metalanguage I envisage a discussion of texts using a style that is not truly formalised. For example, the various cohesive devices such as conjunction and reference, could be served by a common term such as connector or link, and by class names such as pronoun, nouns (related or generic), conjunctions, adverbs and so on, for individual examples. For younger students, attention could be drawn to cohesion in texts through the lexical items themselves. Similarly, for more senior students, a simple metalanguage of discourse can be progressively built for discussing topics such as thematic reordering, for example ‘fronting’, ‘clefts’ and ‘highlighting’ (cf.5.3.1).

Garner (1989) has speculated on the notion of traditional grammar being applied to discourse analysis. He suggests a number of potential areas of study: sentence combining through clause embedding and nominalisation (p.1 94), sentence linking through grammatical devices such as adverbs *however* (p.) 96), phrases *on the other hand*, connectors *but, and*, adjectives as connectors *the following previous ..., former ..., later ...* (p.1 97), reference pronouns - anaphoric and cataphoric, and ellipsis indicated by pro—adverbs *here* and ‘pro-verbs’ *do* (p.200). Although Garner (1989:200) believes traditional grammars application above the sentence to be limited, from the instantiation above, there seems to be some potential for further development towards meeting criterion (c).

3.4 Criterion (d): assessment

The NEC requires students to gain a knowledge of language variation according to user, particularly written standard Australian English. The standard dialect is described simplistically as “the language of formal spoken communication, the education system and professional life” (AEC 1994:10f.). We are also told it is distinguishable by its grammar. Thus we can identify it through grammar analysis, and style and mode variation discussed below.

The style of language varies according to use. The speaker/addressee or writer/reader relationship may produce formal or informal style; it may be in spoken, written or even visual mode; and the function of the text or (what it is about), will influence the style. For example, a chemistry report will have a different form from a narrative, with different structural consequences. One of the main criticisms levelled at traditional grammar has been its restriction to formal style with its inherent prescriptiveness. Christie et al. (1991:106) describe this restrictive account as “rules about what not to do”. Gleason (1965), Blake (1988) and Huddleston (1989) suggest that traditional grammar need not be prescriptive, that it can be as prescriptive or descriptive as style warrants. A formal written style may reflect the most prescriptive features of At the other end of the continuum, by not applying certain rules, the grammar could recognise informal spoken language, traditional grammar at its least prescriptive. A further criticism raised by Christie (1994:18) traditional grammar’s preoccupation with the written language mode. However, there is no linguistic impediment to its use in the analysis of the features of spoken language The phonological features of spoken language, such as intonation, are not directly within the sphere of traditional grammar, but other characteristics can be accessed through the grammar, lexis and discourse. These may encompass such features as clause complexity, noun and verb phrase structure, verb incidence and ellipsis.

It has been shown that by employing an extended metalanguage, which might include the terms style, mode, formal, and informal, words understood outside of linguistics, traditional grammar could, for the most part, fulfil the requirements for the teaching of language variation. In this way, the study of language variation according to use will cover language variation according to user, including standard Australian English, thus meeting criterion (d).

4. Functional Grammar

The functional grammar which will engage the attention of this paper is the one most cited in education documents and journals, that is, Halliday's account (1985a), which he sums up as the interpretation of the grammatical patterns in terms of configurations of functions' (p.x). Hudson (1986:795) views it as a serious attempt at a fully integrated analysis. The theory behind it is systemic, that is, a theory of meaning as choice. It moves from general features through interlocking options: "either his or that, or the other", or "either more like the one or more like the other" through to the ever more specific (Halliday 1985a:xiv). In its purpose of analysing text, the analysis can proceed as far as is needed or as capabilities allow Halliday's system, which has attracted educationalists, particularly in Australia and in Britain, manifests a number of anomalies, many of which have been recounted, notably by Hudson (1986) and Huddleston (1988). Discussed here, are some that relate to the NEC, and which are likely to cause confusion in the teaching and learning of functional grammar in schools.

4.1 Functional grammar: criteria (a) and (b): criticism

- (i) Halliday's account suffers from ill-defined categories.

Hudson (1986:799) offers the following key categories as a sample:

- 'subject': the element that is held responsible, in which is vested the success of the clause in whatever is its particular speech function (p.36); something by reference to which the proposition can be confirmed or denied (p.76).
- 'given': information that is presented by the speaker as recoverable (p.277); what you the listener, already know about or have accessible to you (p.278).
- 'reference': something which can be taken as a reference point for something which follows (p.288).

Throughout the analysis similar instances abound: "a Complement⁵ is an element within the Residue that has the potential of being Subject but is not" (p 79). This interpretation will be discussed below in (iv-b).

Such vague notional semantic descriptions for functional and relational terms would be difficult to consistently apply to text analysis, from a pedagogical approach.

- (ii) Halliday (1985a) provides debatable analyses with little or no justification.

One example is the category noun or nominal which contains the following word classes - common noun, adjective, numeral, and determiner. Participles, such as the present participle in a *losing battle* and the past participle in a *lost cause* are also included in this category (p.164). Thus, as Huddleston (1988:144) points out, in this analysis the predicative complements *brilliant* and a *genius* of the sentences *she is very brilliant* and *she is genius* are both assigned to the nominal group class rather than to the traditional classes, adjectival and nominal, respectively. The constitution of the nominal group and the lack of an adjective group altogether, are difficult to explain or understand, particularly at school level.

⁵ Following Halliday, an initial capital will be used to indicate functions in section 4.

However, Halliday's (1985a:188f.) concept of word class groups can be justified, to some extent. The main word groups in functional grammar, are nominal, verbal, adverbial, and prepositional. He has replaced the head-based phrases of formal grammars with these word groups, with the addition of the prepositional group to account for complex prepositions. In the prepositional group (p.188f.) the complex prepositions such as *instead of*, *far as*, roughly correspond to the word extensions of the other groups, such as the verb group *will have arrived*, or the noun group *those very last trains*, which are extensions of their respective heads *arrived*, and *trains*. This allows the creation of a quite separate unit, the P(repositional) P(hrase), which is non-headed,⁶ as Quirk, et al. (1985:60f.) and Newby (1987:49) attest. However even Halliday (1985a:189) admits that the line between prepositional group and PP becomes fuzzy when considering those complex prepositions, such as *in front of*, which he claims, have evolved from the PP. Halliday's justification for positing a PP rests on his treatment of the preposition as a minor verb, thus creating a link between PP's of the type *regarding the proposal*, *concerning the matter*, and the non-finite clause, which he also claims, overlap in classification. Nevertheless, whatever the analysis, it serves to distinguish the PP from the headed phrases of modern standard analysis. This area of analysis might prove productive for the logical treatment of the phrase category of English grammar for the school curriculum

Further criticism concerns speech roles. Halliday (1985a:69) recognizes two fundamental types, described by Hudson (1986:797) as related on two dimensions: (i) giving versus demanding, and (ii) goods-and-services versus information. Together these define four primary speech functions OFFER, COMMAND, STATEMENT, and QUESTION. Halliday classifies OFFER and QUESTION as maximally different, that is, they differ on both dimensions, and yet in contrasting them with other types, they are both realized, as interrogative clauses, shown in (14-15):

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|----------|--|
| (14) | Would you like this teapot? | OFFER | Giving goods-and-services |
| (15) | What is he giving her? | QUESTION | Demanding information
(Halliday 1985a:69) |

The matter is further complicated: the semantic function of a clause in the exchange of information is a PROPOSITION which refers to a statement or question; the semantic function of a clause in the exchange of goods and services is a PROPOSAL” (Halliday 1985a:71). Thus, by both arguments, an OFFER, which cannot also be a QUESTION, and is not a PROPOSITION, would appear to contravene the analysis if it is realized as an interrogative. Although Halliday believes that propositions have a clearly defined grammar, while proposals do not, the possible implications are not always obvious, as in the following case cited. Christie, Martin & Rothery (1991:73), in their proposed unit on teaching functional grammar for pre-service preparation of teachers, claim that the grammar of English “codes these different roles as a set of choices with specific structural consequences. They give as examples, imperative for structures that demand goods-and-services, declarative for structures that give information, and interrogative for structures that ask for information. Although Christie et al. concede that grammatical metaphor⁷ can extend the choice of structure available for these speech roles, nevertheless, an offer giving goods-and-services, which can be realized by all three structures mentioned, as in (16), would seem to challenge the notion of ‘specific structural consequences’:

⁶ The prepositional phrase, which contains two obligatory elements (Preposition + NP), is called nonheaded, for example, *in the race*, **the race*, **in*, whereas headed phrases have only one obligatory element, the head, such as the noun *race* in the NP *the fast race/fast race/fast* (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik 1985:60).

⁷ See 4.3 (A)1 for an explanation of grammatical metaphor.

- (16) a. Have a cake (imperative) (OFFER)
 b. Here's a cake (declarative) (OFFER)
 c. Would you like a cake (interrogative) (OFFER)

Unaccountable analyses of this kind, that are so debatable as to be confusing, should be properly resolved before being imposed on the school community.

- (iii) For school purposes, Hallidayan functional grammar manifests considerable complexity in a number of additional areas such as theme and tense. Consider the area of tense.

Halliday's semantically driven, highly personal system of tenses in English, although interesting in concept, reveals a number of difficulties in application. Halliday posits three systems of tense, listed below; this paper discusses the finite only:

System I	finite	36 tenses
System II	sequent	24 tenses
System III	non-finite/modalized	12 tenses

(Halliday 1985a:179)

The number of tenses and the means of determining them in a complex verb group would be daunting to school students. In naming the tenses in a text, one begins with the deepest, and works backwards, hence the description in (17)

- (17) was going to have been working
 (past) (future) (past) (present)
 "present in past in future in past" (Halliday 1985a:178)

Detailing the system of tense is beyond the scope of this paper, but broadly, the first element of the verbal group is the finite which carries primary tense; each element beyond that carries secondary tense. In example (17) the primary tense is carried by the finite *was*, the verb group *have been* is considered secondary past, *have* being the base form. However, we can find the same verb group in the example, *have been (of commercial interest), where* *have* is involved in two realizations, that of primary present, as well as secondary past with the en form *been*, the whole being analysed as past in present'. It is quite a sophisticated process to make decisions on grouping such that *to* is grouped with *going* to form a future marker as in (17) and *have* is grouped with *been*. This is not merely an abstract exercise for linguistics. Similar explanations can be found in the same proposed course for teachers (Christie et al. 1991:97f.) mentioned in (ii) above. In addition to the complex system, the analysis is not as straightforward as first appears. Halliday (1985a:176) claims that for the verbal group "the meaning can be fully represented in terms of grammatical features (of tense voice, polarity and modality)". We will consider only the feature tense in (18):

- (18) a. He arrives tomorrow
 b. He's arriving at ten o'clock
 c. It isn't going to improve
 d. He's going to race
 e. He's going.
 f. He's following us to the party
 g. Are you making the wedding dress

If we accept the concept of the three term tense system none of the above examples manifests the commonly accepted grammaticalised future tense markers, such as *will*, although the adverb *tomorrow* in (18a) denotes future time. Semantically, all, even (18e-g) in some contexts, denote future 1 8e-g) in certain contexts, indicating either present or future. Grammatically, the verbs are all overtly marked for primary present tense.⁸ This demonstrates that meaning is not always fully represented in terms of grammatical features of tense in the verbal group, because there is no one- to-one correlation between the grammatical structure and the semantic realization of tense at the language-particular level. Another point to consider is that tense can be indicated semantically by elements other than the verb in the surrounding environment, such as *tomorrow* in (18a) above.

- (iv) Systemic functional grammar provides for analysis of a clause-on three separate dimensions known as metafunctions. (Huddleston 1988:156).

1 IDEATIONAL MEANING (representation of experience)				
PARTICIPANT	PROCESS	PARTICIPANT	CIRCUMSTANCE	
ACTOR		GOAL		
the lion	had caught	the tourist	by the leg	
2. INTERPERSONAL MEANING (form <i>of</i> action)				
	MOOD	RESIDUE		
SUBJECT	FINITE	PREDICATOR	COMPLETMENT	ADJUNCT
the lion	had	caught	the tourist	by the leg
3. TEXTUAL MEANING (relevance to context)				
THEME	RHEME			
the lion	had caught the tourist by the leg			

FIGURE 2: **Multi-functional structure (expanded from Huddleston 1988:156)**

Disregarding the purely linguistic issues, it is questionable whether this three dimensional abstract analysis given its complexity, is the most suitable for school curriculums, in particular at primary school level. Some of the main problems concerning each metafunction will be briefly discussed from this c on text.

(iv-a) *Textual*

The function of theme is a very important element in the analysis of texts in functional grammar. However, identification of Theme is difficult under Halliday's analysis. "As a general guide the Theme can be identified as that element which comes in first position in the clause. McCarthy & Carter (1994). Quirk et al. (1985) accord with this view. Halliday (1989a:39) states: It is what the clause is going to be about", and "The Theme is what the speaker selects as his point of departure, the means of development of the clause" (p.53). This use of the term *theme* as a "formally constrained category" (Brown & Yule 1983), is different from the notion of discourse topic, as "the common these of the previous sentences in the discourse, the topic carried from sentence to sentence as the subject of their predication (Katz 1980:26). It is questionable whether initial elements can be interpreted as indicating what

⁸ The idiom *be going to*, as in (c) and (d) may be viewed as a grammaticalized future marker, but Huddleston (1984:159) sees it as aspectual.

the clause is about (Huddleston 1988:160). It is also a simplistic view of what Halliday goes on to explicate as Theme, discussed below. He further confuses the issue with the statement: “if what comes first is ‘fixed’, ... what comes second may retain some thematic flavour” (p.51). The problems increase with multiple Themes. Consider (19):

(19) And perhaps he’s right

In (19) *and*, perhaps *and* and *he* are all thematic by Hallidayan (1985a) analysis, described thus: *and* is a textual Theme; *perhaps* is interpersonal, and *he* a topical one. It is advisable at this stage to review the functions at the ideational level. They are: Participant, Process, and Circumstance. Topical Theme is the first element in the clause that has some function in the ideational structure, that is, Participant, Process or Circumstance; *and* and *perhaps* are not in the ideational structure, so cannot be topical Themes. The Theme extends up to and includes the topical Theme. “There is always an ideational element in the Theme’ (Halliday 1985a:53). Thus, if Circumstance come before any other ideational Function, such as Subject (Participant), Circumstance will be topical Theme, and the Subject interpersonal Theme. Identifying topical Theme is a particular problem, especially in such yes/no interrogatives as (20).

- (20) a. Wouldn’t the best idea be to join the group?
b. Isn’t the best idea to join the group?

In (20a) Halliday (1985a:55) treats *wouldn’t* as interpersonal Theme and *the best idea* as topical theme, but *wouldn’t* is part of the process element *wouldn’t ... be*. The finite verb in a yes/no interrogative clause is interpersonal rather than topical Theme. Thus, the Finites *wouldn’t* of (20a) and *isn’t* of (20b) are both interpersonal Themes (p.54). The Participant, *the best idea*, which follows both Finites, is the topical Theme, justifying under this analysis, the establishment of *wouldn’t the best idea* and *isn’t the best idea* as multiple themes for the same proposition.

Disregarding the linguistic argument, the real difficulty for students and teachers is that the three-dimensional metafunctional structure complicates the process of identifying the total thematic element in a clause. The following support this claim: We are told (p.54) that “a Predicator is rarely thematic”. We are also told that this functions in the mood structure, but so do Subject, Complement and Adjunct, which are readily accepted as Themes. Existential *there* (p.65) is analysed as topical Theme, but in such clauses, *there* has no ideational function, as seen in example (5) above in 3.1.2 (v), and repeated here: *there should be at least one student on the committee. That, in that there is nothing for me but hard work ...* (p.65), is also thematic, as a textual Theme. The thematic quality of elements cannot always be deduced from the meaning or intention of a clause or sentence in Halliday’s functional grammar, and the bewildering rules for what constitutes the total thematic element are beyond the capacity of many in the school community. Other systemic accounts treat Theme differently. For example, Matthiessen (1992:52) expresses Theme as thematic value, allowing more than one ideational element in a clause to be Theme, such as Circumstance and Participant, but disregards textual Theme, as noted in the following example:

(21) ... and *in the spring the Boy* went out to play

Here, the connective *and*, which would be a textual Theme by Hallidayan analysis, is ignored as Theme, the Circumstance, *in the spring* is the marked Theme,⁹ and *the Boy*, as Subject, having “some thematic value”, is also included as Theme. Rashidi (1992:192) introduces a

⁹ See 4.3 (A)1 below.

further modification, apparently for simplification of certain analyses, choosing to treat Theme as one element, ignoring textual and interpersonal Theme. This concept could also be explored for school purposes.

Hudson (1986:798) also finds the explanation of Theme confusing when he says of Halliday: “Perhaps he is tuned to language in a way that the rest of us are incapable of, but those of us who can’t easily pick out the part of the clause which defines ‘what it is going to be about’ or its point of departure are simply unable to decide whether any of his claims about themes are right or wrong”. If linguistics themselves are confused, how does the teacher fare? A further obstacle to gaining an understanding of Theme as a rule-governed function, seems to be the multiple meanings of Theme outside of linguistics. The idea of Theme remains an anomalous area by Halliday’s account.

(iv-b) *Interpersonal*

On the interpersonal dimension, the main functions as shown in Figure 2 above, are Subject, Finite, Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct.

One concern on this level is the interpersonal function of Complement. Huddleston (1988:162) translates the functional grammar interpretation into traditional roles. Thus, Complement fills the role of direct object, nominal indirect object, and predicative complement. Halliday regards all functions as semantic in nature (1985a:73), but rather than a semantic account of the Complement, it is defined through a grammatical criterion, that is, an element “that has the potential of being Subject but is not” (p.79).

This account does not work for attributive complements. Halliday admits examples such as these are exceptions:

(22) King Alfred was **a noble king**

(23) Its fleece was **white as snow**

In modern English, neither *a noble king* nor *white as snow* can be subjects in these clauses. This is because they are both considered attributive complements, and as such, cannot become subjects of what Halliday terms “passive sentences with the verb be, as in *a noble king was King Alfred*; whereas from the sentence *King Alfred was the best king*, we can have the so-called passive *the best king was King Alfred*, with the *best king* a subject. This phenomenon is discussed further in (iv-c) below. Halliday fails to his criterion that a Complement has the potential of being Subject, or to attempt to revise the function Complement.

(iv-c) *Ideational*

The ideational dimension does not have a single set of generalised clause functions, but different sets, depending on the type of **process**. The Process element is generalised, but the major **participant** roles are differentiated (Huddleston 1988:167), for example

FIGURE 3: **Clause as Process and Participants**

material processes (processes of doing) The lion caught the tourist	participants Actor the lion	Goal the tourist
mental processes (processes of sensing) I like it or It pleases me	participants Senser I/me	Phenomenon it
attributive relational processes (processes of being) Sarah seems wise	participants Carrier Sarah	Attribute wise

Halliday (1985a:111) insists that different semantic roles and processes, some of which are seen in Figure 3. and below in (iv-c), can be justified grammatically, for differentiating between mental processes and material processes and their corresponding participants. The argument is not relevant to this paper, but the consequences of it are. The processes are differentiated to a fine degree, on the basis of grammatical distinction. For example, the principal sub-types for mental processes are perception, cognition and affection. The participants, if they are present, remain as Senser and Phenomenon, as in (24):

- | | | | |
|---------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| (24) a. | I | believe | you |
| | Senser | Process: cognition | Phenomenon |
| b. | It | hurts | my ears |
| | Phenomenon | Process: affect | Senser |

(Halliday 1985a:111)

The sub-grouping of participants and processes in relational processes, processes of being, is much more complex. While it must be remembered that with a systemic grammar the analysis can be as delicate as is warranted, nevertheless Halliday and proponents of Functional grammar argue that it deals with real language. Thus, we find the simplest sentences still require for school students, knowledge of a large number of, difficult terms, since the grammar calls for differentiation. Consider (25):

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| (25) a. | The cuckoo | is | a bonny bird |
| | Carrier | Process: intensive | Attribute |
| b. | You | are | the frog |
| | Identified/Token | Process: intensive | Identifier/Token |

(Halliday 1985a:115,117)

Halliday claims that Attributes need to be distinguished from Identifier/Tokens because Attributes are not participants, and therefore cannot participate in a passive clause as Subject in a sentence like *a bonny bird is the cuckoo* (cf.iv-b above). He identifies attributes as a nominal group with the head as a noun or adjective, but not a pronoun, and typically, although not obligatorily, indefinite (1985a:115). Identifier/Token, on the other hand, has participant status and can become Subject in what Halliday terms a passive clause: *the frog is you*. The status of the attribute as a non-participant, such as *a bonny bird*, is very confusing, when students are taught that nouns or nominal groups represent participants (Board of Studies NSW 1993:90).

It is conceded that much of the massive metalanguage discussed would not need to be accessed at the school level, but the difficulty of the words and the number required, to successfully use the grammar, should be a matter of concern to educators.

- (v): The metalanguage for- functional grammar is difficult to constrain for school curriculums.

In studying and analyzing texts, students need to discuss the structure and manipulation of language in more sophisticated ways as they progress through school. As we have already seen in (iv-c), the application of functional grammar to this task presents the problem of the number of terms that will confront them. To follow a functional approach to language, Halliday (1985a:28) himself advocates a knowledge of the 'linguistic technical terms' that have become familiar in everyday use, that is, class names such as noun, verb, prepositional phrase, and function names such as subject, object, complement, auxiliary, that are found in traditional and other grammars. For school students these are not familiar, but yet another set to learn. The primary English curriculum for New South Wales, founded on the NEC, states:

Traditional grammar and functional grammar provide complementary ways of describing language... This syllabus draws on both grammars” (Board of Studies NSW 1993:8). The need for knowledge of more traditional terms and structures is evident from the form of dictionary entries for noun, verb, adjective, adverb and so on. Similarly, although functional grammar has some application to second language learning, particularly in the socio-cultural context of language variation and discourse analysis, traditional terms are generally needed to explain nice points of grammar. In functional grammar new terms are introduced for labelling additional functions as needed. Consider Figures 2 and 3 above; the number of terms representing a single clause sentence is confusing. Moreover, as we have seen in (iv-c) above, terms used for participant functions, such as *Senser* and *Phenomenon* for processes of sensing, and *Carrier* and *Attribute* for processes of being, are not immediately obvious through the processes themselves. Again, there is nothing in a relational identifying clause such as *It was me*, that directs the reader to the labels *Token* and *Value*, for participants *It* and *me*. A plethora of terms, even for short texts at a shallow level of analysis, is evident in literature on functional grammar, in Halliday’s (1985a) work itself, and from discussion in (iv-c). Although there is evidence (Board of Studies NSW 1994) that some of these terms have been simplified for the school environment, such as *describer* for *epithet*, *thinking process* for *mental process*, we still find terms like *ideational*, *logical relation*, *temporal relationship*, *circumstance*, *obligation*, *participant*, *interpersonal*, many of which seem to leave any simplification to the teacher’s discretion and ingenuity.

4.2 Criteria (a) and (b): assessment

To meet criteria (a) and (b) for functional grammar, a number of categories and functions require revision, simplification, or better definition. Halliday treats definitions in a cavalier fashion. The area of definitions for school grammar is a delicate one, but we have shown that in general, categories and functions are inadequately defined in functional grammar, for example, subject, complement and theme. Definitions for categories particularly word classes are almost non-existent. One of the few, the class of nouns, is discussed through semantic and grammatical features, but no clear conclusion reached. Attempts should be made towards creating a consistent defining system.

It has also been shown that some categories, such as noun, are debatable. The adjectival phrase or group is not a category; even though there is the less productive adverbial group. The only phrase category is the prepositional. For school grammar, controversial categories should be fully justified or revised.

It can be fairly said that Hallidayan functional grammar (the preferred model) cannot alone meet criteria (a) and (b). Other grammars would need to be consulted to provide a foundation for functional grammar. A grammar that is more structurally oriented is more useful for correcting faulty structure in written work, such as ‘dangling’ participles and ambiguity. The metalanguage needs to be reduced and simpler terms devised. Attention must be given to resolving some of the demonstrated anomalies of functional grammar, such as the classification of speech functions and the semantic treatment of the grammatical feature of tense. The following revisions apply to criterion (b). The functional roles of participants and processes in the ideational metafunction need to be simplified and clarified; clear and ns such as complement and theme should be posited. The problems with determining theme should be resolved if the potential of this function is to be properly evaluated, Hudson (1986:800) points out that it is worse than useless to apply debatable analyses to analysing texts.

4.3 Criterion (c): assessment

Functional grammar's value seems to lie in its emphasis on discourse analysis (Christie 1994:18; Hudson 1986:793; Eggins 1994:25). Halliday (1985a:313) identifies certain features which combine to create texture in the grammar of English:

- (A) Structural
 - 1. thematic (Theme and Rheme) and focus (Given and New.)
- (B) Cohesive
 - 2. lexical cohesion and reference
 - 3. ellipsis and substitution
 - 4. conjunction

It can be seen that these features are broadly equivalent to the discourse analysis criterion (c) of the NEC, listed in 2.1.1 above. A very brief discussion of the functional approach to these features follows.

(A) 1. Thematic and focus

In functional grammar the system of Theme and Rheme, together with information focus of Given and New, provide the pivot for the flow of information across the clause and between adjacent clauses. Intonation also plays a part in the rise and fall of speech, from initial thematic prominence towards final informational prominence of New (Halliday 1985a:31 6). "The Theme ... is speaker-oriented prominence; 'it is what I am talking about. The New, which culminates in the focus, is listener-oriented prominence: it is 'what I am asking you to attend to' " (Halliday 1985a:317). Given and New, and Rheme are not under particular discussion in this paper.

Berry (1977:121f.) notes that the main function of the textual component is that of highlighting certain parts of the text, and choice of a marked Theme is one of these devices. A marked Theme is something other than a Subject in a declarative clause, according to Halliday (1985a:45). There is some controversy on the cohesive qualities of the marked Theme. In Hallidayan terms, cohesive features of a text link parts of sentences or larger units of discourse. Halliday does not consider the structural resources for discourse, of which Theme is one, to be cohesive. Cohesion is a non- structural relationship (Halliday 1985a:318). Therefore, theme variation from his perspective is not cohesive. Berry (1977:121), however, is not as categorical, noting that marked Theme sometimes has a cohesive function. Four examples of this device with functional interpretations are put forward.

(i) Fronting: In (26-b) the fronted Complement *bureaucracy*, is placed in front of its Subject and Predicator as marked Theme.

- (26) a. I can't abide bureaucracy
- b. **Bureaucracy** I can't abide.

With the fronted Complement highlighted as marked Theme, the cohesive relationships, if any, will most likely be anaphoric, since an earlier reference to *bureaucracy* is likely if it is the Given, and *I can't abide* is the New. Huddleston (1984:455) believes that fronting can sometimes, also serve as a linking device to the following clause.

(ii) Thematic equatives (nominalisation): Halliday (1985a:42) uses the term nominalisation for an element or group of elements taking on the functions of a nominal group to constitute "a single element in the message structure", which he claims, serves to express exclusiveness, as in (27b). The nominalisation *what the teacher did* constitutes the whole Theme and contributes the meaning and that's all he did, according to Halliday's interpretation.

- (27) a. The teacher offered a prize
 b. **What the teacher did** was offer a prize

In formal grammars, this construction is known as a pseudo-cleft and is considered a marked Theme. From Halliday's (1985a:41) stance it is not marked because the nominalised construction of (27b) is also Subject, and therefore non-marked. However, Halliday treats the reverse form as the marked variant, in which the nominalisation becomes the Rheme (p.42, *A prize is what the teacher offered*). Halliday (p.43) regards both of these constructions as a thematic equative. It identifies (specifies) what has been selected as Theme, and identifies (equates) it with the Rheme. For Halliday, the issue of cohesiveness for either variant does not arise (cf. 5.3.1).

(iii) Predicated theme: Halliday differentiates between the thematic equative of (27b) and the predicated¹⁰ Theme of (28b), which in formal grammars is commonly known as the cleft construction, and in that context, is another form of marked Theme

- (28) a. **The butler** did it
 b. It **was the butler** who did it

An analysis showing a predicated theme, has the whole clause *It was the butler* as the Theme, which Halliday (1985a:601) associates with "an explicit formulation of contrast". In speech, Halliday argues, the same effect, could be achieved either with a marked tonic accent, making *the butler* both Theme and New, as shown by the bold type in (28a), or the predicated form, with the tonic accent in its unmarked place at the end of the first clause in (28b). This latter version is the only one available in the written form.

Matthiessen (1992:56) views both predicated Theme and thematic equative as 'identifying' clauses, seeing them both as grammatical metaphors. Grammatical metaphor, is a device used by Halliday (1985a). Matthiessen (1992:56) interprets it thus: 'one grammatical feature or set of features is used as a metaphor for another feature or set of features; and since features are realised by structures, one grammatical structure comes to stand for another' In this case an identifying clause in (27b) and (28b) is used to represent a non-identifying one, (27a) and (28a). The change is in the ideational functions, but as Matthiessen points out the motivation is textual, that is, an alternative way of distributing information in the clause.

It is difficult to imagine the same understanding of this change in the ideational metafunction being applied at the school level, and yet identifying clauses and grammatical metaphor are discussed in Christie, Martin & Rothery (1991).

(iv) Voice: The system of voice, which I choose to include under marked Theme, is merely Theme variation under Halliday's analysis. He points out that the Subject is still Theme in both active and passive, that is, unmarked. This suggests that Halliday does not consider the passive/active pair to be cohesive devices, since he asserts (p.315) that the unmarked options are selected if cohesion is not desired. Elsewhere, Halliday states that 'allowing unmarked information focus ('getting the tonic accent in its rightful place at the end') is one of the principal functions of the passive voice in English" (1985a:118).

In the previous examples (26-28), sentences a and b can be said to have the same propositional meaning, such that, to quote Huddleston (1984:17), it would be logically

¹⁰ Berry (1975:164) describes a clause which chooses a non-predicated theme as one which "leaves whatever occurs in first place unadorned by any singling-out device. A clause which chooses predicated theme encloses whatever occurs in first place in a construction such as *it* + part of the verb *be* + *who* / *which* / *that* (cf. Huddleston 1984:495f.).

inconsistent to assert one and deny the other”. These examples, including typical active and passive contrasts, differ only in Thematic meaning, which is really the issue here. Christie et al. (1991:86) describe active and passive as resources in the grammar for getting the appropriate information in Theme and New position. In active clauses like 29a), the Actor is the unmarked Theme and the Goal is the ‘New’. In the passive, 29W, the Goal becomes the unmarked Theme and the Actor becomes the New as exemplified below:

- | | | | |
|------|--------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| | Actor | | Goal |
| (29) | a. | Babette prepared | the feast |
| | b. | The feast was prepared by | Babette |
| | | Goal | Actor |

Berry (1975:163f.) views the marked theme option and the passive option as “representing, in the significant first place of the clause, something other than the actor” and that both of these options often also have the effect of “representing something unusual in the other significant place, the last place.” They achieve these effects by different means. The marked theme option moves a structural element to an unusual position in the clause, while the passive option merely assigns a function to another element of structure. Berry further observes that, **it** is perhaps because marked theme shifts a whole element that it seems more marked, that is, more unusual than the passive. The choice to include passive in this section then, was really based on the choice it offers of varying the semantic role in the thematic position, as a manipulative device.

Although Berry (1977:1 21) regards the function of marked theme as rarely cohesive (cf. .3.2), sentences like (26b), (27b) and (28b) above surely result from reference to a previously mentioned item or tact. Take the example (26b), ***Bureaucracy I can't abide***. It is fair to assume that the discussion has included some reference, not necessarily explicit, to ***bureaucracy*** or to a lexical item that has either synonymous or antonymous relations with the word, if, as we have already pointed out, Halliday considers these ‘marked’ Themes to be a contrastive device, within the text or without, or some form of exclusiveness, then a marked Theme would seem to have a cohesive function. The cohesive value of the structural resources of discourse, such as Theme and Rheme, and what realistically constitute, a marked Theme, warrants further study. For the school situation, this is an important point when considering reasons that might be given to students for choosing these marked constructions

(B) 2. Lexical cohesion and reference

A single participant in a text, such as persons, objects, abstractions and the like can be traced through referential chains, which may include processes and participants represented by pronouns, repetition of the lexical item itself, or by such lexical relations as synonymy, hyponymy/hyperonymy (subset/superset), meronymy (part-whole), or antonymy. Consider this example of a reference chain that could build from a text about porpoises:

- (30) The porpoises ... they ... these creatures of the sea ... swim ... other mammals ... them

The examples of reference in (30) show only some endophoric cohesive markers, that is, in discourse terms, cohesion through the text structure itself, represented here by lexical chains of semantically related items. Endophoric relations form cohesive ties within the text, in such examples as: *Look at the sunset! It's gorgeous. It* refers back to the sunset, which is interpreted as being within the text. In other cases, the reference may be exophoric, that is, outside the text, relying on shared knowledge of writer and reader in the context of situation (Brown & Yule 1 983:1 92): *Look at that!* (the sunset), with that referring to possibly some object such as a picture or the actual sun setting.

Halliday (1985a:31-6) considers the interaction of the chains, through a relationship of transitivity, to be what makes a text cohere. From this observation, lexical chains can be seen as related by ideational meaning. They vary from one register to another (p.31-7). Brown & Yule (1983:197) question the adequacy of cohesive ties across sentences as a basis for guaranteeing 'textness', and also the correctness of the endophora/exophora distinction, both of which play a large part in the literature that supports the K-6 English syllabus for NSW. The linguistic foundations for the discourse area of the school curriculum should first be investigated for soundness, before being applied

An interesting point arises in this area of functional grammar. It can be noticed that cohesion can be discussed without the formal metalanguage of the theory. Cohesive devices can be discussed through the more general terms of discourse or its more modern counterpart, text analysis, rather than through the metalanguage of functional grammar. The account of lexical chains above, could be carried out without the metalanguage demonstrably representative of functional grammar. Similarly with conjunction, the conjunctions themselves, such as *firstly*, *further*, *moreover*, *because*, are often cited as examples of cohesiveness, even in the functional approach. This area of text linguistics, and that of (B)3 and (B)4 below, which currently seems tied to the functional framework, needs to be appraised further, and from other approaches.

(B) 3 Ellipsis and substitution

The three main forms of ellipsis are nominal, verbal, and clausal. Although there are rules governing ellipsis, they are not within the scope of this paper, except to draw attention to Halliday's reference (1985a:317) to the shorter textual reach of ellipsis and substitution compared with that of reference. This may have relevance in discussions of the phenomenon at the school level. Halliday (1985a) relates ellipsis to anaphoric cohesion (p.296), and more particularly to dialogue (p.31-7), which in turn he relates more to interpersonal meaning than ideational, such as the yes/no question in (31). But this is not always the case, as seen in (32), which could be part of a narrative or exposition;

- (31) Did you get the tickets? Speaker A
 They didn't have any left. Speaker B

In (31) Speaker B, the ellipted nominal, *tickets*, has to be supplied for the reply to make sense without taking into account the previous sentence. Generally it is the element already referred to, either in the same sentence or possibly the previous one, that will be ellipted. Consider (32):

- (32) The men did six laps, the women four.

In (32) we find the verbal element *did*, as well as the nominal *laps*, ellipted from the second reduced clause. Here, ellipsis reaches only to the previous clause.

Substitution is referred to as a place-holding device or a grammatical function that has been omitted, such as the subordinate clause in (33) Speaker B:

- (33) Has Cecil got the tickets? Speaker A
 I think so. Speaker B

Here *so* substitutes for the whole clause *Cecil has got the tickets*.

It can be seen from this brief discussion that although I have chosen to use functional terms such as nominal and verbal in this context, it is not necessary to tie the study of ellipsis to a functional grammar metalanguage or framework.

(B) 4 Conjunction

Conjunction, Halliday claims, corresponds to “the distinction between the ideational and the interpersonal ‘metafunctions’.” the first, external (ideational) conjunction, sets up a relationship between processes such as the sequence of events (1985a:31 7), as in

(34) First did ... Then I finished ... Afterwards I went ...

The second, internal (interpersonal) conjunction, sets up a relationship between propositions or proposals, such as steps in an argument (p.31 7), as in:

(35) First I propose ... Secondly I claim ... Lastly I conclude ...

These subtleties would probably be beyond the scope of school grammar, particularly when it is realized that many temporal conjunctions have an internal’ as well as an external’ interpretation. I maintain a simpler approach is needed, and not necessarily from the metafunctional perspective.

Provided simplification is carried out, particularly in the area of structural resources, controversial analyses resolved or removed in the area of cohesion, and the metalanguage kept to a minimum, it has been shown that functional grammar could meet criterion (c). Reservations concerning the efficacy of the theme/rheme system as it stands, suggests further exploration. is needed in this area.

4.4 Criterion (d): assessment

The application of linguistic knowledge to language variation is vital to the important overall requirement of the NEC, that of knowledge of patterns of text structure and text type (AEC 1994:12). Much of language variation is dependent on its situational context, which will determine the tenor, mode and field, terms used particularly in the functional grammar framework. Tenor represents variation according to the relationship between speaker/writer and addressee/reader characterised by the degree of formality; mode represents variation of means - spoken, written or visual - by which the language is communicated; field represents variation according to the subject matter.

Both spoken and written mode manifest different features depending on the degree of formality the tenor of the situation requires. Halliday (1 985a) claims that spoken language tends to be lexically sparse, have a high incidence of verbs or processes, which in turn produce grammatically intricate clause complexes, as shown in (36):

(36) Because the technology has improved it’s less risky than *I* used to be when you install *them* at the same time, and it doesn’t cost so much either.

(Halliday 1985b:81)

Written language on the other hand tends to be lexically dense, has a high degree of nominality, and is grammatically simple, that is, in its clause complex structure (Halliday 1985b), as shown in (37), which is a paraphrase of (36).

(37) Improvements in technology have reduced the risks and high costs associated with simultaneous installation. (Halliday 1985b:81)

The impact on the clause complex of (36) has been to reduce it to just one finite and one nonfinite clause through a process of nominalisation, with its consequential changes in the type and number of processes and participants. Halliday (1 985a) refers to this process as ideational metaphor, one type of grammatical metaphor. The degree of formality will affect the degree of nominality or clause complex intricacy, as well as features more typical of spoken language, such as the incidence of incomplete sentences Idlers, and the like.

Through its integration of phonological features such as intonation, rhythm, and tonicity, functional grammar has the capacity to meet NEC requirements on knowledge of all the linguistic features of spoken language. It has been demonstrated that functional grammar can meet criterion (d) from the perspective of mode and tenor. It follows from similar discussion in 3.4 that standard Australian English can be approached through the tenor and mode variables.

It is aimed (Egins 1994; Christie 1994) that through register (tenor, mode, field), the context of situation is linked to genre by the context of culture, which encompasses the contextual understanding, situational and socio-cultural of the NEC. However, it is the features rather than function from which choices are made in language variation. Martin (1987:17) notes: "Features are realised through the insertion of grammatical functions or elements of structure. For example, clause feature [indicative] is realised by the insertion of the function Subject" Halliday himself states that functional grammar means proceeding from the most general features (1985a:xiv). This suggests the need for a supporting knowledge of categories and language structure.

5. Structural grammar

Structural grammar has fallen into disfavour over the last decades. Stubbs (1986) believes that educationalists equate structural or formal analysis with sterile parsing of sentences, or with a formalistic kind of syntax which ignores meaning. This fear is now largely unfounded. A structural approach along modern principles will ensure that discussion of forms does not exclude meaning; meaning is also conveyed by the forms themselves. If students cannot analyse forms, they cannot analyse many of the ways in which language is manipulated. Stubbs continues (p.34): "... even if it is accepted that a functional orientation is of more interest to teachers, this functional view may appear hopelessly vague if there is no formal analytic model to support it. If one starts with functions, one often never gets [back] to forms". The major part of the structural account in this paper will concern the area of discourse, to attempt to challenge the notion shown to be held by many educationalists in Australia, that only a functional approach is possible.

What then is modern structural grammar? Huddleston (1984:50) gives this account: "The fundamental principle of what we are calling the structural approach to linguistic analysis is that the units and categories postulated for the grammar of a given language are determined by the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations that obtain within the sentences of that language". Concepts like 'NP', 'subject', 'past', 'tense', 'verb', Huddleston also asserts, can be understood only through the role they play in the formulation of the grammar, and are defined by reference to their inter-relationships. A brief overview, borrowing in part from Huddleston's own summary of his structural approach (p.xi), is set out in Figure 4 below:

FIGURE 4: **Structural framework**

Categories - borrowed from traditional grammar; modified and extended
Theoretical approach - not generative; not formalised; not theory-bound; follows a structural approach in a very broad understanding of the term
Grammatical categories postulated - derive from a study of the combinational and contrastive relationships the word forms enter into
Metalanguage - relatively simple and contained

5.1. Structural grammar: criteria (a) and (b): criticism

5.1.1 Definitions

Structural grammar, like the grammars already discussed, also suffers from a difficulty in producing clear definitions for the categories, although the problem is a general one, and therefore common to all categories.

Huddleston (1984:56) gives an account of the structural approach whereby categories are explained by reference to other categories, which in turn are in need of explanation themselves. This is because ‘the relation between syntactic structure and meaning is in general too complex and indirect for one to be able to put syntactic and semantic categories in a one- to-one correspondence. For example, a noun might be explained through reference to heads, noun phrases, subjects, objects, singular and plural inflections, and so on. This is an unsatisfactory introduction to grammar study for young students, but as we have shown, neither traditional nor functional grammars propose better solutions. The recognition of categories seems to be difficult in English, which lacks universal inflections of case and gender. Instead, a relatively fixed word order has developed with the loss of most inflections. This is a crucial factor that we shall see Huddleston using to advantage below in the identifying of categories.

Although Huddleston freely admits that there is circularity in the structural approach to definition, it is possible, to some degree, to break the circle by matching the grammar against the data of what native speakers judge as acceptable. Some problems would still remain with less typical members of the class, such as adverbs like *even*, determinatives like *a few*, proper nouns and nouns like *furniture*. But the resulting problems would be fewer than with the notional definitions of traditional grammar. For example, rather than the notional definition of subject as topic of the sentence, already discussed in 1.2 (vi), and found to be problematic and misleading, Huddleston (p.62f.) puts forward the following tests for the syntactic category subject by using such distinctions as shown in Figure 5 below.

Consider (38) below. Arguments follow Huddleston (1984), We can identify *Liz* as subject, because in the interrogative form of this sentence, the position of *Liz* changes relative to the VP, This evidence is one of the most telling when determining subject.

(38) Liz shot the intruder (Huddleston 1984:58)

FIGURE 5: **Structural tests for grammatical subject**

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Form-class - NP(b) Verb agreement - person/number properties under certain conditions(c) Pronominal case - for some pronouns; inflect for case with nominative forms(d) Position in declarative clauses - i.e. kernel clauses - before the predicator(e) Position in interrogative clauses - here is the one case where the subject does not occur before the VP (not subordinate clauses - considered untypical subjects)(f) Conditions on omissibility - whether the category is obligatory or not. |
|--|

With sentence (38) we can directly identify the subject through the tests (a), (d), (e) and (f), and indirectly by substitution, through (b) and (c), in Figure 5 above.

As already demonstrated in 3.1.2, the standard notional definition of subject in traditional grammar is that of topic or what the sentence is about, and in functional grammar, it is the elements taking responsibility for the sentence. But in changing the sentence to *she shot him*, the topic can switch in real discourse, depending on questions that might have been asked, to produce such a response, for example: *what did Liz do? or what happened to the intruder?* In (39-41) below, the subjects *nobody*, *there* and *close tabs* cannot be construed as ‘topics’, nor as the elements ‘taking responsibility for each sentence’, but can be identified through the tests in Figure 5.

(39) **Nobody** thinks that

(40) **There** should be a student present

(41) **Close tabs** are being kept on the radical element

A structural account of subject appears to be more reliable than the traditional or functional one.

Although this solution to the problem of defining categories, is linguistically sound, it will not completely satisfy the needs peculiar to the school situation. The method assumes a knowledge of ‘what is acceptable, which in turn raises the matter of standard and non-standard variation, quite a sophisticated train of understanding. Students are expected to be merely aware of language variation in the upper levels of primary school, but to gain an understanding of this phenomenon in years 7-10 of secondary school. It follows that to serve the needs of primary students, this model requires some further modification for defining categories.

5.1.2 Concept of phrase

The concept of phrase in structural grammar conforms to standard modern classification. Phrases are considered to be extensions of a head word; for example, the NP *the very fast train* has the noun *train* as the head. They form part of the hierarchy between word and clause. The head-based phrases are noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, and adverb phrase. There is some disagreement as to the status of the prepositional phrase. Quirk et al. (1985) and Newby (1987), as shown in 4.1 (ii) favour the nonheaded analysis, while Huddleston (1984:337) claims it is head-based. I have already given reasons in 4.1, for preferring the non-headed analysis. If the head-based analysis cannot be justified, an alternative analysis must be devised, one that is linguistically sound, and which can be incorporated into what is seen as a rational system suitable for a school grammar. Further study of the categories of structural grammar, such as phrase, clause, and tense, will be the focus for future investigation.

5.2 Criteria (a) and (b): assessment

To meet criteria (a) and (b), structural grammar would need to overcome the circularity of its definitions. Consider the class of nouns. The first step would be to select the core of what we may regard as central or prototypical from a number of distinctive properties, such as form and position. The most typical are count nouns, and of those, the group that is traditionally known as concrete nouns. Establishing recognition of a category through noting its distribution and form, can be carried out successfully through the presentation of nonsense sentences from which meaning has been extracted. It is possible, through their intuitive knowledge of grammar newly brought to consciousness, for all but the youngest students to identify parts of speech, by position, inflection and so on, as exemplified in (42) through the set of nouns:

(42) Plome the pleakful croation will be ruggling polanians ungleshably in the rit

(Quirk & Stein 1990:178)

From this point the whole class of nouns will be more readily accessible by more conventional means. The nonsense method can serve as a point of departure for discussion of language at any level, and if approached enthusiastically, can engender keen interest in many facets of structural grammar. Examples can be composed to distinguish content from non-content words, verbs from nouns, adverbs from adjectives, and so on, where appropriate and as the need arises.

The metalanguage of structural grammar can be determined partly by the delicacy of the analysis required. The level at which analysis takes place can be limited by reference to more general classes, such as verb phrase, rather than specific parts of the phrase (operator, auxiliary and so on). The metalanguage of structural grammar is relatively contained, and is the one that students are likely to find in modern dictionaries. It is relatively free of the difficult abstract terms that are so prevalent in functional grammar - terms such as Token, Phenomenon, Value, Participant, interpersonal, many of which have meanings beyond linguistics.

Through the extended and modified categories and functions of traditional grammar, but founded on such modern principles as combinational and contrastive relationships, structural grammar with suggested revisions, can meet criteria (a) and (b) of the NEC.

5.3 Criterion (c): assessment

The crucial question for this paper, is not whether structural grammar can give an adequate account of sentence grammar, but whether text analysis is within its capabilities. Structural grammar, through its very structures, which themselves encode meaning, can be used for analysing real texts. By manipulating structures we can manipulate meaning; and through analysing these marked and unmarked structures we can seek out embedded propositions, and so elicit the real intention of the author, all of which are skills valued in the NEC.

Huddleston (1984:437) regards this concept as the thematic system of the clause. In the following section we will apply a structural analysis to some of those systems which were discussed in 4.3 (A)1 from the functional perspective. From a structural perspective Quirk et al. (1985:1362), having assigned theme to initial position in the clause, simply list the items which can be theme, such as subject, operator, *wh*-element, adverbial. They also concede (p.1363) that through the criteria 'given' and 'less prosodic prominence' (in spoken language), initial subject in a declarative sentence is the least marked theme. Therefore 'marked theme' is achieved by moving into initial position an item which is otherwise unusual there (p.1377); (cf. 4.3 Berry 1975, Halliday 1985a; Huddleston 1984:454). This operation Quirk et al. designate by the general term 'fronting'; Huddleston refers to it as 'thematic reordering'. Huddleston believes the effect of marked themes is to assign greater prominence to the element concerned. The following are adapted from Huddleston (1984).

5.3.1 Thematic reordering

(i) Thematic fronting: For Huddleston, this refers to a particular type of fronting, where an element, in many cases known as the topic, is moved to the front of the clause to pre-subject position (cf. 4.3). It is not the same as subject-complement switch. In addition to a highlighting function, this very often serves as a cohesive device, linking the clause to the preceding or sometimes the following one, as shown in (43b). Fronting can also be used for contrast between clauses (Huddleston 1984:455). Significantly, Huddleston also considers fronting to have similarities to passivisation.

- (43) a. You could make it more cheaply with this material
- b. **With this material** you could make it much more cheaply

(ii) Cleft construction: In (44b), a cleft construction is derived from (44a). The possible syntactic analyses are not discussed here. Huddleston (1984:459f.), however, abandons the discontinuous NP I cf. Matthiessen 1992:56; Berry 1975:164), and posits one which I believe is more accessible to school students. A single clause is divided into two parts assigned to different clauses. One part is placed in the superordinate clause, *it was a faulty switch*, the other in a non-embedded subordinate relative clause *that caused the trouble*.

- (44) a. A faulty switch caused the trouble
b. **It was a faulty switch** that caused the trouble (Huddleston 1984:459)

The general effect is to highlight or add prominence to the former, in this case, a *faulty switch*, or to contrast that part with some former element in the text. The highlighted NP a *faulty switch* is associated with the identifier role, and the rest, is associated with the identified role. The relevance of the thematic meaning is that the content of the relative clause is generally given'; the highlighted part is generally 'new'. But 'when the information in the relative clause is 'new', the highlighted element, will often be anaphoric or its referent otherwise given (Huddleston 1984:465), that is in most cases. [he cleft tends to be interpreted as being about the referent of the highlighted element, particularly in this last case. This is a very relevant point for school grammar, as it also implies cohesiveness in thematic variation. The cohesive effect is similar to fronting.

(iii) Pseudo-cleft construction: Huddleston (1984:464) notes that the *pseudo* cleft is semantically regarded as another thematic variant, but not always regarded as a syntactic variant derived from the type of non-cleft clause in (44a). It is a special case of the identifying *be* construction, having a NP as the fused relative *what caused the trouble*.

- (44) c. **What caused the trouble** was a faulty switch

For the relevant thematic meaning, the basic form, has the fused relative as an NP and subject, which lends itself to being topic, especially when it comes first in the clause, and as such, to interpretation as being about the referent of the fused relative (p.466). Although it is conceded that the content of the relative clause need not always be 'given', but even if it is 'new,' it will be lower in communicative significance than the highlighted element. All this accords to the potential of the pseudo-cleft for forming cohesive relations. Huddleston also draws attention to the "component of uniqueness or exhaustiveness that both pseudo-clefts and clefts exhibit through the presence in them of a definite NP, the fused relative and *it* (p.466). This is similar to Halliday's (1985a) conclusion.

5.3.2 Postponement

Quirk et al. (1985) consider voice and extraposition a form of 'postponement' rather than examples of marked theme (cf. Huddleston's (1984) term 'transformation').

(i) Voice: active and passive: Quirk et al. view passive voice as postponement of the agentive subject. In the case of (43b), it is omitted altogether. The semantic difference from its active correlate is that in the passive, information need not be encoded that had to be encoded in the active (Huddleston 1984:446). In (43b), passive is used to abrogate responsibility for the act of delay. Omitting the agent, further distances *the officer* from the action, with the result that specific responsibility for the delay is firmly buried, thus implicitly changing the message of the sentence. Other passive sentences may serve to change the prominence of the agent or the goal, rather than through a fronting device.

- (43) a. The officer regrets the delay in sending an ambulance
b. The delay in sending an ambulance is regretted

(ii) Extraposition¹¹: shifting a unit to the end of a clause and replacing it with *it*, as in (44b) has the thematic effect of moving a ‘heavy’ unit to the end of a clause for easier processing whether by the speaker or the hearer, and the longer the embedded clause, the more likely that it will be extraposed (Huddleston 1984:453). It operates almost exclusively on subordinate nominal clauses as clausal subjects as in (44a) (Quirk et al. 1985:1391). Huddleston (p 454) considers that there is no absolute correspondence between ‘given’ and non-extraposed, and ‘new’ and extraposed, but there does seem to be some measure of correlation between them. Greenbaum (1991:163) notes, by the principle of end-focus the more important information tends to be in fuller detail, and being longer, comes at the end. This would tend to be the ‘new’, Extraposition may also have a cohesive function by linking the first clause to a previous one.

- (44) a. That he was very angry with the way things turned out, was obvious
b. It was obvious **that he was angry with the way things turned out**

It has been shown in 5.3.1 and 5.3.2, that within the structural framework, the significance of thematic variants can be related to textual structure, which is the rationale behind the need for grammar teaching in the *NEC*. It has also been shown that, where *useful*, semantic roles and structures, such as identified term and identifier’ are correlated with grammatical functions and structure, providing adequate support for this area of the curriculum.

As demonstrated in 4.3, cohesion and reference, ellipsis, substitution, do not require a special metalanguage, and are not the province of just one grammar framework. With the metalanguage already in place, analysis of text structure from a structural framework, can include these discourse features. **It** has been demonstrated that structural grammar has the capacity to deal with text analysis, thus meeting criteria (c) for discourse functions.

5.3.3. Criterion (d)

In the earlier discussion of register (tenor, mode and field) in functional grammar (4.4), attention was drawn to the fact that these variables can be interpreted through other approaches; one such approach is structural grammar. I-or example, the degree of formality, which, in 4.4, we showed to be related to mode, can be approached through a number of means - the degree of nominalisation, clause complex intricacy, types of nouns and verbs, verb incidence, sentence completion, and the like. For instance nominalisation, which is a learned process, can be approached from a structural perspective through the clause and phrase structure, as a linguistic variant available to the language user. The purpose or subject of the text will also influence these structural choices. The choices can then be related to the features of written standard Australian English, thus meeting criterion (d).

6. Conclusion

It has been shown that structural, functional, and even traditional grammar to a lesser degree, could all, with varying modifications, serve the main purposes of the national English curriculum from differing perspectives. Whatever the outcome, both statewide and federally, Brock (1993:28) points out the inherent dangers of a single theory approach offered in pre-service and in service teacher education courses. A solution to the shortcomings identified, is to integrate the most applicable aspects of the structural approach incorporating the best of modified traditional grammar, with the most applicable aspects of functional grammar, to

¹¹ This change in grammatical function was not discussed from a functional perspective. Halliday considers the marked variant to be the one with clause as subject, as in (44a), contrary to the orthodox kernel clause structure.

achieve a workable foundation from which a suitable grammar can be devised to support the national English curriculum.

Because it appears that systemic functional grammar has the support of the academics in education, it would be v II to heed the points that Hudson (1986:804f.) puts forward. Firstly, the claim for systemic grammar concerning the nature of semantic structure, that the fundamental components of meaning are functional components he asserts, “could have been made within any other theoretical framework. Secondly, the claim that ‘each element in a language is explained by reference to its function in the total linguistic system’, Hudson reminds us, is true of any account of language structure. Thirdly, the claim that systemic functional grammar is designed to account for how language is used, is true even of a Chomskyan account, in a different perspective.

Finally, the following quotation from Hudson, succinctly sums up my stance on the matter: ‘I have laboured the point about ‘functional because it seems to me that this is little more than a slogan for eliciting favorable reactions from a particular kind of person the kind of person who is struck by the truism that language is a tool for communication, rather than an abstract and pointless formal system. Systemic grammar seems to appeal to many people who find more formal approaches harder to connect with their day- to-day experience, but this may have something to do with the method of presentation ‘ (Hudson 1986:804).

Following this line, Newby (1 987:3) concludes that “... any grasp you may have of the nature of language will be crucially limited without some understanding of its structure”. Therefore it behoves us to design a grammar that exposes the school students of Australia to all of the best elements of the grammars reviewed, to successfully meet the needs of the national English curriculum.

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