The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

University of Cape Town

ORAL NARRATIVES OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE :

A DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF CAPE FLATS CHILDREN

Karen Cecile Malan

University of Cape Town

Thesis presented for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of Linguistics

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

December 2000

To my daughters, Nina and Isabella

and to the children of Kensington/Factreton

with love, gratitude and admiration.

University of Cape Town

ABSTRACT

This study investigates developing skill in structuring oral narratives of personal experience in children, aged from three to six years, resident in the Cape Flats community of Kensington/Factreton. There is extensive research evidence that the ability of preschool children to construct autonomous narrative texts is strongly related to later literacy development and academic achievement. Relatively little detailed sociolinguistic research on South Africa's language varieties exists, and even less on the acquisition of oral language and literacy by young children. It is known, however, that for many younger members of Cape Flats communities the task of language and literacy acquisition is complicated by the need to develop control over a range of standard and vernacular language varieties for use in different contexts of speaking. Furthermore, previous research in Kensington/Factreton indicates that both emergent literacy knowledge and home supports for literacy are lacking in children from working-class homes.

The data for the study were collected over a period of three years in a preschool, a primary school and a few homes in Kensington/Factreton, using a combination of methods that included participant observation, interviews, anonymous recording and elicited reports. Three main types of data were obtained : (i) personal narratives, elicited from individual children using a technique developed for conversational settings; (ii) naturally-occurring discourse in a preschool, including teacher- and child-talk; and (iii) a small amount of family discourse in homes. Data from all three settings were drawn on to build up a picture of children's language development and language experiences in preparation for literacy and academic instruction.

A total of 415 personal narratives were analysed using a framework developed during the course of the research. Children drew on the linguistic resources of both major language varieties of their community to produce richly structured accounts of their experiences in which the key devices responsible for narrative coherence were repetition, refrains and lexical/syntactic parallelism. Distinct narrative types and developmental paths were identified, as well as a canonical narrative form amongst the oldest subjects. Comparisons with findings from other social/cultural groups revealed certain distinctive features of the Cape Flats children's narratives. Analysis of the preschool data revealed that few opportunities exist in the course of either planned or naturally-occurring classroom discourse to support the development of narrative and other forms of extended discourse that are considered crucial for literacy and other academic achievement. These findings point to the need to investigate children's home environments as sources of developing competence in oral narrative production. The speech data collected from homes in this study offer useful groundwork for future research along these lines.

University of Cape Town

Table of Contents

		Page
Acknowledgements		iv
Notes on transcription		v
Chapter 1 : Aims, methods and contexts of the research		
1.1	Rationale for the study	1
1.1.1	Aims and questions	4
1.2	Collecting narrative data from children	5
1.2.1	Eliciting fictional stories	6
1.2.2	Eliciting personal narratives	8
1.3	The data base for the study	19
1.3.1	School data : Pre-school	19
1.3.2	School data : Primary school	29
1.3.3	Home data : Discourse in an extended family network	30
Chapter 2 : The sociolinguistic community : historical and contemporary perspectives		
2.1	English and Afrikaans on the Cape Flats	33
2.1.1	Historical overview	34
2.1.2	The linguistic repertoire	38
2.1.3	Variation in the linguistic codes	41
2.1.4	Linguistic features of Cape Flats English and Afrikaans	43
2.2	A profile of Kensington/Factreton	44
2.2.1	Historical development of the area	44
2.2.2	Contemporary Kensington/Factreton : its homes and families	48
2.2.3	Schools in Kensington/Factreton	52
2.3	Conclusions	61
Chapter 3 : Narrative topics and genres : tellers, tales and tellings		
3.1	Theoretical framework for examining the conversationally-situated narrative	62
3.2	Narrative topics in the Kensington/Factreton data	63
3.3	What counts as a personal narrative?	71
3.4	Other genres of narrative	78
3.4.1	Development of genre skills in young children	78
3.4.2	Narrative genres in the Kensington/Factreton data	79
Chapter 4 : Articulating the structure of personal narratives		
4.1	Labov'sapproach to narrative analysis	87
4.1.1	Basic assumptions of Labov's theory	87
4.1.2	Labov's theory of narrative structure	89
4.1.3	Applications of Labov's model to children's narratives	95
4.1.4	Appraisal of Labov's theory of narrative structure	97
4.2	Line, verse and stanza analysis	98

University of Cape Town

4.2.1	Hymes : verse patterning in Native American oral narratives	99
4.2.2	Gee : line and stanza analysis of personal narratives	102
4.2.3	Application of line and stanza analysis to children's narratives	107
4.2.4	Appraisal of line and stanza approach to narrative analysis	108
4.3	A linguistic framework for analysing narrative structure	110
4.3.1	Lines	112
4.3.2	Stanzas	118
4.3.3	Parts	122
4.3.4	Levels of narrative structure	122
4.3.5	Cohesion	125
4.3.6	Staging	126
4.3.7	Focus and theme	131
4.4	Conclusions	135

Chapter 5 : Developing narrative competence : Level 1 analysis

5.1	Idea units	136
5.1.1	Review of theoretical positions and coding systems	136
5.1.2	Analysis of idea units	143
5.2	Line, stanza and part structure	153
5.3	Lines : mainline and offline propositions	154
5.3.1	Orientation	158
5.3.2	Evaluation	161
5.4	Stanzas	172
5.5	Parts	176
5.6	Summary and discussion	177

Chapter 6 : Developing narrative competence : Level 2 analysis

6.1	Cohesion strategies	185
6.1.1	Connectives and clausal subordination	185
6.1.2	Repetition	189
6.1.3	Refrains	191
6.1.4	Parallelism	196
6.2	Staging	199
6.2.1	Shifts in reference marking stanza beginnings	199
6.2.2	Staging manoeuvres delineating Part structure	204
6.2.3	Chronology and manipulations of temporal sequence	207
6.3	Focus and Theme	210
6.3.1	Narrative types based on the focusing system	211
6.3.2	Relationships of canonical form, topic and age	222
6.3.3	Forms of the personal narrative not centred on crisis events	225
6.3.4	'Oral' or 'literate' narratives?	235

Chapter 7 : Classroom discourse

7.1	Theoretical framework	238
7.2	Child talk	239
7.2.1	Types and distribution of child talk	240
7.2.2	Conversational partners	242
7.2.3	Curriculum constraints	243
7.3	Teacher talk	245

University of Cape Town

7.3.1	Analysis of a fictional story-reading session	245
7.3.2	Analysis of a newstime session	247
7.3.3	Teacher's structuring of the discourse	256
7.3.4	Interaction of topic, speech acts and topic development	257
7.3.5	Teacher agenda	260
7.4	Summary	261

Conclusions 263

End note 267

Bibliography 268

Appendices :

1. Background to the families from whom speech recordings were made in homes 283

2. Non-standard English and Afrikaans lexical usage and lexical borrowings among Cape Muslim speakers 284

3. Preschools and schools in Kensington/Factreton 288

4. Definitions of child talk categories 290

5. Transcript of a fictional story-reading session in the preschool classroom 291

University of Cape Town

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to a number of people whose support, both moral and practical, has made this research possible. Most particularly, I wish to thank the following :

During the course of my fieldwork, the teachers and staff of the Kensington Creche and Sunderland Primary School were unfailingly kind and welcoming, patient in enduring my extensive recording and collection of data, and generous in sharing their knowledge and experiences; I cannot thank them enough. Likewise, to the children at these schools, for their enthusiastic, warm and entertaining participation as the subjects of this study, and their willingness to share their life stories, I am enormously grateful. The families who participated in the recording of speech in their homes were generous with their time and efforts and I thank them sincerely.

For the duration of this research, I had the double benefit of having Roger Lass and Rajend Mesthrie as supervisors in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Cape Town. For their encouragement, advice, enthusiasm for the project and, above all, for their endless patience and forbearance with the vicissitudes of my studentship, I am deeply grateful.

I also profited greatly from the assistance of people further afield. Most especially, I owe thanks to Alyssa McCabe for her very kind interest, help and advice, both practical and conceptual, which enabled me to find direction in the early stages of this study, and whose work has remained an inspiration throughout. To Catherine Snow I am indebted for offering me the opportunity and privilege of spending time at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. I gained enormously from the input of many people while at Harvard, including James Gee, who offered helpful comments on a number of the narratives in my data, and Shoshana Blum-Kulka, for whose friendship and practical wisdom I am grateful.

Jacqui du Toit undertook the task of rescuing tables and text from formatting errors and designing the layout of the final product with efficiency and good humour.

Finally, but most importantly, I wish to thank my daughters, who have endured with patience long bouts of preoccupation and absence, and my husband, Nicholas Bicket, without whose material and moral support, humour and forbearance this study would not have been possible.

This research was funded by the National Research Foundation, and earlier by a Lestrade Scholarship from the University of Cape Town.

University of Cape Town

Notes on transcription

Code-mixing, code-switching and lexical borrowing are features of the vernacular of this speech community. In order to clarify these phenomena, italics are used for Afrikaans speech and roman print for English. In some cases, the orthographic form of a word is the same in both languages; in these instances the type face indicates whether the word was pronounced as an English or Afrikaans one. For the reader unfamiliar with Afrikaans, glosses are supplied in the text immediately following the glossed utterance and enclosed in square brackets [ ].

The amount of detailed non-segmental annotation that is provided for transcribed text varies depending on the type of analysis under discussion. However, the following basic conventions are used consistently where they are considered necessary :

/ /	tone unit boundaries
.	brief pause
_	longer pause
*	overlapping speech
[xx]	unintelligible word or phrase
[2 sylls]	"

Capital letters indicate words given extra emphasis.

Interjections and contributions by me are marked with my initial (K :)

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 1

AIMS, METHODS AND CONTEXTS OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter provides first a general rationale for the study (1.1) and a statement of its aims and questions (1.1.1). It goes on to examine some of the methodological issues involved in collecting narrative data from children and their implications for the research reported here. Section 1.2 considers a range of methodologies available to the researcher interested in the acquisition of narrative competence, while section 1.3 outlines the data base for this study.

1.1 Rationale

A key development in first language acquisition is the ability to produce autonomous, extended forms of discourse. This process of developing control over text-like units of discourse begins in early childhood and is critical to later success with the linguistic demands of formal education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. In particular, early skill in the production of narratives has been identified as an important predictor of later literacy and other academic achievement (e.g, Snow 1983; Feagans & Short 1984; Wells 1985; Sulzby 1986; Snow & Dickinson 1990). Explanations for this link between oral narrative and literacy skills have centred on the argument that narrative is a form of decontextualized language, in which novel information is conveyed to audiences who may share little or no background knowledge. Like other forms of decontextualized oral language (such as giving explanations or planning future actions), narration requires skills such as explicitness of reference, high degrees of cohesion and complexity of syntactic structure, that are not usually necessary in face-to-face, contextualized conversations, but which are basic to many literacy tasks (Cummins 1983; Snow 1983, 1991a; Snow & Dickinson 1990; Dickinson 1991). Relatively little is known as yet, however, of how children acquire the ability to use and understand decontextualized language or of how school and home environments contribute to variable success in the acquisition of this type of discourse.

The personal narrative – i.e., a conversational account of a personal experience – is perhaps the most ubiquitous and commonplace of oral narrative genres. As a process of presenting ourselves, and of signalling our perspectives on events (i.e., our attitudes, beliefs and values), narrating our experiences is a vital human activity and integral to the process of constructing a personal and social identity. The personal narrative emerges as early as two years of age, within a supportive context of interactions with older speakers who provide the scaffolding for emerging narrative structure (McCabe & Peterson 1991; Peterson & McCabe 1992; Ninio & Snow 1996; Ely, Gleason & McCabe 1996; Snow & Imbens-Bailey 1997). Gradually, children develop the ability to produce coherent narrative accounts, independent of adult support, that are effective and appropriate to the situation of speaking. Whether relating

University of Cape Town

an episode as an anecdote during family dinner-table conversation or as a verbal report in the classroom, the task involves handling a complex interaction of cognitive, linguistic and social/pragmatic requirements in realtime, online processing (Berman 1997; Pan & Snow 1999).

Taking each of these factors in turn, children's developing skill at narrative production can be viewed from the perspective of three different kinds of knowledge : as a *cognitive* structuring of experience; as a reflection of *social* knowledge; and as linguistic knowledge – both on a *microlinguistic* level of handling syntactic and lexical elements and the ability to integrate these microlevel components into a coherent *macrostructure*[1] for narrating. From a cognitive perspective, narrative is a representation of experience : in remembering experiences, we translate knowing into telling (Hudson & Shapiro 1991). Narrating is possibly the primary means that humans have for making sense of the chaos of events that make up our lives; as Hymes 1982:122) puts it, narrative allows 'an implicit organization of experience into set, satisfying patterns'. Similarly, Bruner (1986) has identified narrative thought as one of two modes of cognitive functioning (the other being a logico-scientific mode) with which humans make sense of their world. In producing narrative texts, Bruner argues, we are required to construct simultaneously two landscapes - a 'landscape of action', whose constituents are the arguments of action and a 'landscape of consciousness', relating to what those involved in the action know, think or feel. The process thus requires not only an understanding of temporal ordering and action structure, but also consideration of the listener's perspective in terms of providing adequate background and descriptive information, as well as the ability to give expression to one's own – i.e., narrator – and character perspective (Berman 1997).

From another perspective, the ability to narrate is linked, along with other forms of discourse, to our repertoires of social knowledge and plays a significant role in socializing children into membership of their culture (Hymes 1982; Miller *et al* 1990; Blum-Kulka 1997). Narrative skills develop within a rich environment of children's interactions with family members, peers and a widening range of social settings. Because they are deeply embedded in social-cultural contexts of communicating, personal narratives differ, sometimes strikingly, in structure, style and function across different groups of people. For instance, what speakers intend as the 'point' of stories seems strongly bound to social culture, as do conceptions of what constitutes sufficient versus redundant information. White North-American children tend to produce personal narratives that are linear, factual, event-centred accounts of a single

---

1 Macrostructure refers to 'the abstract underlying structure of a text; the deep structure of a text defining its global meaning' (Prince 1987:49).

University of Cape Town

experience (Peterson & McCabe 1983; 1997). In contrast, the narratives of children from some African-American communities involve a series of implicitly associated episodes built around an unstated thematic focus (Michaels 1981, 1985; Gee 1986). Prosody, repetition and parallelism are used as devices for cohesion, contributing to the impression of a 'poetic' style of narrating. For Latino children the point of stories is not to relate temporally or causally related events but rather to emphasize family ties. Their narratives are lengthy accounts containing very few sequential events but detailed descriptive information on family connections, background and lineage (Rodino *et al.* 1991; Silva & McCabe 1996). Japanese children, on the other hand, in keeping with the value placed by their culture on 'reading the mind' of others as empathic listeners, produce extremely brief, economical narratives of personal experience that are collections of similar experiences and take the form of three-line stanzas bearing a similarity to *haiku* (Minami & McCabe 1991; Minami 1996a,b).

These cross-cultural studies of narrative acquisition suggest that children in different social and linguistic settings experience different ways of representing knowledge and life events through narrative discourse, and consequently may differ markedly in their own 'ways of telling' (Heath 1982). Yet attempts to articulate the macrostructure components of the personal narrative have often ignored this variability and argued instead for universal constructs. From a developmental perspective, approaches have been dominated on the one hand by models derived from experimental psycholinguistic research – in particular, variants on Story Grammar – which prescribe the composition of mental operating schemas for storytelling (e.g., Stein & Glenn 1979; Mandler 1984), and on the other, by Labov's 'high point' analysis, arising from his sociolinguistic research (Labov & Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972), which foregrounds notions of plot and linear temporal sequence. A fundamental problem for narrative analysis is how to uncover the structural features of narrative that render it coherent without imposing on it some *a priori* notion of how to tell a good story. On the other hand, there are probably some basic requirements for rendering personal experiences that may be universally agreed upon; studying the narratives of speakers from diverse speech communities may assist in identifying these.

South Africa is currently in a state of transition with regard to language and education policies, with new paradigms being sought to redress the immense disparities that exist in access to literacy and learning resources between different language and social groups. This process is hampered by the scarcity of detailed, descriptive sociolinguistic research on the country's diverse language varieties (Mesthrie 1995) as well as language and literacy practices prevailing in schools (McCormick 1989a). The work presented in this study focuses on one particular historically disadvantaged population. Its subjects are young pre-schoolers

University of Cape Town

and first-graders from working-class families, who attend a community creche (day-care centre) in the adjacent urban neighbourhoods of Kensington and Factreton in Cape Town - an area that was designated from the 1950's until 1991, under apartheid legislation, a group area for people classified as 'Coloured' (i.e., considered to be of mixed racial ancestry). The speech repertoire of this and other urban 'Coloured' communities in Cape Town consists mainly of vernacular varieties of English and Afrikaans and has been documented in some depth by McCormick (1989a, 1995). We have relatively little detailed knowledge, however, of the acquisition of either oral language or literacy by young children in these communities, although it is clear that these tasks are significantly complicated by the need to develop control over a range of standard and non-standard language varieties for use in different contexts of speaking.

1.1.1 Aims and questions

The aims of this research were the following :

1. A general aim was to contribute to an understanding of the language development of children within this speech community, and their language experiences in preparation for literacy and academic instruction. This was achieved by building up a picture of the contexts (historical, geographical, social, interactional and physical) in which language learning takes place, key features of children's language use, and their repertoire of discourse genres (in chapters 2 and 3).
2. The specific aim was to track the development of competence in structuring oral narratives of personal experience in these young children in the years leading up to entry into the school system. To this end, there were two sub-aims or requirements.

(i) the development of a linguistic framework for analysing developing narrative structure (chapter 4);

(ii) the application of this framework to the analysis of personal narratives elicited from children between three and six years of age (chapters 5 and 6).

3. A third and final aim was to investigate the discourse of children and teachers in preschool classrooms, in order to determine the role of the preschool environment in shaping children's early experiences with language and literacy (chapter 7).

The study thus seeks answers to three main questions :

(i) By the time that children in this speech community have entered formal schooling, with what ways of representing knowledge and experience do they come equipped?

(ii) Is there a distinctive or canonical structure to their personal narratives, and if so what are its key features and developmental paths?

University of Cape Town

(iii) To what extent does the preschool environment provide opportunities for developing narrative and other forms of decontextualized language skills in preparation for literacy?

The remainder of this chapter outlines the methods and contexts of data collection that were employed in order to answer these questions.

1.2 Collecting narrative data from children

How have narratives been elicited from children in the research into developing narrative competence? John-Steiner & Panofsky (1992:220) remark that one reason for the popularity of narrative research in many different countries and cultures is that 'children's stories are easy to obtain, both the ones they make up themselves and the ones they fashion from stories told to them. This is a simple methodology. It can be varied experimentally. Children's participation is assured.' In other words, given the right set of encouraging circumstances, children universally seem to be willing and eager storytellers. However, the particular method used to obtain narrative data both entails a certain set of cognitive, linguistic and social requirements for the act of narrating and determines the genre of narrative that children will produce. These factors in turn constrain what one is able to say about their developing narrative skills.

Broadly speaking, two different types of methodology can be identified in the research on children's narratives : (i) elicitation of fictional stories in controlled, experimental conditions and (ii) recordings of personal narratives as they occur in more or less natural conversational contexts. This division is roughly consistent with a more general distinction in the field of child language acquisition between research that is rooted in a psycholinguistic tradition and that undertaken from a sociolinguistic perspective. The former has tended to use experimental task situations for studying mostly structural aspects of child language and to seek cognitive explanations for children's performance on these tasks. Sociolinguistically motivated research, on the other hand, has sought to investigate children's developing language in natural contexts of speaking and has emphasized the social origins and determinants of linguistic competence.

The primary concern of this study is to understand the development of personal narratives within the sociocultural framework of children's discourse interactions. Accordingly, more attention is given here to issues surrounding the collection of personal narratives in natural contexts of speaking. However, it will be useful to consider briefly studies that have elicited fictional narratives in experimental situations, since these raise important considerations concerning the cognitive requirements of different narrating tasks.

University of Cape Town

1.2.1 Eliciting fictional stories

The widespread popularity of this general method of narrative elicitation owes largely to the influence of story grammarians and proponents of schema theory, whose concern has been to model the underlying conceptual representation of narrative that guides individuals' production and recall of stories (Rumelhart 1975; Mandler & Johnson 1977; Stein & Glenn 1979; Mandler 1984; Stein & Albro 1997). Investigating developmental stages in the acquisition of story schemata and episode structure has been a common aim of studies of children's narratives within this line of research. Other researchers (e.g., Berman 1988; Bamberg 1987) have used elicitations of fictional stories to analyse the linguistic means by which children structure and link episodes in narratives. Eliciting fictional stories has also been the method of choice in studies of narrative deficits in language-disabled children, most of which have adopted the schema approach to analysis (e.g., Weaver & Dickinson 1982; Roth & Spekman 1986).

Several variations of this method exist. Probably the most commonly used is the story retelling task, in which children are read a fictional story or shown a film and then asked to retell the story (e.g., Maclachlan & Chapman 1988; Liles 1985, 1987; Liles & Purcell 1987). In some studies, researchers have sought to reduce reliance on a linguistic model for narrating by showing children wordless picture stories (e.g., Bamberg 1987; Berman 1988; Schroder & Terhorst 1990; Reilly 1992; Norris & Bruning 1988) or silent films (e.g., Sleight & Prinz 1985; Hicks 1991).

Narrating novel visual or auditory material, whether accompanied by a linguistic text or not, makes two kinds of demands on a child : firstly, there needs to be some cognitive organization of the information given; secondly, the resulting mental schema needs to be translated into linguistic form as a narrative text. The researcher may choose to analyse children's skills at both cognitive and linguistic levels, as Schroder & Terhorst (1990) have done. Alternatively, as Bamberg (1987) advocates, one can reduce the cognitive demands of the task by thoroughly familiarizing children with the story before analysing their linguistic narrative skill at retelling. Studies of the narrative skills of language- and learning-disabled children, however, have mostly ignored the question of whether the poorer narrative abilities of these children, evident in their fictional story retellings, can be attributed to difficulties at a cognitive or linguistic level.

In another variation on this method, children are asked to spontaneously generate a fictional story. Merritt & Liles (1989) gave children a story stem, containing information regarding protagonists and setting, and asked them to make up what might happen next, while Roth & Spekman (1986) simply asked their subjects to 'make up a story about something that

University of Cape Town

is make-believe'. This method increases the cognitive burden of the narrating task for the child, who has to conceptualize, with little or no guiding information, a coherent story schema to narrate. In the Merritt & Liles study, the aim was to compare the effectiveness of a story – generation task (using story stems) with a narrative-retelling task (where children were read a story, then asked to retell it), by comparing the narratives produced by language-disabled and normal-language children in response to each task. Not surprisingly, they found that both groups of children produced shorter narratives with fewer complete episodes and fewer story grammar components in the story-generation task. They concluded that story-retelling is the more useful elicitation technique.

Merritt & Liles' findings underscore one of the attractions of this general method of narrative elicitation : when a story model is present (with or without an accompanying language text), the researcher has a known referential context with which to interpret children's narrative attempts. A well-chosen model story of reasonable length and complexity provides a framework for analysing children's attempts to articulate the event structure and temporal or causal relationships that render a set of events coherent, as well as their control over microlinguistic aspects of text production. This method also provides directly comparable narrative data across children, which is useful when one is interested in describing developmental or other differences between groups.

However, as discussed above, experimental tasks involving narration of fictional stories usually require the ability to cognitively organize a set of stimulus material not previously encountered, a skill which not all children will be equally good at. Moreover, these tasks also presuppose knowledge about the events themselves that make up the model story. Hudson & Shapiro (1991) point out that children are sometimes asked to produce narratives about events that they may know little or nothing about. It may be the case with requests to narrate fictional material that different children have widely varying levels of knowledge and experience with the events themselves that they are required to organize cognitively into a coherent whole.

Some of these problems can be minimised when personal narratives are obtained, since these draw on personally experienced events. Yet even personal narratives are subject to constraints of knowledge and memory. Hudson's work on the development of general event knowledge and memories for specific episodes (Hudson 1986, 1990; Hudson & Nelson 1986; Hudson et al. 1992) indicates that general and specific event memories are part of the same interconnected memory system. Ideally, general event knowledge facilitates the retrieval of specific episodes by providing a framework for organizing recall, but at times it can impede narration of specific events by causing confusion between memories of similar episodes.

University of Cape Town

Hudson & Nelson (1986) found that preschoolers experienced this type of difficulty when asked to recall episodes of highly routine events, such as a specific birthday party, since these events occur with relatively high frequency and include a lot of general information but few episodic details. In contrast, memories of more unique and salient events were more accessible to recall and narrated in richer detail.

These findings suggest that the most suitable kinds of topics for personal narratives concern experiences for which children have a reasonably well developed background event knowledge, yet which tap into memories of specific, salient episodes. I return to this issue in section 1.2.2 below.

A more general limitation of eliciting fictional narratives as a method in narrative research is the artificiality of the task. Narrations of fictional events, whether original fictions or retellings of familiar stories, occur with far less frequency than personal narratives in children's repertoire of spontaneous language behaviours (Preece 1987; Hudson & Shapiro 1991). Not only is the narrative genre itself relatively atypical, but the task in which children are required to produce it is contrived; hence this approach can only provide limited answers to the question 'What is narrative competence?'. The following section considers an alternative approach that relies on locating narratives within the settings in which they are normally comprehended and produced.

1.2.2 Eliciting personal narratives

In contrast to elicitations of fictional stories, personal narratives have mostly been obtained by recording conversations between children and familiar adults or peers in various more-or-less natural contexts. This approach assumes that not only narratives themselves, but the interactional contexts in which narrating occurs, are an appropriate focus for investigation. Hence, unlike the methods described above, which conform to the requirements of controlled experimental research but bear little relation to real-life uses of language, the aim in this approach is to minimise the researcher's influence on spontaneous behaviour. To achieve the goal of recording naturally occurring narratives, however, the researcher must find some solution to the problem, common to all sociolinguistically-motivated research, of what Labov (1972:208) termed the 'Observer's Paradox' : that, in situations where speakers are being observed by strangers, their speech tends to shift away from the spontaneous, unmonitored style that is the object of analysis.

The methods for obtaining narratives outlined below represent different means of dealing with the problem of the Observer's Paradox, ranging from long-term immersion in a social group via ethnography to the more contrived procedures of the sociolinguistic interview. More specifically, differences between these methods arise in (i) the degree to

University of Cape Town

which researchers have either involved themselves personally in the conversational interaction or attempted to influence the interaction, and (ii) the specific contexts of narrating that they have explored.

Ethnographic methods

Developed by anthropologists and adopted by sociolinguists to study the language behaviours of members of a specific speech community, ethnographic methods rely on participant observation and analysis of the norms and values of the group studied. That is, the researcher attempts, usually over a considerable period of time, to become a participant in the group and to interpret its behaviours in terms of the attitudes and beliefs of its members, rather than by imposing a pre-determined set of categories. For sociolinguists, the goal of what Hymes (1968:101) calls 'the ethnography of speaking' is 'what a child internalises about speaking, beyond rules of grammar and a dictionary, while becoming a full-fledged member of its speech community'.

Relatively little ethnographic work has focused on children as a subculture[2], however, and even less has incorporated an investigation of children's narratives. Exceptions are Heath's excellent study (1982, 1983, 1986) on the norms for language socialization in three rural communities in the Southern United States and Goodwin's (1990) work on the social organization of talk amongst urban black children in Philadelphia. While these studies are concerned with broader aspects of communicative competence, both include a specific focus on the role of narrative in children's language socialization. There is also a body of research, loosely termed the 'ethnography of schooling' (e.g., Green & Wallat 1981; Spindler 1982), that has taken ethnographic methods into preschool and school classrooms (although little of this has focused on narrative).

Heath (1986) describes 'the ways of taking from printed stories [that] families teach their preschoolers' (p. 98) in three communities : a middle-class, mainstream school-oriented group and neighbouring working-class black and white families. As a participant observer over a period of roughly ten years in all three communities, she documented the forms and functions of spoken and written language, including oral and written narrative, in social networks at home, in schools, work settings and religious institutions. She describes how children internalise very different kinds of knowledge about the form and function of narrative as a consequence of distinct story-telling styles and conceptions of story across the three communities; these differences in turn have direct consequences for children's success at literacy acquisition. Heath argues that to understand children's relative success or failure in

---

2 I am referring here to studies that have included young children, and therefore excluding work such as Cheshire's (1982) on adolescent language.

University of Cape Town

literacy achievement, it is necessary to study literacy events in relation to the larger sociocultural patterns that they reflect, and that this can only be achieved by ethnography.

Heath's acceptance as a participant observer by the families she studied was facilitated both by her own personal experience of having grown up in similarly composed communities in a neighbouring state and by her position as a teacher-trainer serving the communities which she studied. Probably few ethnographers of communication achieve the extent of immersion into the lives of community members that she enjoyed. Certainly, a crucial aspect of successful ethnographic work is the researcher's ability to assume a role in the group that will cause a minimum of disruption to its members' usual behaviours, or, in other words, to offset the worst effects of the Observer's Paradox. As Fasold (1990:47) comments : 'To find out what beliefs and values motivate a community of people, the investigator must go as far as she or he can towards becoming a part of the community, *filling a role that makes sense in that setting.* Usually, he or she has to be content with the role of a relative outsider; perhaps even the role of a guest or stranger [my italics]'. When children are the objects of study, finding a suitable role for the adult researcher can be especially problematical.

Corsaro (1981) identified two main difficulties of doing ethnography through participant observation in a preschool setting : the problem of intrusion into children's peer activities, and the physical size and perceived power of the researcher. He describes in detail various strategies for becoming an active participant in preschoolers' play activities, many of them based on the principle of deliberately behaving unlike other adults in the school setting. While arguing that participant observation is necessary to gaining insight into childhood culture and peer interactions, he acknowledges that 'Doing ethnographic research in a preschool peer setting is not easy. Even after months of careful field entry and daily participant observation, the researcher still can not completely overcome some obstacles of intrusion.'(p.117).

Goodwin (1990, 1997) settled on a different interpretation of her role in a study of children in a black working-class community that focused on peer-group interactions in a neighbourhood street. She accompanied the children while they went about their activities, with a tape-recorder strapped over her shoulder, for a period of eighteen months. However, rather than involve herself as a participant observer, Goodwin found it expedient to disturb their activities as little as possible, arguing that their language use would have been especially sensitive to intrusion on her part. Unlike Corsaro, therefore, she minimized her own interaction with them, acting as 'more an observer of their activities than a participant observer' (p. 23), a role in which she found herself more readily accepted. Goodwin explores

University of Cape Town

children's use of talk in different face-to-face interactions to construct their social world, including their use of narratives in dispute processes.

Anonymous observation

Anonymous observation methods differ from the ethnographic approach in that they can be characterized as observation from the outside in, rather than the inside out (Romaine 1984). In narrative studies using this approach the researcher has remained essentially uninvolved in the conversational situation, simply arranging for a tape-recorder to be running at times and in particular circumstances when personal narratives are likely to be exchanged. Whereas ethnography requires that the researcher build up an intimate understanding of a community or group's functioning by observing them in a range of interactions, studies using anonymous observation have generally been more restricted in scope and focused on a particular context of speaking.

Some studies have involved ingenious exploitation of mundane situations : Preece (1987) recorded the back-seat conversations of three Canadian children, aged five to seven, while driving them to and from school over an eighteen-month period, during her turns in a car-pool. She found that narratives made up a significant proportion of the children's conversations with each other, especially accounts of personal or vicarious experience. Preece's recordings provided an extensive data-base for investigating the range of different narrative forms that children produce spontaneously amongst each other and the influence of peer input and collaboration in narrating (the latter analysed in Preece 1992).

Using a similar approach, Meng (1987a,b; 1990; 1992) recorded naturally-occurring conversations amongst children in a German kindergarten over a three-year period. Recordings were made twice a year by having a tape-recorder pick up conversations for ten minutes at a time in three situations where narrating was likely to occur : during eating, dressing and playing. Meng analysed the development of children's understanding of their roles as both narrators and listeners in conversation from the ages of three to six years. Her data also permitted examination of the role of teachers in developing narrating and listening skills. Blum-Kulka (1989, 1997) and Blum-Kulka & Snow (1992), on the other hand, have used this method to explore the ways in which children acquire narrative skills in the context of family discourse. They recorded dinner-table conversations in Israeli and Jewish-American middle-class families and working-class American families, arguing that family discourse at dinner, as a time when experiences of the past day are exchanged, provides unique opportunities for socializing children as conversational narrators. Their studies explore the ways in which family narrative events differ as a function of cultural attitudes with regard to 'tellability' and story construction.

University of Cape Town

In Blum-Kulka's study, access to homes was negotiated by 'observers' who were acquainted with the families and present at dinner times when recordings were made, while Snow's working-class data was obtained simply by supplying families with tape-recorders and asking them to record mealtimes. Similarly, Nelson (1989, 1990) recorded a single child, Emily, from the ages of twenty-one to thirty-six months by asking her parents to place a tape-recorder under her crib at nap or night times, when this child was especially verbal. The recordings included talk between the child and her parents as well as lengthy pre-sleep monologues. Emily's 'narratives from the crib' provided the opportunity to investigate three sources of developing narrative competence : event knowledge, parental narrative models and stories read from books.

Elicited reports

With ethnographic methods and anonymous observation researchers have sought to tap into everyday contexts where narrating arises spontaneously and to minimise their own influence on the speaking situation. As the review above illustrates, these methods allow for investigation of not only narratives themselves but also the contexts of social interaction (e.g., peer groups, family discourse, the preschool) in which narrating occurs. However, there is no guarantee that narratives will actually arise in a given context, nor are these always practical or effective approaches for the researcher who wishes to focus on a specific aspect of narrative discourse. As Romaine (1984:24) points out, '... in many cases it is not possible to observe precisely the features we are interested in merely by waiting for them to turn up spontaneously.' One way of overcoming these problems is to ask parents or another familiar adult, such as a teacher, to elicit narratives.

Parent- or teacher-elicited reports are especially useful when the role of these adults themselves is a main focus of study. McCabe & Peterson (1990, 1991), Peterson & McCabe (1992, 1994), Miller & Sperry (1988) and Snow's New England corpus (Sokolov & Snow 1994) used parent-elicited reports to examine the role of parents in nurturing the emerging narrative skills of very young children (one- and two-year-olds). Since children's earliest narrative productions arise in the context of conversations with familiar adults and tend to be heavily scaffolded by adult contributions, parent-child conversations provide an ideal context for capturing nascent narrative skills and the adult structures that support them. To ensure that narratives would be included in the interaction, parents were given a simple general instruction, although care was taken not to interfere in any other way with the natural course of conversation. Miller & Sperry video-recorded two-year-olds with their mothers at home and, amongst other kinds of interactions, asked mothers to 'try to encourage [the child] to tell about an event that happened in the recent past' (1988: 296). McCabe and Peterson supplied

University of Cape Town

parents with tape-recorders and asked them to record occasions when their children liked to tell them narratives, defined as 'stories about personal experience, about real events that have happened in the past' (1991:226). Parents' elicitation strategies and prompts during the child's narrations were analysed as a potential source of individual variation in children's narratives.

A limitation of this approach is that the researcher ends up with data consisting of talk about events that parents have selected for discussion. As Reese (1999) has demonstrated, these parent-selected events may not be the ones that children find interesting to discuss. Investigating the ability of very young children (aged fourteen to thirty-two months) to recall past events, Reese devised a method aimed at recording their spontaneous memories. She asked their mothers to keep a diary record over a specified time period of each instance when the children spontaneously talked about an incident in the past. Mothers were instructed to first write down the child's utterances, then provide a description of the original event as a means of contextualizing the child's version. Lying somewhere between anonymous observation and an elicited report, this type of approach potentially yields a fuller, richer picture of a child's abilities than would be possible for an unfamiliar researcher to elicit by normal observational means. It may only be practical for use with very young children whose language output is limited, however : Reese (1999) found that keeping manually written records became too onerous a task for mothers (including herself, when she adopted the same method with her own son) as their children's verbal output increased.

Both anonymous observation and elicited reports represent a different approach to the problem of the Observer's Paradox from that of participant observation. That is, the researcher removes herself from the recorded situation, on the assumption that speakers will behave more naturally in the absence of an outside observer and will more or less forget the presence of the tape recorder as they become involved in discussion. However, one cannot take it for granted that subjects' behaviour will necessarily be unaffected by the knowledge that they are being recorded. Occasionally researchers have opted for surreptitious recording, but this is both ethically dubious and potentially damaging if a relationship of trust is to be maintained between researcher and subjects. Consequently, most sociolinguists rely, as Milroy (1987:90) says, on people's inability to remain constantly vigilant, a fact which tends to blur the boundary between covert and overt recording in any case. Fortunately, children seem generally to be less inhibited than adults by the presence of a tape-recorder (Romaine 1984).

University of Cape Town

Interview methods

Another alternative to recording narratives as they arise in natural contexts is to make use of a staple method of sociolinguists and child language researchers : the face-to-face tape-recorded interview between researcher and subject. Like elicited reports, the interview method cuts down on the time and resources required for the 'wait-and-see' approach inherent in ethnographic and anonymous observation methods. It also allows the researcher to direct the focus of the interaction to those features she wishes to study and affords some control over the many possible variables that can influence language use in naturalistic situations. Since the interview remains a standard procedure in sociolinguistic research, it is worth considering, firstly, its limitations as a general method of data collection and, secondly, the implications for its use as a means of eliciting personal narratives from children.

Milroy (1987) describes the formal interview as the antithesis of participant observation methods in that the role of observer *as* observer is quite unambiguous. However, this means that the problem of the Observer's Paradox will be most acute in this setting. A central problem with the interview as a sociolinguistic method, and one which exacerbates the Observer's Paradox, is the unequal distribution of power between the participants. One aspect of this inequality may be the difference in social status between researcher and interviewee, as happens, for example, when the researcher is associated with a dominant social class. There is also, as Wolfson (1982) and Milroy (1987) point out, an asymmetry in the discourse roles of participants in an interview. Even though subjects may have had no personal experience of being interviewed, they are likely to have clear expectations concerning the distribution of speaking rights and obligations in an interview, including, for example, the knowledge that the interviewer has the right to ask questions and control the choice of topics whereas the interviewee is obliged to answer these questions cooperatively. These kinds of factors tend to define the interview as a setting in which formal rather than casual speech is appropriate.

An important part of Labov's (1972) contribution to sociolinguistic methodology has been his exploration of strategies aimed at reducing these imbalances inherent in the interview situation to make it more conducive to casual speech. Most of these rely heavily on skills and sensitivity on the part of the interviewer in monitoring the social and discourse dynamics of the interaction – for example, the ability to modify her own speech style in the direction of the vernacular, to gauge the level of subjects' personal involvement with topics or to exploit chance events such as a phone call or entry of a third person. These kinds of mostly intuitive, *ad hoc* strategies help serve the purpose of what Milroy (1987:49) calls 'fudging the speech event' so that subjects are encouraged to break loose from the constraints governing the interaction and initiate their own topics. Other, less arbitrary, techniques include making use

University of Cape Town

of fieldworkers who are perceived as insiders in the speech community and interviewing groups rather than individual subjects. Pairs or groups of subjects serve the useful function of outnumbering the interviewer and increasing the likelihood that the speech event will take on the nature of something other than an interview (Labov 1972:210).

Significantly, Labov found that eliciting narratives on certain themes was a particularly successful means of eliciting informal speech from subjects in an interview situation. One such theme was invoked by a 'danger of death' question, where informants were asked 'Were you ever in a situation where you said to yourself – This is it'? In a different version, adolescents in Harlem were asked 'Were you ever in a fight with a guy bigger than you?' If the subject replied 'Yes', the interviewer asked 'What happened?' (1972:354). Labov found this technique very effective in eliciting narratives characterized by casual, unmonitored speech styles, because of its tendency to engage the speaker in a partial reliving of an emotionally-laden event of personal crisis.[3]

It is characteristic, then, of the sociolinguistic interview that the researcher manipulates certain variables in the interview situation in order to turn it into something approximating a 'natural' conversational interaction. Several problematical issues are raised by this approach, however. The first has to do with the unreliability of using strategies that depend heavily on factors, such as the personal characteristics and perceptions of interviewer and interviewee, that are outside the researcher's control. Secondly, the 'naturalness' of the speech event is questionable : if the interviewer deliberately violates the expectations that speakers share regarding appropriate social and discourse roles for an interview, what exactly is the nature of the resulting speech event? One cannot necessarily claim that it resembles interactions that informants are likely to encounter in everyday life. Wolfson (1982:66) criticizes attempts to break down the asymmetries of the interview situation as misguided, arguing that the resulting speech event goes by 'no name recognizable to members of the speech community and it has no rules of speaking.'

Wolfson is also critical of attempts to elicit narratives in the context of interviews, citing as evidence differences between narratives produced in response to questions in interviews and those that arise spontaneously in conversations. Her conversational narrative data from adult American speakers were rich in the use of grammatical and stylistic features, including the conversational historic present (CHP) as well as direct speech, asides, repetition, expressive noises and gestures, that marked these narratives as 'performances'. She observes

---

3 In South Africa the 'danger of death' question was used successfully by Mesthrie (1992) in his work on South African Indian English. It has not always been found effective by other sociolinguists, however – see Milroy (1987:40-41) for a critical discussion of its use elsewhere.

University of Cape Town

that, by contrast, performed narratives only rarely occur in sociolinguistic interviews where, she argues, subjects are inhibited by the constraints of the interview : these dictate that interviewees do not have the right to introduce topics and that when they are invited to tell narratives they ought to do so briefly and with the aim of answering a question, in keeping with their role as respondents.

Bearing in mind these limitations of the interview method and Wolfson's scepticism regarding the quality of narrative attainable within it, we need now to consider the use of the interview as a means for eliciting narratives from children. Firstly, are interviews with children subject to the same kinds of social and discourse constraints as those with adults? Whatever the researcher's socio-cultural background or personal attributes, her status as an adult must certainly represent a powerful influence on the dynamics of face-to-face interactions with child subjects. This may be particularly the case in school settings, where adults are likely to reinforce children's perceptions of their own roles as essentially passive discourse partners. However, where the researcher is an outsider to the school or home context where children are interviewed, the consequent uncertainty or ambiguity regarding her status can be turned to positive advantage. Just as Corsaro (1981, above) found it advantageous as a participant observer to behave in ways generally unlike other adults at the preschool, the interviewer can exploit certain differences in her behaviour from those of teachers or parents to reinforce children's perceptions of her as having a special status as a conversational partner.

The extent to which young children share adults' perceptions of the interview as a speech event is less than clear, but it is probable that there are significant differences in their understanding. Preschool children's exposure to the interview as a discourse genre (e.g., on television or radio) may be quite limited. Romaine (1984:27), reporting on interviews conducted with Edinburgh school children aged six to ten years, concluded that the youngest children in her sample certainly had a less clear idea of what an interview is, while only the older eight- to ten-year-olds were more familiar with it as a genre. Moreover, preschoolers are still in the process of acquiring basic skills in controlling the structure of discourse (Pan & Snow 1999), such as rules for turn-taking, topic initiation and topic extension. If young children have an incomplete awareness of patterns of communicative rights and obligations in adult-child interactions, it should be possible to turn this to advantage too. Romaine (1984) suggests that the adult researcher can engage children in topics that are of high interest value to them and conducive to informal speech by familiarizing herself with child culture and picking up cues about the interests and activities of the group. Certainly the researcher who

University of Cape Town

has done some participant observation in the group and community to be studied is in a better position to conduct a successful interview.

A second question is whether the interview can be an effective context for eliciting narratives from children. In the same study mentioned above, Romaine (1984) found that, in comparison with Wolfson's adult interviews, children produced many more spontaneous narratives in the course of her interviews. These included several with the features of 'performed' narratives – an unexpected finding in view of Wolfson's prediction that the right to perform is strongly counter-indicated in a situation of asymmetrical status relations, as between an adult interviewer and a child. Romaine suggests that two factors explain this discrepancy between her own and Wolfson's findings. Firstly, it seems possible that young children are less aware of the appropriateness conditions for the speech event, that 'they did not consider the event to be as strictly governed by the adult rule : the interviewer asks the questions and defines the topic' (p. 27). Secondly, it may be that the occurrence of spontaneous performed narratives is indicative of an interview that has been successful in reducing the status imbalance between adult and child. Alternatively, she suggests that there could be important differences between adults and children concerning the social significance of performed vs. unperformed narratives : it may be that, for children, performance is a simpler means of narrating in that it reduces the need for control of the more sophisticated grammatical and cohesive features of narrative structure.

Support for the latter claim comes from a study by Reilly (1992). She compared children's storytelling performance (as conveyed through linguistic and paralinguistic means) with the structural coherence of their stories in a picture storytelling task. Comparing preschool three- to four-year-olds with older schoolgoing children, she found that the youngest children used markedly more affective expression in their storytelling, including a range of paralinguistic devices (e.g., facial expressions and gestures) but especially affective vocal prosody (pitch and intonation contouring, stress, and volume modulations). These younger children appeared to be relying on affective means of communication (i.e., expression of attitudes and emotions by paralinguistic means) to compensate for the relative structural poverty of their stories, which were brief and incomplete in event structure. In contrast, the seven- and eight-year-olds produced narratives that were longer and more complex in structure, but relatively flat in affective expression. By ten and eleven years of age, children were able to produce stories that were both highly coherent in structure and incorporated features of performed narrative; they were capable of integrating linguistic and affective means of communicating.

University of Cape Town

In Romaine's study, children's narratives were produced in response to questions on topics such as fights or games, in a fairly standard interview format, similar to Labov's 'danger of death' or fight questions. However, there are ways of eliciting narratives that depart from the restrictions of the question-answer pattern. Peterson & McCabe (1983) developed an interesting variation on this method : instead of simply asking questions to elicit narratives, the adult herself related narratives of personal experience in the course of conversation, following these with a question such as 'Did anything like that ever happen to you?' If the child responded affirmatively, he was encouraged to elaborate on the experience. An adult who offers narrative accounts herself presents a very different impression from that of an impersonal questioner, making this a potentially effective means of equalizing the discourse and social roles between adult and child. That it is successful in this regard is borne out to some degree by Peterson & McCabe's finding that the three- to nine-year-old children whom they 'interviewed' produced many spontaneous narratives on topics of their own selection, aside from the ones they uttered in response to the adult's narrative accounts. Their technique thus also has the potential to establish a more natural communicative context for narrating, in which narratives arise spontaneously from both participants, in response to topics in conversation.

Generally, then, it seems that, given some skill and sensitivity on the part of the adult listener, the face-to-face interview can be an effective method for eliciting spontaneous narratives from young children. If one's aim is to explore the social origins and contexts of narrative skill, however, it is probably best used in conjunction with other kinds of observations in different situations, in order to obtain as broad a data-base as possible. Snow & Dickinson (1990) and Snow (1991a) used interviews with mothers and teachers amongst a range of other methods, in a large-scale study of the social sources of narrative in low-income families. Their study explored children's exposure to narrative in both home and school environments, using methods that included anonymous observation at home (supplying families with tape-recorders to record mealtime talk) and school (tagging children with body tape-recorders throughout a school morning), mother- and teacher-elicited reports and interviews with parents and teachers. Their study is a good example of how using varied means of obtaining data in several different contexts can build up a comprehensive picture of children's narrative competence within a particular socio-cultural background; it provided a loose model for my own approach, described below.

University of Cape Town

1.3 The Data Base

The data for this study were collected over a period of three years in a preschool, a primary school and a few homes in Kensington/Factreton, using a combination of methods that included participant observation, interviews, anonymous recording and elicited reports.

I chose to focus on the Kensington/Factreton area both because it had been a relatively stable community historically and because I had contacts with schools and families which would facilitate access as a researcher. My entry into homes and schools was more or less simultaneous but, as my aims became more circumscribed, I phased out data collection in homes and concentrated on the school contexts. The following sections describe the different approaches I employed, problems I encountered and the refinement of a methodology.

1.3.1 School data : Preschool

Since preschools are obvious places in which to find a captive and accessible population of young children, one of the first things I did was to locate and visit several of them in the community. The range and type of preschool facilities that I encountered in Kensington/Factreton is described in some detail in chapter 2. I settled on Kensington Creche as the preschool in which I would collect data because it was large, centrally situated and composed mostly of working-class children representative in socio-economic terms of the majority of homes in the area. Later on, when I needed to extend my subject sample to children in primary school, I chose nearby Sunderland Primary for much the same reasons, but also because many of the creche children transfer there on reaching school age.

The most intensive period of my visits to the creche took place over the course of one school year during which I did participant observation in classrooms while exploring various methods of collecting data. I was a participant in the classroom in the sense that I had a loosely defined role as a teacher's aide; however, it was understood that my reason for being there was to observe and record the children's speech. I always made tape-recordings openly and, when these included substantial amounts of talk by a teacher, I requested her permission before recording.

As I had hoped, my role as participant observer afforded me, with time, the opportunity to develop a relationship of trust and ease with children and teachers while being able to observe classroom interactions relatively unobtrusively. There were, however, issues related to my own role that required sensitive handling. As section 1.2.2 made clear, asymmetries (perceived or real) in status and characteristics of the researcher that mark her as an outsider are common obstacles in sociolinguistic research. In my case I had a dominant position deriving from my status as an adult (in relation to the children), my association with

University of Cape Town

a university (in relation to the teachers) and, being white and middle-class, my membership in a dominating social group.

These factors were more immediately problematical in relation to the teachers. Corsaro (1981) describes 'field entry' – i.e., negotiation with adult caretakers – as the first important undertaking of the participant observer in schools. In my case, physical access to the creche was easily negotiated due to my prior professional contact with the social worker in the university's health and welfare organization which has its headquarters in the same complex. I explained to the matron in charge and to the teachers whose classes I observed my general interest in children's language acquisition. I mentioned some of the difficulties involved in developing competence in two languages that I had observed in my contacts with children from this speech community and that I hoped to learn more from the teachers themselves and from listening to the children. Being able to place myself, truthfully, in the position of a learner interested in the experiences and opinions of the teachers was helpful in securing a role for myself that would be comfortable both for me and for them. I found the teachers interested in discussing the children's use of language and generous in sharing their experiences; some of their opinions are summarized in chapter 2.

My request to make myself useful in the classrooms by acting as an aide to teachers was somewhat dubiously accepted at first, but ultimately worked well. In practical terms, it simply meant that I helped out with chores such as laying out or clearing up materials, giving help to children involved in small-group tasks, or dishing out food at mealtimes. Later on, when I began recording individual children outside the classroom, I became a very intermittent aide, but it did provide me with a role in the classroom that was both unexceptional and low-profile (and hence useful for unintrusive observation or recording). Since I was under the teachers' direction in this capacity, it also went some way, I think, to reducing some of the asymmetries in my relationship with them.

In relation to the children, I tried to turn my role to advantage by exploiting certain differences between me and the teachers. As an outsider I could legitimately ask them questions about events and circumstances in and outside the classroom that would provoke topics of conversation. And, since I did not have the responsibilities of the teachers, I could spend time talking to children individually or simply observing their interactions. For the teachers, faced with overcrowded classes of boisterous children, maintaining order was an overwhelming preoccupation, whereas I had the liberty to offer undivided attention and interest in their activities and only rarely needed to enforce discipline. Finally, despite my contrasting social and linguistic background, I had the advantage of several years of contact with children from Cape Flats communities in my work as a speech/language pathologist. I

University of Cape Town

am familiar with the linguistic features, such as lexical borrowings, in the vernacular spoken by these children and, while Afrikaans is not my first language, I am comfortable with switching from English to Afrikaans as circumstances require. In a more general sense, I was able to draw on my professional experience in creating a comfortable communicative environment for children, drawing them out in conversation, the types of topics that are likely to engage their interest, and so forth. As it turned out, only a few children needed coaxing to communicate; most were highly verbal and spontaneous and quickly seemed to adapt to my presence.

During the course of my time at the creche, I collected four main types of data : (i) *personal narratives* elicited from individual children in 'interview' situations; (ii) *classroom discourse*, i.e., discourse structured by teachers for the class as a whole, such as newstime or storytime sessions; (iii) continuous records of *child talk*, obtained by tagging individual children with body microphones; (iv) *interviews with teachers*. The following sections outline the methods I used to obtain data in each of these categories.

(i) **Personal narratives**

Since my primary aim was to analyse the developing structure of children's personal narratives, it was necessary to employ some sort of controlled procedure for eliciting narratives in comparable quantities, under similar conditions, from children of different ages. At the same time, I did not wish to sacrifice the naturalness of the interactions in which they narrated their personal experiences. After some experimentation, I found that using Peterson & McCabe's (1983) method (described in 1.2.2 above) was effective in meeting both these criteria. I followed this basic procedure for collecting narratives with forty eight creche children, aged between three and five years, and later on with a further sixteen primary-school children aged six years. These children and the criteria for their selection are described below, along with details of my own application of Peterson & McCabe's method.

Subjects

Details of the subject groups are summarised in Table 1 below. I selected sixteen children in each of four age-groups – 3.0 – 4.0 years, 4.0 – 5.0 years, 5.0 – 6.0 years and 6.0 – 7.0 years – according to the following criteria :

Table 1 : Subject characteristics per age-group of children

Age-group	N	Male	Female	English	Afrikaans	Age-range	Mean age
3 years	16	9	7	7	9	3.2 – 3.10	3.6
4 years	16	7	9	9	7	4.1 – 4.10	4.6
5 years	16	8	8	9	7	5.0 – 5.11	5.6
6 years	16	8	8	8	8	6.2 – 6.11	6.6

University of Cape Town

(i) The mean age in each group clustered around 3 years and 6 months, 4.6, 5.6 and 6.6. This is important in studies involving developmental comparisons across age-groups because of the significant differences in language development that a few months can entail.

(ii) Equal numbers of male and female children were selected overall, since gender-related differences in children's language behaviours are well-documented, though relatively unexplored with respect to narrative skills.

(iii) Normally-developing language was a pre-requisite for subject selection, in order to exclude from the analysis any children with developmental language delays. Given the complex, variable linguistic repertoire of this speech community (see chapter 2) and the absence of valid or reliable developmental language assessment tools, I was not able to carry out any formal assessments. I asked teachers to indicate any children whose language skills seemed in any way deficient or weak in relation to peers and excluded these children as potential subjects. My own previous experience with language-impaired children from Cape Flats communities provided an additional check on this criterion.

Language dominance in either English or Afrikaans was not used as a selection criterion in the preschool because of the difficulties, described in chapter 2, of establishing language dominance. In any event, attempts to manipulate the balance of English vs. Afrikaans language data or to select one language group only would have resulted in a biased sample in terms of the community's mixed language make-up. Children were encouraged to use either language in the narrative elicitation sessions (see *Procedure* below) and in all cases they quickly settled on one language which was then used more or less consistently. It was thus possible to identify children as either English- or Afrikaans-speaking after the event. As it turned out, there were almost equal numbers of three-, four- and five-year-olds in either language. In the case of the oldest age-group (6.0 – 7.0 years of age), however, these children were placed in either English- or Afrikaans-medium classes by the school, and I selected equal numbers from each language stream.

Physical context

In order to elicit personal narratives under similar conditions and obtain recordings of reasonable quality, it was necessary to record individual children outside of the crowded, noisy classroom context. However, finding a quiet room in which to talk was problematical both at the creche and at the primary school, where physical space was in any case limited. Mostly I used one of a few small cloak-rooms or store-rooms and, occasionally, a small play-

University of Cape Town

room leading off a classroom at the creche. None of these places was well sound-proofed, nor free from intrusion by the odd teacher or child. While this occasionally caused interference with recordings, the locations adequately served their purpose for most of the time.

Both the children and I were always seated informally on the floor during our conversations, with drawing materials in front of us (the reasons for the latter explained below). A portable cassette tape recorder with internal microphone was placed nearby, to one side. Its presence usually invoked initial curiosity, especially since many children did not have tape recorders in their homes. I answered any questions they asked about how it functioned and its purpose in the situation truthfully but simply, and found that this usually sufficed to satisfy their interest and that it seldom arose, except briefly, as a subsequent topic of conversation. At the end of a session, if a child requested it, I would play back short sections of our conversation, an event which always occasioned great amusement. The novelty of being tape-recorded may have been one reason for children's eagerness to accompany me to these sessions; however, since they appeared to forget the presence of the tape recorder itself in the course of our conversations, there was no evidence that it caused any alteration in speech style.

Interpersonal context

Since it was important that the children feel comfortable with talking to me outside of the familiar classroom and peer-group context, I took the following precautions. Firstly, narrative recording sessions were undertaken only after I had spent a considerable amount of time as a participant observer in the classrooms. I was thus a familiar presence and the children conversed readily with me by the time our sessions outside the classroom took place. In many cases, these sessions in fact took place on more than one occasion, so that they were familiar with the events involved. As it happened, I never experienced any reluctance on a child's part to come with me; on the contrary, there was usually a clamour of raised voices begging to be allowed to participate each time I asked a child to accompany me. Our sessions provided an opportunity for individual attention and interest in their personal experiences that is seldom possible in the classroom context, where around forty children must compete for teacher attention; perhaps partly for this reason, children seemed to enjoy our conversation sessions and mostly spoke freely and eagerly about their experiences.

Secondly, children were seen in pairs, usually friends, in order to reduce the asymmetry of a one-to-one interaction with an adult. Recording any more children at one time would have created difficulties with voice identification on transcription, but this was seldom a problem with two. It did sometimes happen, however, that a less verbal child was

University of Cape Town

overshadowed by a more garrulous one; I tried to minimise this by giving each child a chance to respond to my narrative prompts (see below).

Thirdly, following Peterson & McCabe's (1983) suggestion, children were engaged in another, manual activity during our conversations. They were provided with crayons and paper and they, and I, drew pictures while we talked. This served a useful function in that it removed some of the focus from the act of speaking, reduced self-consciousness and provided an ongoing activity around which conversation could naturally evolve.

Procedure

The recorded sessions always proceeded as follows. Children were settled into the room, where we sat informally on the floor, and provided with drawing materials. The three of us began drawing, while I led the conversation from an initial focus on the drawing itself to general conversation about each child's siblings, friends, home and family. In the process, I switched regularly from English to Afrikaans for the first ten or so minutes, until I had a feel for which language each child was most comfortable using and most fluent in. This was necessary, given the unreliability (discussed in chapter 2) of determining language dominance from either teachers' or parents' reports. I wanted the children to feel that either language would be acceptable, as would switching from one to the other. In the event, they always settled quickly into fairly consistent use of one or the other, and from that point I conformed with their choice. The selection was not always the same for both children; in these cases I switched from English to Afrikaans more or less equally and depending on which child I was addressing.

After a period of general conversation, and once talk was flowing smoothly, I followed the method outlined by Peterson & McCabe (1983) to elicit personal narratives. In the course of conversation, I gave brief accounts of personal experiences such as visits to the doctor, injuries, car accidents, fights or misadventures involving pets, following these accounts with a question such as 'Did anything like that ever happen to you?'

This procedure is an adaptation of Labov's (1972) 'danger of death' and fight questions (described earlier) for eliciting personal narratives. In Peterson & McCabe's version, adapted for use with children, narrative 'prompts' are provided on a variety of different topics, in order to capture the extraordinary life experiences of young children. Like Labov, Peterson & McCabe suggest that, while the topics must be within the realm of children's experiences, they should attempt to tap into unusual, and hence reportable or newsworthy, experiences. An account of a birthday party or shopping trip is likely to elicit a boring and dispassionate listing of events with little structure or evaluation, whereas an account of, say, personal injury or accident will probably be structured around themes or

University of Cape Town

events of special significance to the narrator. Research on the cognitive constraints governing narrative production, touched on in 1.2.1, suggests that this is due to the memory confusion that arises when recalling one of a number of very similar episodes.

Like Peterson & McCabe and, apparently, not unlike Labov, I discovered early on in pilot work that the most successful prompts for eliciting personal narratives were those describing salient and rather gory events, such as doctor visits, car accidents, injuries, fights and pet misadventures. However, since children's particular experiences obviously differ, it could not be expected that all children would respond to all the prompts; hence a wide variety was used in each session, in an attempt to capture different personal experiences. In the event, and as I had hoped, not all personal narratives were produced in response to these prompts. Very often, as our conversations developed, children spontaneously came up with accounts of personal experience in the same way that, in ordinary everyday conversations, accounts of personal experience tend to generate others amongst participants. All of these narratives, elicited and spontaneous, were included for consideration in the data base. Chapter 3 provides a full listing of the narrative topics, both those arising from prompts and those that arose spontaneously.

An important aspect of the technique developed by Peterson & McCabe is how the adult controls her responses during a child's narration. Following their suggestion, I maintained the conversational interaction by making various responses at natural points in the narrative, such as when the narrator paused. However, I took care to confine these to interjections such as 'really', 'mhmm', 'gosh' or 'wow', reiterations of the child's last utterance, or prompts such as 'yes?' or 'and then?' The aim was to encourage the child's narration and maintain a conversational interaction, while not directing or leading the narrative. Thus, while the naturalness of the speech event was preserved, there was minimal interference in or contribution to the child's structuring of the narrative itself. The texts produced by the child could then be analysed for their coherence as essentially monologue-type accounts of personal experience.

Sessions lasted a minimum of forty-five minutes – the length of one side of a ninety-minute cassette tape – but frequently, in the case of four-, five- and six-year-olds, went on for longer if children were reluctant to leave and wanted to carry on talking. Many children returned for repeated sessions at their own request, while some less talkative children were recorded only once. All the recorded data was transcribed and all narratives were included for consideration in the analyses that followed. However, where findings were quantified – for example, where comparison across children or across age-groups was required – only the three longest narratives from each child were considered.

University of Cape Town

Transcription

All recorded conversations were transcribed orthographically. Personal narratives were then extracted from the conversational data to be considered individually. (The processes involved in defining a text as a personal narrative, as distinct from other genres, are described in chapter 3). This meant that, while narratives could be analysed as essentially independent texts, the broader conversational context was available for reference where it might be illuminating. This included 'entrance talk' (Polanyi 1985, 1989), any interjections from either myself or another child present, and resumed conversation at the end of the narrative.

The analysis of these narratives makes up the main substance of this study. However, since I was also interested in the role of the preschool in developing skill in narrative, I made use of my time at the creche to document, in addition, naturally-occurring discourse in the classrooms. My earliest efforts in this direction were attempts to record small groups of children while they were engaged in typical classroom activities such as drawing around a table or pretend play. I quickly discovered that this approach was not yielding useful data. For one thing, with as many as forty to forty-five children in a classroom and inadequate soundproofing between rooms, noise levels in the creche were extremely high; this meant that recording at times when a class was broken up into dispersed groups of children produced largely unintelligible, poor-quality samples. Secondly, the contexts of speaking were too specific; I wanted records of a full range of discourse experiences that children were likely to have in the course of a school day. With experimentation, I finally arrived at decent-quality recordings that fulfilled this criterion, by using the methods described in (ii) and (iii) below.

(ii) **Classroom discourse**

I recorded several hours of large-group discourse sessions in the oldest class of children (four- to six-year-olds) at the creche. These were times in the school morning when a teacher gathered the whole class together for some form of structured interaction; they included newstime, storytime and 'language development' time.

Newstime is a traditional component of preschool curricula, usually taking place early in the school day, in which children are invited to relate to the class any interesting recent events. In this creche it was more broadly interpreted to include, in addition, questions about the day of the week, weather or season, singing songs, reciting rhymes and, sometimes, telling of a Bible story. Storytimes occurred towards the end of the school morning and involved the teacher reading a story from a children's book to the assembled class and asking questions related to the story. 'Language development' sessions were mainly aimed at developing

University of Cape Town

vocabulary and were devoted to a particular theme (e.g., air, a season) which the teacher would discuss and question the children about.

All three types of large-group sessions offered the opportunity to obtain recordings of reasonable quality, since the children, gathered together on a carpet, were collectively disciplined by the teachers and expected to sit quietly and listen, or speak when spoken to. Since they involved discourse that was heavily teacher-controlled, I did not attempt to record any until I had spent eight months visiting the classrooms and developed a relationship of some familiarity with the teachers. I then asked, and was given, permission to tape-record some of them and sat quietly on the outskirts of the group, as a non-participant, while doing so. I continued to use a simple portable tape recorder with built-in microphone so that the recording equipment itself would be unimposing and relatively non-intrusive. It rendered good-quality recordings of the teacher's speech, which was the main focus of interest here, although the clarity of the children's responses varied and I was not always able to identify individual voices during transcription.

These tapes provided useful material for analysing teacher-talk and the kinds of opportunities that teachers provide for engaging in extended and/or decontextualized discourse. The storytime sessions were also interesting as examples of children's exposure to fictional, written story. This material is discussed in chapter 7.

(iii) **Child talk**

To tap into something like the full range of discourse contexts that children encounter in the preschool, I needed to extend my recordings beyond the large-group sessions to include other components of the school day. Mornings offered the greatest variety of experiences, since all classes followed a loosely-adhered-to timetable for the morning, described in chapter 7. Aside from mealtimes and the large-group times described above, the remaining time is spent either in small-group activities (organized but not directed by the teacher) or in free play (not organized or directed by a teacher).

Since my efforts with a portable tape-recorder had proved unsuccessful for all but large-group activities, I decided to tag individual children with lapel microphones, to obtain continuous records of their conversations through the course of a school morning. However, it was almost two years after my initial entry into the creche that I developed an effective means for accomplishing this. The difficulties that I encountered prior to this were mostly due to technical vagaries of the recording equipment; for instance, early attempts to record children via a separate transmitter and receiver linked to a tape recorder were marred by a loud interference signal which seemed inexplicable until I eventually traced its source to the radio networks of the mobile health-care trucks parked next door. Besides the interference problem,

University of Cape Town

this system itself was cumbersome and complicated to operate. Eventually, field-workers involved in the Harvard University Home-School Project (Snow 1991a), which was undertaking this type of recording in Boston preschools, came to the rescue with invaluable advice on both equipment and the practicalities of recording. I obtained a small, light tape recorder (slightly larger than a cigarette pack) which I fitted into a child-sized canvas money-pouch densely padded with foam; this I found more compact than the rucksacks used in the Harvard project. The pouch was attached around a child's waist and a tiny lapel microphone, connected to the tape recorder by a fine wire, was attached to the front of the child's clothing. With this system, the child carried her own compact recording system around with her, while remaining quite unencumbered by it and having unrestricted freedom of movement around the school and playground. The proximity of the microphone to the child's face ensured adequate quality recordings of both the child's speech and (usually) her conversational partners.

Six randomly selected children were tagged in this way, two three-year-olds, two four-year-olds and two five-year-olds of both sexes. They and their classmates were delighted and enormously excited by the event initially, several of them believing that they were 'on TV'. We had several trial runs to allow for the novelty to wear off and also to identify any practical difficulties that might arise. The final recordings were made one child at a time, throughout the course of a school morning. A student assistant, who was conducting research (Wolson 1992) in the classrooms, fitted the target child early on in the morning and then withdrew to follow and observe the child from a distance while making notes, on conversational partners and the physical context of speaking, to be added to later transcriptions. Aside from changing the cassette tapes and checking the recording equipment at timed intervals, she remained uninvolved in the child's interactions and routine activities. Recording was stopped at the end of the school morning. After the initial excitement, the children quickly adapted to wearing the recording equipment and, aside from an occasional reference to it, seemed to more or less forget its presence.

Ultimately, then, this approach was successful as anonymous observation of the naturally-occurring language and literacy experiences of children in the classroom. It provided quite detailed information on the types of discourse, including spontaneous narrating, that children engage in, with whom and in what contexts. Some of the main findings are discussed in chapter 7.

(iv) **Teacher interviews**

After I had been visiting the creche for almost a year, I recorded three separate conversations between me and the matron in charge of the creche and the two teachers in charge of the oldest class of children, with whom I had spent the most time. The interviews

University of Cape Town

with each teacher took place individually, in a small room where I had done most of my narrative elicitation with the children, and that with the matron in her office. I approached each of them individually and told them that I would like to be able to spend some time with them discussing the children and sharing views on how language is used at the school and in the community. I asked if they would mind if I recorded our conversations, since I might otherwise forget useful information that they could provide. By this stage I knew all three women quite well and felt we had a sufficiently comfortable relationship for this sort of undertaking.

The conversations with the two teachers were each about one hour long and that with the matron slightly shorter. They covered language policy in preschools and schools, teachers' perceptions of their roles, the children's home languages and changes in language dominance, and language shifts in homes and in the community. With the two classroom teachers, the conversation also extended to more personal topics : their own families, patterns of language use in their homes, educational issues affecting their children and their own knowledge and experience of the community. They were frank in speaking of personal matters and willing to share their opinions; the tone of our conversations was relaxed and the style relatively informal. One of the teachers told me afterwards that she had felt nervous initially about being recorded but had been relieved when it turned out to be an informal conversation of the kind we were used to having.

The transcripts of these interviews were useful in three ways. Firstly, they filled out the background picture for me about language patterns in the school, homes and community, which fed into chapter 2 of this report. Secondly, as an indication of teachers' perceptions, they provided a context in which to interpret my classroom recordings. Thirdly, although the conversations were not geared towards elicitation of personal narratives, a few did emerge in the course of our discussion. In retrospect, I regretted not having tried to elicit more, since those that did emerge showed some interesting patterns in relation to the children's narratives. A few of these are discussed in chapter 6.

1.3.2 School data : Primary school

South African children commence formal schooling when they are six years old, the age at which, according to Peterson & McCabe (1983), children have developed a mature narrative structure. To complete my investigation of narrative development, then, I later extended my data-base to include children in Grade 1 at Sunderland Primary School, not far from the creche. Over a three-month period I visited the school a few times a week, to spend time observing interactions in the Grade 1 classrooms and collecting personal narratives from sixteen children drawn from both the English- and Afrikaans-medium language streams.

University of Cape Town

Because of the more formal structure of classroom activities, it was not feasible to act as a teacher's aide as I had done at the creche; my role in these classrooms was therefore purely that of an outside observer, although I moved around and conversed with groups of children whenever possible, in order to get to know them. I did not tape-record any classroom discourse as I had done at the creche, but simply wrote down some general observations concerning the new and different linguistic demands imposed by formal schooling. These are included in chapter 2.

After spending some time in a particular classroom, I would ask certain children to accompany me to a separate room where I followed exactly the procedure described above for eliciting personal narratives. As at the creche, I found the children invariably eager to accompany me and willing to recount their experiences. Their narratives complete the developmental progression to a mature style, described in chapters 5 and 6.

1.3.3 Home data : Discourse in an extended family network

My attempts at gathering speech data from homes in the community arose through my contact with a student, F., who was doing research in Kensington/Factreton and who was herself a resident of this community, having married into a family there. Through her I made contact with a small family network consisting of three related families, F's own in-laws, each of which had a young, preschool child and a common pair of grandparents. They offered an opportunity to look at patterns of language use across three generations within a single, extended family, and hence a means by which I could build up a context within which to locate children's developing narrative skills. The family relationships are sketched in Appendix 1, along with information on patterns of language use in these homes.

Having settled on anonymous observation as the most workable approach, I discussed with the mothers their daily routines and times when it would be possible for them to record conversations that included the children. My general aim here was to tap into a range of contexts of speaking and to include several different family members as participants in conversation. Where families did not have a suitable portable tape recorder I supplied one, together with blank cassettes, and asked the mothers to record the kinds of interactions we had identified whenever they found it convenient. I emphasized (following both Milroy's (1987) and McCormick's (1989a) suggestion) that they should feel free to wipe any material from the tapes that they did not feel comfortable having me listen to.

I received tape recordings every few months from two of the families over a period of roughly a year. These contained speech data that were in many respects useful and interesting. I discovered, firstly, that the mothers had been helpful in sampling a range of different contexts of speaking and different conversational participants. These included interactions

University of Cape Town

involving a mother and one or more children, often during the course of routine domestic activities such as preparing food, ironing or bath times; family talk at meal-times; exchanges with friends or relatives who dropped by and, occasionally, mothers' fictional story narrations to children. Secondly, there was a general spontaneity and lack of self-consciousness on the part of speakers in the presence of the tape recorder. This was attested to by the use of informal speech styles marked by code-switching and code-mixing that characterise vernacular speech in this dialect community. Some examples, extracted from these data, are discussed in chapter 2.

There were difficulties and limitations to this method of data collection, however, that became increasingly apparent during the course of the year and which ultimately led me to abandon the recordings. Very soon after I began, the father in family 3 (see Appendix 1) died unexpectedly and I stopped any further attempt to collect data from that particular family, feeling that it would be intrusive and insensitive. On a practical level, I soon ran into difficulties dealing with the data that were accumulating from the two remaining families. It proved extremely difficult to transcribe conversations (and especially the speech of the young children) with a reasonable degree of accuracy in the absence of contextual information such as who the participants were or what the context of speaking was. On segments of tapes, the problem was compounded by background noises, such as running water, food frying or television sounds. I found that by sitting down with the mothers and going through tapes that I had roughly transcribed they were able to resolve most of the unintelligible portions for me. However, aside from the demands that this made on their time, the exercise tended to draw their attention to their own speech forms – a self-consciousness I particularly wished to avoid. One mother, for instance, noticing her use of certain expressions, commented apologetically that they were 'not good language'.

Aside from these practical difficulties, it became clear that, if I wished to make the home environment a separate focus of investigation, the type of data I was obtaining was not optimal for this purpose. This was partly due to certain characteristics of my family network. Since the children in these families were very young (one to two years of age), there was no opportunity to observe family discourse of the kind recorded by Blum-Kulka & Snow (1992), for example, involving joint participation in discussing events. As the sample extracts show, parents' more pressing preoccupations at this stage involved regulating their children's behaviour or trying to decode their utterances. Furthermore, the parents in these families were of somewhat higher educational and socio-economic status than those of the creche children, where typical parental occupations were factory worker or shop assistant; they were thus not directly comparable home environments. At the same time, it was becoming clear that, given

University of Cape Town

the volume of data I was obtaining from various sources, it was not feasible to include an independent study of any sufficient depth of the home environment as a source of narrative competence.

These factors led me eventually to phase out my attempts at data collection in this family network. Nonetheless, those tapes that I was able to transcribe successfully provided information that fed into this study in several ways. Despite the differences mentioned above between these families and those of the creche children, the patterns of language use in these homes confirmed the reports I received from teachers about this community, as well as descriptions (e.g., McCormick 1989a) of other Cape Flats neighbourhoods. The data that I obtained from these recordings, together with what I learned about the dynamics of language choice in this extended family, contributed to building up the sociolinguistic picture of the community that is offered in chapter 2. The future value of this experience as pilot-work for extension of this research is discussed in the final chapter.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMMUNITY

The aim of this chapter is to contextualize the narrative texts and other genres of spoken discourse that are analysed in subsequent chapters, by locating them within the larger framework of social relations, linguistic behaviours, historical events and geographical setting in which they occur. The first section (2.1) provides an overview of the repertoire of linguistic codes in use in Cape Flats communities, including their historical determinants, illustrated with examples from this and previous research. The intention here is to provide a general picture of how English and Afrikaans have evolved, their variability and domains of use. Section 2.2 narrows the focus to a description of the suburb of Kensington/Factreton. It looks briefly at the historical development of the area from vast peri-urban squatter settlement to suburb, and then sketches a social profile of contemporary Kensington/Factreton, focusing on its schools and homes - the two main contexts in which children develop language skills.

2.1 English and Afrikaans on the Cape Flats

Text 1: Preschoolers trading insults (Source : child-talk recordings, Kensington Creche)

A : he's gonna have lipstick, nail polish and a dress on, and all the girls think he's gonna have a - "ooh, aah, I'm a girl, what you think?"
B : *hy sê* [he says] "oh, I love you *mos*[1]"
A : he's gonna put a earring on his nose
C : and then he got a panty on
A : anytime he got a dress on, Jody Cabody *die mamma* [the mother], Jody Cabody *die mammie sê* [the mother says] "aah, aah"
B : Teacher, man, man, Joslyn *lekker*[nicely] make jokes for Jody Wyngaard
A : his name isn't Jody, his name is *Borrel* [bottle] Wyngaard[2], *borrel* wine

Text 2 : Teacher, aged early thirties (Source : teacher-interview recordings, Kensington Creche)

Now me and E. speaks English. And when we went one day to a workshop - and uh, most of the teachers there were Afrikaans - and we were there; they were looking at us like that, you know [demonstrates look]. And I asked E., "Why's this people staring at us?" She said, "No, I don't know." And I asked them, "Look here, excuse me, is there a problem? You want to know something?" They said, "No, it's nothing wrong." Then this one woman told me, she said "Yes, because if you speak English then we think you so high and mighty." But it wasn't that way, because we don't keep us like that, you know. But it just shows you. So I took it always that way, that's in people's mind, you know.

The speakers of these texts reside in Kensington/Factreton, one of the windswept, semi-arid areas of Cape Town, known as the Cape Flats, that were designated from the 1950's until 1991 under apartheid laws as 'group areas' for 'Coloureds', i.e., people considered to be of mixed racial ancestry. Historically, they have shared the Dutch/Afrikaans and English languages of

---

1 *Mos*, is a discourse marker with no direct English translation. It is discussed in more detail in chapter 5, section 5.2.2.

2 *Wyn, n.* wine.

University of Cape Town

South Africa's dominant white classes, yet they have not had the same access to power and privilege nor the same strong link between group identity and one particular language - facts that have crucially influenced the form of the language varieties spoken in Cape Flats communities and speakers' attitudes towards them. As a consequence of two centuries of intense language contact, there is phonological, syntactic and morphological convergence, code-mixing and code-switching between English and Afrikaans. Perhaps the greatest degree of convergence is found in the non-standard English of young children, illustrated in Text 1; this appears to be a consequence of language shift, since at least some children in Cape Flats communities are acquiring as their first language an L2 variety of English from Afrikaans-dominant parents. However, as Text 2 suggests, English and Afrikaans have distinct social connotations and domains of use.

2.1.1 Historical overview

The forms of English and Afrikaans spoken on the Cape Flats today can only be understood in the context of a history of long and intimate contact between Cape Dutch (later Afrikaans) and English, as well as the less-well-researched role of input from several other languages and varieties of English.

Dutch was brought to the Cape in 1652 by employees of the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC or Dutch East India Company) mandated to establish a victualling station en route to the Company's possessions in the East. As their settlement grew, and as the Cape's indigenous Khoekhoe and San communities began to disintegrate under the impact of this expansion, the Dutch imported slave labour to the Cape from other parts of Africa and the Dutch empire. Slaves brought with them a considerable variety of languages and cultures from their places of origin, which ranged from the west and east coasts of Africa, Madagascar and the Mascarenes, through the Indian sub-continent and the Indonesian Archipelago to Borneo and the coast of China. The sheer diversity of their geographic and cultural origins made the Cape slave population the most heterogenous of any recorded slave society (Shell 1994) and rendered communication difficult or impossible, both amongst slaves and indigenes themselves and between these groups and the power elite. According to Davids (1990), those slaves from the Indonesian Archipelago alone would have spoken a possible seven different Malayo-Polynesian languages, of which there is evidence that Malayu, Buganese and Javanese were dominant. Other Eastern slaves, from Sri Lanka and India, spoke languages such as Bengali (Indo-European) and Tamil (Dravidian). Of the African slaves, those from Madagascar spoke Malagasy while those from the west and east African coasts would have brought with them a wide range of different Bantu languages. In addition to their native languages, many slaves, African and Asian, had a knowledge of Creole Portuguese, the *lingua franca* of the trade routes.

University of Cape Town

While their numbers increased substantially throughout the VOC period, the extreme linguistic and ethnic diversity of the Cape slave population and the geographical dispersal of rural slaves were obstacles both to the development of a cohesive slave culture and to the survival of their native languages (cf. Armstrong & Worden 1989). Their communal identities and family lives eroded, slaves and indigenes alike gradually accommodated to the European languages of their (French, German, but predominantly Dutch) masters. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a Cape Dutch vernacular evolved as a lingua franca amongst Dutch settlers, slaves and their descendants, as well as those remnants of the Khoekhoe peoples who were co-opted as wage-labourers for the colonists. The Cape's indigenous Khoe and San languages were probably not heard in the South-Western Cape much beyond the eighteenth century, as these communities disintegrated and finally vanished under the impact of settler farming expansion, a smallpox epidemic in the first half of the century and, in the case of the San, widescale massacre at the hands of settler commandos (Traill, 1995). Of the profusion of languages brought to the Cape by slaves, few survived into the nineteenth century. The Portuguese creole spoken by some Company officials, colonists and slaves had died out by the late 1700's. Amongst the languages of eastern origin, Malayu survived the longest, perpetuated by virtue of its significance to Cape Muslims who used it in spoken and written form as the language of worship and religious instruction (Davids 1990). Malayu was to eventually die out by the end of the following (nineteenth) century after a long period of co-existence in urban slave communities with Cape Dutch (later Afrikaans), though its religious terminology and expressions of respect live on in the language of Muslims today.

By the final years of the VOC period, at the end of the eighteenth century, Cape Town was a cosmopolitan community in which European and Asian cultures flourished and had mutual influence. Boundaries that had earlier produced sharp distinctions between social groups (Khoekhoe, European settlers and slaves) had become blurred by miscegenation and intermarriage, proselytization of Islam and, to a lesser extent, Christianity, and the absorption of remnants of the Khoekhoe into other groups. Manumissions of slaves, while relatively infrequent, had resulted in a new societal group, the 'free blacks' - a marginal group of ex-slaves and their descendants augmented by Asian political exiles, amongst them Muslim intellectuals and literati who were later to publish the first written texts in Afrikaans using Arabic script. Yet free blacks, as much as slaves, Khoekhoe and their mixed descendants, continued to be excluded from the status and privileges of European settlers and officials in what remained a rigidly stratified colonial society (Elphick & Shell 1989). Amongst these lower-status groups Cape Dutch had by this time become a widely-used vernacular in all spheres of social and economic communication in Cape Town and its surrounding arable regions.

University of Cape Town

The turn of the nineteenth century marked the advent of British rule at the Cape and, with it, the second major European language influence. Successive British occupations of the Cape in 1795 and 1806 brought the first influx of English speakers - mostly transient military and government officials stationed in Cape Town and its environs. English became firmly established, however, with the arrival in 1820 of around 5000 predominantly working-class British immigrants in the Eastern Cape. The speech patterns of this group were characteristic of the regional and working-class dialects of London and the Home Counties (Lanham 1978) and incorporated such stigmatized phonetic and grammatical variants as *h*-dropping, double negation and non-standard number agreement (Mesthrie & West 1995). Lass (1995) regards their input as the primary influence on the development of a new local variety of South African English that was shaped further, though minimally, in his view, by contact with Cape Dutch/Afrikaans.

A comparatively late arrival at the Cape and, initially at least, representative of a minority of speakers, English nevertheless had a profound impact on all strata of Cape society. Amongst White Cape Dutch speakers it sparked a gradually increasing concern for the survival, status and 'purity' of their language. For urban slaves and 'free blacks' of multilingual origins, it presaged the emergence of a new code-switching vernacular.

During the nineteenth century, as a result of a determined anglicization policy pursued by successive Governors of the Cape, and of the social, economic and political power wielded by the British, English came to predominate in government, commerce, education and public life (Lanham & MacDonald 1979:10). English was declared the only official language of the colony and was privileged in education and the civil service, while Dutch was prohibited as a medium of instruction in schools. For Dutch burghers, British imperialism with its attendant threat of linguistic and cultural absorption fuelled a growing nationalist consciousness in which language was to play a key role. Largely through the *Genootskap van Opregte Afrikaners* (Society of True Afrikaners) founded in Paarl in 1875, intensive efforts were made to secure the status of Afrikaans as an autonomous language with a standardized orthography and grammar and to raise its social prestige. The 'purity' of Afrikaans was established on the one hand by exclusion of ethnic varieties of the language from the standardization process and on the other by claims of unbroken lineage from the mainland language (Deumert 1994). By the end of the century, the Afrikaans language, though not yet officially recognized, had become a focal symbol for Afrikaner nationalism. In the process White Afrikaans-speakers had dissociated themselves from any connection to indigenous languages of South Africa or other dialects of Afrikaans and had distanced themselves linguistically and socially from their 'Coloured' compatriots who shared their language and had participated in its creation.

University of Cape Town

For slaves and 'free blacks', British colonial rule did not bring a significant improvement in status. While the British abolished slavery in 1834, they were also responsible for the introduction of discriminatory education and labour policies and franchise criteria. Slavery came to be replaced by a less brutal but nonetheless entrenched system of institutionalized segregation on lines of colour. However, its abolition and the lifting of pass laws meant that former slaves were free to move, and mass migrations took place from the countryside into the city and its southern suburbs surrounding Table Mountain. Several thousands settled into an area close to the centre of Cape Town that later became known as District Six. In the best documented sociolinguistic study of this area, McCormick (1989a, 1989b, 1995) describes District Six in the nineteenth century as a multilingual community, settled in large part by ex-slaves, free blacks and their descendants, but also by immigrants from Britain and Ireland, Yiddish speakers from Eastern Europe, and migrants from other parts of Southern Africa, including Zulus, Swazis and Mozambicans. Knowledge of English became increasingly necessary for commercial enterprise and employment in the colony; it spread as a second language throughout the colony and as a lingua franca in multi-lingual urban environments.

In these circumstances, code-mixing was a widespread phenomenon: Mesthrie's (1993) survey of attestations of English and Cape Dutch/Afrikaans code-mixing in nineteenth century travellers' journals suggests that functional code-mixing occurred as part of a general learning process amongst people from a variety of backgrounds who were developing competence in the two dominant languages of the colony. Speakers mixed codes out of necessity when they lacked competence in the second code or because they were misled by structural and lexical similarities between the two languages. However, Mesthrie also found some evidence of a different type of code-mixing in the deliberate and skilful manipulation of the two codes for rhetorical purposes, suggesting that for some people code-mixing had developed beyond an interlanguage stage to some degree of mastery of both codes. At missionary schools in the Cape, attended mostly by children of the 'Coloured' working-classes, both English and Cape Dutch/Afrikaans were used in classrooms in a way that may have engendered code-switching as an unmarked strategy. Mesthrie suggests that while for other speakers focusing on either English or Afrikaans had taken place by the end of the century, the urban 'Coloured' community developed mixed-code patterns which then came to be an integral part of their speech repertoire.

In the twentieth century the balance of political power shifted again as British domination ended with the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. Under successive White governments, but most aggressively from 1948 under Afrikaner Nationalist rule, the process began of entrenching already-existing discrimination on grounds of colour via racist legislation. Tens of thousands of English and Afrikaans speakers who were classified 'Coloured' (besides

University of Cape Town

many other 'non-white' groups) were disenfranchised and deprived of basic civil liberties. The vast majority resident in the Cape Town area and southern suburbs were forcibly removed to the Cape Flats, their former homes appropriated or razed to the ground (Innes 1975). A smaller number remained in enclaves surrounding the city centre such as Woodstock, Salt River, Walmer Estate, the Bo-Kaap and a small remnant of District Six.

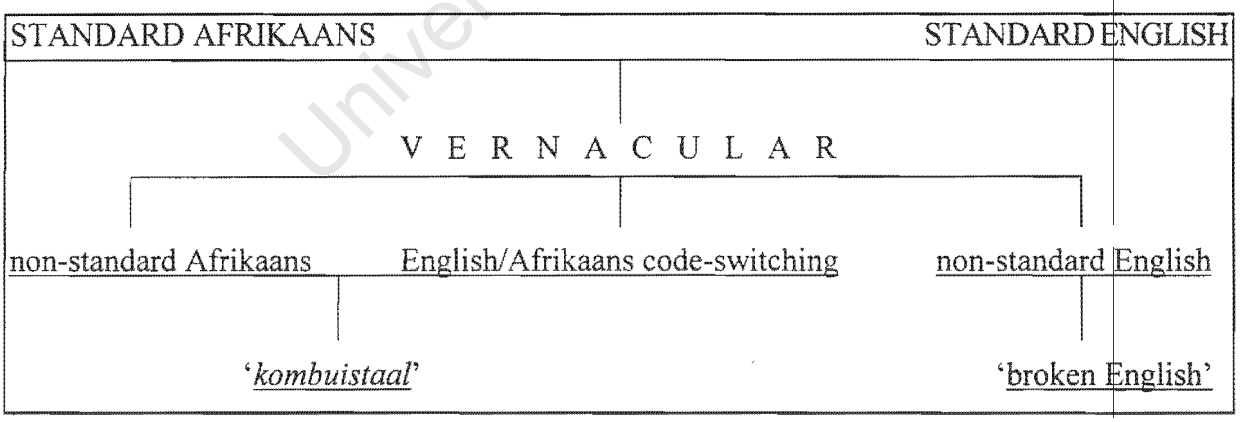
The intimate co-existence of English with Afrikaans, expressed most definitively in code-mixing, in these communities today can be understood in terms of the effects of South Africa's socio-political history on speakers' sense of linguistic identity. As McCormick puts it,

> The contact between Cape Dutch - later Afrikaans - and English was intensive, many faceted, and of long duration. It was made through ethnically heterogenous people who had no emotional investment in keeping either language 'pure' as their identities were not tied up with them in the way that, say, the identity of White Afrikaners has been with Standard Afrikaans. An effect of apartheid policies was the alienation of Afrikaans speakers classified as 'Coloured' from those classified as 'White' and from their dialect of Afrikaans if not from the language as a whole. In District Six the most striking feature of vernacular Afrikaans is prolific lexical borrowing from English, a practice which was an anathema to 'White' Afrikaans nationalists at whose hands residents suffered erosions of civil rights, including their right to live in District Six. (1989b:206)

2.1.2 The linguistic repertoire

McCormick's (1989a) sociolinguistic study of the small remnant of District Six is the most detailed investigation to date into the repertoire of codes found in 'Coloured' speech communities. She schematises the linguistic repertoire as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 : Schematic representation of the linguistic repertoire (from McCormick 1989b:207)



The 'vernacular' in Figure 1 refers to three distinct codes : non-standard Afrikaans, non-standard English and code-switching between them. The non-standard dialects of both languages show signs of linguistic convergence, although this is expressed in distinctive ways. Non-standard Afrikaans shares most of the features of standard Afrikaans syntax, but its extensive incorporation of English loanwords and distinctive phonological characteristics (cf Wood 1987) readily distinguish it from standard Afrikaans. McCormick (1989a,b) regards it as a mixed code,

University of Cape Town

since English loanwords form an integral part of its lexicon, with fairly stable grammatical structure. In contrast, non-standard English has absorbed relatively little Afrikaans into its lexicon but has a less stable morpho-syntactic system which differs in many respects from standard English and is strongly influenced by Afrikaans. McCormick's claim that this is a transitional variety, an L2 in the process of becoming an L1, is discussed in 2.1.3 below.

McCormick's analysis of the speech repertoire, based on a substantial corpus of recordings of interviews, meetings, family and children's discourse, suggests a distinction between the code-mixing that is characteristic of vernacular Afrikaans and the practice of code-switching between the two non-standard dialects. The former is realised by the incorporation of single elements (usually single lexical items) from English into Afrikaans constructions

e.g. *ou* **stock** *is lekkers wat ge***chip** *is af* [old stock is sweets that have been chipped off] (McCormick 1995:195)

This is not simply an individual speaker's strategy, but an integral and distinctive aspect of the code; speakers may, in fact, be unaware of which language particular words belong to. Code-switching, on the other hand, involves alternating longer strings from the two dialects and usually serves, albeit mostly unconsciously, pragmatic, stylistic or social purposes :

e.g. *My ma het nie gewerk nie, my ouma het nie gewerk nie* [my mother didn't work, my grandmother didn't work] - she was a housewife. (McCormick 1995:194)

Speakers code-switch within and across conversational turns (even within one sentence) or in accordance with aspects of the social setting (situation, interlocutor or topic of conversation). Both code-mixing and code-switching are illustrated in the following extracts from the transcripts of home recordings carried out in my own study of Kensington/Factreton, discussed in chapter 1 (1.3.2). The extracts show that English is seen by the parents in these families as the appropriate code in which to address their young children; however, switches to the vernacular occur with speech directed at other familiar adults, as well as at points in the interaction with children that are emotionally loaded, either with anger or affection. They also illustrate the smooth and skilful interchange between codes that is characteristic of many spoken interactions in this speech community.

1.	**Mother, Child 1 and Child 3; morning, in the kitchen**
Child 3 :	nice, nice [referring to a shoe she is trying on]
Mother :	what is nice?
Child 3 :	*pas daai aan* [try that one on]
	no! *hy wil nie my pas aan nie* [it doesn't fit me]
Mother :	uh-uh, *maar daai skoen is te klein vir jou* [but that shoe is too small for you],
	my darling, *hy's nou rerig te klein vir jou* – [it's now really too small for you]
	A., put that shoes away, A. –
	you must put that on for Mamu's wedding –
	kom, sit weg daai skoene [come, put those shoes away] ….

University of Cape Town

2. **Mother, Father and Child 1; supper-time**

[Mother cannot make out what child is requesting]

Mother (to C.) : show, come show mommy where you want
Child : xxx
Mother (to F.) : *E., vra gou vir hom wat hy wil he, ne* [ask him quickly what he wants, okay?]
Father : what you want, A.?
Child : xxx
Mother : *ek het hom nou* coke *gegee ook* [I've given him coke too]
Father : A., what you want?
Child : / /
Father : ice blocks?
Mother : *daai groen, daai* [that green, that] cream soda
Father : oh
Child : xxx
Mother : okay, mommy open that
Child : water, water, water, water
Mother : water, oh water, water!
come, mommy show you - -
(to F.) : *is daai mammie se stem wat ek hoor, E.?* [Is that mommy's – i.e., paternal grandmother's – voice that I hear?]
Father : *ek hoor stem, ek kan nie uitmaak nie* [I hear a voice, I can't make it out]
Mother : *seker in die* [probably in the] toilet
(to C.) : here, here, here's it – water [giving water to C.] ....

3. **Mother, Child 1, Child 3 and Mother's sister-in-law, S., who has come to visit one afternoon :**

Mother (to C1) : give me kiss
S. (to C1) : give kiss for Popo please
[child obliges]
Mother : *sies, spoeg en al!* [Ugh! Spit and all!]
S. (to M.) : *hoe's dit vir jou xx?* [how was it for your xx?]
Mother : *uh-uh, ek was vandag by my ma* [I was at my mom's today]
S.: oh
Mother : *ons het opge*clear, *en wat nog nie* [we cleared up, and so on]
[interrupted by Child 3 breaking a piece of chalk]
uh-uh T.! /hhh/ *nee! Mammie gaan jou slaan –*
moenie, moenie, moenie dit doen nie! [no! mommy's going to smack you – don't, don't, don't do that!]
en volgende keer as [and next time if -] – if you do it I'm also going to hit you on the hands, okay?
you gonna get hiding, hiding, hiding [clapping hands]
you don't break chalk like that – see here, now it's broken
Child 1 : no, T.! [hits child 3]
Mother : no, no, you don't hit her – you don't say anything to her, I'll do it, okay?
daarsy, daarsy, daarsy [there, there, there] - [placating]
sies, die tone stink [ugh, these toes stink] [referring to Child 3's foot]
Child 3 : *en daai!* [and those!] [offering other foot]
[laughter]
Mother : *nou moet ek die ander toon ook ruik* [now I have to smell the other toe too]
[sniffs] oooh! [shrieks in disgust]
stink toes! –

University of Cape Town

wys my [show me] A.'s toes [takes up Child 1's toes]
ook sies! Jou tone stink ook – [also yuk! your toes stink too]
A., what's this ? [pointing to drawing]
Child 3 : *en daai* [and that one] [offering foot again]
Mother : naa, *ek wil nie nou, nou weer ruik nie* [I don't want to now, smell again now]
A., what's this?

Factors motivating the choice of code in a given situation stem from a complex and often ambivalent set of attitudes to the language varieties depicted in Figure 1. Within the speech community, both non-standard Afrikaans and the practice of code-switching are often referred to as *kombuistaal* (kitchen language), the implicit negative judgement reflecting the pejorative attitudes held by speakers of the standard dialects. However, despite the low status accorded to this variety by its speakers, the majority of those who have grown up with the experience of apartheid have shown no corresponding desire to move closer to standard or *suiwer* ('pure') Afrikaans, which is strongly associated with the values of an oppressive government (Wood 1987; McCormick 1989a,b, 1995). In this context, McCormick (1995:198) explains, vernacular Afrikaans has acquired a symbolic value as 'the language of neighbourhood solidarity, its form clearly a product of easy contact between different ethnic groups and thus a reminder of a valued social order'. Both non-standard Afrikaans and code-switching are the approved codes for informal, family and neighbourhood communication; to use either standard Afrikaans or English in these situations can be construed as snobbish, socially distancing or a betrayal of one's roots. English, however, has other positive attributes, being associated with higher education (and accompanying socio-economic advancement), the international community and opposition to apartheid (1990:6). The general perception of English as a higher status language is seen in the choice of many parents of English-medium education for their children even when they are Afrikaans-dominant. More specifically, English tends to be seen as the appropriate medium for formal occasions (such as meetings) and for discussion of technological subjects, but unsuited to the expression of emotions or conveying intimacy, for which vernacular Afrikaans is preferred.

2.1.3 Variation in the linguistic codes

The non-standard English spoken in the community is most often referred to by its speakers as 'broken English' (Figure 1), which seems to reflect a perception that, unlike non-standard Afrikaans, this is not a distinct dialect but simply inadequately learned English (McCormick 1995:199). Wood's (1987) study of attitudes and perceptions towards varieties of English in the Cape Peninsula concurs that while standard and non-standard Afrikaans are perceived as, and function as, two separate codes with strong identity associations, this is not as clearly the case with standard versus non-standard English. Wood (pp.99-101) suggests, following Lanham's (1978:146) scheme for 'White' South African English (SAE) that variation

University of Cape Town

in 'Coloured English' (CE) occurs along a continuum from 'Extreme' (closest to the non-standard pole and showing greatest amount of Afrikaans influence) to 'Respectable' (closest to the standard pole; least influence from Afrikaans). At any point on the continuum, linguistic variables (phonological, lexical, syntactic) correlate with a complex of social variables, the most important of which are social class, level of education, amount of English spoken in the home relative to Afrikaans, area of residence and political leanings. The interplay of these social factors determine both a speaker's level of proficiency in English and the linguistic variables which make up his or her idiolect. Wood (pp.140-1) associates the Extreme variety with those speakers who 'constitute the lower end of the socio-economic scale, are highly bilingual, have a low standard of education and inhabit areas of the Peninsula characterized by sub-economic housing and crowded conditions, and where vernacular Afrikaans is the normal medium of communication.' Speakers of Respectable CE on the other hand are 'typically better educated, more affluent, speak less Afrikaans than the above, and will inhabit an area of the Peninsula characterized by home ownership and where English is a normal medium of education' (p. 141).

McCormick's data, reflecting mostly working-class speech, indicates that the age of speakers contributes significantly to variation in English. The English of preschoolers in her sample manifested many more non-standard morpho-syntactic features and calques from Afrikaans than that of older people aged 60 to 80, whose English approximated the standard. This difference existed despite the fact that these young children were acquiring English as an L1 whilst their grandparents had learned it as an L2. McCormick (1990) explains this finding in terms of the different circumstances surrounding the learning of English across generations. Typically, people aged 60 and over would have had Afrikaans as a home language and learned English as an L2 at school, where English was both subject and medium of instruction. English was the formal language used not only in schools, but in churches and at community events, while vernacular Afrikaans was the language of family and neighbourhood interaction. These Afrikaans-dominant speakers thus developed in many cases a first-language level of competence in English. Their children, however, learned English only as a subject at school, because of the enforcement by the Nationalist government, from the early 1950's, of a policy of mother-tongue instruction. For the majority who had Afrikaans as a home language there was little opportunity to develop a high degree of competence in English, since socialising between the language streams at school was not common and vernacular Afrikaans remained the language of neighbourhood interaction. Many of these people, now parents themselves, deeply resented the enforcement of this language policy, since, as McCormick's informants testify, the two language streams are viewed as socially and academically unequal : 'There was and still is a very strong belief that children in the English classes are educationally privileged in a number of ways both at

University of Cape Town

school and in tertiary education and also in the economic and social opportunities that arise post-school' (1990:7). Many have, in consequence, adopted a policy of speaking English to their young children at home, in preparation for an English-medium education. The distinctively non-standard character of preschoolers' L1 English thus derives largely from the nature of the input, an L2 variety.

Clearly, the speech of young children is central to questions of the future of English and Afrikaans in these speech communities. McCormick (1989a) has found that, in some high schools, students' written English shows few non-standard features other than subject-verb concord, illustrating the strong pressure towards conformity with standard varieties that schools exert. However, mastery of standard English does not necessarily entail the loss of vernacular styles. It is not yet known whether these young children, skilled from an early age in the use of multiple linguistic codes, will continue as adults to use a non-standard variety of English outside of the formal requirements of educational and occupational domains. If so, it remains to be seen whether English will displace Afrikaans to any significant extent in informal spheres of communication : at present, despite the increasing use of English amongst children, non-standard Afrikaans and the code-switching vernacular are still deeply rooted, at least in working-class communities, in family and social interactions, where the use of English is regarded as inappropriate. Later sections of this chapter will show that, in Kensington/Factreton at least, the increase in the use of English amongst children may not be equal across neighbourhoods or socio-economic classes. It seems likely that, initially anyway, the extent of language shift on the Cape Flats will be partly class-based and that for some the shift may be one of dominance rather than replacement.

2.1.4 Linguistic features of Cape Flats English and Afrikaans

It is beyond the scope of this study to detail the distinctive linguistic features of Cape Flats English and Afrikaans, though I have done so elsewhere : Malan (1996) explores the syntactic, lexical and phonological characteristics of Cape Flats English, much of it based on the data obtained in the present research. Kotze (1984, 1989), van der Rheede (1983) and McCormick (1989a) have investigated microlinguistic features of the Afrikaans vernacular. However, to assist the reader unfamiliar with these vernaculars in the interpretation of the narrative texts that follow in chapters 5 and 6, Appendix 2 provides tables of non-standard lexical usage for both English and Afrikaans, as well as lexical borrowings from Arabic and Malayu that appear in the speech of Muslim speakers on the Cape Flats. All the examples are taken from the data collected for this study.

University of Cape Town

2.2 A profile of Kensington/Factreton

Having outlined a social-linguistic history of the language varieties spoken on the Cape Flats and some of their characteristic features, the remaining sections of this chapter turn to a focus on the particular community in which this study was undertaken. In researching the history of Kensington/Factreton (2.2.1), I was greatly assisted by da Costa's (1984) political-geographical study of the area, Swart's (1983) history of the development and destruction of Windermere and its subsequent rebuilding as a suburb, and Field's (1990) analysis of the experiences of workers in Factreton, as well as several profiles of the area undertaken by social work and planning students. To fill out my personal experience of the community in order to describe the homes and physical environment in contemporary Kensington/Factreton (2.2.2), I relied on statistical data and helpful information supplied by the Planner for Kensington at the Cape Town City Council, archival material (much of it unsourced) from the Kensington Library and discussions with residents, including teachers at the Kensington Creche. The final section (2.2.3) looks at schools in the area: in explaining the legacy of a 'Coloured' education system I have relied heavily on information in Muriel Horrell's thorough work on this subject (1970), while the description of schooling facilities and patterns of language use in school and preschool classrooms is based solely on my own observations and researches.

2.2.1 Historical development of the area

Pre-1943 : Growth of a squatter settlement

The area initially known as Kensington Estate Reserve, about eight kilometres from the centre of Cape Town, was formed in 1847 when two erven from the farm Varsche Valley were transferred to the Colonial Government. Following a series of transfers and sub-divisions, by the early part of this century the land had been split into hundreds of plots and sold. Unsuited to agricultural development because of its marshy *vleis*, barren soils and exposure to strong winds, the Reserve was by the early 1920's still an undeveloped area of *vlei* and bush with a few crude dwellings. It was occupied at first largely by 'Coloured' and later increasingly by African people who came either from surrounding rural areas or the overcrowded city, as well as a smaller number of British, Eastern European and Indian immigrants. By the end of the 1920's it was already a sizeable community; at a public meeting of residents (who, ironically, in view of its subsequent development, objected to the area's name on the grounds that 'Reserve' had connotations of a 'Native location'), it had been popularly renamed Windermere, after England's largest lake - presumably a wry commentary on the fact that the lack of roads and drainage in the area rendered it a large water mass during the winter months. Over the next two decades, as a consequence of the rapid urbanization experienced by South Africa as a whole, Windermere's population swelled in size to, at its zenith in the late 1940's and early 1950's, a massive squatter

University of Cape Town

settlement in which 25 - 35 000 people lived in overcrowded slum conditions.

Economic factors together with Windermere's favourable physical location precipitated its rapid growth as a squatter town. Mass migrations from rural areas occurred as increasing poverty and inability to subsist on the land forced people towards the cities. Windermere's proximity to Cape Town's growing industrial heartland of Maitland, Ndabeni and the northern suburbs, and to the city itself, made it a prime location for easy access to places of employment. Furthermore, its situation on the peri-urban boundary exempted squatters from municipal taxation and building regulations : while the adjacent Maitland municipality had been incorporated into that of Cape Town in 1913, only a small section of Kensington was included, up to 6th Avenue, which then became the northern boundary of the city of Cape Town. Windermere extended beyond this boundary and hence lay outside of the Cape Town City Council's jurisdiction. For many Africans who were unable to obtain legal status for themselves in Cape Town, there was the additional advantage of evading the application of influx control measures such as the Native (Urban Areas) Act by settling outside of the urban boundary. Other squatters moved there from overcrowded parts of the city itself, where inadequate wages combined with rising property values and high rentals, as well as evictions under the Slums Act, forced many people out to areas like Windermere where the cost of shelter was much lower.

Windermere's location proved a serious disadvantage in terms of access to public services and facilities, however. The Divisional Council, under whose authority it fell, failed to provide the most basic services on the grounds that it was negotiating with the City Council for a takeover of the area, while the City Council in turn refused to assume responsibility for it - a stance it was to maintain until as late as 1943. As a result of this neglect by local authorities and uncontrolled growth, Windermere grew into one of the worst slums in the country. By the 1940's, with a population estimated at 25 -35 000 people (Swart 1983 :14), the area still lacked all basic amenities such as a water supply, sanitation, lighting and roads. A housing survey commissioned by the City Council in the mid-1940's (da Costa 1984) reported that the majority of dwellings were overcrowded hovels, shacks or *pondoks*, many lacking washing, cooking and toilet facilities and having a high incidence of rat and bug infestation. The survey's report cited further extreme overcrowding and a high incidence of infectious diseases, partly due to the insanitary environment created by the absence of sewerage and waste removal facilities and regular flooding in winter.

In these poverty-stricken conditions lived a cosmopolitan mix of people from different backgrounds and cultures - Malays, Jews, 'Coloureds', Indians and Africans from rural and inner city areas. Official population figures (generally considered underestimates) in the 1940's reported ± 19 000 African people and 4 000 'Coloureds' in the area; there was known to be a

University of Cape Town

smaller White population as well until as late as the 1970's (da Costa 1984). Many were employed in the nearby industrial centres or as domestic servants in neighbouring White areas; others worked in the informal sector, running shebeens, selling water, hawking or in home industries. Swart (1983:40-42) notes that the poverty of residents of the area was not due to unemployment but rather to an inadequate wage structure and prejudicial employment opportunities. Despite its destitute state, Windermere in the 1930's and 1940's had a rich community life. Churches representing a wide range of denominations thrived in the area; these offered the only schooling available (see 3.2.3) as well as various welfare and social activities which became a significant part of the community's cultural life. In addition, shebeens, gambling, horse-racing and a vibrant live music scene flourished (Field 1990; Swart 1983). Adding to the notoriety of the area were characters such as '*Langrok*' [Long Dress], a formerly devout Christian lady who, dressed in Victorian garb, ran a shebeen known as '*Langrok se smokkelhuis*', and an eccentric Scotsman named Hickson who built himself a 'castle' from whose turret he raised the Union Jack every evening while posing in Naval uniform.

From around 1940, an increasing amount of public attention focused on the appalling living conditions in Windermere and the threat they posed to public health. The City Council was accused of gross neglect of the area and, simultaneously, various relief and welfare organizations began providing services to the community. The University of Cape Town's Student Health and Welfare Centres Organization (SHAWCO) had its earliest beginnings in Windermere in 1943, in the form of a student-run medical and welfare clinic, as did, some years later, the Peninsula School Feeding Association. By 1952 the students' operation had grown to a point where they were able to move to permanent premises in 12th Avenue, which remain today the headquarters of SHAWCO. These they shared initially with CAFDA (the Cape Flats Distress Organization, formed in 1944) and the Union of Jewish Women which ran a soup kitchen in the area. The latter organization established in 1942 the creche for preschoolers, on SHAWCO's premises, which continues today and which provided the subject sample for this study. While a considerable amount of welfare work was undertaken in Windermere, its emphasis was necessarily ameliorative only (Swart 1983); the local and state authorities alone had the capacity to effect some improvement in underlying conditions, but it was only in 1943, after protracted negotiations and considerable public pressure that the City Council capitulated and incorporated Windermere into the municipality of Cape Town. By this time conditions had deteriorated to the point where the entire area could be regarded as a slum.

Mass removals and redevelopment as a suburb

The City Council's plan for Windermere was to demolish shacks under the provisions of the Slums Act, which allowed for acquisition by a local authority of property declared a slum, and

University of Cape Town

to remove Africans from the area which would then be 'restored' to the status of a 'Coloured' residential area. Africans were to be rehoused in the Langa location, while 'Coloureds' would be accommodated in a housing scheme to be developed in Windermere or in council housing schemes elsewhere. The plan hinged, of course, on the capacity to provide alternative housing on a wide scale and for the next few years the Council engaged in prolonged disputes with central government on the issue of funding, so that by the end of the decade very little progress had been made towards this end. By this time, however, the National Party had come into power, with plans for radical social engineering that were to dramatically change the character of Windermere. Between 1953 and 1959, intensive and systematic police raids were conducted in Windermere to forcibly remove Africans from the area, with distressing and traumatic effects for the community as a whole. The initial targets were 'bachelors' (the definition of which became increasingly broad) who, if they could provide proof of their legal right to work in Cape Town, were moved to Langa to be housed in 'bachelor hostels'. The majority of African men in Windermere were included in the 'bachelor' category, whether or not they had families living with them (Swart 1983:68) Family accommodation was planned only for 'legal' families (the definition of which became increasingly narrow). All 'illegals' (which came to include most women and children) were arrested and sent back to reserves. By 1958, the year in which Windermere was proclaimed a 'Coloured Group Area', 10 -12 000 African 'bachelors' had been moved out and by the following year 930 families (about 1/3 of Windermere's population) had been removed (Swart 1983:68-71).

The beginning of the 1960's marked a new era in the community's history and its transition to a suburb of Cape Town. The demise of Windermere was marked by the renaming of the area in 1962 : while the whole area was given the name Kensington, a distinction emerged which remains today between the predominantly working-class section (from 13th to 18th Avenue) known as Factreton, and the area (between Kensington Road and 12th Avenue) which is inhabited by lower- to middle-income families and known as Kensington. As forced removals of Africans proceeded, dwellings were demolished and property acquired by the Council for redevelopment of the area as what was grandly intended to be a 'model' Coloured residential suburb. Factreton, originally planned as an industrial site (hence the name, derived from 'Factory Town'), became instead the site of a council housing estate on which economic and sub-economic houses were built, along with construction of roads, sewers and stormwater drainage. 'Coloured' people who had previously lived in slum conditions in Windermere were accommodated in these houses or shifted to housing estates developed elsewhere on the Cape Flats. The remainder of the area, i.e., Kensington, was developed largely on a home-ownership basis according to a scheme providing for purchase by individuals of detached houses constructed

University of Cape Town

by the council, which could be redeemed over a period of 30 years.

The transition from peri-urban Windermere to suburban Kensington had been accomplished at considerable cost to the area's inhabitants. Several thousand African and 'Coloured' families were destroyed and even greater numbers of people suffered displacement and alienation from the communities in which they had lived. Field (1990) points out that while some 'Coloured' residents benefited from the removal of Africans in that it entailed rehousing in improved conditions for themselves, many 'Coloured' families were broken up where 'Coloured' women had African husbands. Some proportion of 'Coloured' people were also removed to other areas of the Cape Flats, while others were shifted in from outside areas, under the terms of the Group Areas Act. Alongside these developments, 'Coloured' people as a whole suffered the loss of political and civil rights under laws which removed them from the national and local municipal voters' rolls and discriminated against them in many types of employment, areas of residence and access to public facilities. Their rights to decision-making were reduced to participation in local Management Committees which were simply advisory bodies in the control of the City Council; not surprisingly, in Kensington as in other 'Coloured' group areas, these received little support.

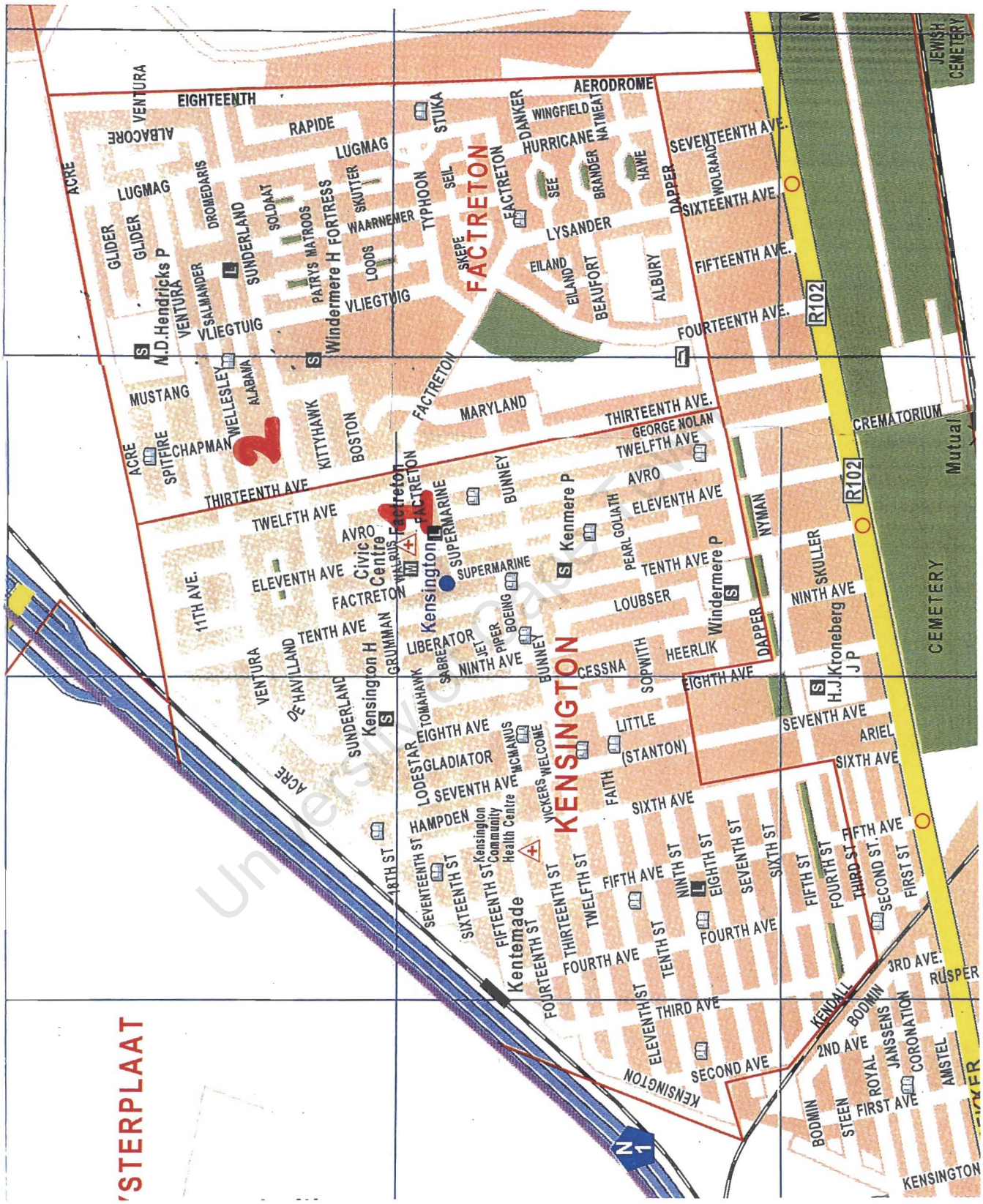
2.2.2 Contemporary Kensington/Factreton : its homes and families

Kensington/Factreton today has a total population of around 27 000. It comprises three broadly distinguishable sections (see map 1). The first is the small portion of Kensington abutting Maitland, between Kensington Road and 5th Avenue; this was incorporated along with Maitland into the municipal area of Cape Town prior to the growth of Windermere, and hence has undergone predominantly natural or evolutionary urban growth as a residential area (da Costa 1984). The remaining two sections - Kensington (from 6th to 12th Avenue) and Factreton (13th to 18th Avenue) - form the bulk of the area and comprise planned housing schemes built on the site of the old Windermere. The great majority of inhabitants live here in economic (detached-) or sub-economic (row-) houses. Since 1984 the City Council has encouraged private ownership by selling off its houses to residents; by 1991 two-thirds of the population were living in their own homes, either fully or partly paid-off, compared with just under one-third in rented dwellings.

The area as a whole has certain unique characteristics. Firstly, its physical location is such that it is not only relatively isolated from the Cape Flats network of 'Coloured' communities, but also separated by various 'buffers' from its immediately surrounding White areas (see map 2). On its southern boundary the vast Maitland Cemetery separates Kensington/ Factreton from the White 'garden suburb' of Pinelands and prevents direct access between the two suburbs. To the east it is bounded by the Wingfield Aerodrome, separating it from the White suburb of Goodwood. To the north and north-west lie a railway line, Table Bay Boulevard and a huge stretch of open field which separate it from the White areas of Acacia Park, Montagu Gardens

University of Cape Town

Map 1: Kensington/Factreton – location of schools



1. Kensington Creche
2. Sunderland Primary School

Map 2: Kensington/Factreton – surrounding areas

and Ysterplaat.

Secondly, it is an historically older community than most other Cape Flats 'Coloured' communities. Most of the latter were formed as direct products of the Group Areas Act of 1958, in terms of which people classified 'Coloured' were shifted from the city and its lusher southern suburbs to newly created townships on the Flats, while Kensington, as we have seen, arose out of an earlier settlement dating to the early part of the century. While it was deeply affected by the Group Areas Act, it was in fact already a rapidly-growing urban community before its proclamation as a 'Coloured' area under the Act. It has, in consequence, a relatively more settled and conservative character than most other contemporary suburban 'Coloured' areas in the Peninsula (Field 1990). In addition, the existence of some privately owned properties in Kensington contributes to a perception of this as a 'better area' than those 'Coloured' townships (such as Hanover Park or Bishop Lavis) that consist only of council housing schemes (da Costa 1984).

It shares, however, many of the social problems and economic disadvantages of other Cape Flats communities. A housing crisis still exists in the area, as elsewhere on the Cape Flats. Figures from the 1991 census showed a population density of as high as 102 persons and 15 dwellings per hectare in Factreton, while neighbouring White middle-class Pinelands had an average of 18 people and 6 dwellings per hectare. Factreton still has a large number of shanties, often built in backyards from iron sheets and sacking, called *afdakkies*, to house excess people, since very often three generations of an extended family are obliged to occupy the same tiny dwelling. While more affluent and well-maintained homes do exist, giving the area a mixed character, in much of Kensington and virtually all of Factreton, houses are in considerable disrepair. Sub-economic houses, in particular, have primitive facilities : crude electrical wiring, no hot water supply, only one wash-basin, no baths and, in many cases, outside toilets. Yards are unpaved patches of sandy soil which flood in winter and are separated from one another and from the street by fences of chicken wire or scraps of iron sheeting. The most depressed section of the community lies in the north-eastern corner of Factreton, bordered roughly by Acre, Albacore and Sunderland roads (map 1), known locally as 'Die Kreefgat' or simply 'Die Gat'[3]. It has the worst living conditions : a high density of crude shanties, widespread unemployment and a high rate of violent crime. By contrast, in the geographically and socio-economically opposite parts of Kensington that lie closer to Maitland, one finds some proportion of more affluent, middle-class homes of professional or trading families.

University of Cape Town

---

3 *Kreef, n.*rock-lobster; *kreeftegang,* retrogression; *die kreeftegang gaan,* go backwards. *Gat, n.* (1) hole, orifice; (2) arse, backside; a wretched, cursed place; (Am. sl.) the pits.

The area as a whole has few recreational facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds and those that do exist are poorly equipped and maintained, unsightly and often dangerous. The dilapidation of buildings and public spaces, together with the consequences of a poor level and quality of services (e.g. refuse removal, sewerage, stormwater drainage, road maintenance) to the area contribute to a drab and depressing physical environment. The overall incidence of crime is lower than in several other Cape Flats communities, perhaps because of its relatively older and more stable family networks; the most common are assault (including rape), housebreaking and possession of drugs, which accounted together for over 75% of the crimes reported in 1994. Gangsterism is prevalent, however, especially in Factreton, where rival gangs clash in violent and drug-related activities.

The income and education levels of inhabitants are generally very low, although there is a discrepancy between Kensington and Factreton in this regard, reflecting the class differentiation between the two areas. In 1991 the average monthly per capita income was R462 in Kensington and R289 in Factreton. Well over half of the employed people in both areas have only some level of primary school education (standard 5 or below) : 62% of Kensington residents and as many as 81% of Factreton's residents fall into this category. Only 21% of employed people in Kensington and 11% in Factreton have completed high school (matriculation), and as few as 8% and 1% respectively have any form of tertiary qualifications. These education levels are reflected in the range of occupations found, which cluster in either the blue-collar (especially in Kensington) or production/unskilled worker categories (the latter especially in Factreton). There is also a high rate of indigency : in 1991 unemployment stood at over 20% in Factreton.

2.2.3 Schools in Kensington/Factreton

As we have seen, the general level of education of residents of Kensington/Factreton is low. A brief look at the history of schooling facilities in this area and in the Cape as a whole is instructive in explaining why. The first parts of this section focus on schooling in the first and the second halves of this century, in an attempt to understand the educational experiences of the grandparents and parents, respectively, of the children who took part in this study. We then move on to a description of the current schooling situation and, in particular, the preschool and school from which subjects were drawn.

The legacy of colonial education

While both the Dutch and British colonial authorities established schools in the Cape, these catered almost exclusively to the children of White settlers and admitted very few slaves or children of mixed ancestry. Until the time of emancipation, a small proportion of slave children were able to attend one of three 'free schools' for slaves - in Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Graaff Reinet - at which the main focus of education was reading and memorizing of Christian religious

University of Cape Town

texts. For the most part, however, provision of educational facilities for this group was left to the churches. From the nineteenth century onwards, a number of mission schools were set up in and around Cape Town by various (Dutch, English, Scottish, German as well as local) missionary societies which provided religious and secular education for slaves, Khoekhoe and children of mixed ancestry. [4] Attendance at both types of schools was, at best, irregular : neither the Dutch nor British authorities made any attempt to enforce compulsory education for slave children and child labour was much used by slave owners, the majority of whom saw no reason to educate their slaves (Horrell 1970).

Following the emancipation of slaves in 1834, the free schools closed. While in theory, 'Coloured' children could attend government schools or state-subsidized public schools, very few could afford the fees introduced by the British; also, at several schools, White parents agitated for the removal of the small numbers of 'Coloured' children enrolled. By 1861, government schools had to all intents and purposes become reserved for White children only (Horrell 1970:14). For the great majority of 'Coloured' children, then, their only chance of an education lay at the inferior mission schools. From the 1840's on, these came increasingly under state control as the state began augmenting teachers' salaries; they were required to teach English as a subject and, increasingly, to use it as the medium of instruction. Their emphasis was on practical and handwork subjects, along with the three R's. Since mission schools did not provide education beyond the primary level, 'Coloured' pupils were virtually excluded from the opportunities of secondary education.

Education in the first half of the twentieth century

These conditions changed very little during the first half of the twentieth century. From 1910, following the establishment of the Union of South Africa, primary and secondary education for 'Coloured' pupils were administered by local Provincial councils, which were subsidised by the state. The vast majority of 'Coloured' schools during this period were still denominational schools, owned by missions but under the control of the Cape Department of Education; smaller numbers of non-denominational Departmental schools existed, as well as a few Muslim and one Hindu school. A policy of mother-tongue medium of instruction was enforced only in public schools during the first half of the century; mission schools, where the great majority of 'Coloured' people received their education were exempt from this ruling, and many continued to use English as both subject and medium of instruction.

University of Cape Town

---

4 For Muslim children living in Cape Town, at least, there was an alternative to Christian education : the first *madrasah* was established in 1793 in Dorp Street by local imams who taught the precepts of the Qu'ran and reading and writing in Arabic (Davids 1990).

Inequality between White and 'Coloured' education systems persisted. While in 1905 an Act was passed providing for compulsory education of White children between the ages of seven and fourteen, 'Coloured' children were excluded from this ruling. Segregation of schools had become a *fait accompli*, but in 1911 legislation was passed barring all 'Coloured' children from attending White schools. Furthermore, subsidies to 'Coloured' schools remained substantially lower : in 1949-50, the expenditure by all 4 provinces per pupil averaged R33-10 for 'Coloureds' and Asians, as compared to R83-98 for Whites (Horrell 1970:34). Since relatively few high schools had been established by this time, education for the great majority of 'Coloured' pupils was still confined to primary school level, where a huge shortage of school accommodation existed. In 1944 it was estimated that at least 30 000 'Coloured' children between the ages of 7 and 14 in the Cape were not receiving any education at all; of those who were enrolled in schools, by far the great majority did not proceed beyond standard 4. In 1956 evidence to the Botha Commission found school buildings inadequate and overcrowded, classes too large, inadequately trained teachers, unsatisfactory classroom equipment, scarcity of textbooks, lack of libraries, and rare provision of sports fields or physical education.

Swart's (1983:43-7) research into early schooling in Windermere shows that, in keeping with this general history, up until 1935 all schools in the area were founded and run by churches. The first, a Moravian school, opened as early as 1910. About eight years later, the Evangele Strewers mission church founded a school, followed in the 1920's by the Catholic St John's Primary, a Volkskerk Primary and the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) school, and in the 1930's by the Anglican Good Shepherd, the Methodist Primary School and the City Mission school. Since most of the denominations in the Windermere area catered largely for the 'Coloured' population, these schools accommodated mostly 'Coloured' pupils, the only exception being the AME school aimed at African children. In 1935 the first state school, Kensington Central, opened in Kensington Road, despite considerable opposition from the churches; it was the first school in the area to extend the level of education to standards 5 and 6, and by 1943 it had 500 pupils. In 1945 another state school, Windermere Primary, opened in 10th Avenue, but church-run schools continued to dominate until at least the end of the 1950's.

Pupils at these early schools suffered both a poor quality of education and, often, extremely difficult conditions. While church-run schools provided a badly needed service in the absence of state provision of adequate schooling facilities, their limited financial resources and the absence of formal standards severely constrained the quality of education they were able to provide. Furthermore, until as late as 1952 only primary-level schooling was available in the Kensington/Factreton area, and in most schools only as far as standard 4. The City Council's survey of Windermere in the mid-1940's showed that the period spent at school by most children

University of Cape Town

was very limited, most attending between the ages of 10 and 15 years. Attendance must have suffered further under the primitive conditions in which schools functioned. One of Swart's elderly informants described the circumstances under which schools, particularly those in the heart of Windermere, operated :

> Mr Cleinwerck, whose wife taught at the City Mission School in Acre Road, described the building as a part-iron, part-brick construction, resembling a shanty, in which homeless people slept at night, and into which livestock, including cows, wandered. He recalled the struggle to get to-and-from the school each day, since there were no roads and the sandtracks were flooded in winter. (1983:46).

Education in the second half of the twentieth century

Around the mid-twentieth century, two developments occurred which were to have decisive effects on 'Coloured' education for the remainder of this century. In 1956 the Botha Commission of Inquiry, appointed three years earlier to investigate 'Coloured' Education in the Cape, reported its recommendations, and in 1964, control of primary and secondary education for 'Coloured' pupils was transferred to central government. The Botha Commission, composed entirely of White educationalists, not only supported the *status quo* regarding segregated schooling for 'Coloured' children but advised that the aims of their education should be different from that of Whites, with an emphasis on non-academic, manual and vocational training. While recognising the critical lack of schools and facilities, it adopted the retrogressive method of using current employment statistics to calculate the provision of facilities for the future : since some 210 000 Coloured employees in 1954 were labourers, it was estimated that this number of children would need only a measure of primary education; around 41 000 would require schooling up to standards 6 to 8, and only 7 000 should complete the Junior or Senior Certificate. The combined effect of these policies was to ensure that school children with vocational skills would be destined to remain unskilled, cheap labour, particularly since legislation existed to bar non-Whites from most skilled occupations (Holman 1984). Furthermore, the Commission recommended the takeover of mission schools by purchasing or hiring denominational schools, as well as the enforcement in all mission schools of the use of the child's mother tongue as medium of instruction. The latter policy, in particular, was resented by many parents whose children were judged to be Afrikaans-dominant and who were, consequently, denied the benefits of an English education.

The transfer of Coloured schools to central government control, under the authority of the Coloured Affairs Department, was achieved in 1964 despite bitter opposition from teachers' associations, parents, churches and numerous other organizations within Coloured communities who foresaw the entrenchment of inequality in education that a separate education department would entail. Spurred by the concomitant loss of civil rights, exclusion from political decision-

University of Cape Town

making, and forced removals from areas, now proclaimed as White, where families had lived for generations, acts of protest and resistance flared up repeatedly at 'Coloured' schools during the 1970's and 1980's. Chief amongst these were numerous school boycotts which, while providing an outlet for frustrated aspirations, also disrupted the school careers of many pupils during these decades. Meanwhile, the serious shortage of adequate schooling facilities continued. Throughout the 1950's, building programmes had been delayed in many areas while racial zoning decisions under the Group Areas Act were awaited. After 'Coloured' group areas had been proclaimed in various areas, authorities began providing schools alongside the development of housing schemes in these newly-created, soulless suburbs; however, supply did not meet demand and many children were turned away from already overcrowded schools, while other schools introduced double sessions, repeating classes in the mornings and afternoons to different sets of pupils.

In Kensington/Factreton, the 1960s saw, alongside the rebuilding of the area as a suburb, the opening of a number of state schools and the corresponding decline of the influence of the churches. Six of the seven state primary schools that exist in the area today were built during this decade, joining the earlier-established Windermere Primary. Between the late 1960's and early 1980's the church-run schools gradually closed down, with the exception of the Catholic St John's Primary which continues today as a state-aided church school. The area's first secondary school, Kensington High, opened in 1952, followed twelve years later, in 1964, by Windermere High in Factreton; these are still the area's only high schools today. Preschool facilities remain in short supply : since the establishment of the Kensington Creche during the last years of Windermere's existence, three further preschools have opened - insufficient to meet the needs of the large numbers of preschoolers in the area.

Schools in Kensington/Factreton today

A listing of preschools, primary and high schools that I found operating in Kensington/Factreton today is given in Appendix 3, and the following summarises my findings and observations regarding these schools. Turning to the four preschools first, it was apparent that these differed in fee requirements and facilities. The Factreton Play Centre catered for the poorest families who could not afford the fees of other creches in the area. It was run on a meagre budget from the City Council which supplied milk and one high-nutrition biscuit per child each day, as well as minimal equipment : the centre was poorly stocked with very few, and mostly very old, play materials. It was housed in an old, draughty community hall, previously used for showing films; two groups of children occupied either end of the hall, with no partition separating them, and a third group an adjacent room. Most of the children came from Afrikaans-speaking homes, but the teachers used both languages in roughly equal amounts, provided English and Afrikaans versions of rhymes and songs, and so on, so that by the time the children were of school-age, they

University of Cape Town

would have acquired some competence in English. At six, most were taken up into one of the four primary schools in Factreton, where those with sufficient skill in English might be placed in an English-medium class. By contrast, the Watersprite Nursery School in Kensington served the more affluent families of the area who were able to afford its fees, which in turn ensured a higher standard of equipment and play materials. It offered a more pleasant physical environment, two trained teachers in addition to teacher aides (which are the norm in other preschools in the area), and an active PTA which raised additional funds. The majority of its children were from English-dominant homes. The Kensington Creche and Gateway Children's Centre were state-subsidized preschools occupying the middle of this spectrum. They charged minimal fees according to parental income and catered for a majority of working-class children and fewer children of blue-collar workers, with mixed dominance in English and Afrikaans.

In all four preschools, as is typical in other Cape Flats communities, English and Afrikaans speaking children were mixed together in classes regardless of language dominance. However, on entering primary school, children were streamed into one or the other language group. Appendix 3 includes information regarding the relative proportion of English- and Afrikaans- medium classes in primary and high schools. These proportions, and the direction in which change in language medium has come about in recent years, are interesting because they reflect an increasing demand for English-medium education in the community as a whole, but also that social class plays a role in the extent of this move to English. Of the eight primary schools in the area, six were dual-medium; all six were formerly predominantly Afrikaans-medium but have undergone a shift in language balance as increasing numbers of English-medium classes have been introduced in response to demands from parents. This is shown in the larger numbers of English-medium classes in the lower standards, as the change gradually spreads upwards. Amongst these dual-medium schools, however, there was a noticeable difference between the Kensington and Factreton schools in the proportion of English versus Afrikaans medium classes : those in the more-middle-class Kensington had more English-stream pupils than their counterparts in working-class Factreton. Corroborating this, teachers and principals frequently commented that most of their Afrikaans-speaking children came from Factreton and many had indigent parents, while most of their English-speakers were from somewhat better-off homes in Kensington. Not surprisingly, therefore, of the two exceptions to dual-medium primaries, W.D. Hendricks in Factreton was Afrikaans-only, while the relatively upmarket St Johns in Kensington was English-only. These two schools offered an interesting contrast. W.D. Hendricks, situated in the heart of '*Die Kreefgat*' in Acre Road, catered for this poorest section of the community. Since the majority of parents were unemployed, on meagre government welfare grants, the only 'fee' payable was a more-or-less voluntary 50 cents a week; this was donated

University of Cape Town

back to the Peninsula School Feeding Association which supplied one slice of bread with peanut butter and jam and one glass of milk to each child per day - for many children, their only reliable meal. At the quasi-private St John's in 8th Avenue, on the other hand, parents paid substantially higher fees than anywhere else in the area and the school was regarded as the best the community has to offer. Until around four years ago it was dual-medium, but switched to English-medium only as the numbers of Afrikaans-speaking pupils dwindled.

A similar pattern prevailed in the area's two high schools : while both were dual-medium, Kensington High had a proportionately greater number of English-medium classes than Windermere High in Factreton. Those children of middle-class professional families were likely to travel to better high schools outside the area, such as the English-medium Harold Cressy High in Zonnebloem or Livingstone High in Lansdowne, both of which produce numbers of matriculants who are likely to gain entrance to universities.

Of the schools outlined above, one preschool and one primary school provided the setting for the observations recorded in this study. Kensington creche and Sunderland Primary school (see map 1) catered neither for only the very poorest nor the most affluent members of the community, but they both drew mostly on working-class families which form the majority of homes in Kensington/ Factreton. They are described in more detail below.

Kensington Creche

This creche (preschool day-care centre) is situated on the corner of 12th Avenue and Factreton Street, thus virtually on the border of Kensington and Factreton, in a building rented from the adjacent SHAWCO (Students' Health and Welfare Organization) headquarters. The creche has no other formal connection with SHAWCO, but it does benefit from partial funding by the Union of Jewish Women, its original founders. Children are accepted from the age of eighteen months up to six years, the age of entry into primary school. The majority are drawn from Factreton, rather than Kensington. While some parents are unemployed, the most typical parental occupations are factory worker and shop assistant, with a very few being teachers or clerks. Fees are established according to an income scale, the maximum fee being around R15 per month.

The accommodation consists of four interleading classrooms surrounding a small outdoor play area. Most of the partitions between classrooms are not soundproofed and, with up to fifty children per class, noise levels are generally high. The oldest, pre-primary class is better equipped than the others, which have sparse play materials. There are two teachers per class - mostly residents of this or neighbouring communities. None have formal teaching qualifications, though most have attended some ad hoc preschool training seminars run by the Grassroots educational organization. For the three- to six-year-olds, mornings follow a set routine or 'curriculum' which is roughly adhered to, while afternoons are not structured in any way and children are allowed to

University of Cape Town

play freely.

Children are placed in one of the creche's four classrooms solely according to age, regardless of language dominance. Teachers use vernacular English and Afrikaans interchangeably in the classrooms, in response to the individual child's language selection and/or their perception of the child's dominant language. There is no requirement to use standardized forms in either language; on the rare occasions that I observed teachers drawing attention to the form of child utterances it was to correct developmental phonetic errors (eg. free/three).

Teachers were usually able to describe individual children as showing dominance in one language or the other. However, their judgements did not always coincide with the language that children chose for conversing and narrating in their sessions with me. Also, teachers differed in their opinions as to the dominant home-languages : some felt that most children came from Afrikaans-dominant homes, others felt that the majority of homes were English-dominant. It seems that establishing language dominance in these children is problematical, for at least three reasons. Firstly, there may be a discrepancy between a child's actual language dominance and the professed home language. All the teachers whom I interviewed mentioned an increasing desire amongst parents, many of whom are Afrikaans-dominant themselves, for English-medium education for their children. To this end, some make efforts to speak English to their young children at home but even more look to the preschools for this function. Parents' claims that the language of the home is English may thus reflect a desired more than an actual situation, while the child's competence in English may be poor relative to Afrikaans. Partial corroborating evidence for this turned up in some of my conversations with Grade 1 children about language preferences and patterns of language use in their homes. The following extracts (a and b) are from discussions with six-year-olds :

(a)
K : So, N., do you speak Afrikaans at home?
N : Yes, 'cause there at home they talk Afrikaans with me
K : So how come you're in the English class at school?
N : 'cause my mommy say I'm English
K : And what do you like to talk most – English or Afrikaans?
N : English

(b)
K : And you, A., what do you speak at home?
A : English
K : Only English?
A : And my mommy talk Afrikaans. My parents talk Afrikaans, and my big brother. I also got a small brother the same size like me, and he's four.
K : So your parents talk Afrikaans?
A : Yes
K : And who talks English?
A : My big brother talk to big people Afrikaans, and sometimes he talk with us [= speaker and her younger brother] English
K : So which language do you like to talk best, A.?

University of Cape Town

A : English
K : Why?
A : It's nice to speak English

Secondly, as early as the pre-school years, children learn to switch from one language variety to the other, depending on contextual factors such as the perceived language dominance or status of their listener and the type of language activity engaged in. Indeed, part of their developing language competence involves the ability to switch codes according to judgements of these kinds. For example, one of the most sophisticated narrators in the oldest pre-school class, five-year-old Sharnel, had Afrikaans-dominant parents, yet consistently chose to speak English both to her teachers and to me (indicating that she perceived me as a kind of teacher or, at least, linked to the school domain, although I spoke both languages interchangeably). In the free play with her peers that I recorded on the playground and play-room, she shifted with ease from English to Afrikaans vernaculars, depending on contextual factors and her perception of their dominant language.

Thirdly, language dominance may shift over relatively short periods of time. In the oldest class of four- to five-year olds at the creche, both teachers were English-dominant and consequently tended to talk more English than Afrikaans overall in the classroom. Many of the children who entered this class from the lower age-groups with poor competence in English soon developed skill in English through this exposure. Some of these children that I observed, who had spoken only Afrikaans with me at the beginning of the school year, were spontaneously addressing me in English by the end of the year.

Sunderland Primary School

Situated in Sunderland Street, in Factreton, this primary school opened in 1963 as an Afrikaans-medium school only. Approximately five years later, English-medium classes were introduced, in response to parents' demands. Currently, children entering Grade 1 are placed in one of two English- or two Afrikaans-medium classes. Within each language medium pupils are placed into either a 'slower' or a 'faster' class, depending on their performance on a school entry test. According to one teacher, most children who have attended a pre-school end up in the 'faster' group.

Sunderland Primary is a fully subsidized state school; fees are R25 per quarter and all books and materials are supplied. School uniforms are not compulsory and are worn only by those children whose parents can afford them. The school is more fortunate than some others in the area in having both an adaptation class teacher and a part-time remedial teacher for children struggling with the regular curriculum.

University of Cape Town

Placement in one language stream or the other on school entry tends to be determined initially by parents' preference; children's language skills are subsequently evaluated by class teachers who may, in some cases, advise the parents to shift a child with very poor English competence to an Afrikaans-stream class. One teacher with whom I spoke stressed that the parents' choice was not necessarily the right one. Several teachers voiced their concerns that many of the children in English-medium entry classes lacked sufficient competence in English, being Afrikaans-dominant. Generally their attitudes towards children's language use tended to be pejorative and there was a concern with standardized usage in both languages. In the classrooms, this sometimes translated into giving instructions regarding specific syntactic constructions. For example, in an English Grade 1 class, prior to a 'newstime' session in which pupils individually gave accounts of significant events of the night before, they were instructed by the teacher to avoid using the word 'did' (an attempt to eradicate the vernacular past tense form of unstressed DO + uninflected MV, as in 'I did run'). The children were then required to chant several times over " 'Did' is dead! 'Did' is dead!" before proceeding with their news. The attempt was not altogether successful, as children struggled to avoid 'did' even in standard main verb or stressed auxiliary forms.

2.3 Conclusions

The complex and shifting linguistic situation in Cape Flats communities sets up peculiarly difficult challenges for children acquiring language and literacy. This chapter has described the legacy of South Africa's past for these children. As a new democracy, we are at a point of transition with regard to language and education policies, with new models being sought and tested to redress the massive disparities that exist in educational opportunities and access to literacy between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Understanding the functions and characteristics (lexical, morpho-syntactic, etc.) of the language varieties spoken in Cape Flats communities - as we have attempted to do here - is only part of what is required. We need to know more about how children acquire control over the extended forms of discourse that are predictive of school achievement, and how their preschool and home environments shape their early language experiences in preparation for the demands of school. The chapters that follow take some preliminary steps in this direction by examining a range of narrative and other discourse genres that arose in one pre-school environment and the contexts in which they occurred. They also explore the question of whether, given the diverse linguistic and cultural influences on the evolution of Cape Flats language varieties, a distinctive style of structuring oral narratives exists and what that structure might be.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 3

NARRATIVE TOPICS AND GENRES : TELLERS, TALES AND TELLINGS

Having located the narrators in this study and their narrative productions within a larger historical and sociolinguistic context, this chapter reflects on the narrative data itself within its immediate interactional contexts. Section 3.1 adopts a broad theoretical framework for considering the socially-situated narrative, based on the dimensions of teller, tale and telling. Section 3.2 looks at the range and type of topics that emerged, answering the question of what children in Kensington/Factreton actually spoke about when encouraged to talk freely about their life experiences. The remaining sections consider what distinguishes the personal story from other genres of narrative : in defining only certain types of texts as personal narratives (3.3) we contemplate the range of conversationally-produced narrative forms that arose in the data-base as a whole, and the kinds of interactional contexts in which they were likely to occur (3.4).

3.1 Theoretical framework for examining the conversationally-situated narrative

For young children, developing competence in the production of narratives of personal experience is how they construct a 'life history' or store of autobiographical memory for themselves, and hence forms an integral part of the social construction of self in childhood (Nelson 1989, 1992; Miller *et al* 1990; Snow 1991b; McCabe, Capron & Peterson 1991; Fivush *et al.* 1995; Kyratzis 1999). For those concerned with societal and cultural determinants of narrative competence (e.g. Heath 1983; Polanyi 1989; Gee 1985, 1989, 1991b), this formulation of a personal life history derives immediately from adult narrative practices in the home, but ultimately from a wider narrative context, arising 'from one's history, traditions, socialization, and the narratives groups of people share with and repeat to one another' (Gee 1991b:3). Blum-Kulka & Snow (1992) suggest that acquiring narrative competence in childhood is a process of developing autonomy in three dimensions of narrativity - *tellers*, *tales* and *tellings*. These dimensions capture the personal/social as well as the strictly linguistic aspects of narrative production and will be used as a broad framework for investigating the narrative data obtained in this study.

Teller refers to 'the real person behind the story, the one whose personal meaning is expressed by the narrative' (Blum-Kulka & Snow 1992:191). One of the distinctive features of narrative that set it apart from other speech events is the perceptible presence of the narrator. As Toolan (1988) points out, part of the experience of being a recipient of a narrative is our 'reading' of the character of the teller : 'We stare at the narrator rather than interacting with him as we would if we were in conversation with him' (p.3). This effect of divided attention is a consequence of the fact that while narratives recount experiences both spatially and temporally remote from the teller and audience, access to the distant topic is achieved through the present teller, 'making what is distant and absent uncommonly present' (*ibid.* p.2). In the previous

University of Cape Town

chapter we looked at the tellers in this study in relation to the 'wider narrative context' (referred to by Gee above) in which their narratives are embedded - their language and social histories, homes and educational backgrounds. This chapter explores how the tellers behind the stories are further revealed by the subject matter of their stories (topic) and in the range of narrative forms they produce (genre). Of course, the personal meanings conveyed by tellers can be directly accessed by examining the linguistic structure of narrative texts themselves; in the following chapters (4, 5 and 6) part of the discussion will concern an analysis of the *evaluation* components of narrative texts - the linguistic devices used by narrators to indicate the point or relevance of the story from an individual perspective.

Telling is 'the act of narration, the actual performance of the story in real time' (Blum-Kulka & Snow 1992:190). This dimension of narrativity thus concerns the immediate interactional contexts in which stories are told; it can perhaps best be explored via Halliday's (1978) conceptualization of the situational dimensions of discourse as *field*, *mode* and *tenor*. Field refers to the nature of the ongoing social activity in which the narrative arises, including the structure of the discourse, topic of talk and type of social activity in which it is embedded. Mode concerns variations in the medium of the text - e.g., whether written or spoken, planned or unplanned, and the degree of decontextualization. Tenor refers to the participant relations involved, including the status and roles of narrator and listener. These aspects of situational variation will be considered in this chapter when we consider the range of narrative genres that arose in the course of this study.

Tale, finally, refers to the narrative itself. In this study I take the position (argued further in chapter 4) that, while personal narratives are imbued with personal and social meanings, they can nonetheless be analysed as autonomous textual units with a coherent internal linguistic structure. Thus, analysis of the tale itself is the subject matter of the following three chapters – 4, 5 and 6.

University of Cape Town

3.2 Narrative topics in the Kensington/Factreton data

Table 1 below shows the range of topics per age-group that formed the subject matter of personal narratives in this study. The topics themselves reflect the extraordinary experiences in the ordinary young lives of children in Kensington/Factreton; they relate mainly to their home, and to a lesser extent, school environments, but also to their experiences as members of the wider community described in the previous chapter.

The most talked-about topic in almost every age-group concerned illnesses or injuries suffered by themselves or people close to them, usually necessitating visits to a doctor or hospital. They recounted their own childhood illnesses, vaccinations, cuts and bumps sustained on the playground, and even treatment for mosquito bites (see (1) below), as well as the more serious

ailments and injuries of parents and grandparents (in (2) below). (The latter contains a nice example of code-switching in reported speech).

(1) Five-year-old girl (in response to 'Did a mosquito bite you there?) :
Yes, like here [indicates]. They bite me like all the sores come out. And here, look! So my mommy took me to Woodstock Hospital. They said I mustn't eat any more chips and all that luxuries, because why it is THAT that my blood is too rich!

(2) Six-year-old girl :
And my grandpa is sick; he's in the hospital. His eyes is [stop?] over, and his feet, and there's lots of blisters on his feet. Now there's bandage around it. [K: oh shame, N.] And almost - the water is going *mos* over his heart. [K: the water?] He drinks lots of cooldrinks and water, that's why his feet get so thick. And so he just sitted there on the *stoep* [porch], and then he get warm and he drink. Then he go send me for cigarettes, and then my mommy say "*Pappie moenie meer* cigarettes *rookie,* 'cause then it *mos* give you cancer". [Daddy mustn't smoke any more cigarettes ...]. And so he's - there was three blisters on his feet, and so my mommy did phone the ambulance and so he went to hospital .... [continues].

In the case of the six-year-old boy below (3), a clinic visit involved a blood test for proof of paternity; his narrative illustrates how the story 'prompts' used in conversation often had unexpected consequences, serving merely as springboards for children's own topics :

(3) [K (following an account of a car accident) : Did you ever see an accident like that?]
No, but I've already had a injection. [K: Tell me about it, E.] Um, my daddy admitted that I'm not his son! [K: Your daddy what?] All daddies what say, like, um, I know my daddy say - [*hypothetical*] If Goosain's daddy now say Goosain's not his son, now they have to solve the problem at the blood transfusion. Now, so my daddy said I'm not his son; so me and my mommy and my daddy went. My daddy came after us - we came before him - so he came after. He first got the blood. And there's a dot - right there [indicates on arm]. So first my daddy, then my mommy, then me. I, I SHOUTED the first time when they pricked me! It was SORE! But so - but I am his son. [K: You are his son - is that what they found out there?] Yes... [continues].

Two sub-topics within this category which occurred frequently enough to be considered separately were car accidents and accidents in the home. The Cape Flats has a particularly high incidence of road traffic accidents; thus, not surprisingly, many children had witnessed, or been personally involved in, car accidents - often the result of being knocked down while playing unsupervised in the road. Of accidents occurring in the home, by far the most common was burning, usually with hot water being carried to or from baths or stoves, but also from stoves themselves or irons - probably a consequence of primitive heating and electrical facilities in many homes. There was also a tale of an elderly aunt stuck in a steam-filled bathroom while the council was called to break the door down, and more than one of grandparents having accidental falls, as in this dispassionate account (4) of a granny fatally slipping in the bath :

University of Cape Town

Table 1 : Topic of personal narratives per age-group

	Topic	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
1.	Illness, injury, doctor & hospital visits	19 31%	27 29%	22 23%	28 17%
2.	Car accidents	5 8%	12 13%	12 12%	14 9%
3.	Accidents in the home	3 5%	4 4%	5 5%	9 6%
4.	Pet adventures & misadventures	8 13%	9 10%	5 5%	11 7%
5.	Beach outings Other outings	8 2 16%	9 1 11%	13 7 21%	12 3 9%
6.	Domestic conflicts	1 2%	2 2%	-	5 3%
7.	Neighbourhood violence	1 2%	3 3%	2 2%	22 13%
8.	Sibling/peer fights	4 6%	3 3%	4 4%	5 3%
9.	Misbehaviour	-	10 11%	6 6%	2 1%
10.	Social events	5 8%	-	3 3%	5 3%
11.	Parents' work	1 2%	3 3%	1 1%	5 3%
12.	Family births	-	2 2%	3 3%	6 4%
13.	Deaths - people - pets	- 1 2%	5 1 6%	5 5 10%	16 14 18%
14.	Miscellaneous	3 5%	2 2%	4 4%	6 4%
	Total number of narratives :	61	94	97	163

University of Cape Town

(4) Six-year-old boy :
But my mother and my granny, um, she was standing in the bath and taking, um, she was washing her, and so she was standing, so she slip. But now she's dead - in the grave now. [K: So she died because of that?]. Yes. [K: Shame!]. [Friend : MOST grannies slip - then they knock their head]. [K: Most grannies do?]. [Friend : Yes].

A surprising number of children had, in fact, had some experience of death in their short lives, and not all were so sanguinely recounted. Twenty six narratives told of the deaths of people known to them; most involved members of extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) who had, in many cases, lived in their homes, while fewer recounted the deaths of strangers or people less familiar to them (neighbours, friends). A further twenty one narratives told of the deaths of pets. A closer look at these narratives of death reveals some interesting differences from those gathered by Peterson & McCabe (1983) in their study of the personal narratives of three- to nine- year-olds in Ohio. In an earlier published study, Menig-Peterson & McCabe (1978) isolated the accounts of death produced by these working-class American children and presented some striking findings. Children below five-and-a-half years of age very rarely touched on death at all in their personal narratives, while children over five years showed curiosity about death and spoke about it more often. In this latter age-group, however, regardless of the degree of significance of the dead individual to the child (i.e., whether a family pet, a stranger, a relative or a parent), their narratives of death were characterized by an almost complete absence of either affective reaction (e.g., their own or others' crying or sadness) to the loss, or expression of attachment to the victims of death (and even, in some cases, reversal of affect, expressed, for example, in a child's inappropriate giggling while recounting her mother's death); this occurred despite the ample presence of evaluative, affective responses in the same children's narratives on other topics. Only the nine-year-olds in this study conveyed some degree of emotional involvement in the deaths they recounted. The authors suggest that the lack of appropriate empathy in children under nine years of age indicates a difficulty both in understanding death, from a cognitive viewpoint, and in coping with it in emotional terms : 'Death is an event that is described, at times even graphically, but not an event that is reacted to emotionally' (1978:311). They cite supportive evidence from the psychoanalytic literature on children's bereavement, to the effect that pre-adolescent children deal with important losses through death with massive denial and inhibition of affect.

Peterson and McCabe's data offer a useful comparison with my own study, since the age-range of their younger children coincides with my three- to six-year-olds, and because the method of eliciting personal narratives was identical. (It is worth noting that in neither study was death raised as a topic by the researchers; hence any accounts of death were spontaneously offered by the children). The death narratives of children in Kensington/Factreton differ in several key

University of Cape Town

respects from those of Peterson & McCabe, however. Firstly, while accounts of death were certainly more prevalent amongst six-year-olds, they did occur with younger children. Secondly, and more importantly, even the younger Cape Flats children almost always provided evaluative, affective reactions to the deaths of people (though not animals - see below) in their narratives, but especially where the victims were known to them. For instance, a four-year-old, reporting her uncle's death (in 5), gives no explanation of how he died, but provides only evaluative commentary on the reactions of people close to her :

(5) My uncle is dead, and he went in the coffin. And so my mommy cried, and my daddy, because why he went in the hole. And so my teacher said that uncle Ampie's not coming again, *ne.* And my mommy said that uncle Ampie is not coming again. And my mommy miss him. And my daddy.

Aside from describing the expected mourning responses of adults to the death of a family member, the narrative also illustrates how these adults help to interpret or make sense of the loss for the child, by explaining the irreversibility of death (uncle A. won't be coming back) and expressing their own feelings (we miss him). In other cases, explanations were couched in religious terms, (e.g. 'so Jesus take him, and God' (six years); 'we first had to pray for him' (six years)). Empathy for the victim was conveyed via descriptions of their suffering ('so she screamed, and shout' (five-year-old describing a fatal accident in the home) and the reactions of others ('so they rush her to the hospital' (five-year-old); '*en toe sien hulle dis lelik*' [and then they saw it looked really bad] (six-year-old, referring to burn wounds on a cousin's face), and there were attempts to convey the value of the dead person to themselves ('he was my best cousin' - six-year-old referring to a young drowning victim); 'so I did cry for her; I really missed her. because she give luxuries, and Easter eggs too, and she was my friendly ma' – (six-year-old referring to her grandmother). Most common, however, were descriptions of the emotional responses of themselves and others to the loss; these are described at some length in the following extract from a six-year-old's account of a grandfather dying in hospital :

(6) ..... So when my sister came, and so she was crying. And so I say my sister mustn't cry, and so she just say "leave me - leave me, come take me down to my other aunties." And so I took her and so she sit still there and so I say rhymes to her. And my sister said "It's almost time for him to go [= die]". And my auntie said "Do you want pappa to stay there *of* [or] come home?" So I say "I want pappa to come home". And so my *tietie* [auntie] say "I also want pappa to come home". My *tietie* did say "I don't want pappa to go".

The sharing of experience and discussing of feelings that is revealed in this narrative may be the factor responsible for the evaluative and meaningful accounts of death produced by these children. With extended families living together in close quarters in homes, children are likely not only to be exposed with relative frequency to death itself, but also to the emotional responses, interpretations and rationalizations of death expressed by adults surrounding them, which would

University of Cape Town

offer in turn both a framework for understanding death and a natural outlet for their own feelings of grief and mourning.

If the suffering of people receives generally empathetic treatment, however, animals certainly fare worse in these children's reported experiences. A fair number of narratives at all ages dealt with various kinds of mishaps and adventures involving pet animals, including dog fights, bites, attempts to train recalcitrant pets, injuries and death. Pets were mostly either small dogs and cats with affectionate names like Snowy, Crinkles or Cuddles, or larger, fierce dogs called Duke, Major, and the like, kept purely for their value as protection of property. Some families, additionally, keep chickens or turkeys in their yards, and, in one case, a parrot enjoyed a brief stay as a house-pet :

(7) So my granny did, um, left that chicken-*hok* [cage] there by our room. That parrot go "coo-coocoocaroo" the WHOLE NIGHT through. I'll never like a parrot - uh-oh - that's VERY bad for a person, you can't even SLEEP. [K: a parrot?] Yes, he talk the whole night, whole day, whole night and day. My cousin say I'm a parrot! Because I talk so much! (Six-year-old boy).

Accounts of pets sustaining injuries or dying as a result of being hit by cars were common. Both injuries and deaths of animals (even the Snowys and Cuddles') were almost invariably reported without any expression of emotion, attachment to the animal, or empathy, however; this category of death narratives alone, therefore, was similar to Peterson & McCabe's data. For instance, two six-year-old girls who had described at length the emotional responses of themselves and family members to the death of grandparents offered these bland accounts (8 and 9) of the accidental deaths of their pets :

(8) And my sister's kitten and my kitten - it was everybody's kitten - he was a girl kitten and his name was Socks. And so afterwards he, Socks, did sit in the middle of the road, so he jumped to the car, so the car came out, so he knocked him over. [K: and then?] So we didn't know the cat was dead, so my mommy told me. [K: oh, shame] Afterwards so we had to take him, so we didn't know what to do, and so my daddy said we must bury the cat.

(9) My daddy also bump my dog by the car. [K: Did he? Tell me what happened] He did bump that one last time. He did - the dog were under his wheel, there by the wheel, almost touched the wheel, so he rode, and so he rode on the dog, so the dog died. [K: Oh no - and then?] So we had to take him to the hospital, and so the nurse said that the dog is dead. So we buried him.

If children genuinely attach little value to the lives of animals, it may be because they are to some degree already inured to violence amongst people in their community. In the previous chapter (2.2.2) we mentioned that while the overall incidence of crime in Kensington/Factreton may be lower than in some other Cape Flats communites, the area is nonetheless plagued by street gangs, assaults, house-breaking and drug-dealing. The extent of these activities has become

University of Cape Town

better known outside of communities such as Kensington/Factreton since the formation in the mid-1990's of a (predominantly Muslim) backlash vigilante movement, People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), which has led a series of highly publicised attacks on prominent gang leaders and drug dealers, a number of whom are based in the Kensington area. The publicity attached to these conflicting forces in Cape Flats communities has highlighted the predicament of many working-class people : that is, while this group are the most frequent victims of gang-related violence, they are also, as a group, the most likely to be led, by unemployment and general lack of opportunity, to gangsterism or drug-dealing themselves.

That young children in Kensington/Factreton are aware of, and exposed to, ongoing violent activities in their neighbourhoods is evident from their general conversation (as conversational extracts 10, 11 and 12 illustrate) as well as their personal narratives.

(10) In our place, they shoot guns [makes gunshot noises]. [K: Did you ever see something bad happen?] No, but when we play in front, we hear the guns, and my granny call me. My granny says to me - mommy say "EDERIES, SHAFIEK, COME IN!" Then we must run fast in, because what if the *skollies* [gangsters, thugs] come to our house and they shoot us dead? (Six-year-old boy)

(11) I don't want the rapes in my house, because I'm too scared for that. [K: rapes?] Yes, they kill you. [K: Who are the rapes?] The rapes steal your stuff. And *skelms* [crooks] I don't want, 'cause they got that mask on their - black *dingus* [thingummy] on their face. I don't like that. [K: Do they wear black masks?] Yes. [K: Now where do those *skelms* live?] There's lots of *skelms* in my street! And they can kick your window in, and they don't worry! (Six-year-old girl)

(12) *Ons het skollies in onse plein, en daar baklei hulle, dan haal hulle hulle guns uit. Wanneer ons slaap dan haal hulle hulle guns uit, dan skiet hulle. Dan sit ons die draad daar by onse kant, laat hulle nie in kan kom nie; dan sluit ons onse hek.* (Six-year-old girl) [We've got *skollies* [gangsters] in our square, and they fight there, then they take their guns out. When we're sleeping then they take their guns out, then they shoot. Then we put the wire up on our side, so that they can't come in; then we shut our gate.]

Personal accounts of specific incidents of neighbourhood violence included tales of assault (stabbing, shooting, gang warfare), house break-ins and theft of property. Table 1 indicates that the frequency of this topic as a subject for narratives increased markedly at six years; however, as I explain in the following section (3.3), this does not mean that narratives with themes of violence were scarce amongst three- to five-year-olds : on the contrary, they were very common, but in this age-group, children meshed fantasy with reality in such a way that their narratives of violence were often not reliably identifiable as referring to real events. Most six-year-olds gave entirely plausible accounts of specific violent happenings involving their own or other families in the neighbourhood, or simply fights between gangs. Several volunteered their knowledge of the names, symbols and gestures of the various gangs operating in the community, such as the

University of Cape Town

Americans, Hard Livings and Naughty Boys, and in a few instances identified older brothers as *skollies* or gang members.

Some narratives concerned conflicts of a purely domestic nature; these mostly involved family arguments, separation or divorce of parents and, in a few cases, physical assaults among family members. For the most part, however, tales centering on the home environment told of typical incidents of family life : the birth of siblings, fights amongst siblings and peers, misbehaviour and its consequences, visits to and incidents surrounding parents' place of work, family outings to the beach and elsewhere, parties and social events. Several children had experienced the birth of younger siblings, cousins, or even nephews and nieces (13) or had tales concerning their own births (14) :

(13) My mommy had a baby. When I stay at ma, *ne*, when I come here the creche yesterday, and here my daddy chased my ma in the doctor, because why she can't keep the baby in her stomach anymore, because why the baby's coming out now. And then the baby didn't get out the stomach, is [unintelligible] when he come out this time. Then he cry, for me. [laughter] Yes, he cry for me, he say "*boeta*!" [brother]. [K: He said that when he came out the stomach? And then what?] Then he *sommer* [just], he, then they put the towel over him, then I keep [=hold] him. And my mommy said my brother's coming, *ne*, um July when he's so big as me, then he's going in my class, my brother. (Five-year-old boy).

(14) So my mommy *skel*led [scolded] me that other time, because why my mommy's fat, because I made my mommy fat when I was born. So my mommy *skel* me out 'cause my mommy's STILL fat. So my mommy say it's because of me that my mommy's still fat. (Six-year-old boy).

Others told of fights amongst siblings or peers, as well as various kinds of misbehaviour and its consequences : in one family discipline was meted out by confining children to the house - a punishment they termed 'house arrest', in mockery of one of the penalties of *apartheid* laws; otherwise, physical punishment in the form of 'hidings' was common, and, in the first grade of school, a rubber stick known as "ears", for reasons explained by this six-year-old :

(15) But that other time, my teacher hit me with EARS. The pain go up and down here by the neck. [Friend : But ears is sore!] [K: She hit you with what?] Ears - it's a rubber stick. But the pain went up and down, up and down, up and down. [K: wow] That other time she hit me here, and so the next time I feel, the pain was STILL there. [K: So ears are a big stick?] No, ears is so small, and the other stick is so big. [K: So why's it called ears?] Because children who haven't got ears, then she say "I will give you ears!"

A few narratives revolved around their parents' occupations, most of these involving visits to their places of work. In the course of our conversations, I usually asked about the type of work their parents did, if employed, as well as about the children's own job aspirations. The most common occupations of mothers were factory workers (e.g., machinists in clothing factories) and cashiers in supermarkets, and of fathers, artisans, repairmen, workers on building sites or taxi-drivers. Most children aspired to jobs in similar or somewhat higher categories of employment :

University of Cape Town

they wanted to be mechanics, policemen, nurses, or shop-keepers, though sometimes they mentioned that their parents had higher aspirations for them :

(16) I will be a mechanic, but my mommy most times tell me I must be a doctor (Six-year-old).

During weekends and holidays, the most popular family outings were to the beach, where, aside from various predictable events, drowning was a surprisingly popular theme : actual drownings were one fairly prominent cause of death in the category of death narratives discussed above, while a number of further narratives described near-drownings or simply fear of drowning in the sea. A few children had been on family camping holidays or school outings (17), but most recreational activities centred on social events within the community, involving extended family and neighbours.

(17) The last time, the matron's White people took us to, Mr L.-them, took us to Sea Point. Do you know Tania? She took us. She took us. And they took photos of us. Did you see I was in the Argus? [K: No, when?] They took photos of us. (Five-year-old girl).

Finally, a small number of personal narratives were categorized as 'miscellaneous' in terms of topic (Table 1); these comprised topics that arose no more than once each and included such various subjects as bed-wetting, nighttime fears, a handicapped individual in the neighbourhood, school sports and getting caught in the rain.

3.3 What counts as a personal narrative?

When studying oral narratives from a developmental perspective, an early methodological problem is to develop a satisfactory definition of what counts as a personal narrative, in order to identify these in transcripts of conversation. Story grammar definitions (e.g., Mandler & Johnson 1977; Mandler 1984) emphasize the structural well-formedness of stories and require, accordingly, the presence of a certain number of temporally sequenced and causally linked events. Similarly, Labov (1972) applies Aristotelian schemes of dramatic progression to the personal narrative, proposing features (detailed in the following chapter) of story beginnings, middles and ends that make up the mature, well-formed narrative. Polanyi (1989), on the other hand, emphasizes the social dimension of storytelling by insisting that personal narratives not only have to relate to specific past events but also must clearly have a point. Some researchers find these definitions overly restrictive for the study of adults' personal narratives in particular contexts : for example, Riessman (1991, 1997), investigating couples' divorce accounts, and Harvey et al (1995), analysing the reminiscences of war veterans, argue for an extension or loosening up of definitions of personal narratives to include other types of account within this genre. For those studying children's emerging narrative skill, there is the added problem that most theorists derive their definitions of the personal narrative from postulating ideal adult models which are too sophisticated to capture personal narratives in embryonic or developing form.

University of Cape Town

In attempting to accommodate developing narrative structures, the working definition of a personal narrative that evolved for this study was the following :

at least two utterances encoding specific, distant past and real events.

This particular designation entailed the exclusion of certain other narrative genres and narrative-like texts that sometimes came up in the course of conversation. The key terms in the definition are explained and justified below.

utterances

There have been various approaches to the delineation of utterances in spoken narratives. The question of what constitutes an utterance is importantly related to the type of narrative analysis undertaken. In this study the chief method of analysis was a line and stanza approach (following Hymes 1981; Gee 1986, 1991a), in which an utterance is regarded as equivalent to a single line of narrative. The identification of lines in narrative texts, is discussed in detail in sections of the following two chapters (4 and 5); suffice it to say here that decisions are made on a combination of syntactic and prosodic information - i.e., by noting the clausal structure, intonation contour and pause patterns of the individual's speech in narrating. In syntactic terms, an utterance (or line) usually comprised a single clause (either independent or dependent), often introduced by a connective. Prosodically, it typically contained either one or two prominent rising pitch glides and was bounded by slight pauses.

at least two utterances

One-event narratives encoded by a single utterance about a past event have been identified as the earliest personal narratives, emerging at around twenty-four months of age (Sachs 1983; Miller & Sperry 1988; Hudson 1993) or even younger (Reese 1999). Single utterances of this kind were excluded from the analysis here, however, since it was often difficult to identify them reliably as referring to a specific, distant past event. The minimal requirement for a narrative was therefore two utterances, which, in the case of all minimal narratives found in the data, comprised two simple clauses.

In this I have deliberately broadened Labov's (1972:359-62) frequently-invoked definition of a minimal narrative as comprising two independent clauses that are temporally ordered, since this may be both too restrictive when dealing with possible differences in the structural and temporal organization of narratives from a different language and culture, and too sophisticated when dealing with the immature cognitive and linguistic abilities of the younger children in this sample. Thus, for example, the following minimal narrative from a three-year old was included for consideration in the analysis of personal narratives :

University of Cape Town

(18) *my bors is seer* [my chest is (was)sore
en die dokter het my ma medisyne gegee and the doctor gave my mom medicine]

In Labov's terms, these two utterances would not qualify as a narrative, since the first is not a narrative clause but a 'free clause' (bearing no fixed relation to temporal sequence).

encoding specific events

This requirement meant that scripts or generic narratives, encoding events that habitually recur (such as shopping trips) were excluded from the analysis. Scripts involve a different cognitive task for the speaker, requiring recourse to generalized event knowledge (as opposed to memory of a single episode) and have structural characteristics distinct from personal narratives (Hudson & Shapiro 1991). Some researchers (eg. Gee 1991b:20) do not regard scripts as a genre of narrative at all. In order to minimise the occurrence of scripts in the data, I avoided recounting generic experiences in my narrative prompts to children; instead, my own narratives were about specific, discrete events. Inevitably, however, a few script-like narratives were produced by children, either in response to my prompts or in the course of conversation. An example of a text rejected from analysis on these grounds is the following account by a five-year-old :

(19) my daddy tell me a story, ne
and then - when my daddy finish tell me story
and then I *batja* [= pray], ne
and then I go to bed -
my daddy always tell me that stories about the baby and the mommy
and 'bout the sister
and then the baby always cry

Aside from the exclusive use of the present tense (a distinguishing characteristic of scripts), it is clear from the nature of the events described and the adverbial 'always' in lines 5 and 7 that these are habitual occurrences.

distant past events

'Distant past' was defined, following Miller & Sperry (1988:297), to mean prior to the recording session. This entailed that three types of narrative-like texts were excluded from consideration :

(i) Talk about the immediate past : any comments on events that occurred in the context of our conversational sessions were disregarded, since implicit in my definition of narrative is that it is decontextualized talk.

(ii) On-line narrating of simultaneously-enacted or planned events, as found in pretend play (Sachs 1980; Chang 1998; Kyratzis 1999). This sort of text, sometimes referred to as dramatic play narrative', can be quite elaborate and is certainly decontextualized, but has functional and structural characteristics quite distinct from the narrative of personal experience; for instance,

University of Cape Town

narratives produced during pretend play have distinctive 'voices', marked by use of the subjunctive and lexical markers to propose unreality (Kyratzis 1999). Simultaneous narrating never occurred in my own narrative elicitation sessions, where the context of interaction was deliberately attuned to conversation about non-present events, but turned up frequently in recordings of natural classroom discourse; it is discussed further in 3.4.

iii) Future time sequences about planned or anticipated events. Also referred to as *plans*, these are also structurally and functionally distinct from the personal narrative (Polanyi 1989) and clearly do not qualify as accounts of actual experience. An example is the following short text (20) produced by a five-year-old in response to a friend's narrative about a visit to the dentist:

(20)	*my tande is los* [demonstrates]	[my teeth are loose
	vanaand gaan dit uitval	tonight it's going to fall out
	dan sit ek dit in my skoen	then I'll put it in my shoe
	en as ek slaap dan kom die muis die tand haal	and while I'm asleep, then the
	dan gee hy vir my 'n tien sent	mouse will fetch the tooth
		then he'll give me ten cents]

Note that while the definition requires an account of past events it does not specify that those events be reported in the past tense. Although the great majority of children's narratives contained at least some explicit past markers, there were at least three reasons for not including this as a criterion. Most obviously, the younger children did not always have stable control of linguistic tense markers. Secondly, there are dialect-related differences in the marking of past tense in the English of adolescents (Malan 1981) and adults (McCormick 1989a) in this speech community (see chapter 2), and the pattern of acquisition of these by young language learners is as yet not well understood. Thirdly, it is my impression that the use of conversational historic present (CHP) tense when narrating events is common amongst Afrikaans speakers generally; certainly, the Afrikaans narratives in the data here contained fewer explicit past markers and these were often conveyed via conjunctions rather than the verb system.

An example from an Afrikaans-speaking three-year old (21) illustrates the difficulty posed by the lack of explicit past markers in certain narratives for reliably distinguishing specific past from habitual events :

(21)	*my broers baklei*	[my brothers fight
	hulle huil	they cry
	hulle ma slaat hulle	their mother hit(s) them
	hulle huil	they cry
	dan slaat hul daddy *hulle*	then their daddy hit(s) them]

Where a set of utterances could not reliably be interpreted from the surrounding discourse or my own knowledge of events as referring to a specific, distant past experience, it was excluded from the narrative analysis. In fact, problems of this sort arose infrequently.

University of Cape Town

real events

Some definitions of personal narratives (e.g., that used by contributors to the McCabe & Peterson (1991) volume) include accounts of imaginary as well as real events; others (eg., Labov & Waletzky 1967) exclude narratives of vicarious experience. My own data suggested a definition that differs on both of these points : my criteria specified real events of either personal or vicarious experience. I justify these separately below.

- real vs imaginary events

A very few narratives in the data were conscious attempts at telling 'a story', rather than a personal experience. These were typically narrated in the third person, and were identifiable further by the use of fictional conventions such as 'once upon a time there was a ...' and endings such as 'and so the story was finished', as well as by their obviously fictional content. These narratives belong to the genre of fictional story, distinct structurally and linguistically from the narrative of personal experience (Hudson & Shapiro 1991), and were therefore excluded. An example is the text given below (22) from a five-year-old who announced that she 'had a story to tell' - usually a reliable indication in itself that what was to follow was a fictional story. I learned very early on in pilot-work experiments with narrative elicatations to avoid using the word 'story' myself, since it invariably prompted lengthy and tedious accounts of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The story below has rather more interest value, as what Preece (1987:361) would call an 'original fantasy' : it is distinct from a story-retelling in that it relates events which are the narrator's original creations, but reflects the conventions of the genre in linguistic style and plot structure :

(22) once upon a time
there was a boy named Tommy
and he was a good boy
and so he did be a naughty boy
and so he running around
and so his mommy said he mustn't play in the road
because why Mr Miada gonna catch you
and Mr Miada catch him
and put him in a bag
and so Mr Miada sent him to his house
and so and so Tommy ran
and so Mr Miada catch Tommy
and put him in a bag
and so Mr Miada sit on Tommy
and so Mr Miada wait until the pot boil
and so the pot never boil

University of Cape Town

A much larger number of the narratives I elicited were imaginary accounts of a different genre. They were usually narrated in the first person, ostensibly as personally experienced events, but their content was largely or wholly fantasy and/or material derived from television or film. In almost all cases, this content was of an extremely violent nature : descriptions of stabbing, shooting and chopping abounded.

In most cases this sort of narrative was easily identifiable as fantasy or media-derived by virtue of its characters (e.g., bogeymen, man-eating sharks, or names from popular television series) and events (e.g., "then my daddy *kap* [chop] his head off"; "so I put on my Superman clothes and I fly away"). Themes of violence were not the sole domain of fantasy, however : some narratives told of violent incidents that had quite likely been observed by the child in real life. For instance, there were accounts of domestic assaults in which participants were named as '*my ma*' [my mom], 'uncle Greg' or 'auntie Sarie', and street fights involving brutal but nonetheless plausible events. As I have argued earlier, these children as a group are likely to have some degree of either personal or vicarious knowledge of actual violent happenings in the community. Teachers were sometimes able to confirm the violent life-experiences of certain children : for example, a three-year-old who produced nothing but violent fantasy narratives turned out to have a drug-dealing father on the run from the police; a couple of six year olds who told personal narratives involving stabbings had older brothers who were members of street-gangs. However, knowledge derived from real experience may become entwined with images of violence from a television culture that uses these as stock themes; it is this merging of fantasy and reality that makes it difficult in some cases to reliably distinguish real from imagined events in narratives. The following example (23) illustrates the difficulty : this report was offered by a five-year-old boy in response to my own comparatively mild account of a sibling fight :

(23)	*in die aand, ne*	[In the evening, ne
	toe baklei hulle ook daar by onse veld	then they also fight there in our *veld*
	dan steek hulle die mense	then they stab the people
	dan kap hulle die mense -	then they chop the people
	die mense se groot kinders	the people's grown-up children
	dan steek hulle	then they stab them
	dan hardloop hulle	then they run
	want dan kom die laws	because then the police come
	dan vang die laws *vir die*	then the police catch the one who
	wat die een gesteek het	stabbed the other one
	dan maak hulle die agter deur ope	then they open the back door
	dan jump *hy uit*	then he jumps out
	en dan hardloop hy huis toe	and then he runs home
	dan wil hy nie he die laws *moet hom sien nie*	then he doesn't want the police to see him]

University of Cape Town

There are no improbable characters or events here to signal a fantasy, and in fact the opening line mentions a location near his house, suggesting that these events were actually witnessed by the child. But of course there is no way of knowing the degree to which they refer to a specific observed incident or were gleaned from adult conversations about similar separate incidents. Or, were they partly observed and the rest filled in by television images?

My decision was to exclude narratives in which reference to characters or actions made it clear that the contents were largely or wholly imaginary. Where it was not possible to reliably place a narrative in this category, it was included and its contents marked for later scrutiny. Why exclude these types of stories? Labov (1972) and Labov & Waletzky (1967) have demonstrated that narratives relating events seen on film lack coherent structural organization as well as any evaluation, the *raison d'etre* of personal narratives. This certainly seemed the case for the narratives in the category of fantasy here, which mostly consisted of quite lengthy action sequences lacking orientation, evaluation and meaningful thematic structure. A very few narratives that were obviously wholly fantasy proved exceptions to this general rule and showed some interesting structural features; one of these will be examined in chapter 6.

Finally, it is important to mention that these criteria for deciding what constituted real events in no sense entailed that fantasy *per se* was disallowed in the narratives included for analysis. To do so would be to suppress a creative aspect of story-telling - the uniquely personal rendering of reality. As Riessman (1991:45) reminds us, 'The "world" of consequential events that a narrator constructs is not a replica of a preexisting reality, but a representation. It is constitutive of reality, rather than mirrorring it.' It is well-documented that young children's narratives of personal experience sometimes contain elements of fiction or exaggeration (McCabe *et al* 1991). In the personal narratives analysed here, these elements sometimes cropped up as embellishments to what were otherwise entirely plausible accounts of personal experience - for example, where a child, describing her fear during a thunderstorm at night, imagined that the sounds she heard were the work of the devil; or where a narrative was resolved in a way that more likely represented a wish fulfillment than the actual outcome of events. In stories of personal injury, considerably exaggerated or even impossible descriptions of the injury and its treatment were not uncommon: one child, recounting an accident he'd had while riding his bike, described lying on a bed, watching the doctor cut his back open and pull out a broken bone.

- personal vs vicarious experience

Labov & Waletzky (1967) have argued that narratives of vicarious experience lack evaluation and the structure characteristic of narratives of personally experienced events. However, they provide as examples only stories recounting film or television events as evidence, and not accounts of real events. Preece (1987), on the other hand, distinguished anecdotes of

University of Cape Town

vicarious (real) experiences from 'visual media retellings' in her categorisation of children's spontaneously produced narrative forms; she found that the former, like the accounts of personal experience, were structurally complete. Likewise, Wolfson (1978:225) argues that 'it is not in the least necessary to have taken part in or even witnessed an event in order to perform a detailed story about it.' More recently, Shiro (1997) found Labov's claim that narratives of vicarious experience are less evaluated than those of personal experience to be unsupported by studies comparing these two genres. As with Preece's and Wolfson's data, some of the narratives told by children in my sample concerned events that had been experienced by others; these had either been observed by the child him or herself (e.g., an account of a fight between other children in the classroom) or reported to the child by another person (e.g., a car accident involving a child's mother, or an injury to a father when he was a child himself). In several cases it was not clear whether the child had observed the events or been told about them. Since there was no clear evidence that narratives of vicarious experience lacked the structure or evaluation of stories of personally experienced events, they were included in the analysis.

One final reason for exclusion arose with a few narratives that contained too much interspersed dialogue to be regarded as independent story constructions. Although my responses during a child's narrative were specifically aimed at avoiding this, it occasionally happened where two children collaborated in telling about events they had both experienced, or where I was unable to resist requests for clarification.

3.4 Other genres of narrative

As we've seen, the process of defining narratives of personal experience entailed the exclusion of several other genres that cropped up in the data. It may be useful to summarize here those alternative genres for which distinct textual characteristics can be described. While these were not the focus of this research, they are nonetheless of interest for two reasons. Firstly, relatively little is known about the range of narrative types spontaneously produced by children in school and home environments, although there is (largely anecdotal) evidence that children as young as two or three years of age have control over several discourse forms; secondly, the occurrence of various genres carries methodological implications for the elicitation of narratives from children whether in research, educational or clinical contexts.

3.4.1 Development of genre skills in young children

'Genre' refers to an 'organisational structure for information' (Pan & Snow 1999:242). Genre knowledge has its origins in children's earliest social interactions : through participation in diverse forms of oral language activity - conversation, pretend play, sharing of recent personal experiences, book-reading, explanations, future planning - children learn the conventions of their families and cultures for different modes of representing experience. By three years of age,

University of Cape Town

distinct textual genres are in evidence, including scripts (accounts of routine or habitual events), personal narratives (talk about specific past events), fictional storytelling and fantasy narratives (imaginary characters in play), and by five years children are capable of making systematic distinctions in their marking of these different types of texts (Allen *et al.* 1994; Hicks 1990; Preece 1987; Wolf 1985; Wolf, Moreton & Camp 1994). They thus enter the early grades of school equipped with the ability not only to 'tell what happened' but also to relate events in generically distinct ways (Hicks 1990). Their developing sensitivity to genre also means that, in research or clinical contexts, they are likely to perceive different elicitation procedures (e.g., being asked to make up a story versus telling about a specific event) as different discourse situations and adapt their narrative productions accordingly (Allen *et al.* 1994).

Narrative production, as we've seen (chapter 1), is a task with inherent cognitive as well as linguistic demands, requiring adaptation to the constraints of particular social contexts of speaking. As Hudson & Shapiro (1991) demonstrate, narrating requires three basic types of knowledge and skill : first, content knowledge (involving access to, for instance, memory for generalized event structures as well as specific personal memories); secondly, linguistic knowledge (both of the macrostructural components of particular genres of narrative and of microlinguistic features such as tense, aspect or anaphoric reference); and thirdly, contextual knowledge regarding the function of narratives in different situations of speaking. Different narrative genres may have very different content and structural requirements; successful control of genre distinctions requires that the narrator shape content knowledge into a particular narrative structure - a process of 'translating knowing into telling' (1991:89). We turn now to the types of narrative discourse that came up in the data discussed here, in terms of their cognitive, linguistic and social-interactional features.

3.4.2 Narrative genres in the Kensington/Factreton data

The elicitation method (based on that developed by Peterson & McCabe 1983 and described in detail in chapter 1) was specifically geared towards collection of personal narratives. In essence, it involved the researcher offering, in the course of conversation, narrative prompts in the form of short accounts of specific, real (or at least plausibly real) past experiences of events that were slightly out-of-the-ordinary but within the children's realm of experience. The method proved successful : three- to six-year-olds produced in response a total of 415 personal narratives (Table 1) that conformed to the criteria described in 3.3 above. In the course of our conversations, a smaller number of texts was produced that could not be classified as personal narratives. Except for the fantasy narrative, which occurred with greater frequency than the other types, I have not quantified these, but present for the sake of completeness seven distinct genres that were discernable in the data as a whole.

University of Cape Town

(i) ***Scripts*** - 'generic, prototypical sequences of events anchored in mental schemata' (Berman 1995:286) - arose where children told of habitually occurring events (as in 24), as opposed to a specific past episode :

(24) [K: Now did you ever fight with your sisters or your cousins?] My sister. [K: *ja*?] 'Cause everytime if I [nag?] with her, then she hit me, and I hit her. Then my mommy say "*Julle twee, ne, ek gaat julle donder*" [You two, *ne*, I'm going to beat you up]. (Six-year-old)

Cognitively, scripts require access to a different knowledge base from the personal narrative : in producing a script one draws on general event knowledge for a description of what usually happens under a particular set of circumstances, rather than on an autobiographic memory store for a single experience. There is evidence that, by the age of three years, children have a temporally organized store of general event knowledge as well as an extensive autobiographic memory system, both of which are verbally accessible (Hudson & Shapiro 1991). Prior to this age, it seems that children are more successful at producing general event scripts than describing a specific occurrence of an event without external support and guidance from an adult (Eisenberg 1985; Nelson 1986; Fivush *et al.* 1995), leading some researchers to conclude that talk about specific events (personal narratives) is grounded in general knowledge about categories of events. However, while general event knowledge may facilitate recall of specific episodes, by providing a general framework for organizing recall, it can also, at times, distort memory for specific episodes. Both younger and older preschoolers have difficulty recalling specific instances of highly routine events (e.g., a birthday party), suggesting that details of similar or frequently-experienced episodes may become fused into general event representations in memory (Hudson & Shapiro 1991; Eisenberg 1985).

This potential for merging of general and specific experiences when the topic of narrative is a familiar event has important methodological implications. Even when care is taken, as here, to recount exceptional events in narrative prompts, these will inevitably sometimes be rejoined by accounts of routine events on the same general topic. For instance a tale of witnessing a near-drowning at the beach might elicit anything from a dramatic account of the actual drowning of a friend or cousin on a family outing to the beach, to a humdrum description (25) of events which may have occurred on a unique occasion but may equally well be routine occurrences on trips to the beach :

(25) *Ons het ook* beach *toe gegaan.*[K: *Sê vir my wat het by die* beach *gebeur*]. *Ons het geswem, en toe maak my ma vuur, toe braai my ma die hoender. Toe eet ons, en toe gaat ons huis toe* .... etc. (Five-year-old) [We also went to the beach. [K: Tell me what happened at the beach]. We swam, and then my ma made a fire, then my ma grilled the chicken. Then we ate, and then we went home].

University of Cape Town

These types of script-like personal narratives mostly lacked the structural sophistication characteristic of narratives of more exceptional or novel experiences, as Hudson & Shapiro (1991) also found. Their coherence is a simple function of stringing together a sequence of discrete, temporal events - a chronological pattern that 'is found at all ages and is boring at all ages' (1991:97). As Daiute & Nelson (1997:208) note, scripts can be understood as 'the stripped down referential core of personal narratives, as Labov & Waletzky conceived them. They are also the developmental starting point of stories ... [Scripts] constitute the "canonical events" against which the unexpected component poses a problem and introduces feeling and thinking (intentionality or meaning) that is the heart of narrative'. The following narrative (26) on the same topic, in contrast with (25), is structured around a sequence of refrains and incorporates contextualizing as well as evaluative (affective) information:

(26) I wanna tell you what happened. [K: mm?] [Takes deep breath]. Man, my mommy *mos*, my mommy *mos* went with they [gestures to friend, to indicate the friend's family] to beach *mos*. And we *mos* went to that small pools with a lot of water in. And we didn't *verdrink* [drown]. And there the river was starting to come over, and it was only a little water [waves?] coming over, and on the other side was coming a b-i-i-i-g one in the pool. And so my thin sister she *'t* [past auxiliary] almost *verdrink* [drown]. And so my ma must, um, must did grab her, and my ma did also go with. And then my daddy wanted to hit my mommy, because why my daddy was also with, and my daddy did almost also *verdrink* [drown]. (Five-year-old)

The opening line of this tale ('I wanna tell you ...') suggests the reason for the difference between these two narrative examples. It seems that children (and presumably adults) are more likely to produce coherent, full narrative structures when motivated by the desire to relate something of particular personal significance; the less constrained they are by topics prescribed by a researcher (or educator or clinician, for that matter), the more likely this is to happen.

(ii) ***Plans*** - or future-time narratives - arose occasionally (as in 27) where children described 'wished for but yet unrealized sequences of events' (Polanyi 1989:18) :

(27) I'm gonna tell my mommy to buy me a ball, a beach ball, ne. Then I throw it in the small water, man, then I catch it, and then go back to my mommy, then we go home. (Five-year-old)

Since the events described are hypothetical, they tend to lack the affective component as well as the complexity of structure that characterize many personal narratives. Like scripts, however, they are decontextualized temporal sequences and important precursors to various types of logical-analytical discourse required by school : instructions, explanations, hypothesizing and strategizing have their origins in scripts and plans. Linguistically, while scripts are formulated with either the timeless present tense or past tense clauses with generic modals such as *would* or *used to* (Polanyi 1989), plans require developing control of the future tense and modals

University of Cape Town

appropriate to the description of events which might, will or ought to occur.

(iii) ***Dramatic play narratives*** involved narrating pretend events in the context of ongoing play activities. This genre never, in fact, arose during the conversation sessions in which personal narratives were gathered, since the context was deliberately not conducive to this type of narrating; it is included here, however, because of its frequency of occurrence in classroom and playground peer-discourse (see chapter 7) where, with minimal props, children enacted and narrated elaborate pretend sequences of events. An example is the following monologue (28 - not given here in its entirety) by a five-year-old boy who, with a friend, and with only a couple of wooden blocks as play-materials, enacted this pretend sequence involving breaking into a house and a shoot-out with police (during a part of the school morning officially designated for "educational activities" on the curriculum!):

(28) Tring-tring, tring-tring, hello [holding block to ear]. There's someone dead, let's go! There's your gun, give that gun for me, some bullets in. I'm on my way. What's up? That is your walkie-talkie, we got two. I got a lot of walkie-talkie, a lot of my own stuff, all my stuff here, all my walkie-talkie. Where's the gun? Give him that gun! Come over here, *skelms*! What walkie-talkie do you want? See all my walky-talkies, here all my walkie-talkies of mine, all my bombs, so *maar* [but] I got a lot of bombs. All right, we on our way. Come now, we not friends, but we, you just call me, come on now, run, come on, let's ride, buddy! We gonna catch someone now, just watch, I'm gonna catch him now, buddy. Now just get us a place to hide. I'm hiding behind the tree, wait, wait, man, I'm taking my knife [shooting noises], I'm practising with a play gun, now I can do it.... [continues]

This type of narrating is structurally and functionally distinct from the personal narrative: because the narrated events are being simultaneously enacted by the participants, there is less need for linguistic explicitness and evaluation can be conveyed non-linguistically. Heath (1984:89) demonstrated how children use the genre of dramatic play narratives to 'negotiate a jointly achieved future scene, script, or redesignation of real objects and people (e.g., through verbal announcement baskets become baby beds, or cats become tigers)'. As discussed earlier, these narratives have distinctive 'voices' and grammatical marking (Kyratzis 1999).

Pretend play narrating leads us into the realm of fiction and fantasy genres; three distinct types of narrative within this general category were discernable in the data here, although their boundaries sometimes merged. Since all three have been described in 3.3 above, I simply summarize their distinguishing features and their methodological implications here.

(iv) ***Fictional stories - retellings*** : These consisted of a child retelling a story that had originally been read to him or her. As Preece (1987) found with her category of print-source retellings, they were generally lengthy, reasonably accurate renditions of the original, incorporating traditional story markers ('Once upon a time there was a...'; 'they lived happily ever after'; 'and that was the end', etc.). They arose only in my early pilot-work experimentations

University of Cape Town

with methods of eliciting narratives, where I found that inviting a child to 'tell a story' invariably prompted either a fictional story retelling or an original fiction (v). Questioning children, it appeared that their range of exposure to written fiction was extremely limited; they were able to identify and retell only one or two stories that had been read to them in the classroom. This limited contact with bookreading activities is discussed further in chapter 7; for the time being we can note that for these children, developing narrative competence seems minimally influenced by the written story.

(v) ***Fictional stories - original*** : These fictions were the original creations of children themselves, involving fantasy characters and incorporating the linguistic conventions of the fictional story. Although they occurred infrequently, the example given earlier (22) is typical of the content of those original fictions that came up. Most revolved around the evil doings of a bogeyman who was sometimes identified by children as 'Mr Miada' or simply 'a stranger', but most often as '*Oupa* [Grandpa] *Djinie*'. This character was invoked frequently in children's games as well as their narratives : they would enact scenes where '*Oupa Djinie*' lurked behind closed doors and windows, sending them scurrying in fear and excitement. His status, as the following conversational extracts (29, 30) illustrate, seems to derive from a folk legend or myth perpetuated by adults in order to scare their children into avoiding real dangers in the neighbourhood :

(29) Child A : There's a man named *Oupa Djinie*, *ne*. Now he put children in a bag. [K: He puts children in a bag?]. A : Yes, and he kills children also. [K: What's his name?]. A : *Oupa Djinie*. Child B (shaking head in disagreement) : Strangers will catch you. A (disagreeing) : *Oupa Djinie*. B : No, not *Oupa Djinie*, strangers - the devils. A : His name is *Oupa Djinie*, *mos*! *Oupa Djinie*! B : The devil! A : Is *Oupa Djinie*, man! [K: And he puts children in a bag? And then what?]. A : Then he kills children. [K: Oh, that's terrible. Now where would you find *Oupa Djinie*?]. A : Strangers.

(30) Child C : And my teacher said, if we go alone, um, if we go alone - Child D : to the shops. C : If somebody's small, *ne*, then we go alone to the shops, then - D : Then the man standing around the corner, then they will catch yous. C : Yes, he gonna catch us. [K : Oh, so you've got to be careful]. C : Yes, then our mommy cry too, for our childrens. D : And they make you dead. C : Yes, AND kill us. We must go with mommy to the shop, we must go with our mommy to the shop, and we must keep our mommy's hand TIGHT. D : And your mommy's and your daddy's.

This mythical character, capable of terrifying acts of violence, that threatens children who stray from adult protection, seems to merge, in the minds of the younger children, with their knowledge of the real gangsters and criminals who make their neighbourhood unsafe. It also feeds into the images of violence derived from the media that are one source of the fantasy narrative (vi).

(vi) ***Fantasy narratives*** : Unlike the fictional varieties above, these were often narrated in the first person, as though personally experienced, though their substance (characters and events)

University of Cape Town

was identifiable as either fantasy or media- (largely television) derived. They were almost invariably extremely violent in nature. Two characteristics distinguish this type from similar genres reported for children elsewhere. Firstly, while both Labov (1972) and Preece (1987) describe the occurrence of retellings of stories or events seen on television or video, the Kensington/Factreton narratives were mostly not obviously straightforward retellings, but a meshing of fantasy and reality that suggested the children themselves were not necessarily able to properly distinguish the content as unreal events. Thus, rather than beginning such accounts with comments such as "I'll tell you a scary, scary thing in a movie ..." (Preece 1987:361) or "I was watching the Sandy Becker show ..." (Labov & Waletzky 1967), a four-year-old who informed me that she had seen a car accident launched into the following incoherent account (31) in which she mixes third and first persons as the experiencer of events; on questioning afterwards, this turned out to have been something seen on the American TV programme "Rescue 911" :

(31) *Die* accident *het vir hulle kar omgeslaan. En toe sê die* police *"ek gaat julle nou doodskiet". En toe sê die man "wat gaat jy met my kar maak?" Toe sê hy "ek gaat hom doodskiet". Toe sê hy hy gaan my kar skiet. Toe skiet ek hom weer in die kar.*
[The accident knocked their car over. And then the police said "I'm going to shoot you dead now". And then the man said "What are you going to do with my car?" Then he said "I'm going to shoot it dead". Then he said he was going to shoot my car. Then I shot him again in the car.]

Similarly, this five-year-old boy, whom I knew to have only one sibling - a baby brother - told me in the course of a conversation about *skelms* in the neighbourhood :

(32) I did saw they picking my other brother with a *panga* [machete] here. He's so big as (unintelligible word). Because why he try to go to his mommy, and so three *skelms* [crooks] hit him here on his *dingus* [thingummy], on his body, and they cut here through. Then they put him in a coffin. He's dead. [K: He's dead? Who's that, your brother?] His name is Ricky, because why he's so big, he's so tall like my daddy, my daddy's tall like him. They did also shoot my other brother, shoot here. And you know, yesterday I got a lot of brothers yesterday. Okay, I did saw a other one stab my brother here in the heart, stab him here ... [continues]

In this case, the narrative's material is not obviously from a television source but derived from the child's knowledge of actual incidents of violent assaults, into which he has projected fantasy brothers, bigger and stronger than himself.

Secondly, the frequency with which this violent-fantasy genre occurred, usually in response to narrative prompts recounting real-life and comparatively mild experiences, was disturbing : in each age-group from three to five years, around 20% of all the narratives elicited were of this type. Peterson & McCabe (1983), in their comparable study of white, working-class American children, found a predilection for somewhat gory topics and descriptions in the narratives they elicited, but this occurred only within the confines of accounts of real, personally-

University of Cape Town

experienced events, and not in the form of fantasy narratives *per se*. Of Preece's (1987) range of narrative types, the closest category is one she terms an 'original fiction', involving real characters in imaginary events. However, these arose infrequently (making up less than 5% of her data) and involved playful accounts of behaviour ranging 'from the preposterous and bizarre to the blatantly rude' (p. 362), rather than naked violence. The reason for the high occurrence of this type in my own data may lie with the life experiences of these Cape Flats children. While several authors (e.g., Eisenberg 1985; McCabe, Capron & Peterson 1991) have noted that the borderline between real and imagined events in young children's narratives can be fragile, their commingling here and its violent nature may be more striking because these children are exposed to violent crime in their everyday lives. Children who have actual experience (personal or vicarious) of violence may also be more vulnerable to the harmful effects of enacted brutality on television, in that they are less able to maintain a separation of the latter from the reality surrounding them.

Nonetheless, the occurrence of violent-fantasy narratives appears to have been considerably lower in my own data than in that of Kay McCormick (1989a) for children from similar backgrounds in CapeTown's District Six. The reason for this is, I suspect, largely methodological. In recording the speech of nursery-school children, McCormick devised two types of tasks in an attempt to elicit narrative discourse. One consisted of asking the children to tell stories for transcription into specially-made booklets; the response to this was, as I found too, a tendency to retell known fictional stories. In a second task, McCormick gave puppets to pairs of children and encouraged them to make up and act out dialogue for the puppets; she reports that

> The process was not as productive as I had hoped because the children's stories were mainly aggregates of television type scenarios involving a great deal of non-verbal noise representing car chases, shooting and knocking about, which is linguistically very boring. I tried to curb this so that there would be room for other types of interaction, by saying (like a tediously literal-minded adult) that 'If the people get shot dead then they can't speak any more and so that will be the end of the game'. It did not have the desired effect - they preferred the short violent life. (1989a:166-7).

It seems that the method used here of conducting a natural conversation while guiding the topics, by means of narrative prompts, towards specific experiences grounded in reality can successfully reduce the amount of fantasy narratives and ensure that the majority of accounts will be of personally experienced events. Moreover, the ability to separate reality and fantasy showed a clear developmental progression here. By six years of age, children were able to explicitly identify (e.g., by means of introductory comments) certain events as having occurred on television; at the same time, they produced accounts of neighbourhood crimes that were identifiable as plausible, real events.

University of Cape Town

(vii) ***Collaborative narratives*** : This last category of narrative text occurred when two children collaborated in recalling an experience. Group participation in a narrative telling is fairly common in multi-party speaking situations, both amongst children (Preece 1987) and adults (Toolan 1988; Polanyi 1989) as well as in family speaking events (Blum-Kulka & Snow 1992; Blum-Kulka 1997). Part of the process of developing narrative competence consists of gaining independence in the act of telling, which requires making bids for storytelling rights in conversation; however, support for these rights may be granted differentially in different cultures. Blum-Kulka (1997) reports that, in family dinnertime conversations, middle-class American families pay strict attention to rituals of granting children individual floor-space for story performance, a feature completely absent from Israeli families, who support group participation in narration of personal experiences, even when participants have not shared in the original events. Preece (1992) argues that in peer interaction, children adopt roles both as critics of, and collaborators in, each others' narrations, and so play a facilitative and supportive role in fostering narrative growth independent of adult guidance. In the following example (33) from my own data, two six-year-old boys collaborate, dispute and finally agree on a version of an accident suffered by a classmate :

(33) Child A : So this other child in my class, um, that other child in my class - Child B : Oh Fabian! A : Ja. B : He also burned his leg! A : *Ja*, um *ja*. [K : What happened?] B : He put his face in HOT water - A : And he push the kettle, so, so he throwed um, in the cup water, so Nakita found him. B : No, you lie! You lie! A : But that's - B : He was BATHING, and the water was hot, so his sister pushed - He had a kettle in his hand. A: And his sister - B : So the hot water went over his face; here. [Sharp intake of breath]. It was VERY sore. A : But, but his face came right. [K : It did come right?] A/B : [sounds of agreement].

While narrative genres can be readily distinguished, as we have done here, in terms of their characteristic linguistic and social-interactional features and/or their cognitive requirements, most naturally-occurring discourse does not, of course, occur in sharply delineated genres. Rather, the participants in a speaking situation tend to move freely among several different genres, while within genres, as Wolf *et al.* (1994) have shown, other kinds of transitions occur - for example, conversational asides in which speaker and listener clarify meanings might be interspersed in the narration of events, as well as brief shifts to quoted speech or description. These kinds of transitions among 'lines of talk' within a narrative genre 'reflect the on-line, participatory process of negotiating and texturing meaning, rather than the more general structural changes in the context of telling that are brought by shifts in genre' (1994:294).

In the following three chapters we turn to an analysis of the tales themselves, focusing on the personal narrative genre.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4

ARTICULATING THE STRUCTURE OF PERSONAL NARRATIVES

This chapter describes the development of an approach to narrative analysis that will be used in subsequent chapters to explore the narrative texts of children in Kensington/Factreton. Since the model used here owes a large debt to the work of Labov (1967, 1972, 1997), Hymes (1981, 1982, 1985, 1990) and Gee (1985, 1986, 1989, 1991a,b, 1997), their theories of narrative structure are discussed first in some detail. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 outline, respectively, Labov's 'high point' approach and Hymes' and Gee's 'line and stanza' approach - arguably the two most influential models in the research on children's personal narratives. In each section we consider the basic assumptions of each approach, their application to childhood narratives, and their relative merits and weaknesses. Section 4.3 describes, via the analysis of a single narrative, the framework used in this study.

4.1 Labov's approach to narrative analysis

Two seminal essays by William Labov have had a profound influence on the linguistic study of narrative discourse and generated a great deal of subsequent research on the socially-situated narrative. The first of these, written jointly with Joshua Waletzky, appeared in 1967 and the second in 1972 as a chapter in Labov's *Language in the Inner City : Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. The latter chapter is a revised and extended version of the earlier paper, in which the model of narrative structure is applied to the spoken narratives of pre-adolescent, adolescent and adult members of black English vernacular culture in south-central Harlem. More recently, Labov (1997) has extended and updated somewhat his approach to narratives of personal experience, in a volume of the Journal of Narrative and Life History dedicated to examining the impact of Labov & Waletzky's original paper on narrative research in the last three decades. In this chapter, however, I examine the key features of Labov's theory of narrative structure chiefly on the basis of his two earlier, more extensive and influential, works, with mention of some of his later revisions where appropriate.

4.1.1 Basic assumptions of Labov's theory

Labov's interest in narrative arose as a by-product of his research, conducted in the 1960's and 1970's, on the social patterning of language in specific American-English speech communities, including such inner-city areas as described above. In their efforts to overcome the constraints of the face-to-face interview, Labov and his co-workers discovered that the most effective technique for obtaining large quantities of casual, unmonitored speech was to elicit narratives of personal experience 'in which the speaker becomes deeply involved in rehearsing or even reliving events of his past' (1972:354). The prototype questions used to elicit such narratives were those specifying 'danger of death' or 'worst fights' (discussed in chapter 1, 1.2.2). Labov's

University of Cape Town

approach to the analysis of narratives thus elicited is grounded in linguistic theory and represented a break from previous research on narrative - both that stemming from literary criticism and the story grammar tradition - in at least three main ways :

(i) *His focus on conversational narratives of actual speakers* :

Labov & Waletzky (1967) argued that the simplest and most fundamental narrative structures are to be found in oral versions of personal experience - i.e., ordinary speakers recounting their extraordinary experiences. In this they consciously departed from the long-standing tradition in narrative research which took folk-tales, myths and other products of literate or oral traditions as their subject matter. Their task can therefore be seen in one sense as the search for a basic pattern from which more complex narratives might be derived (Toolan 1988). As we shall see shortly, however, constraints on this search arise from the fact that theirs are conversational narratives of one particular type.

(ii) *His approach to the temporal organization of narrative texts*

Reinhart (1984) points out that while virtually all scholars agree that narrative texts *represent* some sequence of temporally ordered events, Labov's definition of narrative in terms of temporal organization of the text itself differs radically from those definitions assumed in literary criticism. Early Russian formalists (e.g. Propp 1928 [1968])) analysed narrative events in relation to two realms: *fabula* and *sjuzhet* (roughly equivalent to the later French terms *histoire* and *discours* - e.g. Barthes 1977). *Fabula* refers to the actual events in the depicted world and *sjuzhet* to the text representing those events - 'the business of distinctive and creative working on a story to produce the discourse we actually encounter' (Toolan 1988:10). In literary theory and criticism the defining property of narrative texts has generally been considered to be the existence of a temporal sequence in the *fabula* - i.e., the existence of temporal relations between events in the represented world is sufficient for narrativity to prevail (Reinhart 1984; Toolan 1988). For Labov (1972:359) however, a narrative is a text that contains at least two 'narrative clauses', which he defines as 'a sequence of two clauses which are *temporally ordered* ' : that is, their order of presentation in the text (*sjuzhet*) matches the order of occurrence of the represented events (in the *fabula*). Thus, while a narrative may contain many non-narrative clauses as well, its defining property is its organization along a temporal axis - what Labov terms the narrative 'skeleton' - which is a sequence of clauses that match the order of occurrence of the original events. In these terms, then, a narrative is just 'one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred' (p. 359). His examples (p. 360) illustrate : of the following texts, only (a) is a narrative while (b) is a non-narrative text :

University of Cape Town

(a) Well this person had a little too much to drink
and he attacked me
and the friend came in
and she stopped it.
(b) A friend of mine came in just in time
to stop this person
who had a little too much to drink
from attacking me.

It should be clear, then, that Labov's definition of narrative texts is restricted in that it applies only to a subset of texts reporting temporal events, since for him, 'narrativity is not a property of the represented world, but of the text' (Reinhart 1984:782).

(iii) *His introduction of a distinction between referential and evaluative functions of narrative.*

Labov's approach to narrative analysis is structuralist in that it seeks to identify and relate formal linguistic properties of narrative to their functions. The clause, as we've seen, is privileged as 'the smallest unit of linguistic expression which defines the functions of narrative' (Labov & Waletzky 1967:13). At the broadest level, Labov nominates two functions of clauses as essential or basic to the personal narrative : a *referential* and an *evaluative* function. 'Referential' refers to the function of recapitulating past experience or relating information (what happened, to whom, when and where). 'Evaluative' refers to the function of conveying to listeners what the events being recounted meant to the narrator; it fulfills the critical requirement of the personal narrative, according to Labov, that it should have a 'point' : 'in short, evaluation is about why the narrative was told' (Peterson & McCabe 1983:29). Thus, while for Labov the only essential pre-requisite for a narrative is the presence of at least two narrative clauses presented in an order that matches the temporal sequence of the original experience, evaluation of that experience is nonetheless 'perhaps the most important element in addition to the basic narrative clause ... [the narrative's] *raison d'etre*' (1972:366). The evaluative aspect of narrative had not been widely recognized in narrative studies prior to Labov's, partly because, as Toolan (1988:147) suggests, 'narrative has not always been properly related to its contexts of occurrence, its role as an instrument or resource for its human users.'

We move on now to consider the details of Labov's model of narrative structure.

4.1.2 Labov's theory of narrative structure

(i) *Narrative and free clauses*

As we have seen, the 'skeleton' of a personal narrative, according to Labov (1972) consists of a series of temporally ordered *narrative clauses* that must occur in a fixed sequence - i.e., a change in their ordering will result in a change in the temporal sequence of the represented events. This non-reversibility of narrative clauses is a crucial point for Labov; however, Toolan

University of Cape Town

(1988:148) notes that 'this is not an assertion of the impossibility of reordering narrative clauses as such, but simply the impossibility of doing so *while still telling the same story.*' He cites the following sequences of narrative clauses, reordered in the second instance, as examples to illustrate this point:

1 John fell in the river, got very cold, and had two large whiskies.
2 John had two large whiskies, fell in the river, and got very cold.

A further constraint which follows from this is that only independent clauses can function as narrative clauses, since subordinate clauses can be placed before, after or even within the main clause on which they depend without affecting the temporal ordering of events. The latter type are termed *free clauses* - these are clauses which are not confined by temporal juncture but have the potential of being moved anywhere in the text. Free clauses may be independent as well as subordinate : Labov (1972:361) cites as examples clauses that describe circumstances surrounding the fixed sequence of events in the narrative ('I know a boy named Harry') or general events which have occurred an indefinite number of times ('we used to go swimming there'). The definition of free clauses is essentially a semantic, rather than syntactic one, however; it is 'a clause that refers to a condition that holds true during the entire narrative.' (Labov 1997 : 401).

Labov & Waletzky (1967:22-23) identify two further clause types on the basis of their 'displacement potential', i.e., the extent to which a clause may be shifted in a narrative text without disturbing the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation : clauses with identical displacement sets are termed 'coordinate clauses', while those that have a limited range of displacement are 'restricted clauses'. Narrative and free clauses, however, are the most sharply contrasted pair of clauses in Labov's scheme. The linear sequence of narrative units represents the 'surface structure' of the narrative (*ibid.:29*)

(ii) *Elements of the fully-formed narrative*

While only the presence of a sequence of narrative clauses is strictly necessary for a text to be considered narrative, the mature or fully-formed narrative, according to Labov (1972) has a linear structure comprising several additional components, which we might summarize as follows:

	(Abstract)	:	what, in a nutshell, was this about?
	Orientation	:	who, when, what, where?
	Complicating action	:	then what happened?
Time	**High point**	:	climax
Line ↓	**Resolution**	:	what finally happened?
	Evaluation	:	so what?
	(Coda)	:	I'm finished and returning to our present situation.

University of Cape Town

Parentheses surrounding the abstract and coda indicate that these are optional elements in the sense that a narrative could still be regarded as fully-formed in their absence. The vertical line marked 'time line' indicates that the complicating actions, including their high point and resolution, comprise the temporally ordered narrative clauses that make up the skeleton of the narrative. The remaining elements (orientation and evaluation) are represented by free (or at least restricted) clauses that are not strictly bound by temporal juncture; as we shall see, they are also not bound to the positions indicated in the outline above, but can occur at any point in the narrative. The orientation section and complicating actions together clarify the referential function of the narrative, while the evaluation component answers the question of why the story was told (evaluative function). The individual components of the model are discussed below.

Abstracts and *codas* together form a category of appendages to the narrative text (Peterson & McCabe 1983) : narrative comments attached respectively to the beginning and the end of the narrative text. An abstract typically comprises a clause or two outlining, or encapsulating key features of, the story that the narrator intends will follow; the following example (Labov 1972:364) illustrates :

> An' then, three weeks ago I had a fight with this other dude outside.
> He got mad 'cause I wouldn't give him a cigarette.
> Ain't that a bitch?

Since the abstract does not add new information to the narrative as a whole but covers the same ground as the story to follow, Labov sees its function as primarily evaluative : 'the abstract not only states what the narrative is about, but why it was told' (1972:370). Codas, on the other hand, *put off* further questions about the story; they signal that the narrative is finished and may bring the listener full circle to the point at which they entered the narrative :

1 and that - that was it, you know. (1972:365)
2 that was one of the most important [fights]. (1972:359)

However, abstracts and codas are possibly better understood as discourse devices necessitated by the context of the conversational interaction in which personal narratives are told. As Polanyi (1989:47) observes,

> a competent conversationalist does not begin a story at any random moment, but tries to build a bridge from a point being made in the general state of talk to some states of affairs in the storyworld which can be seen to relate in significant ways to what is being talked about.

Seen in this light, abstracts and codas are aspects, respectively, of what Polanyi (1985, 1989) refers to as 'entrance- ' and 'exit talk' - i.e., talk which serves to smooth the transition between the story proper and the discussion in which it is embedded. Recognizing their interactive function permits identification of further possible dimensions of these narrative

University of Cape Town

components : for instance, abstracts may contain implied requests for storytelling rights ('Have I ever told you about the time when ...?') or explicit pronouncements regarding the reportability of the tale to follow ('You're lucky to see me here today...'). While these types of functions are common in natural conversational interactions, their absence from Labov's corpus is explained by the constraints of his methodology: although the context was a conversation, Labov's informants were supplying stories on request, at the invitation of interviewers, so that the need to request floor-holding rights or advertise the story to follow was obviated.

Orientation refers to those free clauses in a narrative which provide information regarding the people involved, the place and time of events or the physical situation - i.e., those elements usually referred to as 'setting' in literary theory. Orientation clauses can also refer to events or situations that occurred prior to the narrative action, ongoing events or habitual events, since these are not strictly bound by temporal juncture. It is common to find an orientation section placed at the beginning of a narrative, prior to the complicating action; in the following example, from Labov & Waletzky (1967:14), a brief abstract (a) is followed by a series of orientation clauses (b) which give the relevant background to the first of a series of complicating actions (c) :

(Were you ever in a situation where you thought you were in serious danger of getting killed?)

a I talked a man out of - Old Doc Simon I talked him out of pulling the trigger
(What happened?)

b Well, in the business I was associated at that time, the Doc was an old man ... He had killed one man, or - had done time. But he had a - young wife, and those days I dressed well. And seemingly she was trying to make me.
I never noticed it. Fact is, I didn't like her very well, because she had - - she was a nice looking girl until you saw her feet. She had big feet. Jesus, God, she had big feet!

c Then she left a note one day she was going to commit suicide ..... etc.

However, orientation can, of course, be provided at any point where it is judged necessary to clarify certain complicating actions, as in the final clause below (in an extract from the same narrative):

I talked him out of it; and says "Well, we'll go look for her, and if we can't find her, well you can - - go ahead, pull the trigger if you want to." I was maneuvering.

Labov (1972) suggests that the most interesting use of orientation is where salient aspects of it are delayed and presented late in the narrative for strategic effect; in this case, the displaced orientation serves an evaluative function. We shall see an example of this strategy in the narrative analysed in 4.3.

As the examples above illustrate, orientation clauses commonly contain verb forms other than extensive verbs in the simple past tense, which is the unmarked case for complicating

University of Cape Town

actions. We find here past progressive and past perfective forms, intensive verbs, as well as modals and auxiliaries such as 'used to' and 'would'. However, the orientation function can also be performed by phrases or lexical items contained in narrative clauses (e.g., 'then this dark-haired man called Joe turned up').

Complicating actions comprise a body of narrative clauses (defined above) that convey a series of chronologically-ordered events. The complicating actions are terminated by a result, or resolution, to these events, as in a description of a fight which ends 'and I won the fight', or an account of physical injury ending 'and I had to get seven stitches'. However, Labov & Waletzky (1967) suggest that a narrative may contain an orientation, complicating action and result, and yet not be a complete narrative; that is, while it may fulfill the referential function perfectly, it will lack significance or 'point':

> A simple sequence of complication and result does not indicate to the listener the relative importance of these events or help him distinguish complication from resolution ... Therefore it is necessary for the narrator to delineate the structure of the narrative by *emphasizing the point where the complication has reached a maximum* : the break between the complication and the result. Most narratives contain an evaluation section which carries out this function. (pp. 34-5, my italics).

This moment of maximum significance in the complicating action has been labelled the 'high point' by Peterson & McCabe (1983), who consequently termed Labov's model of narrative structure 'high point analysis' - an appellation since adopted by many other researchers. The high point can be understood as the climax of the story and is roughly equivalent to Polanyi's (1985, 1989) 'key event' : like Labov, she emphasizes that the onus is on the narrator to indicate clearly which of the mainline events of the narrative effects a meaningful change in the state of affairs in the storyworld. In order to understand how this is accomplished, we need to look at the final, and critical, component of the fully-formed narrative, that of evaluation.

Evaluation consists of the various linguistic means used by the narrator to establish and develop the significance of a series of events, the point or *raison d'etre* of the story. It is therefore the means by which the narrator signals her or his personal perspective on the events being recounted. Stories lacking evaluation are met, according to Labov (1972:366), with the withering rejoinder 'So what?' - a question every competent narrator will be anxious to ward off.

Evaluation tends to be concentrated around the high point of the complicating action. When used to optimum effect, evaluative clauses delay or suspend the action at this critical point, thus intensifying the impact of the resolving event or action when it finally comes. In recounting one of the worst fights of his life (with 'the baddest girl in the neighbourhood'), an adolescent informant of Labov's (1972:359) suspends the action between the time his opponent hits him (t)

University of Cape Town

for not bringing her candy to school and the time he decisively hits her back (z) :

t	She says powww!	[she hit me]
u	So I says to myself, "There's gonna be times my mother won't give me money because (we're) a poor family	
v	And I can't take this all, you know, every time she don't give me money	
w	So I say, "Well, I just gotta fight this girl.	
x	She gonna hafta whup me.	
y	I hope she don't whup me."	
z	And I hit the girl : powwwww!	
aa	and I put something on it	[I hit her hard]
bb	I win the fight	

Labov points out that the inner dialogue with its implied emotions expressed in clauses u - y must have been instantaneous, or even simultaneous with the action in z, but by stopping the action in order to elaborate them in separate clauses, the narrator calls attention to the significance of the event to follow. In short, 'evaluation sections are responsible for those deviations from the order of the primary sequence of the narrative that complicate the a-then-b relationship of narrative' (Labov & Waletzky 1967:36). Evaluative devices are not confined to the climactic point of the narrative, however, but may be distributed throughout the narrative, serving to emphasize the relative importance of some narrative events compared to others.

Evaluation can be expressed via phonological, lexical, syntactic or discourse devices (levels which will be explored further in 4.3.7). Labov (1972) makes a basic distinction, however, between internal and external evaluation, according to whether it occurs inside or outside the fixed-position narrative clauses. He claims that 'the narrative clause itself is one of the simplest grammatical patterns in connected speech' (p. 375), comprising a basic structure of sentence connective, subject noun-phrase and verb phrase, and that departures from this simple pattern have a marked evaluative force. Internal evaluation, then, comprises four categories of linguistic devices that complicate the syntax of the basic narrative clause : intensifiers ('and I punched her *powwww*!', 'he had cuts *all* over'), comparators (including negatives, futures, modals, imperatives and comparatives : 'I never came nearer booting a dog in my life'), correlatives (progressives and appended particles, double appositives and double attributives : 'she was a big, burly-looking, dark type sort of a girl, a real geechy-looking girl') and explicatives (appended subordinate clauses which qualify, or give reasons for, the narrative events : 'and when we realized that we were really out of danger ...'). Labov acknowledges that while some of these syntactic features occur in clauses having a purely referential function (that is, they clarify the factual circumstances surrounding events), most occurrences are closely linked to the evaluation of the narrative. In

University of Cape Town

practice, however, the distinction between orientation and evaluative components may not be clearcut : for instance, the description of Old Doc Simon's young wife in the narrative quoted earlier ('She was a nice looking girl until you saw her feet ... Jesus, God, she had big feet!') is both referential and evaluative in function.

External evaluation, on the other hand, is expressed in clauses separate from the fixed narrative events. It includes comments made from the perspective of outside the storyworld ('it was the strangest feeling, because ...'), comments or thoughts reported as occurring to the teller-as-participant at the time of events ('I said, "O my God, here it is!"') or having been said to other participants ('I say "Calvin, I'm bust your head for that!"'), or coming from another participant ('And the doctor just says, "Just about this much more," he says, "and you'd a been dead."'); it also includes evaluative actions which reveal the feelings or tensions of participants without quoting dialogue ('I never prayed to God so fast and so hard in my life!'; 'I was shakin' like a leaf'). Whether these clauses should necessarily be considered separate from the narrative action is debatable, however : Toolan (1988), Ely & McCabe (1993) and Peterson & McCabe (1997) have questioned Labov's privileging of actions over words ('what is done' in a story becomes the core text of narrative clauses, while 'what is said' becomes evaluative commentary on those actions), arguing that in many instances, 'what is said' constitutes the essential complicating action. Polanyi (1989) suggests that in the case of reported speech, the matrix clause containing subject NP and verb of saying (or thinking) be regarded as a discrete, instantaneous event on the narrative timeline, while *what* is said is not.

4.1.3 Applications of Labov's model to children's narratives

The best known application of Labov's theory to children's conversational narratives is that of Peterson & McCabe (1983) who analysed 1124 narratives told by 96 children ranging in age from four to nine years, making this, incidentally, one of the largest corpora of oral narratives in childhood. The children came from different social backgrounds to Labov's subjects, being from predominantly working-class, White families in small-town mid-Western America. Peterson & McCabe adapted Labov's method of eliciting personal narratives in a procedure previously detailed (in chapter 1) and developed a meticulous clause-coding scheme based on Labov's model of narrative structure. Their findings showed that the 'classic' high-point pattern of narrating was established by the age of six and became the dominant pattern from this stage onwards, while up to the age of six, several interesting developmental shifts in narrative structure took place. At four, children produced some proportion of 'impoverished' narratives (containing too few events, repeated several times) as well as 'disoriented' narratives (characterized by confused or contradictory representations of events). However, the most common type of narrative structure at

University of Cape Town

four years was the 'leap-frog' pattern, 'where the child jumps from event to event unsystematically, leaving out important events (1983:48) and placing a heavy burden of reconstruction on the listener. Within a year, the leap-frog pattern declined considerably, although 'chronological' stories persisted; these are stories that achieve a temporal sequence of events but lack a clear point or integratedness to the material (i.e. stories that fulfill the referential but not the evaluative function). Development occurred in two main phases from this point on. Firstly, at age five, the preference for leap-frog and chronological structures gave way to experimentation with 'end-at-high-point' narratives; these are stories having most of the attributes of the classic pattern but ending abruptly without any resolution. At this stage too, there was some growth in the ability to use the classic formula, and continued use of the chronological pattern in one narrative out of four. The second phase of development occurred at age six, with a permanent shift in favour of the classic pattern as the dominant mode for narrating.

More recently, Champion *et al.* (1995) largely replicated Peterson & McCabe's findings in a study of the development of personal narrative structure in African-American children aged six to ten years. They suggest, however, that narratives classed as immature (e.g. the 'leapfrogging' pattern) reveal a complexity that is not captured by high-point analysis when analysed, from a sociolinguistic perspective, as cultural constructs. Taken together, these findings thus lend support to the Labovian model of narrative structure, but suggest, too, that there are other ways of structuring narrative that may nonetheless be perceived as comprehensible to listeners. This point was made in chapter 1 (1.1), in the discussion of cultural differences in styles of narrative construction, but can perhaps best be illustrated by the results of studies by Minami & McCabe (1991) and Minami (1996a) in which Labovian analysis was applied to the personal narratives of Japanese five- to nine-year-olds. While analysing narratives into lines and stanzas (see section 4.2), the authors also coded each clause in terms of the Labovian categories of orientation, action, evaluation, etc., and found that their data necessitated the addition of a further category, which they labelled 'outcome', representing the results of specific actions. The Japanese narratives did not resemble a high point structure, but rather presented multiple experiences (on average three) related to the same topic; these different experiences were each conveyed succinctly via three-line stanzas with the form 'orientation - action - outcome', a form also found in *haiku* poetry.

Furthermore, Hudson & Shapiro (1991) argue that both the topic and the context of narrating influence whether or not high point structures will be produced. When children are requested to produce a narrative (as in experimental elicitation contexts) on topics selected by an examiner and representing familiar events, they are far less likely to structure their accounts around a high point than when spontaneously relating novel events. We should recall here the

University of Cape Town

specific circumstances in which Labov's own narrative data was elicited : much of his analysis was performed on the accounts of adolescent gang members for whom building self-image via verbal displays of prowess was a central concern, and who were specifically invited to relate a dangerous or life-threatening experience. Evaluation and elaboration around a climactic event involving the narrator would undoubtedly fulfill this dual requirement. Thus, Labov's classic high point structure may be subject to both a cultural and a methodological bias.

4.1.4 Appraisal of Labov's theory of narrative structure

Two chief aspects of Labov's model are particularly helpful to the analyst of conversational narratives in that they seem to have widespread or universal application within this genre. Firstly, his recognition of the distinction between referential and evaluative components captures an essential feature of the personal narrative, as distinct from a report, that of conveying a personal perspective on the events recounted. Indeed, critics of Labov's notion of evaluation (e.g., Watson 1973; Bamberg 1987; Toolan 1988; Berman 1997; Daiute & Nelson 1997) have not taken issue with the concept itself, only with problems in defining and categorizing it.

A second defining feature of narrative texts is encapsulated in Labov's distinction between the narrative 'skeleton' (the core sequence of narrative clauses recapitulating events) and non-narrative 'flesh' (circumstances surrounding events and explications of their significance). Reinhart (1984) suggests, in fact, that this foreground/background distinction in narrative is so basic as to be the linguistic counterpart of the perceptual distinction between figure and ground proposed in gestalt theory. The crucial property defining relations of figure and ground, according to Reinhart, is the functional dependency of figure upon ground : that is, the chain of events represented on the temporal axis of a narrative is meaningless in and of itself; its interpretation or significance can only be determined by the background. Foreground narrative clauses have the distinctive purpose of moving forward the time-line of the story relative to the reference time of the previous narrative clause. Non-narrative background material includes orientation and evaluation, i.e., (a) non-temporal clauses needed either for full construction of the represented events or for interpretation of the story's 'point', and (b) temporal material which the narrator chooses to represent as background. Since the latter does not advance reference time it must be marked by linguistic means - via aspect and morphological markers (e.g. perfect or progressive aspect) or clausal subordination. This foreground/background distinction has been widely accepted in research on personal narratives and will be taken for granted in this present work, although with two caveats, discussed earlier : the first is that Labov's definition of the minimal narrative as comprising two narrative clauses containing a temporal juncture may be too restrictive for application to early childhood narratives; the second is that the reporting of

University of Cape Town

evaluative comments that are spoken or thought at a particular point in events might be considered part of the core action in a story.

The chief limitation of Labov's model lies in his assumption of a 'classic', linear structure to the personal narrative, with a dramatic progression from orientation to complicating action, building to an evaluated high point and subsequent resolution. We have already seen that this structure may be limited to certain social groups and/or to certain types of narrative data; however, it is also limiting in terms of its potential for exploring the linguistic complexities of narrative texts. In Labov's scheme, narratives have a linear structure in which different sections (abstract, orientation, complicating action, etc.) present different kinds of information. Each section has a different function within the story as a whole. Working downwards, each section is comprised of different types of clauses whose syntactic and semantic properties contribute to their identity as units within the story and to their function (Schiffrin 1994). Put another way, Labov focuses on the level of the semantic propositions conveyed by individual clauses which are further analysed for their syntactic properties. He also acknowledges the social-pragmatic functions of narrative (expressed through the evaluative dimension) at the level of individual clauses. However, his interpretation of how clausal propositions hang together at a macrostructure level is restricted to one particular structural possibility. In this sense, Labov's is a top-down approach, in which the analysis of interacting levels of discourse structure must conform to one type of global schema for narrating. In the following section we examine an alternative approach to narrative analysis that operates in a bottom-up fashion, by analysing the surface prosodic, syntactic, semantic and discourse markers in narrative texts in order to generate hypotheses about the global structures that shape their production.

University of Cape Town

4.2 Line, verse and stanza analysis

The observation that oral narratives are patterned into lines and groups of lines (verses, stanzas and larger units) is by no means new, but has mostly been confined to the context of traditional stories and myths of 'oral' cultures (e.g., Finnegan 1970; Scheub 1975; Tedlock 1977; Hymes 1982; Scollon & Scollon 1981). We begin here with a brief look at the development of this notion by the linguistic ethnographer Dell Hymes, in the course of his study of Native American oral texts (1981, 1982, 1985, 1990), and then move on to consider in more detail its elaboration by James Gee (1985, 1986, 1989, 1991a, 1991b), who has argued the validity, on psycholinguistic grounds, of lines and stanzas as universal, basic units in the production of narrative discourse.

4.2.1 Hymes : Verse patterning in Native American oral narratives

(i) *Units of narrative structure*

Analysing oral narratives recorded by himself and others from speakers of American Indian languages, Hymes found recurring patterns of textual units that he termed (in ascending hierarchy) lines, verses, stanzas, scenes and acts. While each of these levels of textual organization show form-meaning relations, the relations vary in directness and consistency. *Lines* are identified chiefly in terms of predicate phrases or, in the case of sentences which do not require a verb, by linguistic features such as repetitions and parallelisms. *Verses* are groups of lines that are most directly and consistently marked 'by a single, definable set of linguistic features, namely, sentence-initial particles' (1981:151); these are typically conjunctions or adverbs such as 'now then', 'and', or 'again'. Further evidence for verses as recurring units in narrative is provided by two common types of sequential relationships (Hymes 1981:150) : descriptive cataloguing (illustrated in verse (1) below) and cumulative repetition of action (illustrated in verses (2) - (6)[1]). Lines in these extracts are represented in spatial relationship to one another, underscoring Hymes' argument that the presentation of texts in blocks of prose obscures their inherent patterning : 'the presentation of lines does one of the things that I think is crucial ... It slows down the eye. One reads for form as well as information' (1982:122).

(1) Now then he awoke,
a woman was sleeping with him,
a very beautiful woman :
her hair was long,
and bracelets right up to here on her arms,
and her fingers were full of rings,
and he saw a house all painted inside with designs,
and he saw a mountain-sheep blanket covering him,
both him and his wife.

(2) Now then did he fish with hook and line;
he caught one sucker,
half he ate,
half did he save;
again, morning, he ate half.

University of Cape Town

1 Verses (1) through (6) are extracts from the Chinookan text 'The Deserted Boy', recorded by Edward Sapir at Yakima Reservation, Washington, in 1905. The presentation and analysis of the text is that of Hymes (1981:145-9).

(3) Now again did he go to fish,
he caught two,
one he ate,
one he saved,
again, morning, he ate one.

(4) Now again in the morning did he go to fish,
he caught three suckers,
he ate one and a half,
again, morning, he ate one and a half.

(5) Now again he went to fish,
he caught four suckers,
two he ate,
two he saved,
morning, he ate now all two.

(6) Now again did he go to fish for the fifth time;
now five times the boy had fished;
now he had become a grown man. (1981:146-7)

Verses (2) - (6) constitute, in the context of the narrative as a whole, a single stanza. *Stanzas* are defined by Hymes (1990) as groups of one or more verses, and are again discernable in terms of certain kinds of sequential patterns. Thus, while verses provide the frame within which lines are identifiable, they are also the units whose groupings provide for stanzas, and through stanzas, scenes (1981:151). Stanzas show verbal repetition and parallelism of content both internally and externally - i.e., among verses within stanzas and among stanzas that go together with a scene. *Scenes* are groups of one or more stanzas and are usually associated with a change in the timing or location of events as well as, often, a linguistic marker; they are grouped together, in turn, into *acts*, according to the same types of content and formal criteria.

In Hymes' analysis, then, higher levels of textual organization (stanzas, scenes and acts) show some direct marking by linguistic features, but most of the relation to linguistic features is derived from, and depends on, the patterning of lower level units - primarily verses (1981:151). He acknowledges that the interaction of the several levels of textual organization is found only through a painstaking process of searching for, and reconsidering, the evidence for integral units, but insists that 'one is not free to make *ad hoc* decisions as to the status of a feature' (*ibid.*, 151), as long as one adheres to two basic principles - namely, that there is a consistent structure and that it is to be found in the covariation of meaning and linguistic form.

(ii) *Verse patterning as a 'grammar of experience'*

Hymes argues that the organization of oral narrative texts into lines and verses, etc., is 'so pervasive that it may embody an implicit logic of experience, a rhetoric of action' (1982:121). This is illustrated most explicitly in the formal patterning of texts around certain numbers that are

University of Cape Town

sacred in Native American cultures. For instance, the representation of experience in terms of textual units grouped into threes and fives is a recurrent characteristic of Chinookan narratives (as in verses (2) - (6) above), whereas among the Zuni, units occur in clusters of two and four. Hymes suggests that since the telling of stories was the chief means of explaining and understanding experience in such cultures, children were the main audience for oral narrative literature; the recurrence of formal patterns of textual organization meant that children were inducted repeatedly into particular ways of organizing experience :

> In the serious and scheduled occasions when children were the specific audience for the telling of myths or when children were simply present when myths or other narratives were being told, not only were samples of language being presented, but over and over again, at every level, an implicit organization of experience into set, satisfying patterns was being conveyed and internalized. (1982:121-2).

That narrative is a cognitive representation or structuring of experience is an uncontroversial notion (see chapter 1); what we should note here, however, is that while Labov explores the linguistic means available to narrators for conveying *personal* meaning or significance, Hymes' emphasis is on deeply-rooted cultural norms for the form of reported experience :

> the relationships between verses (and often, but not always between lines) are grounded in an implicit cultural patterning of the form of action ... such that the form of language and the form of culture are one and the same at this point. (1982:140).

The kind of pervasive and repetitive patterning of oral discourse described by Hymes is of course familiar from biblical narratives and epic poetry (e.g., Lord 1960), and has been found in many languages and cultures other than Native American having similarly rich repositories of oral history and mythology (e.g., Finnegan 1970; Scollon & Scollon 1984; Scheub 1975). The question arises, however, as to whether it occurs amongst non-traditional social groupings with fewer connections to an oral culture; if not, this approach to narrative analysis may be of limited use. Hymes (1982, 1990) speculated that such form is potential in every language and speech community, as 'a universal concomitant, or better, dimension of language' (1990:102), although he acknowledges that it may be less consistently present in non-traditional societies. He suggests that 'good storytelling gets washed out by all the media and events that influence people's experience with the language' (1982:139) but that when people lapse into the performance (in Wolfson's (1982) sense) of a story, some of this kind of patterning starts to show up; he claims, in fact, to have found some evidence of it in Labov's adolescent narratives. In Hymes' view, this patterning may be part of what the (largely pre-literate) child in any community brings to school, although it will tend to be debased by formal education which favours literate modes of communication.

University of Cape Town

Hymes therefore leaves us with some interesting speculation as to the universality of verse patterning in oral narrative production. James Gee's work, discussed below, has provided further support for the validity of this approach to narrative analysis. Gee's work takes line and stanza analysis outside the domain of anthropological studies of 'oral cultures' and thus offers clarity on some of the issues raised here.

4.2.2 Gee : Line and stanza analysis of personal narratives

Gee's contribution to the development of the line and stanza approach has been the careful analysis of a handful of narratives produced by children and adults from working-class black and middle- and working-class white American backgrounds (Gee 1985, 1986, 1989, 1991b, 1997) as well as an institutionalized schizophrenic adult (1991a). Like Hymes, he argues that the patterning of narrative discourse into lines, stanzas and larger groupings of lines reflects a universal aspect of human discourse competence, a claim he defends on psycholinguistic grounds (1986).

Gee's approach, while roughly similar to Hymes', shows two basic points of departure : the first relates to the importance attached to prosodic aspects of narrative data, and the second to actual designations of textual units. Hymes (1982) rejects an approach to analysis based on listening to the actual speaking voice of the narrator, arguing that the fundamental criterion for determining line-units is syntactic, not phonetic. In contrast, Gee (1991a:23) claims that 'how a text is actually *said* is crucial to the structure we assign it'; thus, the prosodic pattern of narrating serves as an initial cue to the structures behind the narrative performance. Additionally, the actual units of structure identified by Gee are slightly different to those of Hymes, though in some cases the differences seem largely terminological.

(i) *Units of narrative structure*

Gee proceeds from the assumption that spontaneous oral discourse in any culture bears overt markers of its structure and that by analysing these surface markers one can induce the structures that underlie and shape the production of the discourse. He uses 'converging evidence from prosody, pausing, structural and semantic parallelism, and stylistic analysis to argue for a series of hypotheses about units that appear to organize the construction of discourse' (1986:408).

At the lowest level, Gee appeals to the widely accepted notion that all spoken discourse is produced as a series of short bursts of speech, each corresponding to a unit of information and hence known as idea units. Likewise, he demonstrates that spoken narratives are produced as a series of idea units. Prosodically, an idea unit has a unitary intonation contour and bears one prominent pitch glide, signalling the focus of the idea unit - the particular word or words that the speaker wishes the hearer to take as new, salient or asserted information (Gee 1991a), while junctural phenomena (e.g., pausing, terminal pitch glide, final syllable lengthening) indicate its

University of Cape Town

boundaries[2]. The direction of the pitch glide (rising, falling, rise-fall, etc.) may signal additional perspectives on the information in the focus. Syntactically, idea units tend to constitute single clauses; exceptions do occur, however, such as when the subject NP of a clause, or an adverbial element, is new information in itself and therefore constitutes a separate idea unit. In these cases, once the element is introduced as an idea unit, it can be incorporated as old information in subsequent idea units :

an' ... my mother	(newly introduced to the discourse)
my mother	
my mother's bakin' a cake	(Gee 1986:395)

Idea units, together with the dysfluencies (hesitations, false starts, repairs, etc.) and speech errors that characterize all spontaneous speech, 'reflect the on-line planning and production of speech, the mind actively at work' (1989:288). Like many other prosodic and discourse analysts (e.g., Halliday 1967; Crystal 1975; Chafe 1982) Gee argues, however, that the simple clause is the basic linguistic unit underlying this process. Thus, when dysfluencies and speech errors are removed from the text, and adverbial or noun phrases that constitute separate idea units are collapsed into their matrix clauses, one gets an 'ideal' realization of the narrative text that 'reflects quite clearly the overall shape and patterning of a text, the "ideal" or underlying structure the mind is "aiming" at' (1989:288). This ideal structure comprises what Gee refers to as *lines*, each one of which contains a single argument, expressed as a simple clause, a verb of saying and what is said, or a 'heavy' pre- or post-clausal modifier (e.g. "and then you know just all of a sudden"). Furthermore, lines typically begin with a connective (of which the most ubiquitous is "and"). We should note here that Gee is essentially in agreement with Labov in viewing the clause as a basic unit of narrative analysis. Gee prefers to call these units 'lines', however, partly 'in order to make contact with the literature on oral narrative in oral cultures' (1986:395), but also 'because it seems that their most salient properties ... have little to do with their being clauses per se' (1986:395). Evidence for line structure in narrative texts, according to Gee (1986) comes from converging sources : their prosodic, semantic, syntactic and discourse properties. That is, lines are typically marked at the beginning (by a connective or hesitation) and at the end (by pitch and junctural phenomena), in terms of their internal structure (correspondence with a clause) and their relationship to adjacent lines (patterns of syntactic and semantic parallelism - discussed below).

University of Cape Town

---

2 In languages other than English, different devices for marking focused information may be used.

Lines pattern into larger units which Gee calls *stanzas* (a term roughly equivalent to Hymes' 'verse'). Stanzas are 'clusters of lines narrowly constrained in structure and topic' (1986:409). That is, they constitute a group of lines (often around 4) about a single, quite narrow, topic or theme, that shows internal patterning in rhythmic, semantic and syntactic structure (Gee 1991a). Functionally, each new stanza in a narrative tends to mark a shift in perspective - for example, a change of character, event, location, time or narrative function. The grouping of lines into stanzas is signalled by a variety of linguistic devices that Gee suggests may be different for different languages and dialects of the same language; they include topic chaining (an NP in the first line is referred to anaphorically in subsequent lines), phonological, rhythmic, syntactic and/or semantic patterning of words and phrases across lines in a stanza, and patterns of pausing and dysfluencies (both are common at the beginning of stanzas, providing further evidence for their status as units of discourse planning). Thus, as is the case for line structure, arguments for the demarcation of texts into stanzas are based on converging linguistic (patterning, syntax, intonation, topic structure) and psycholinguistic (pausing, rate, dysfluencies caused by planning) evidence. 'It is with stanzas', Gee (1986:409) claims, 'that discourse takes its most definitive step beyond syntax'.

In the narratives of working-class black children (Gee 1985, 1986, 1989), patterns of repetition and syntactic and semantic parallelism between lines are the most striking defining feature of stanzas, as illustrated in the following extracts from the personal narrative of a seven-year-old black girl, Leona, to her class at school :

> an' my mother's bakin' a cake
> an' I went up my grandmother's house while my mother's bakin' a cake
> an' my mother was bakin' a cheese cake
> my grandmother was bakin' a whipped cream cup cakes
>
> she said mmmmm
> she had all chocolate on her face / cream / strawberries
> she said mmmmm
> that was good (Gee 1986:411-2)

In addition to the patterns created by repetition and parallelism, lines in stanzas tend to be bound together by prosodic devices of rhythm, stress, pitch and rate. Gee (1986) suggests that while not all stanzas are as transparently patterned as the ones cited above, these transparently patterned stanzas give us the clues we need to identify stanzas as operative in text production. In the narratives of middle-class, literate speakers, parallelism also exists as a binding principle in stanza structure, although it tends to be less overt. For instance, Gee (1986) demonstrates in a comparative analysis of Leona's stories with one from an elderly, white, middle-class school-

University of Cape Town

teacher that the latter also uses stanzas as a basic unit of narrative organization, although there are several superficial differences in their form. The teacher organizes her stanzas quite narrowly around elements of (a) a time, (b) a place, and (c) a topic or theme, with each stanza exemplifying these elements at progressively more specific levels. Furthermore, although her idea units are not clausal, she integrates them, like Leona, into lines that are clause- or sentence-like and that have one piece of salient information together with information that is redundant or given.

Stanzas group themselves in turn into larger *parts*, signalling major transitions of topic and theme in the narrative as a whole, and roughly equivalent to Hymes' 'acts'. Parts, again, are defined by converging criteria (1986:399) : they constitute single, larger topic units, with consistency of theme, place, time or major characters; within them, stanzas may fall into particular structure or patterns; their boundaries may be identifiable additionally by cues from intonation, pausing, adverbial openers and hesitations. A unit intermediate between stanza and part structure sometimes occurs, where stanzas fall into related pairs, which Gee (1991a) terms *strophes*; in these cases, the second stanza essentially repeats the content of the first, or it only slightly furthers the narrative line. An example, also from Leona's 'cakes' story (1986:412) illustrates; in these adjacent stanzas, the second matches the first, line for line, in content - a form of parallelism operating across stanzas :

last night
my grandmother snuck out
an' she ate all the cake
an' we hadda make more

an' we was sleepin'
an' she went in the room
an' gobbled 'em up
an' we hadda bake a whole bunch more

Like Hymes, then, Gee argues for a hierarchical structure to narrative, in contrast with the linear structure proposed by Labov. In all of the speakers whose narratives he analyses, the following units of narrative performance could be demonstrated. At the lowest level, idea units are integrated into lines that are typically clausal and that have one piece of salient information together with information that is given, redundant or less foregrounded. At the highest level, the narrative is organized around parts, similar to the acts of a play. In between, the crucial mediating structure is the stanza, which both organizes the lines of narrative text and constitutes the internal structure of parts. Stanzas thus 'seem to be a crucial switching device that mediates between the line and the larger narrative structure of the text' (1986:401). Furthermore, Gee claims a psychological status for stanzas, arguing that his evidence suggests that

University of Cape Town

> Stanzas are a universal part of the human language production system for extended pieces of language. They are, I believe, the same units that psycholinguists have referred to as "encoding cycles" ... I have shown ... , however, that English speakers from different social groups pattern language within stanzas differently, and that this is one of the most salient ways in which groups differ from each other in how they use language to make sense in extended forms of language like narrative (1991a:25).

In section 4.2.3 we look at the significance of these differences in stanza and narrative organization. Before doing so, however, we take a look at later work (1991a) of Gee's, in which he takes the notion of hierarchy of structure beyond the level of lines, stanzas and parts.

(ii) *Hierarchical levels of structure and meaning in narrative*

Gee (1991a) uses a personal narrative elicited from an adult, schizophrenic woman to illustrate his theory that narrative texts are structured at five hierarchical levels, each of which is tied to line and stanza structure. The first, basic level, then, consists of the units of line, stanza, strophe and part, which 'cut a narrative into blocks of hierarchically related pieces of information - the ideas, events, characters and states that make up the material of the narrative' (p.27). This structure is the framework in terms of which all other levels operate. The second level is that of *syntax and cohesion*; the syntactic system, including word order and grammatical words, integrates material within lines, while cohesive devices (including conjunctions, anaphora, ellipsis, etc.,) link lines to each other within stanzas and connect stanzas across the whole narrative. Together these specify the connections the speaker claims to exist within the material of the story, hence the 'logic' of the narrative. At the third level of structure, the narrator again uses formal linguistic markers, this time the verbal and aspectual system, to distinguish *mainline* from *off-mainline material*. Mainline events, conveying the narrative 'plot', comprise main clauses marked with the perfective aspect or, alternatively, the CHP; off-mainline material , comprising states and generic, repeated or habitual events, offers the means for interpreting mainline events. The fourth level is that at which *psychological subjects* are identified; these are represented by the grammatical subjects of main clauses (whether on or off the mainline) and convey the point of view from which the material in a stanza is viewed, or 'what the narrator is "empathizing" with' (p.30), and how this might shift through the story. The fifth and highest level of structure and meaning in narrative is that of the *focusing system*. While each of the lower levels set up interpretive questions for the listener, these are ultimately answered at this level. Focus is marked (in English) by pitch and stress at the level of the idea unit; the total of the focused material within and across stanzas comprises the key images or themes out of which we build an overall interpretation of the narrative. Thus,

> our overall interpretation of a narrative is constrained by what is focused, and it is also constrained by the need to "sensefully" answer the interpretive questions that have been

University of Cape Town

> set by all the lower levels of structure in the narrative ... at this level, interpretation is a "reading" of the focused material (viewed as key images or themes) within the overall structure of the narrative. I call this sort of reading *thematic interpretation.* (p. 33)

As we shall see in the following section, it is at this level of thematic interpretation, Gee argues, that we are able to perceive deeper commonalities amongst narratives that are different in structure and style.

4.2.3 Application of line and stanza analysis to children's narratives

A considerable portion of the research on children's narratives has emphasized differences among social groups in their construction of personal stories; in particular, 'oral' versus 'literate' styles of narrative production have been contrasted (e.g., Michaels 1981; Michaels & Collins 1984). The 'literate' style is exemplified by the linear, topic-centred, report-style narrative associated with middle class or 'mainstream' children and the 'oral' style by the poetic, topic-associating stories said to be characteristic of some working-class African-American children. Gee's work also points to a contrast between oral and literate (or poetic and prosaic) modes of narrating, but he insists that the differences are relatively superficial and not reflective of fundamentally distinct genres.

Leona's stories (of which we have seen extracts above) typify the 'oral' narrative. Gee (1989) describes her style as essentially spatializing (in creating patterns of thematic contrast, within and across stanzas, that render a narrative simultaneously whole, rather than a linear sequence) and performative (in its use of expressive sound devices to create a dramatic performance in which the listener is caught up). In contrast, he found the narratives of a young, white, middle-class girl ('Sandy', analysed in Gee 1989) to be characterized by linear and analytical devices associated with expository prose. Rather than shape language itself to create patterning, Sandy uses content as an organizing principle for the information and analytic structure of the events she describes. Rather than rely on prosody and discourse connections to convey coherence, she draws on lexical and syntactic resources. While Sandy's style of narrating conforms to the essayist, expository modes of writing and speaking expected by formal education, Leona's stories, with their pervasive patterns of repetition and parallelism, have more in common with traditional poetry and the mythical narratives of oral cultures, including Hymes' American Indians. Her style of narrating tends to be negatively judged (by schools, principally) as a poor shot at coherence (a view which, Gee (1985) points out, simply reflects the literate bias of our culture) and is seen furthermore as atypical, since less reflective of the influences of schools, literacy and modernity. Like Hymes, Gee claims that, on the contrary, this style is somehow more fundamental or basic to human narrative competence and has simply been obscured by exposure

University of Cape Town

to a dominant, middle-class, literate culture, especially by schooling as it embodies the norms of that culture. He speculates that :

> The practices of these nonmainstream people reflect the fundamental, normal, unmarked nature of human narrative, and it is the practices of the mainstream group that need to be explained, in the sense that they deviate from what we would expect (1991b:8).

More interestingly, however, he argues that, on a deeper level, literate middle-class narratives work in the same way and have basic commonalities with those in the oral style, a position which renders the oral-literate (or story-report) contrast a false dichotomy. Gee uses two arguments to substantiate this claim : firstly, as we have already seen, his work suggests that all speech is produced in terms of lines and stanzas, although different cultures and social groups will organize language within stanzas in 'different and culturally distinctive ways' (1991b:9). We have seen examples of this in Gee's comparative analysis of Leona's stories with those of a white, middle class child (Sandy) and an adult (the retired teacher). Secondly, Gee (1991b) demonstrates that the deeper, non-literal meaning of narratives like Sandy's is largely spatial in form, the actual sequence of events being secondary in importance at this level except as they serve to set up contrasting themes. Thus, despite its overt differences, Sandy's text, just as Leona's, is essentially organized thematically around contrasts or oppositions that are juxtaposed throughout the text, creating a satisfying pattern of themes that each speaker ultimately draws from her own social traditions.

4.2.4 Appraisal of the line and stanza approach to narrative analysis

Schiffrin (1994), in her review of approaches to the analysis of general discourse, suggests that two main issues differentiate the different perspectives on this topic : firstly, whether the data-base for analysis consists of constructed utterances in hypothetical contexts or actual spoken utterances; secondly, the degree to which analysts are prepared to view texts as independent of their contexts. Labov and Gee (as well as Hymes) share similar standpoints regarding both issues. Both use as their starting points socially-situated narratives, elicited by naturalistic methods and both emphasize close analysis of what is actually said, although Gee alone extends this principle to the study of prosodic aspects of spoken narratives. Despite this, both are willing to view the structure of narrative as largely independent of surrounding talk; that is, in both 'high point' and line/stanza analysis, narratives are treated as relatively autonomous textual units within which smaller parts are linguistically defined and systematically related to one another.

The nature of narrative itself justifies a relatively context-independent analysis, however, providing one does not seek to claim that its meaning resides solely within the text. Labov and Gee have demonstrated, in different ways, that narratives are a type of discourse with quite

University of Cape Town

regular internal structure that can be analysed linguistically apart from the immediate interactional contexts in which they are told. However, like any other type of discourse, they are not independent of either personal or social meanings - a fact which both researchers have emphasized in equal measure. Labov focuses on the personal value that a particular experience has for the narrator and argues that this is primarily responsible for the evaluative structure of narrative. Additionally, his methods for eliciting narratives derive directly from his beliefs regarding the nature of linguistic variation (that heterogeneity in language is patterned socially as well as linguistically) and the fallacy of the notion of 'verbal deprivation' (that it is due to predictable sociolinguistic factors operating on investigator and child in an asymmetrical interview situation). Gee (1991b) takes the idea of narrative as socially-situated even further, claiming a 'socio-historical' view of human memory and hence personal narrative. In this view, any personal narrative must be seen as embedded in a larger narrative context, arising from one's history, traditions, socialization and the stories told within one's community. Nonetheless, he defends a linguistic theory of narrative, on the grounds that

> Contemporary work on narrative, particularly work influenced by literary theory, has greatly undersold how much meaning is, in fact, available in the structure of the language of a text. It is the job of linguistics ... to make this clear. (p.16)

An essential difference in approach between Labov and Gee, however, is that while Labov imposes an *a priori* scheme for what constitutes a good narrative, Gee's final interpretation of a story is based on hypotheses generated by evidence from several levels of linguistic analysis. Herein lies the difficulty with line and stanza analysis : even though the analyst must provide support for a particular structural analysis, based on constellations of linguistic features, the possibility remains that other equally plausible readings of the text exist. This is because 'the delineation of lines and stanzas within texts is not a linguistic "given" in that there is no one defining set of characteristics on which to base an analysis' (Hicks 1991:61). Gee himself concedes that one cannot offer conclusive evidence for the presence of underlying structure from analysing surface performance; nonetheless, he argues that by appealing to various sources of evidence, it is possible to demonstrate that they converge on the same analysis. Accepting this central difficulty, the value of line and stanza analysis lies in its acknowledgement of alternative ways of creating coherence (or sense-making, as Gee would put it); hence it allows for an exploration of individual and sociocultural differences in how children organize their narratives structurally and thematically.

University of Cape Town

In the remaining section of this chapter, I outline my own approach to narrative analysis, which draws heavily on Gee's guidelines for the delineation of units of discourse, while incorporating several aspects of Labov's approach to analysing the semantic propositions conveyed by lines.

4.3 A linguistic framework for analysing narrative structure

In this section I analyse in some detail a narrative produced in conversation by a twenty-one-year-old, white, South African male[3], in order to elucidate the framework for analysis that is used in chapters 5 and 6 to examine the narratives of children in the Kensington/Factreton sample. The narrative may offer a useful comparison with the child data that follows, for two reasons. Firstly, since the narrator is adult, his account allows us to examine some of the more complex linguistic devices for constructing narrative that may be beyond the reach of child narrators. Secondly, since the narrator has a different socio-cultural and educational background to the subjects in this study, we would expect to find differences in his construction of narrative but also, and less obviously perhaps, similarities, if we accept Gee's theory (4.2.3) that differences between narrative styles are relatively superficial or a matter of degree. The narrative itself was recounted in the course of conversation amongst a small group of university students who were friends; one of the participants, a Linguistics major, recorded a part of the conversation which revolved around surfing, including this narrative, which he elicited by trying out Labov's (1972) 'danger of death' question on his friend, an enthusiastic surfer. The narrative that ensued is given below in line, stanza and part form, a division that will be justified as the analysis proceeds.

The framework for analysing narrative that I present here thus takes for granted Gee's theory that any oral narrative will be organized into a basic structure of lines, stanzas and parts. I do not intend to argue the validity of lines and stanzas as constructs in narrative analysis here, since this has been done thoroughly by Gee and summarized in 4.2.2. Nor does this account make any claims with regard to the processing of narrative texts - i.e., it is not intended to be a psycholinguistic model of narrative production, although, as we have seen, Gee has claimed a psychological status for lines and stanzas as processing units in the production of discourse. What it proposes, simply, is that narrators will map onto this basic structure (of lines, stanzas and parts) a set of propositions that are linked coherently to one another by one or more kinds of local- and global-level strategies. That is, narrators operate with (or are guided by) some kind of abstract schema for how to render a coherent account of experience. The precise form of that schema, and

---

3 I am indebted to Bruce Legg for recording this narrative as part of a practical assignment on narrative elicitation methods. The analysis is my own.

University of Cape Town

the key strategies that are used, may vary from one socio-cultural group to another and even between individuals; it will also undergo developmental changes in children acquiring narrative skills. However, it should be possible to identify some principal means for achieving coherence in narrative, as a set of strategies that are potentially available to narrators, and then to investigate the specific ways in which they are used, or acquired, by a particular group. A further assumption of this framework is that several levels of discourse operate together in the creation of a story. Thus, microlinguistic features of the text (e.g., tense, aspect, lexical choice, connectives) operate at clause level, differentiating and defining the propositions that make up the narrative, but they also serve to organize larger units of discourse structure. In order to illustrate the framework, we begin by analysing the line, stanza and part structure of the surfing narrative.

Surfing narrative

Part 1		
Stanza 1		
S	1	it was one of those change of season days, you know
S	2	when the swell had dropped -
S	3	and there wasn't much - in the way of waves -
S	4	and um - no - basically the - uh - swell had dropped totally -
S	5	biggest wave could be seen at Long Beach was *about one foot* -
S	6	so you you thought it was a pretty safe day for surfing
S	7	**it wouldn't be too big - -**
Stanza 2		
E	8*	get out to Long Beach
S	9	it's picking up to *about three, four foot* -
E	10	paddle out -
E	11	think "this is nice
E	12	**it's not going to get any bigger" -**
Stanza 3		
S	13*	but little did we know
NS	14*	there's a - thing called the Roaring Forties -
NS	15	which uh generates huge waves - uh - in a matter of minutes -
NS	16	it's kinda a major version of a cold front -
S	17*	this was passing ah - long uh the - south of us - -
Stanza 4		
S	18	and um as uz I was out there
S	19	it was *four foot* -
S	20	and it was picking up all the time -
S	21	and eventually - I was there for about two hours -
E	22	it picked up to *eight or nine foot* -
S	23*	**and this is like bigger than I've ever like caught** [laughs] **surfed in my whole life before - -**

University of Cape Town

Part 2

Stanza 5

S	24*	and uh I was trying to think
S	25	how I could uh actually paddle back in - without catching a wave -
S	26	because it was too big for me -
E	27	and uh eventually I tried to paddle in

Stanza 6

E	28	but ahh - then a huge set came -
NS	29*	and the first wave of the set was - is - never the biggest
E	30*	and this one drilled me quite badly -
S	31	so I ah knew what was to come -
S	32	so I was getting ready for it -

Stanza 7

E	33	and then the next five waves totally drilled me
S	34	and I thought I was going to drown -
E	35	and started to like black out -
E	36	and the next thing I remember I was washed up on the beach - -

Stanza 8

E	37	and later that week Simon and I - we went up the coast - to surf -
S	38	and I ah - was scared to go out in a six-foot swell

Codings : E = Event proposition
S = State proposition
NS = Non-storyworld proposition
* denotes tense switch

4.3.1 Lines

(i) *Structural properties of lines*

Lines in the surfing narrative are represented as clauses. Each clause is therefore transcribed as a separate, numbered line, with the exception of embedded relative clauses (e.g., line 5 : *biggest wave could be seen at Long Beach was about one foot*) and indirect speech (e.g., 6 : *so you thought it was a pretty safe day for surfing*), which are included in their matrix clauses.

The representation of narrative lines as individual clauses is agreed on by both Labov (1972) and Gee (1986; 1991a), and has been accepted as standard by a number of other researchers (e.g. Berman & Slobin 1986; Peterson & McCabe 1983; Polanyi 1989; Sulzby & Zecker 1991; Wolf et al 1994). As we've seen, the clause is central to Labov's definition of the personal narrative and to his analytical framework, as 'the smallest unit of linguistic expression which defines the functions of narrative' (Labov & Waletzky 1967:13). Gee, on the other hand, arrives at the clause as a basic unit by analysing the linguistic surface structure of narratives as they are actually spoken, including patterns of intonation and dysfluency. In chapter 5 the line

University of Cape Town

structure of a narrative in the subject sample is analysed in detail, paying close attention to its prosodic features. For the purposes of the present analysis, however, we shall take for granted that a line contains a single semantic proposition that maps onto one or more prosodically-defined idea units corresponding with a clause. We begin by analysing the types of semantic propositions conveyed by lines, and some of the microlinguistic structures that each type entails.

(ii) *Semantic propositions conveyed by lines*

Each line in the surfing narrative is coded as an Event proposition (E), a State proposition (S) or a Non-Storyworld proposition (NS), categories that are defined below. The first two encapsulate Labov's foreground/background distinction, while the third is motivated by Polanyi (1985, 1989) as a separate category of proposition.

An important distinction exists in the mature narrative between reporting *events* and supplying contextualizing information regarding *states of affairs* in the storyworld or, to put it differently, between encoding main-line and off-main-line material. While the former can be construed as the narrative 'plot' (insofar as this term is appropriate to the personal narrative), the latter provides a means for interpreting the plot, or the significance of events. This distinction is so fundamental that many languages mark the two components with different syntax, affixes and particles, verb tenses, or word order (Peterson & McCabe 1991:30); hence they are distinguishable both semantically and syntactically.

Mainline event propositions - also known as *foreground clauses* (Berman & Slobin 1986; Reinhart 1984) or *narrative clauses* (Labov 1972) - carry the sequential plot line of the narrative. They form what Labov (1972:361) calls the 'skeleton of a narrative', a minimal requirement for a text to be considered a personal narrative at all. Semantically, they are identifiable, according to Polanyi (1989:16) as a

> series of successive instants in the narrated world which correspond to the moving reference point in the narrative construction of that world. *Event* is used here to mean an occurrence in some world which is described as having an instantaneous rather than a durative or iterative character.

Syntactically, mainline events are encoded as main (non-embedded) clauses (Labov 1972; Berman & Slobin 1986; Polanyi 1989; Gee 1991a); they are usually marked by the simple past tense (e.g., 30 : *this one drilled me quite badly)* but may also employ the conversational historic present , or CHP (Wolfson 1982) (e.g., 8 : *get out to Long Beach*).

Offline state propositions - also known as *durative-descriptive clauses* (Polanyi 1989) or *background clauses* (Berman & Slobin 1986; Reinhart 1984) - provide setting information (e.g., regarding characters, physical context, prior or ongoing events) that is relevant to understanding states of affairs in the storyworld. They are often necessary at the beginning of a telling, in order

University of Cape Town

to contextualize the events to follow, but may occur at any point in the narrative, in order to provide a means for interpreting events as these unfold. These are 'free' clauses in that they are not confined by any temporal juncture (Labov 1972). They encode states of affairs which persist over some interval of time in the storyworld, rather than occurring at one discrete instant. Identification and description of characters, motivation and internal states, the time and physical location of events, as well as generic, repeated, habitual, ongoing or prior events and states are all included in this category of off-the-mainline propositions, as are purely evaluative comments such as line 23 : *and this is like bigger than I've ever like caught in my whole life before*. Syntactically, while state propositions can be encoded as main clauses, subordinate clauses always seem to be state propositions. (In the case of complement clauses containing direct speech (or thought) - e.g. 11 : *think "this is nice"* - I have followed Polanyi (1989:28) in coding only the matrix clauses, and regarding these as discrete, instantaneous events). Stative clauses, like event clauses, tend to be cast in either the past tense or CHP; however, they are distinctively marked by modulation of aspect, including the past progressive (e.g. 32 : *I was getting ready for it*) and perfect aspect (e.g. 2 : *the swell had dropped*) along with the simple past. Aside from tense differentiation, Peterson & McCabe (1991) have demonstrated that both use of connectives and selection of type of connective in personal narratives are determined to some degree by whether the clauses involved are on or off the timeline.

Another basic distinction often arises in personal narratives between storyworld and **non-storyworld propositions**. The latter are comments made from the perspective of outside the storyworld that have a bearing on events or situations within it (Polanyi 1989). In the surfing narrative, we see non-storyworld propositions in the form of asides, encoding general information about phenomena in the real world relevant to our understanding of conditions within the narrative world (e.g. 14-16 : *there's a thing called the Roaring* Forties .... ; 29 : *the first wave of a set is never the biggest*). Also included in this category are discourse particles (e.g. 1 : *you know)* which express the narrator's involvement with the social interaction of telling, and certain explicitly evaluative comments (e.g., *it was just like a movie* - Polanyi's example) which convey the narrator's attitude towards events in the storyworld (Polanyi 1989). Syntactically, where non-storyworld propositions are expressed as clauses, these are distinctively marked by the generic present tense; they may, in addition, require special adverbial markers such as *never* (line 29), *usually*, *sometimes* or *except* (Hudson & Shapiro 1991).

Selection of proposition type in the online production of narratives therefore appears to be governed by the need to make choices between conveying mainline storyworld events, durative-descriptive storyworld information (off the main time-line but conveying a range of static,

University of Cape Town

ongoing, prior or possible events and states) and comments from the perspective of outside the storyworld. These choices in turn entail specific microlinguistic selections - prosodic, morpho-syntactic, lexical and pragmatic - internal to the proposition. At the prosodic level (not analysed here), speakers use pitch prominence to signal the important (new or salient) information within the proposition, while other pitch variables, such as the direction of pitch movement on focused words (rising, falling, etc.), the relative height of pitch glides and lengthening of prominent tones, can signal additional perspectives on the highlighted information. At the morpho-syntactic level, we have seen how type of clause and choice of tense and aspect are used differentially to convey different types of propositions. At the lexical level, we have seen that special adverbial markers and specific connectives may also differentiate propositions. Additionally, a wide range of evaluative devices (lexical and syntactic) is available to the speaker for conveying attitude towards, or perspective on, events; these include intensifiers (e.g., 4 : *the swell had dropped* ***totally***; 6 : ... *a* ***pretty*** *safe day for surfing*), future or negative verbs and comparatives (e.g. 12 : *it's not going to get any bigger*). At the pragmatic level, speakers may choose to use performance evaluative devices, including, for instance, accompanying gesture and vocal shifts or paralinguistic features (e.g. the laugh in line 23); they might pause for dramatic effect or to clarify a particular element in the proposition for the listener; or use discourse markers (e.g., 1 : *you know*) to draw the listener into the narrative by seeking confirmation, attention or an empathetic response. The function of these microlinguistic features is not restricted to the level of the proposition, however. As we shall see later, they also serve to organize larger units of narrative structure.

Some of the microlinguistic choices that turned up in the surfing narrative are identified in Table 1; here, each line of narrative has been coded for (i) tense, (ii) connectives, and (iii) the presence of lexical and syntactic evaluation devices. These specific microlinguistic features were isolated for attention in order to demonstrate their role in organizing larger units of narrative structure. They will be discussed in detail later (in sections 4.3.5 - 7), when their use as coherence strategies can be more clearly exposed. We shall draw on these features in the next section, however, which turns to consider how lines group themselves into stanzas in this narrative.

University of Cape Town

Table 1 : Propositions in the surfing narrative coded for tense, connectives and evaluation devices

Tense codings

Past	Pa	= simple past
	PP	= past progressive
	PaPe	= past perfect
Present	Pr	= general present
CHP	CHP	= conversational historic present

Only the verb in the main clause is coded for tense in the case of complex sentences.
* denotes a marked tense choice - i.e., one that shifts from the tense of the preceding line(s). (Shifts within the past tense category are not counted).

Evaluation codings

Syntactic	Neg.	= negative constructions
	Fut.	= future constructions
	Comp.	= comparatives
	Modal	= modal verbs
	Subord.	= subordinate clauses introduced by connectives
	Passive	= passive constructions
Lexical	Int.	= intensifiers (includes adjectives (*huge*), adverbials (*totally*), colloquial discourse markers (*like, basically*)
	Emot.	= emotive words (*safe, scared*)
	Cogn.	= epistemic verbs (*think, know*)
Discourse	Rep.sp.	= reported speech
	Rep.	= repetition of a proposition
	Stereotyped phrase	(metacomments - *little did we know*)
	Pragm.	= pragmatic devices (verbal - *you know*; non-verbal - *laughter*)

	Tense	**Conn.**		**Evaluation**
Stanza 1				
1	Pa		It was one of those change of season days	Pragm.: you know
2	PaPe	*when*	the swell had dropped	Subord.
3	Pa	*and*	there wasn't much in the way of waves	Neg.; Comp.: wasn't much
4	PaPe	*and*	basically the swell had dropped totally	Int.:basically, totally; Rep.
5	Pa		biggest wave could be seen at Long Beach was about 1 foot	Comp.:biggest,about1 foot; Modal:could; Rep.; rel. clause
6	Pa	*so*	you thought it was a pretty safe day for surfing	Cogn.:thought;Int.:pretty; Emot.: safe
7	Pa		(you thought) it wouldn't be too big	Cogn.: thought; Neg.; Int.: too; Fut.; Modal : would

University of Cape Town

Stanza 2

8	CHP*		Get out to Long Beach	
9	CHP		it's picking up to about three, four foot	Comp.: about 3-4 foot
10	CHP		paddle out	
11	CHP		think "*this is nice*"	Cogn.: think;Emot.: nice; Rep.Sp
12	CHP		(think) "*it's not going to get any bigger*"	Cogn.: think; Neg.; Comp.: bigger;Fut.; Rep. Sp.

Stanza 3

13	Pa*	*but*	Little did we know	Stereotyped phrase
14	Pr*		there's a thing called the Roaring Forties	
15	Pr	*which*	generates huge waves in a matter of minutes	Int.:huge, matter of minutes; Subord.
16	Pr		it's kinda a major version of a cold front	Int.: kinda, major
17	PP*		this was passing along the south of us	

Stanza 4

18	Pa	*and,as*	I was out there	Subord.
19	Pa		it was four foot	Comp.: 4 foot
20	PP	*and*	it was picking up all the time	Int.: all the time
21	Pa	*and*	eventually, I was there for about two hours	Int.:eventually,about 2 hours
22	Pa		it picked up to eight or nine foot	Comp.: 8-9 foot
23	CHP*	*and*	this is like bigger than I've ever like surfed in my whole life before	Int.: like x2, whole, ever; Comp.:bigger than ever, whole life before; Pragm.: laugh

Stanza 5

24	PP*	*and*	I was trying to think	Cogn.:trying to think how;
25		*how*	I could paddle back in without catching a wave	Neg.; Fut.; Modal : could
26	Pa	*because*	it was too big for me	Int.: too; Subord.
27	Pa	*and*	eventually I tried to paddle in	Int.: eventually; Cogn.: tried

Stanza 6

28	Pa	*but.then*	A huge set came	Int.: huge
29	Pr*	*and*	the first wave of a set is never the biggest	Neg.; Comp.: biggest
30	Pa*	*and*	this one drilled me quite badly	Int.: drilled, quite, badly
31	Pa	*so*	I knew what was to come	Cogn.: knew; Fut.
32	PP	*so*	I was getting ready for it	Cogn.: getting ready

Stanza 7

33	Pa	*and, then*	The next five waves totally drilled me	Int.: totally; Emot.: drilled
34	Pa	*and*	I thought I was going to drown	Cogn.: thought; Future
35	Pa	*and*	started to like black out	Int.: like; Emot.: black out
36	Pa	*and*	the next thing I remember I was washed up on the beach	Stereotyped phrase; Passive

Stanza 8

37	Pa	*and*	Later that week Simon and I went up the coast to surf	
38	Pa	*and*	I was scared to go out in a six-foot swell	Emot.: scared

University of Cape Town

4.3.2 Stanzas

To justify the demarcation of lines into stanzas in the surfing narrative, we can consider both the structural composition of each stanza and its role or function in the narrative as a whole. Structurally, a stanza in Gee's (1986, 1991a) terms is a group of lines with internal patterning. As we shall see, internal patterning in stanzas is achieved chiefly by means of cohesive ties between lines : anaphoric reference, connectives, lexical relationships, repetition and parallelism. These create logical, thematic, and structural links which can also operate across stanzas. Functionally,

> a stanza is a group of lines about a single topic; each stanza captures a single "vignette". Each stanza is a particular "take" on a character, action, event, claim, or piece of information, and each involves a shift of focal participants, focal events, or a change in the time or framing of events from the preceding stanza. Each stanza represents a particular perspective, not in the sense of who is doing the seeing, but in terms of what is seen; it represents an image, what the "camera" is focused on, a "scene". (Gee 1991a:23-4)

Stanza 1 is comprised entirely of state clauses; it sets the scene for the events to follow. In the terms of Labov's (1972) classic narrative structure, this is the 'orientation' section, composed of free (i.e., offline) clauses, that is necessary at the outset of a narrative. Of all the possible kinds of background information that the narrator might, and actually does, supply, however - time (a 'change of season day'), place (Long Beach), persons (unspecified), activity (surfing) and situation (sea conditions) - he is at greatest pains to emphasize the conditions of the sea (its calmness, the lack of any significant waves) and, correspondingly, his own expectation that it would be an uneventful, safe day for surfing. The high density of evaluative devices leads us (the text recipients) to believe that this information has more significance than mere backgrounding. Chief amongst these is repetition (of clauses 2 & 4, 3 & 5) : apparently deciding that clauses 2 and 3 will not suffice to make his point (as suggested by the revision in line 4 : *and um - no* -), he repeats their content in 4 and 5, adding emphasis with lexical intensifiers (4 : *basically, totally*), elaboration in line 5 and specification of the height of the biggest wave (*about one foot*). The repetition of content gives rise to structural parallelism, in a set of lexically and syntactically parallel lines with *abab* structure (lines 2 - 5). These lines are connected in turn, via the logical connective *so*, to the final two purely evaluative clauses which, in quoting his thoughts at the time (*pretty safe ... wouldn't be too big*), reinforce the content of the previous lines. In the opening stanza, then, the narrator deliberately sets up a background which describes conditions that are 'pretty safe' and uneventful, hence unlikely to presage any dangerous incident, but the very fact that this unremarkable background is highly evaluated gives a clue that we (as much as the participants in the storyworld) are being set up for a shock.

University of Cape Town

The beginning of **Stanza 2** is marked by a shift in time orientation to the first events on the main time-line. The background having been established in stanza 1 by means of state clauses, the narrator turns to the action: the first of a series of successive, instantaneous events in the storyworld that make up the skeleton of the narrative. This shift in type of proposition is marked in turn at the micro-linguistic level by a switch to the CHP, which continues throughout the stanza. Unlike stanza 1 with its structure of embedded relative and coordinated clauses linked by explicit connective markers, the pattern of lines in stanza 2 is a series of brief, chronological, simple main clauses without connectives. In contrast with stanza 1, too, they are relatively unevaluated and serve to advance the plot line of the narrative. The only non-event clause is line 9, which, significantly, supplies background information about the increasing height of the waves : now 3-4 foot, as compared with only one foot in stanza 1. Despite the increasing swell, the stanza ends with the narrator's thought, directly parallel to the last two lines of stanza 1, that "*it's not going to get any bigger*". Both the estimation of the height of the waves and the narrator's thoughts about this start to emerge as a refrain across stanzas 1 and 2, that will be continued in stanza 4.

While stanza 1 provided necessary backgrounding (offline propositions) and stanza 2 a series of events on the timeline, in **Stanza 3** the narrator steps outside of the storyworld to offer an aside to the listener. Labov (1972) has demonstrated that a well-timed and relevant aside suspends the action and can be an effective dramatic device in narrating. Stanza 3 opens with the dramatic phrase (a bit of self-conscious irony) "*but little did we know...*". The rather ominous, foreboding tone of this phrase contrasts nicely with the complacent sentiment that ends the preceding stanza - the narrator's thought that "*this is nice, it's not going to get any bigger*". It also signals the suspension of events to convey important background information. From here, the narrator shifts into the general present tense which is appropriate to an explanation of a weather phenomenon that is critical to our understanding of the events to follow in the storyworld. The next 3 lines are non-storyworld clauses, marked by the present tense, while the last line (17 : *this was passing along the south of us*) shifts us back into storyworld time, with a corresponding shift into the past tense. Thus the first and last lines of this stanza are bridges out of, and back into, the storyworld. There is a cluster of evaluative devices in the three non-storyworld clauses, as the narrator stresses the powerful force of the Roaring Forties which is capable of generating ***huge*** waves *in a matter of minutes*; a ***kinda major*** version of a cold front. This information also provides an extreme and effective contrast with the placid, dull weather conditions anticipated in stanzas 1 and 2. The aside is thus an effective suspension, since it piques our interest and prepares us for some dramatic events to follow.

University of Cape Town

In **stanza 4** we are back in the storyworld and the narrator describes a crucial progression in the height of the waves, from four foot up to eight or nine foot. We've already noted that each stanza so far (with the exception of the non-storyworld stanza 3) has been characterized by an explicit quantification of the height of the waves, along with the narrator's evaluation of that height:

1 - about one foot
pretty safe ... it wouldn't be too big
2 - three, four foot
"this is nice ... it's not going to get any bigger"
4 - eight or nine foot
this is like bigger than I've ever like caught - surfed - in my whole life before

That eight or nine foot is a critical height both for the storyworld participants and for the narrative itself is indicated by the series of temporal adverbial markers (*all the time, eventually, about two hours*) that build suspense before we reach this crucial height, by a switch from the past progressive (20 : *it was picking up*) to the more decisive past tense (22 : *it picked up*), and, most obviously, by the final, highly evaluated line (23) of the stanza : "*and this is **like bigger than I've ever like** caught [laughs] surfed **in my whole life before***. Aside from the lexical evaluation markers, the tense shift in this line to the CHP is probably in itself evaluative, while the narrator's laugh midway can be considered an additional, performance evaluative device, making this the most highly evaluated single line in the whole narrative. It is appropriate that this line should have a high density of evaluative devices, since it constitutes a critical turning-point in the narrative : it brings the refrain of stanzas 1, 2 and 4 to culmination and marks the beginning of a new turn of events in the narrative : far from feeling safe, the narrator from here on is obliged to try to escape from, and ultimately confront, the biggest waves of his life.

Having led us to a critical point (in terms of the height of the surf), **stanza 5** deals with the narrator's attempts to escape from the situation by trying to paddle back in. The lines in this stanza are bound together in a structure of embedded and coordinated clauses linked by connectives. The evaluative line 26 (*because it was too big for me*) both offers an explanation for his attempts and reiterates the refrain that has closed the preceding stanzas.

Stanza 6 shifts us towards the climax of the story. It contains two successive events and an evaluation of those events which together provide a build-up to the Key Event (or high point) in the following stanza. As in stanza 3, the narrator inserts a non-storyworld clause in the form of an aside (line 29) which effectively suspends the action at a critical point. The preceding line (28) tells us that *then a huge set came*; at this point he shifts out of the storyworld to explain that the first wave of a set is never the biggest - an explanation which increases the impact of the next line

University of Cape Town

(30), a resumption of the story : *and this one drilled me quite badly* (double evaluation in *drilled* and *quite badly*). The next two lines create suspense by anticipating an even worse event to follow: *I knew what was to come, I was getting ready for it.*

Stanza 7 describes the Key Event or high point of the story. Appropriately, it is densely evaluated: the narrator gets *totally drilled*, thinks he is going to drown and actually blacks out. The final line (36) provides a resolution to this high point, as he is washed up on the beach : *the next thing I remember* is a classic phrase in near-death and disaster accounts; it echoes the similar fictional stereotype phrase of stanza 3 : *little did we know*. Even the passive construction in *I was washed up* is evaluative in that it conveys a sense of the narrator's helplessness against the power of the waves.

Stanza 8 provides a coda to the story. Labov (1972:365) describes the general function of the coda as a means of signalling that the narrative is finished; more specifically, a coda might additionally encode states or events which show the effects of the narrative events on the narrator. The coda here achieves both these functions by shifting the action away from the time of the Key Event to "later that week" and describing how, in consequence of the events that form the body of the narrative, he felt afraid to go out in even moderately-high surf.

It is clear from this analysis of individual stanzas that each stanza, as a particular 'take' on events, also makes a specific contribution to the narrative as a whole. We might summarise the gist or essence of each stanza as follows, indicating its role in the narrative structure (I have labelled the gist of each stanza its 'focus' here, and in section 4.3.7 will elaborate more fully on how the focus of a stanza is identified) :

	Focus	Function
1.	One foot waves : not too big	Orientation:the"set-up"
2.	Three to four foot waves : won't get bigger	Main-line events
3.	The Roaring Forties generates huge waves	Non-storyworld aside
4.	Eight to nine foot waves : the biggest ever	Critical turning-point
5.	I attempt to get out	Failed attempt at resolution
6.	The first wave drills me quite badly	Build-up to Key Event
7.	The next five waves - I nearly drown	Key Event
8.	The aftermath : I'm scared	Coda

We can observe at this point that this particular narrative conforms roughly to the classic 'high point' structure described by Labov (1972) : it starts with a high density of Orientation (state) clauses, moves through a series of Complicating Actions (events) building up to a high point that is evaluated and resolved; it is finished off with a Coda. Evaluation devices (explored further in 4.3.7) are distributed throughout the narrative, forming a secondary structure. However, by combining the analysis of propositions with a stanza analysis, as we have done thus far, we

University of Cape Town

are not restricted to the possibility of a linear dramatic progression along the lines prescribed by Labov. We can examine the unfolding structure of the narrative in terms of stanzas whose boundaries are delineated by shifts in time orientation (main-line vs non-mainline) and speaker perspective (storyworld vs non-storyworld), topic and timing of events; these shifts are marked in turn at the microlinguistic level by tense switches, connectives, adverbials and other lexical markers, as well as by pausing and non-fluencies.

4.3.3 Parts

A sequence of two or more stanzas may together form larger units (Gee 1986, 1991a). *Strophes* are adjacent pairs of stanzas that are similar in discourse topic and/or structure, while *parts* constitute a sequence of several stanzas that form a larger topic unit, as defined by a single topic or theme, consistency of characters, location and/or structural patterns. At this level of structure, the surfing narrative can be seen to have two parts. Stanzas 1 to 4, grouped together, deal with the build-up to a crisis; they are linked by a refrain : a pair of lines in stanzas 1, 2 and 4 that provide thematic progression, culminating, in stanza 4, in a critical turning point in the storyworld - a change in external events that entails a shift in the narrator's internal state. Stanzas 5 to 8 grouped together constitute the narrator's attempts to escape from, and ultimate confrontation with, the crisis situation.

4.3.4 Levels of narrative structure

Thus far our analysis of the surfing story has suggested a breakdown of this narrative into its line, stanza and part structure - a structure that 'cuts a narrative into blocks of hierarchically related pieces of information' (Gee 1991a:27). These units form the basis of the two-tiered framework for narrative analysis that is presented here; they are the building blocks onto which a schema for narrating is imposed. The chief characteristics of lines, stanzas and parts, as defined by Gee and as they have emerged in the discussion of the surfing narrative above, are summarized in Table 2.

It was proposed earlier that narrators map onto this basic structure of lines, stanzas and parts a schema for how to narrate a coherent story. I would suggest that this process occurs at two main levels. At one level, a set of propositions is superimposed on the line structure of the narrative, such that a single semantic proposition maps onto one or more prosodically-defined idea units corresponding with a clause. We have already seen that these propositions are of three basic types - those that recapitulate a series of successive, instantaneous events on the timeline of the narrative, those that supply contextualizing or evaluative information regarding states of affairs that persisted over some time in the storyworld, and those offered from the perspective of outside the storyworld. These three main types of propositions, then, make up the lines of a

University of Cape Town

narrative; they may pattern themselves in characteristic ways in individuals or cultural groups, but regardless of how they might distribute themselves, the presence of the first two types (event and state propositions) would seem to be obligatory requirements of the personal narrative. An account of a specific past incident that involves a bald reporting of events, or "what happened", belongs, along with plans, scripts and simultaneous narrations (chapter 3), to the category of the *report*, in which 'the teller need not be making a specific point in his exposition but may merely be recounting past, present or future events' (Polanyi 1989:16). (This point is illustrated in the case of the surfing narrative by the predominance of non-event propositions which, read together, carry a great deal of the sense of the narrative). The three main types of proposition are summarized at Level 1 of Table 3.

At a second level, propositions are linked to one another by local- and global-level strategies for creating narrative coherence. These strategies are responsible for organizing the lines of narrative into larger units - stanzas, strophes and parts. They are of three main types - *cohesion* relations, *staging* and the development of *focus and theme* - each of which are summarized at Level 2 of Table 3, and described further in the following sections.

Table 2 : Characteristics of lines, stanzas and parts

LINES
- Comprised of one or more idea units; bounded by prosodic, pausal and non-fluency phenomena.
- Usually correspond with a clause.
- Contain one semantic proposition.
STANZAS
- Groups of lines with internal patterning.
- Internal structure of the stanza is created chiefly by cohesive links between lines : reference, connectives, lexical relationships, repetition and parallelism. These create logical, thematic and structural links which can also operate across stanzas
- Stanza boundaries are identified by shifts in topic, time orientation and/or speaker perspective. These are marked in turn at the microlinguistic level by tense switches, connectives, adverbials and other lexical markers, as well as by pausing and non-fluencies.
PARTS
- Units made up of a sequence of two or more stanzas forming a larger topic unit.
- Defined by a single topic or theme, consistency of characters, location and/or structural patterns.

University of Cape Town

Table 3 : A framework for analysing developing narrative structure

Level 1	*Function*	*Formal marking*
MAINLINE PROPOSITIONS		
Events	Recapitulation of events. "What happened?"	
OFFLINE PROPOSITIONS		Main vs embedded clauses Tense Aspect
States	Contextualizing / evaluative information with which to interpret events.	
Non-Storyworld	Comments from the perspective of outside the storyworld.	

These three types of propostions form the content of narrative lines. The organization of lines into larger units - stanzas and parts - is achieved via the coherence strategies of Level 2.

Level 2		
COHESION	Local-level relations of meaning and logic between propositions. Creates internal patterning of lines within stanzas and links across stanzas.	Connectives Reference Adverbial markers Repetition Parallelism ... etc.
STAGING	Controls the perspective from which the narrative is presented : shifts in topic, time orientation and speaker perspective. Determines the boundaries of stanzas and parts.	Changes in tense or psychological subject; connectives; adverbial markers.
FOCUS / THEME	Key images and themes that run through stanzas, out of which we build an overall interpretation of the narrative.	Evaluative devices marking certain propositions as more crucial to the telling than others.

University of Cape Town

4.3.5 Cohesion

Cohesion refers to an aspect of microlinguistic knowledge : the use of various linguistic devices to link the sentences (or propositions) in a text, in order to make meaning relations within the text as a whole explicit.The most comprehensive account of cohesion in English remains that of Halliday & Hasan (1976) who view the presence of cohesive relationships as the primary determinant of whether or not a set of sentences constitute a text. In their words, cohesive ties within a text are set up 'where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it' (p.4).

One of the chief resources available to speakers and writers for creating cohesive relationships between sentences is that of **reference** : forms which 'instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right ... make reference to something else for their interpretation' (1976: 31). Where the listener/reader must seek that interpretation outside the text, in the context of the situation, the relationship is an *exophoric* one which plays no part in textual cohesion (1976:18). However, where the co-referential item lies within the text, they are called *endophoric* relations and do form cohesive ties within the text. Endophoric relations are most commonly *anaphoric* in nature, i.e., they point backwards in the text for their interpretation, and less often *cataphoric*, pointing forward in the text for interpretation. In narrative texts, the patterning of lines within stanzas is often achieved by simple topic-chaining, as we see in stanza 3 of the surfing narrative where consecutive lines are bound by chains of anaphoric reference. The devices used to achieve this include complement (line 13) and relative clauses (line 15), and replacement of elements in a proposition by pronominal forms which substitute for the fully specified lexical item (16 : *it*; 17: *this*) or by alternative lexical forms (*a thing - Roaring Forties - cold front*). Other forms of reference arise where propositions are bound by repetition (full or partial) of lines (stanza 1: lines 2 - 5) and ellipsis across consecutive lines (stanza 1 : 6-7; stanza 2 : 11-12), whereas deictic forms, such as 17 : *along the south of us,* 37 : *up the coast*, are interpretable only in relation to a reference point established by the speaker.

Aside from relations of reference, in other stanzas we find cohesion deriving from various structural relationships; these include **lexical and syntactic parallelism** (stanza 1), **consistency of tense** (stanza 2) and **stylistic choice** (stanza 7 : *drilled, black out, like*). **Repetition** - 'the purest deictic device' (Polanyi 1989:24) creates cohesive ties between lines within stanza 1 (lines 2 & 4, 3 & 5), but also functions deictically across stanzas 1, 3 and 4 as a refrain linking the stanzas in part 1 (*it wouldn't be too big - it's not going to get any bigger - this is bigger than ever ...*), as do the lines describing the incremental size of the surf (*one foot - three, four foot - eight or nine*

University of Cape Town

foot).

Connectives offer another means for explicitly marking semantic relationships between sentences or propositions in a text. *Coordinating* connectives (of which the simplest and most ubiquitous in narrative texts is *and)* signal the simple co-occurrence of two events, while *temporal* connectives (e.g. *then, later that week, all the time, eventually*) mark variations of chronologically ordered events. *Adversative* connectives (e.g. *but, on the other hand, except, sometimes, usually*) express contrast, opposition, negation or exception. *Logical* connectives can indicate causal relationships between events (e.g. *because, so*), enabling or conditional relationships (e.g. *when ... then*), result (e.g. *and so, that's why*), reason (e.g. he was happy *that* ...) or purpose (e.g. I was trying to think *how* ...). There is not necessarily a simple one-to-one relationship between any of these formal markers and a particular semantic relation, however; for instance, *and* can function as coordinating, temporal or causal marker (Peterson & McCabe 1991). Also included in this category are relative pronouns (e.g. *who, which, that*) signalling co-referential relationships between clauses.

4.3.6 Staging

Grimes (1975) introduced the metaphor of 'staging' to discourse analysis to describe the ways in which speakers successively manipulate elements of discourse in order to foreground certain items : 'Every clause, sentence, paragraph, episode, and discourse is organised around a particular element that is taken as its point of departure. It is as though the speaker presents what he wants to say from a particular perspective' (1975:323). I use the term here to refer to the linguistic means by which narrators control the perspective from which the narrative is presented.

We have seen that stanza boundaries mark shifts in perspective; in the surfing narrative these include shifts in time orientation (offline to mainline and vice versa), speaker perspective (storyworld to non-storyworld and vice versa), topic and timing of events. We have also noted that several types of linguistic devices - including certain connectives, adverbial markers and tense changes - are used to mark these kinds of shifts. As with cohesion strategies, it may be helpful to explore the notion of staging by looking in depth at the narrator's control of just two types of linguistic strategies - that of *tense* and *psychological subject*.

(i) *Tense usage in the surfing narrative*

From the tense codings in Table 1, as well as the following Table 4, it is evident that the narrator's choice of tense correlates, firstly, with shifts in type of proposition within stanzas and, secondly, with macro-level shifts from one stanza to the next. Looking first at the propositional analysis, each type of narrative proposition is associated with a particular tense or cluster of tenses. Non-storyworld clauses are given in the generic present tense : they describe states of

University of Cape Town

affairs in the real world (14: *there's a thing called the Roaring Forties,* 29 : *the first wave of a set is never the biggest*). Event clauses, which make up the main time-line of events in the narrative world, are reported in either the simple past (27 : *I tried to paddle in,* 28 : *a huge set came)* or the CHP (8 : *get out to Long Beach ... paddle out*). State clauses can also be in the CHP (9 : *it's picking up to about three, four foot*) or the past tense, but with these we see a wider range of past tense types appropriate to the variety of offline events and states that form the background to the mainline narrative events. They include not only the simple past to describe states of affairs in the storyworld (1 : *it was one of those change of season days*), but also the past progressive to convey continuous actions in the storyworld (20 : *the swell was picking up,* 24 : *I was trying to think ...*) and the past perfect to convey prior events (2, 4 : *the swell had dropped*).

Table 4 : Associations of tense with type of proposition in the surfing narrative

Event propositions		
8	CHP	get out to Long Beach
10	CHP	paddle out
11	CHP	think ("*this is nice*")
12	CHP	think ("*the waves aren't going to get bigger*")
22	Pa	the swell picked up to eight or nine foot
27	Pa	I tried to paddle in (to the shore)
28	Pa	a huge set of waves came
30	Pa	the first wave drilled me quite badly
33	Pa	the next five waves totally drilled me
35	Pa	I blacked out
36	Pa	I was washed up on the beach
37	Pa	Simon and I went up the coast to surf
State propositions		
1	Pa	It was one of those change of season days
2,4	PaPe	The swell had dropped
3,5	Pa	The biggest wave at Long Beach was about one foot
6	Pa	We thought it was a safe day for surfing
7	Pa	We thought the waves wouldn't be too big
9	CHP	The waves were picking up to three or four foot
13,17	Pa,PP	We didn't know that the 'Roaring Forties' was passing along the south of us
18, 19	Pa	As I was out in the surf, the swell was four foot
20	PP	The swell was picking up all the time
21	Pa	I was there for about two hours
23	CHP	The waves were bigger than I'd ever surfed in my whole life before
24.25	PP	I was trying to think how I could paddle back in without catching a wave
26	Pa	The waves were too big for me
31	Pa	I knew what was to come
32	PP	I was getting ready for it
34	Pa	I thought I was going to drown
38	Pa	Later that week I was scared to go out in a six-foot swell

University of Cape Town

Non-Storyworld propositions

14	Pr	There's a thing called the Roaring Forties
15	Pr	which generates huge waves in a matter of minutes
16	Pr	It's kind of a major version of a cold front
29	Pr	The first wave of a set is never the biggest

We look next at how tense shifts across stanzas link with the narrator's control of macrostructure components of the narrative (illustrated by the asterisks in Table 1). The first tense switch, from the past to the CHP, occurs at the transition from stanza 1 to stanza 2 and marks the change from background states, or scene-setting (stanza 1), to foreground material - the first of the mainline narrative events (*get out to Long Beach*) that characterize stanza 2. The second switch occurs at the opening of stanza 3, which shifts from CHP back to the past tense (*but little did we know*) to introduce the Non-Storyworld aside. The third switch, in the next line, marks the first of three Non-Storyworld clauses which require the general present tense. The fourth switch, in the final line (17) of this stanza, takes us back into the storyworld with a shift back to the past tense. Thus the tense switches at the opening and closing of this stanza create bridges into, and out of, the storyworld. At the end of stanza 4 a switch occurs again, from the past to the CHP, to mark the highly evaluated line 23 that forms the critical turning-point of the narrative (*and this is like bigger than I've ever like caught* [laughs] *surfed in my whole life before*). Stanza 5 opens with a shift back to the past tense as the narrator describes his attempts to resolve the situation. The final switch occurs in stanza 6; as with stanza 3, the change from past to general present tense signals a shift in perspective to outside the storyworld, as the narrator informs us that *the first wave of a set was - is - never the biggest*. His self-correction here is interesting as it indicates awareness of the need to alter tense in accordance with elements of macrostructure - in this case, a change in speaker perspective. The following line (30) returns us to mainline events in the storyworld and, accordingly, involves a shift back to the past tense.

Thus, not only is tense selection in narrating contingent on the type of proposition being conveyed, but tense switches are marked choices and co-occur with transitional points in the macrostructure of the narrative (chiefly with shifts in time orientation and speaker perspective), or with points of high evaluation that mark a critical stage in the storyworld events. In this narrative, tense switches most often occurred at stanza boundaries, which is where macrostructure shifts are likely to occur.

This analysis of tense usage largely confirms Wolfson's (1978,1982) observations on the CHP in conversation-embedded narratives. According to Wolfson, the CHP is a feature of

University of Cape Town

'performed' narratives - i.e., a certain type of conversational narrative characterized as a dramatized reenactment, in which the speaker 'acts out a story, as if to give his audience the opportunity to experience the event and his evaluation of it' (1982:24); other features which mark a personal narrative as performed include the use of direct speech, asides and repetition, all of which occur in the surfing narrative (we have no information regarding the use of sound effects, motions or gestures, Wolfson's other performance features). The CHP alternates with the past tense in performed narratives but, according to both Wolfson and Schiffrin (1981), its use is mostly confined to sections of the narrative describing complicating actions (or narrative events), while background information and asides are conveyed either in the past or general present tense. This is indeed the case in the surfing narrative, where we find the CHP concentrated in the event propositions of stanza 2 (though line 9 of this stanza, also involving the CHP is strictly a state proposition).

Wolfson's most interesting claim, however, is that the CHP itself has no significance but rather, it is the switching from CHP to past tense and vice versa that is significant; she argues that the switching is connected with important breaks in a narrative, in that the chunking of material into alternating stretches of present and past tense serves to organize events into 'act sequences', the changes in verb tense being analogous with changes in scene : 'With respect to performance, its function is theatrical indeed, since it has the effect of a change of lighting or scenery upon a stage' (1978:220). Her analogy between story performance and theatrical performance is strikingly similar to Gee's (1991a) characterization of narrative stanzas as successive individual 'takes' or 'scenes' from the narrated experience, and in this regard it is interesting how alternations between present and past tenses in the surfing narrative tend to occur at stanza boundaries. We should be cautious of accepting Wolfson's implication that tense switches themselves create the segmentation of narrative into distinct chunks, however. As both Schiffrin (1981) and Toolan (1988) point out, tense-switching is only one possible device, and not a necessary one, in narrative chunking. Finally, we need to note that in line 23 of the surfing narrative there is some support for the traditional view (contested by Wolfson) that the role of the CHP is to make certain propositions in a narrative more vivid and immediate; the switch to CHP in this crucial line seems to be an internal evaluation device (one of several in this line) allowing the narrator to make the past more vivid by presenting the event as if it were occurring at that moment (Schiffrin 1981:58).

(ii) *Psychological subjects in the surfing narrative*

Gee (1991a) defines psychological subjects as the grammatical subject of a main clause, either offline or mainline, representing the point of view from which the material in a stanza is

University of Cape Town

viewed by the narrator. How this stance shifts across the narrative will contribute in large part to our perception of its overall coherence. Looking at how the narrator controls the flow of psychological subjects across the stanzas of the surfing narrative (Table 5) is instructive in determining the guiding schema for this particular story. In virtually each new stanza of the narrative a different contrast is set up between the surf on the one hand, and the 'I' of the narrator on the other. In each part of the narrative, the relative strength of these two entities is manoeuvred by the narrator to achieve a shift in the balance of power.

Table 5 : Psychological subjects in the surfing narrative

	Psychological subject	*Predicate*	*Lines*
Part 1			
Stanza 1	the swell	is 1 foot	(2 - 5)
	I	think : pretty safe	(6 - 7)
Stanza 2	the swell	is 3-4 foot	(9)
	I	go out	(8, 10)
	I	think : nice	(11 -12)
But ...			
Stanza 3	the Roaring Forties	approaches	(14 -17)
Stanza 4			
	the swell	is 4 foot	(19)
	the swell	is picking up	(20)
	I	am out there	(18, 21)
	the swell	is 8-9 foot	(22)
	the swell	is the biggest of my life	(23)
Part 2			
Stanza 5	I	think : how to escape	(24,25, 26)
	I	try to escape	(27)
But ...			
Stanza 6	the first set of waves	drill me badly	(28, 29, 30)
	I	know what is coming	(31)
	I	get ready	(32)
Stanza 7	the next five waves	totally drill me	(33)
	I	think : I'm drowning	(34)
	I	black out	(35)
	I	am washed up	(36)
Stanza 8	Simon and I	surf	(37)
(Consequence)	I	am scared	(38)

University of Cape Town

Line 1 identifies the overall discourse topic for the narrative - *one of those change of season days* - which encapsulates in itself the possibility of change, of the unexpected. In stanzas 1 and 2, the slow increase in the height of the surf is no threat to the narrator - the 'I' is in control, has buoyant thoughts, is the chief Actor in the scenario (*(I) get out to Long Beach, (I) paddle out, (I) think "this is nice"* ...). From the dominant 'I' - Actor in stanza 2, staging devices in the opening line of stanza 3 (the adversative *but* and the expressive *little did we know*) alert us to a drastic shift in perspective : the psychological subject here is the Roaring Forties, an as-yet-unseen phenomenon that threatens the balance of power. By stanza 4, the 'I' is sandwiched between descriptions of the increasingly powerful swell; the 'I' is no longer an Actor, but simply 'out there', and the tables have turned. In part 2, the 'I' makes a last attempt at controlling action, but is limited to thoughts of, and futile attempts at escape; from stanzas 6 through 8, he is diminished to the semantic role of patient (expressed as syntactic object - *drilled me* - and in the passive construction *I was washed up*), in directly inverse proportion to the gathering power of the surf.

The contrasts set up in relation to psychological subjects lead us into the realm of theme in the narrative, which is the concern of the next and final level of interpretation.

4.3.7 Focus and theme

At this level coherence is achieved through the setting up of key images or themes that run through the narrative, out of which the listener builds up a 'senseful' interpretation of its overall meaning. For Gee the identification of key images and themes is derived from an analysis of prominent pitch movement at the level of the idea unit. Here, however, I prefer to consider the total of the evaluated material within the narrative, which can be marked at phonological, syntactic, lexical and discourse levels. Polanyi (1989) suggests that in order to convey the relevance of a story, narrators evaluate key events most highly, to distinguish them from other, less important events on the timeline and, likewise, evaluate the most crucial descriptive (offline) information to differentiate this from less important non-event propositions. Highlighting the most significant material at the expense of that which is less consequential 'is accomplished by according each proposition a more or less distinctive form of encoding; the more distinct the encoding, the more the information encoded stands out from the rest of the text and the better it is remembered' (p. 22). In Table 1, each proposition in the surfing narrative was coded for the presence of lexical, syntactic and discourse evaluative devices; we examine these now in some detail to establish how they operate to focus the listener/reader's attention on key themes. In doing so, we will bear in mind Polanyi's distinction between *deictic evaluation*, i.e., evaluation of information encoded in one clause by devices realized in other clauses, and *contential evaluation*,

University of Cape Town

in which the evaluating device and evaluated information are within the same clause.

At the lexical level we find contential evaluative devices operating in all stanzas. Chief amongst these is the use of what Labov terms 'intensifiers'. Intensifiers are used frequently in this narrative to quantify the size and power of the surf (dropped *totally*, *too* big, *huge* waves, *major* version, etc.) as well as its impact on the other major psychological subject, the narrator (*pretty* safe, my *whole* life, *ever* caught, drilled *quite badly*, *totally* drilled). Colloquial lexical items (*like* (23,35), *basically* (4), *kinda* (16)) intensify by marking specific propositions as particularly salient, as do the temporal adverbials *a matter of minutes* (15), *all the time* (20), *eventually* (21,27). While intensifiers are tacked on to certain propositions in order to highlight the impact of particular events or states, other lexical items are explicitly emotive in themselves (e.g., *safe, nice, drilled, black out, scared*) and yet others evaluate by signalling internal responses or mental states of participants (*thought / think, knew, tried*).

Syntactic-level evaluative devices in the surfing narrative include the use of negative and future clauses (e.g., *it wouldn't be too big*), modal verbs expressing ability and prediction (*could, wouldn't*), comparatives (*bigger, biggest*), subordinate clauses (offering explanations or evidence of mental states - *because, how)* and passive constructions (used here to convey helplessness - e.g., *I was washed up*). Of these, the most frequently used are negatives, futures and comparatives, all of which occur in clauses that are explicitly evaluative in themselves and which function both contentially and deictically. Negative and future propositions are powerful means of highlighting personal significance in narrative because they depart from the description of what actually happened to deal with a level of expected and unrealized events (Labov 1972). Their use here contributes to the thematic contrast between the narrator's confident expectations of mastery over the surf (*there wasn't much ..., wouldn't be too big, not going to get any bigger*) in part 1, and his certain knowledge that the surf would in fact overpower him (*the first wave of a set is never the biggest, I knew what was to come, I was getting ready for it*) in part 2. Comparatives, on the other hand, help mark the progression in the height, and hence the power, of the surf: *bigger, biggest, bigger than ever, too big*, etc. function contentially within their propositions, but also deictically, since together with *one foot, three-four foot, eight or nine foot*, etc., they set up the refrain which marks the focus of each successive stanza in part 1.

Discourse level evaluative devices include the use of reported speech or thought (lines 11, 12) conveying the narrator's internal sentiments at particular stages of events, and stereotyped phrases (*little did we know, next thing I remember*), providing metacommentary on events - both examples of what Labov calls 'external evaluation'. In stanza 1 we find repetition of entire propositions (in lines 4 and 5) - described by Polanyi (1989:24) as 'the purest deictic device -

University of Cape Town

what is evaluated achieves prominence by the mere fact of repetition'. In stanzas 6 and 7, deictic evaluation arises, in a manner similar to repetition, in the clustering of explicitly evaluative clauses around the narrative's key event. At the end of stanza 6, we have a build up to the key event in the narrator's anticipatory thoughts (*I knew what was to come, I was getting ready for it*), while in stanza 7, immediately following the key event (line 33), his reactions to this decisive event (*I thought I was going to drown, I started to black out*) serve to highlight its impact further. Finally, pragmatic or performance devices are evident in the narrator's laugh midway in line 23 (where the surf reaches a critical height), as well as in the opening line of the narrative (*you know*) which draws the listener into the realm of the storyworld and invites our understanding of the paradox (in *it was one of those change of season days*) which is the essence of the story to follow.

Looking first at the distribution of these evaluative devices across stanzas, we find that the narrator employs certain classic strategies, some of which were pointed out in the stanza analysis of 4.3.2. In stanza 1 the narrator dwells on the dull, placid conditions safe for surfing : the high concentration of evaluative devices accorded this description seems paradoxical, since these are conditions which are not reportable. Dwelling on them proves an effective narrative device, however, since it gives us a hint that these conditions will be turned around and the interpretive context shattered. Stanza 3, on the other hand (*but little did we know ...*) involves the technique of delaying relevant action by digressing to non-storyworld information for evaluative purposes. As Schiffrin (1984:324) points out, 'when narrators report states which existed, but about which *they* did not know during the initial stages of their experience, they frequently delay mention of those states until the complicating action has reached their *own* point of discovery'. Since the effect of strategically delaying such information is to put the audience in a similar experiential position (Toolan 1988), the device is one which moulds the audience into a sympathetic alignment with the position the narrative is supporting (Schiffrin 1984). In stanza 4 we have a build up to the most highly evaluated line in the narrative (23); this is not the high point of the story, but rather its turning-point. Polanyi (1985:196) claims that 'one important task of the storyteller is making clear exactly which of the mainline events has "turned the tide", so to speak, and affected a meaningful change in the state of affairs in the storyworld.' Her expression is particularly apt for this narrative, since this line signals a critical height of the surf which marks the major thematic shift between the two parts of the narrative. The high point itself, as we would expect, is accorded a density of evaluation devices, as described above, by clustering explicitly evaluative clauses around it in stanzas 6 and 7.

Secondly, by isolating the most heavily evaluated lines in each stanza, we are now in a position to reduce the overall sense of the narrative to its essence. Table 6 below gives only those

University of Cape Town

propositions in each stanza that are accorded the most distinctive encoding, taking into account both contential and deictic forms of evaluation (i.e., propositions that are further highlighted by devices realized in other lines receive additional weighting); these constitute what I referred to earlier as the 'focus' of each stanza.

Table 6 : Focus per stanza in the surfing narrative

Part 1	
Stanza	**Focus**
1	One foot waves are safe, not too big
2	Three to four foot waves are nice, won't get bigger
3	The Roaring Forties generates huge waves
4	Eight to nine foot waves are the biggest of my life
Part 2	
Stanza	
5	I try to escape
6	The first wave drills me quite badly
7	The next five waves drill me totally
8	The aftermath : I'm scared

University of Cape Town

Read together, these focus lines constitute a mini-text; in this they correspond to what Polanyi (1989:26) terms an 'adequate paraphrase' of the story, an abstract representation of its 'core plot'. Earlier, we observed that this reading of the surfing narrative text conforms to Labov's linear 'high point' structure. However, the focusing system does not only, or not necessarily, serve to advance the plot line of a narrative; it should be clear from the discussion above that evaluative devices in this narrative focus our attention on certain images which make up the two main themes of this narrative : (a) a steady increase in the height of the waves, and (b) a corresponding shift in the balance of power between the narrator's 'I' and the surf. These two themes run through the text as a whole, but their occurrence is not random; the narrator controls them by setting up contrasts at the level of stanza and part (shown in Table 5), using strategies of staging and cohesion. Our thematic reading of the narrative is the 'deeper level' of meaning that Gee (1991b) refers to when he claims a basic commonality across different kinds of narrative styles; at this level we perceive the manipulation of the balance of power between an individual and the natural elements. As Gee (1991b:19) puts it, all narratives work ultimately in terms of satisfying patterns of themes drawn from one's social traditions :

> the deeper, nonliteral meaning ... of any text is largely spatial in form, the actual sequence of events being secondary in importance at this level except as they serve to set up contrasts.

4.4 Conclusions

While the preceding chapters (2 and 3) explored the social contexts of narrating for the children in this study, this chapter has focused on how one might approach the analysis of meanings available within narrative texts themselves. In the process, we have demonstrated the truth of Polanyi's (1989:19) observation that 'there is nothing structurally "casual" about an everyday story. Upon close examination, a story told in a conversation reveals itself to be as formally constructed as any carefully worked out acknowledged piece of literary verbal art.'

Through the analysis of one particular narrative, I have suggested an approach which combines many of the features of line and stanza analysis with some of the principles of Labov's model of personal narrative structure. This is a two-tiered framework, in which narrators are argued to map onto an underlying structure of lines, stanzas and parts a set of propositions that are linked coherently to one another by strategies of cohesion, staging and focus/theme. It rests on the principle of integration of several levels of text structure, at micro- and macro-linguistic levels. In the next two chapters we use this framework to explore the developing textual competence of young children in Kensington/Factreton.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPING NARRATIVE COMPETENCE : LEVEL 1 ANALYSIS

In this chapter the personal narratives of the Kensington/Factreton children are analysed at level one of the framework proposed in chapter 4. Its focus, therefore, is on the types and patterning of semantic propositions that are held by the basic structure of lines, stanzas and parts in narrating. However, given Gee's (1986, 1989, 1991a) insistence that how a text is actually spoken is crucial to the structures we assign it, we begin, in 5.1, by examining the prosodic features that enter into line structure – an aspect dealt with only superficially thus far – as exemplified by a single narrative. Section 5.2 comprises a quantitative and descriptive analysis of the propositions – event, orientation and evaluation – that make up narrative lines, with reference to the three longest narratives produced by each child in the four age-groups. The patterning of these basic proposition types into stanzas and parts is considered in 5.3 and 5.4. The final section (5.5) compares the findings of this study to those reported for different populations.

5.1 Idea units

Unplanned connected speech like narrative tends to be produced in short chunks or bursts, corresponding to units of information. These chunks, 'the smallest units of discourse structure' (Brown & Yule 1983:153), are realized phonologically as tone groups (also known, though not necessarily with equivalent meaning, as tone units, breath groups, intonational phrases and phonemic clauses) and tend to be separated from each other by slight pauses or hesitations. Identification of tone groups in connected speech is not a straightforward process : they have been variously, and often conflictingly, described in terms of criteria of intonation, pausing, rhythmic structure and syntactic boundaries (Halliday 1967,1978; Crystal 1969,1975; Chafe 1979,1980; Brown *et al* 1980). A full discussion of different theoretical positions on the structure of the tone group is beyond the scope of this study; however, in order to justify my own approach to this level of narrative analysis, it is necessary to sift through some of the issues on which analysts have differed.

5.1.1 Review of theoretical positions and coding systems

Some of the most influential work on English prosody has advocated the use of strictly phonological criteria to identify tone groups. For Halliday (1967) and Crystal (1969, 1975, 1982) the tone group is characterised as having a smooth, unified pitch contour with one major pitch disruption or glide (rise, fall, fall-rise or rise-fall) on a given syllable or word. Tone group boundaries are indicated by slight pauses, alterations in pitch direction relative to the preceding tone group (Crystal 1969), or by rhythmic structure (Halliday 1967). In the unmarked case, the tone group is said to be co-extensive with a single clause or, less often, a phrase (Halliday 1967; Crystal 1982; Chafe 1982).

University of Cape Town

Discourse analysts have long recognised the important role of prosody in information flow, i.e., in segmenting the stream of connected speech and signalling focus or perspective. Tone groups each contain a single piece of information, with the prominent pitch glide signalling a focus on lexical items that the speaker wishes the hearer to take as new, asserted or salient; hence the discourse analysts' use of the equivalent terms 'information unit' (e.g., Halliday 1967; Gumperz 1982) or 'idea unit'(Chafe 1980, 1982; Gee 1986, 1989, 1991a). Chafe (1982:37) speculates that each idea unit represents a single 'perching' or focus of consciousness. Gee (1986, 1991a) has demonstrated that the total of the information that is focused via pitch movement in a narrative represents the key images or themes out of which we interpret the sense of the text as a whole.

However, some discourse analysts have taken issue both with the identification of these units on phonological grounds alone, and with the notion that each idea unit necessarily contains only one focus signalled by one prominent pitch movement (Brown, Currie & Kenworthy 1980; Gumperz 1982; Brown & Yule 1983; du Bois *et al* 1993). Analyses of conversational speech show that a single information unit may contain several phonologically prominent words. For example, Brown *et al* (1980), working with Edinburgh Scottish English, found that tone groups with just one strong pitch movement were rare relative to those which had several peaks of pitch prominence, distributed separately or paired, over words introducing new information. Similarly, Gumperz (1982:120) describes Indian English as having no unified intonation contour or clear prosodically marked nucleus, but rather several phrase-length units separated by abrupt changes in pitch or loudness, with almost every content word being highlighted intonationally. A high density of tonics may be accounted for by the varied functions of pitch prominence : while some analysts (notably, Halliday 1967) have taken a narrow view of pitch prominence as serving only to mark new information, Brown & Yule (1983:164) point out that it is also used to signal topic changes, speakers' turns, special emphasis or contrast. In their view, pitch prominence has a general 'watch this!' function and, inter alia, is used by speakers to mark new information; phonological non-prominence, then, is associated with elements to which the hearer is not required to pay attention, including given information but also, for example, unstressed grammatical words.

Brown & Yule (1983) reject a definition of the tone group on phonological grounds alone, arguing that this is too restrictive if one accepts that the tone group corresponds to a unit of information. Using examples from Halliday's own (1967) data, they point out that 'insistence on tying the information unit directly to the form of phonological realisation yields some odd-looking information units' (p.158) which are not only frequently not co-extensive with either clauses or

University of Cape Town

phrases, but counter-intuitive as units of information. Very similar findings, of more specific relevance to my own work, are reported by Douglas (1984) for intonation in Cape Flats English (to my knowledge, the only work on prosodic characteristics of this language variety). Douglas investigated the applicability of Crystal's (1969, 1975) model of intonation to a small group of five-year-old children from McCormick's (1989a) District Six corpus who are of comparable age and background to my own subjects. Her analysis revealed a considerably greater amount of nuclear pitch movement than described by Crystal for British R.P., with a wider range of excursion of nuclear tones. Strict application of Crystal's model yielded a series of very short tone units :

e.g., ooh | I'm getting | my name | right |
Soraya's just | so | naughty | you know that | auntie |

Many of these enclosed structures neither semantically nor syntactically expected, such as single words and structures less than a clause not corresponding with a phrase (e.g., look how short is my |) - a pattern which Crystal (1981:136), in fact, describes as reflecting a deviant prosodic system.

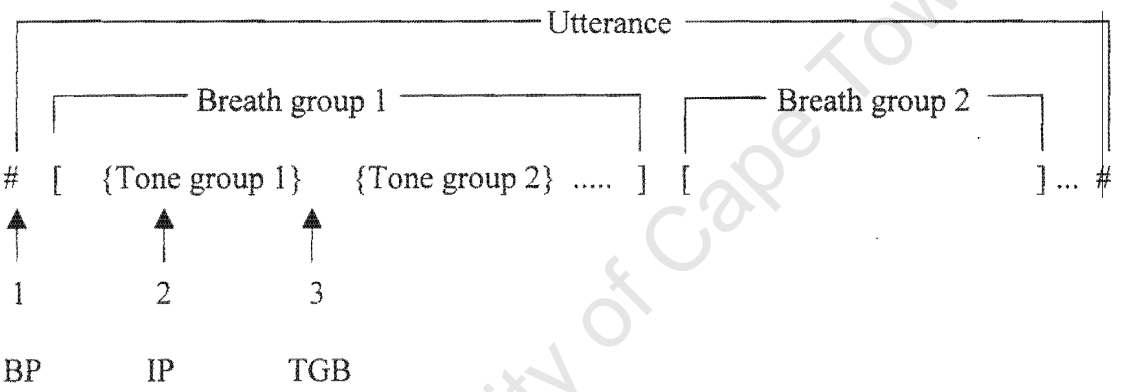
Brown and her colleagues, like Chafe (1979), turned instead to working with pause-bounded units in the stream of speech. Pauses are generally more readily identifiable and measurable compared to pitch movement, and have been extensively investigated in psycholinguistic research as evidence for units of planning in connected speech. There is evidence that the linguistic positions of pauses tend to be (i) between a function word and a content word (where they are generally assumed to reflect lexical access); (ii) between syntactic constituents (phrase, clause or sentence); and (iii) between prosodic constituents (tone groups), with a greater or lesser degree of correspondence between (ii) and (iii). Pauses of course fulfill a physiological function, in allowing the speaker to inhale, as well as a planning function; however, Garman (1990:131) argues that it is more likely that speakers opportunistically utilise positions such as (ii) for inhalation and/or planning than that they pause in order to inhale or plan. A third function of pauses is communicative : they can function as listener-oriented devices inserted by the speaker to signal certain demarcations in the message.

It is the correspondence between pause-bounded phonation sequences and grammatical units that is of interest in identifying idea units in connected speech. Reviewing the evidence for patterns of pause distribution, Garman (1990:127-9) finds three main types of functional correspondence in a typical conversational utterance, starting with the longer breath pause : these pauses are elements of the phonation sequence but also show correspondence with grammatical sequence in that they are much more likely to occur inter- than intra-clausally. The breath pause

University of Cape Town

initiates the breath group, which is a 'sequence of tone groups' (idea units). Typically for conversational speech there are around 2 or 3 tone groups per breath group; breath groups longer than 3 tone groups tend to correspond with sentences, while in shorter breath groups individual tone groups tend to coincide with clauses or longer phrase-sequences within clauses. Within a tone group there may or may not be briefer interruption-pauses, usually before content words. At the end of a tone group, and especially where this coincides with the end of a clause, there tends to be a tone-group boundary break : this may be signalled only by lengthening of final consonant or vowel segments, but where a tone group boundary break occurs at the end of a clause, and is followed by another clause or lengthy phrase within the same breath group, a perceptible break tends to occur.

Figure 1: Patterns of pause distribution within the utterance



from Garman (1990:128). #, juncture; BP, breath pause; IP, interruption pause; TGB, tone group break.

University of Cape Town

These patterns, summarized in Figure 1, describe the role of pauses in delineating chunks of speech at the level of tone group and clause in conversational speech; however, pausing has also been used as evidence of major discourse-level boundaries in spoken texts. Gee & Grosjean (1984) have demonstrated that the longest pauses in oral narrative texts coincide with important discourse breaks in the text. Gee (1986) cites psycholinguistic evidence that pauses tend to pattern hierarchically in narrative texts : the shortest ones occur between prosodic (or idea) units, longer ones at clause and sentence boundaries, and the longest at major episodic or thematic boundaries.

It seems, then, that information structure in the flow of speech is realised partly by phonological systems, including phonological prominence and pause, and partly by syntax. However, Brown & Yule (1983:167-8) caution that, while we should expect to find regularities in the realization of information structure within these systems, we should not expect 100% direct mapping of information units onto syntactic units which are co-terminous with intonationally and pausally defined units. In similar vein, Gumperz & Berenz (1993:95) sum up the idea unit (in

their term, 'informational phrase') as a rhythmically bounded, prosodically defined chunk, a lexical string that falls under a single intonational contour. Prototypically, these are set off from surrounding phrasal units by pausing and constitute semantically interpretable syntactic entities ... In less prototypical cases, determination of phrase boundaries depends on what divisions make sense in terms of the rhythmic and thematic organization of the surrounding discourse.

In identifying idea units in children's narratives here, I have worked with these principles in mind and have taken as axiomatic that the idea unit

> is basically a unit of cognitive information that, at the level of speaking, can be marked by a variety of co-occurring perceptual cues (Gumperz & Berenz 1993:95).

More specifically, I was guided by the systems for coding of spoken discourse provided by Chafe (1993) and du Bois *et al* (1993). For both these, the idea unit is defined by its boundary (or transitional) phenomena : it is a segment of speech that is often bounded by a pause and ends in a terminal pitch contour which indicates continuation or termination of the discourse topic. Other transitional cues include lengthening of the final syllable and shifts in pitch at the start of a new unit. Idea units may contain one or more words that carry primary accent - i.e., words with prominent pitch movement, where 'the significant intonational "action" is focused' in the idea unit (du Bois et al 1993:57). This is broadly comparable with Crystal's 'nuclear accent'; however, as we've seen, there can be more than one primary accent in an idea unit. The various distinctive intonational shapes that a possible in these positions are tones, which may be configured as fall, rise, fall-rise, rise-fall or level. A tone's pitch contour may be realized across a spread of words, frequently extending from the last primary accent to the end of the idea unit.

Chafe (1993:37) suggests a useful functional differentiation between idea units that are substantive and those that are regulatory in the discourse. ***Substantive*** units are contentful segments of speech built around a predicative VP; most are clauses, a smaller number are less than a clause and fewer still more than a clause; their modal length is five words. Chafe argues that substantive idea units can verbalize clusters of ideas; however, only one item will constitute new information, this being the small amount of information that can be active, or in the focus of, a person's consciousness at a particular moment. The other information that may be included in an idea unit comprises given or accessible (semi-active) ideas which provide a context for the one new idea.

Regulatory idea units, on the other hand, serve the primary function of regulating the flow of information; their modal length is one word. They encompass the category of discourse markers (Schiffrin 1987) and correspond roughly to Quirk & Greenbaum's (1973) category of

University of Cape Town

'minor' (non-predicative) utterances. They can be sub-categorized as interpersonal (regulating the interaction between speaker and listener, e.g., 'mhmm', 'oh', 'you know'), textual (regulating the linkage between idea units, e.g., 'and then', 'so', 'but') or cognitive (signalling mental activity or planning on the part of the speaker, e.g., 'let's see', 'I don't know'). Chafe concedes that the line between these three sub-types is not clear-cut : the regulatory unit 'well', for example, could conceivably fulfill all three functions; however, as a group, they clearly contrast with idea units conveying substantive information. Finally, idea units may be of a third type - ***fragmentary*** - one that was begun but broken off, as frequently happens with speaker reformulations.

Regulatory and fragmentary idea units fall within the larger category of what are usually called non-fluencies : the plethora of devices characteristic of all spontaneous speech that tend to be dismissed as 'performance phenomena'. The occurrence of non-fluencies in fact offers a glimpse of the on-line planning that is necessary in the production of longer spoken texts such as narrative. Gee (1986:396) argues that we can appeal to these phenomena as evidence for higher order units of structure; for instance, in oral narrative, an increase in false starts, hesitations and non-clausal idea units tends to coincide with major discourse boundaries in the narrative. Reviewing this category, Garman (1990:119) distinguishes pause-fillers ('er', 'um', etc.), which are usually viewed as associated with difficulties in formulation and/or word-finding difficulties, from pause words or phrases ('I mean', 'you know'). The latter correspond most clearly with Chafe's regulatory idea units and often occur prior to or following contentful utterances; in addition to the functions mentioned by Chafe, they may serve as floor-holding devices, to maintain a speaker's turn. Silent pauses, discussed above, of course often occur with filled pauses (either pause fillers or pause words/phrases), so that to some extent the distinction between filled and silent pauses is artificial (Garman 1990:117); their functions may likewise be speaker-based (for planning or inhaling) or listener-friendly (clarifying the structure of the message). Other categories of non-fluency include repetitions - either restarting an utterance from the beginning or associated with mid-stream reformulations - and constructional switches, usually ending in some reformulation; both these types are likely to be realized as fragmentary idea units.

Table 1 contains a listing of the features that I worked with in analysing spoken narrative texts into idea units. It indicates, where appropriate, the symbols used in transcribing these features, as well as their likely functions in discourse. It does not correspond exactly to any particular existing system for coding discourse, but draws on the work discussed above, especially that of Chafe (1993), du Bois et al (1993), Garman (1990) and Brown & Yule (1983).

University of Cape Town

Table 1 : Summary of categories and symbols used in the analysis of idea units

1. PITCH PROMINENCE

Realized as :
tones carrying marked pitch movement

fall	\
rise	/
fall-rise	V
rise-fall	Λ
level	-

Function :
Communicative/Textual
- new information
- topic changes
- contrast/emphasis
- speaker turns

↑	higher tone, relative to preceding tone
↓	lower tone, relative to preceding tone
→	shift back to base pitch level
=	lengthened tonic syllable

2. PAUSE

Realized as :

short pause (± 1 sec.)	-
longer pause (± 2 sec.)	- -
longer than 2 sec	(approx. length)

Function :
Cognitive (planning)
Physiological (inhaling)
Communicative (clarifying)
Textual (chunking text)

3. PAUSE FILLERS

Realized as :
um, er (non-words)
non-textual connectives
repetitions

Function :
Cognitive

4. TYPE OF IDEA UNIT

Realized as :	*Syntactic unit*	*Function:*
Substantive		
Contentful; built around predicative VP	Phrase Clause Clause - Clause +	Express ideas of people, objects, events, states.
Regulatory		
Discourse markers; connectives; minor utterances		Regulate flow of discourse - Communicative - Textual - Cognitive - Floor-holding
Fragmentary		
Incomplete		Cognitive (formulation or word-finding difficulty)

University of Cape Town

5.1.2 Analysis of idea units

The remainder of this section uses these features of idea units to analyse a single narrative, by a five-year-old girl from Kensington/Factreton who recounted the death of her aunt in a fire. The narrative is reproduced below in a verbatim transcription, including all the various hesitations, repetitions and reformulations that were a part of its production. Idea units are numbered and each placed on a separate line, their boundaries indicated by vertical lines (|). Capitalized words within idea units are those produced with a marked pitch glide above or below the base pitch level. The direction of pitch movement is indicated above the word. These words, by definition, are also stressed. The narrative was spoken excitedly and fast, from start to finish, with no long pauses; however, since this particular recording was made in quiet conditions, inhalations for breath were mostly clearly audible and aided the identification of idea unit boundaries. Audible breath intakes are marked BP, to indicate a breath pause. On the right, each idea unit is coded as substantive (Subst.), regulatory (Reg.) or fragmentary (Frag.); substantive idea units are further analysed for their syntactic correspondence.

1		umm that LAST↑TIME |	BP	Subst. Phrase (NP)
2	→	and SO=|	BP	Reg.
3	→	and and so it was HOLIDAY→and |	BP	Subst. Clause
4		and so um um |	BP	Reg.
5		so auntie |	BP	Frag.
6		that LAST time↓and SO |	BP	Subst. Phrase (NP)
7	→	um aun um aun um |	BP	Frag.
8		auntie ELSIE'S HOUSE=→um |	BP	Subst. Phrase (NP)
9		um um um ge um it STARTED to BURNED=OUT=|		Subst. Clause
10	→	because WHY=|	BP	Reg.
11	→	the the the um |	BP	Frag.
12		whatyoucall now |	BP	Reg.
13		uh the CANDLE |	BP	Subst. Phrase (NP)
14	→	it FELL |		Subst. Clause
15	→	and so the WHOLE |	BP	Frag.
16	→	the WHOLE→um |		Frag.
17		the WHOLE HOUSE STARTED to BURNED↑OUT|	BP	Subst. Clause
18	→	and SO |	BP	Reg.
19	→	and so they they PHONE the fire BRIGADES |		Subst. Clause
20	→	and so uncle CHRISTIE |	BP	Subst. Phrase (NP)

University of Cape Town

21 →	that stay THERE by↑ THEM |	BP	Subst.	Clause
22 →	and so HE did↑ SAVE |	BP	Frag.	
23→	and so he did SAVE the the um the FIRE= |	BP	Subst.	Clause
24 →	and SO |	BP	Reg.	
25 →	and SO when the when the fire BRIGADES↑ CAME |	BP	Subst.	Clause
26 →	and so it was TOO LATE |	BP	Subst.	Clause
27	AND that last TIME |	Subst.	Phrase (NP)	
28 →	and SO when it was HOLIDAY |	BP	Subst.	Clause
29 →	and so AUNTIE MARIAH DIE= |	BP	Subst.	Clause
30 →	and so and so uncle WILLE CAME |	Subst.	Clause	
31 →	and so uncle WILLE |	BP	S ubst.	Phrase (NP)
32	told my MA=→um that |	BP	Subst.	Cl -
33	that um |	BP	Frag.	
34	that that that his WIFE is DEAD |	BP	Subst.	Clause
35 →	and so he was CRYING= |	BP	Subst.	Clause
36 →	and and and so um |	BP	Reg.	
37	so m m SHANTAL TOLD |	BP	Subst.	NP + V of saying
38 →	um for my MA |	BP	Subst.	Phrase (NP)
39 →	here's uncle WILLE |	BP	Subst.	Clause
40→	so so MA↑ SAY→ um |	BP	Subst.	NP + V of saying
41	um uncle WILLE= |		Subst.	Phrase (NP)
42 →	what what what happened with uncle WILLE |	BP	Subst.	Clause
43 →	so um um SHANTAL SAY |	BP	Subst.	NP + V of saying
44 →	that uncle WILLE'S WIFE is DEAD |	BP	Subst.	Clause
45	so um um my MA SAY |		Subst.	NP + V of saying
46 →	uncle WILLE |	BP	Frag.	
47 →	uncle WILLE LIES= |	BP	Subst.	Clause
48 →	and so uncle WILLE went INTO the ROOM |	BP	Subst.	Clause
49 →	and so uncle WILLE SAID→ um um |	BP	Subst.	NP + V of saying
50	um HE don't PLAY with his WIFE'S DEAD |	BP	Subst.	Clause
51	and NOW he's |		Frag.	
52 →	and NOW she's DEAD |		Subst.	Clause

University of Cape Town

Idea units in this narrative were identified on a combination of pause and pitch cues, as well as the occurrence of connectives and non-fluencies. Looking first at pause-bounded units of speech, there were no perceptibly significant differences in length of pauses (though these were not measured objectively); however, audible inhalations on this recording made it possible to identify breath pauses, and therefore breath groups, fairly straightforwardly. It is clear from the transcription notations that the great majority of breath groups enclose a single idea unit and much less often two such units.

Pitch movement followed a characteristic pattern within these units; here I was able to back up my subjective transcription by recording the entire narrative onto a Visi-Pitch monitor which provided a visual display of the pitch movement in each breath group. Idea units almost invariably start at or around the same mid-range pitch level, which, in most cases, then rises sharply on an accented word or words, usually placed towards the end of the unit. It is quite common to find more than one peak of pitch prominence per unit, and in the unmarked case these are rising, or sometimes fall-rise; whichever is the case, the idea unit thus typically ends in a final rising contour (a pattern that conforms with Douglas's (1984) findings for children in District Six). Falling pitch is much less common (only four of fifty-two idea units end with a falling contour) and is a marked form with discourse-level functions, as we shall see later. Where there is more than one accented word in an idea unit, extra emphasis is sometimes created by having successive rises - i.e., a following word has an even higher rise relative to the preceding rise. This is indicated by a ↑(vertical arrow) preceding an accented word :

17 the WHOLE HOUSE STARTED to BURNED↑OUT

Additional emphasis is also created by lengthening the tonic syllable (marked as = following the lengthened word); this occurs with the final accented word in some idea units :

47 uncle WILLE LIES=

Following the final accented word the speaker then typically pauses to inhale and returns to her base pitch level (indicated as →) for the start of a new idea unit. Occasionally, one or two unaccented words intervene between the final pitch rise and the breath pause; these are never substantive words, however, but either a pause-filler (e.g.,'um') or a connective (e.g.,'and', 'that'), and are almost always both unstressed and dropped in pitch level (roughly, back to base pitch), signalling the end of the idea unit :

8 auntie ELSIE'S HOUSE= → um

32 told my MA= → um that

Connectives, pause fillers and other non-fluencies such as repetitions and false starts much more commonly occur at the beginning of idea units :

University of Cape Town

9 um um um ge um it STARTED to BURNED=OUT=

25 and SO when the when the fire BRIGADES↑CAME

These elements, then, can also be seen as idea unit boundary markers. Substantive idea units are three times as likely (in this narrative) to begin with one or more of these grammatical words or non-fluencies than they are to stand alone. These items provide further evidence for the idea unit as the unit of planning in spoken texts like narrative. They are overt evidence of cognitive activity at points of planning and may also have a floor-holding function, forestalling interruption by listeners. In fact, even grammatical connectives (especially the ubiquitous 'and so') often reflect these, rather than textual, functions : 'and so' initiates half of all substantive idea units in this narrative and constitutes the majority of regulatory idea units; in fact it occurs twenty-one times in the text, yet rarely appears to serve a truly textual purpose.

Thus far we've seen that idea units can be identified on a co-occurrence of factors, notably, patterns of pausing and pitch movement and the distribution of non-fluencies. It remains to be seen whether these units, thus defined, correspond to any prototypical grammatical units. Table 2 summarizes the grammatical structures corresponding to substantive idea units.

TABLE 2 : Grammatical structures corresponding to substantive idea units

Clause (main or embedded)		21
Phrase	Subject NP	7
	Object NP	2
NP + V of saying		5
Clause -		1

Close to 60% of substantive idea units enclose a clause, either independent or embedded. Another 25% correspond with phrases that belong with clauses - either as subject or object NP's. In the case of subject NP's, these are separated from the clauses to which they belong by a process of left dislocation : in the following instances they introduce new information (characters or topic NP's new to the discourse) which, having been introduced, can subsequently be encapsulated as an anaphoric pronoun :

8 auntie Elsie's house (subject NP - new)
(**it** started to burned out)

13 the candle (subject NP - new)
(**it** fell)

20 and so uncle Christie (subject NP - new)
(that stay there by them
he did save the fire)

University of Cape Town

The subject NP 'that last time', which occurs as an independent idea unit three times in the first half of the narrative (1, 6, 27) is not as clearly explained as introducing new information; rather, it seems to have significance to the narrator as a reference point marking the time ('when it was holiday') of the narrative's crucial event. She uses it to open the narrative (1), then gets into some formulation or planning difficulties and, while searching for the next bit of new information, returns to this reference point in 6. Later, when she gets to the point of relating the key event of the narrative (the death of her aunt), she again backs up to supply this same time reference (27) :

1 that last time
(**it** was holiday)

6 that last time
(auntie Elsie's house it started to burned out)

27 and that last time
(when **it** was holiday
auntie Mariah die)

Two object NP's occur, both of which are attached to clauses reporting direct speech :

Shantal told
38 for my ma (object NP)
"here's uncle Wille"

so Ma say
41 "uncle Wille?" (object NP)

Clauses reporting speech, in fact, make up a large chunk of the second half of the narrative. Accordingly, around 14% of substantive idea units comprise a subject NP with a verb of saying, followed by a clause or object NP containing the reported speech :

37 so Shantal told(NP + V of saying)
(for my ma
"here's uncle Wille")

40 so ma say (NP + V of saying)
("uncle Wille?")

43 so Shantal say (NP + V of saying)
(that uncle Wille's wife is dead)

45 so my ma say (NP + V of saying)
("uncle Wille lies!")

49 so uncle Wille said (NP + V of saying)
(he don't play with his wife's dead)

University of Cape Town

Only one reported speech clause does not match this pattern exactly. In 31 and 32, the subject NP is separated from the remainder of the clause comprising the verb of saying and object NP, yielding a structure that is less than a clause, not corresponding with a phrase :

31 and so uncle Wille
32 told my ma (Clause -)

It seems clear that for this narrator, the flow of information is structured around the clause as the basic unit of grammar. This is seen most clearly when the narrative text is analysed into independent and dependent clauses. Two chief speaker strategies emerge : (1) All simple, independent clauses in the text are uttered as a single (prosodically and pausally coherent) idea unit, except where they introduce topic NP's that constitute information that is new to the discourse or of thematic significance. In these cases, the subject NP may acquire a special, independent status by being separated from the clause to which it belongs, usually in a process of left dislocation. (Note that this does not necessarily happen with all new topic NP's; it can be regarded as an optional strategy for highlighting topically or thematically important information). (2) Grammatically complex utterances involving dependent clauses are separated so that each clause (main and embedded) constitutes a distinct idea unit. This is seen in the examples below, the first and third of which combine this strategy with that of left dislocation :

20 uncle Christie (left dislocation)
21 that stay there by them (dependent clause)
23 he did save the fire (main clause)

25 when the fire brigades came (dependent clause)
26 it was too late (main clause)

27 and that last time (left dislocation)
28 when it was holiday (dependent clause)
29 auntie Mariah die (main clause)

Even the case of clauses containing reported speech conform to this basic strategy : the dependent clause, comprising the direct or indirect speech, is produced as a separate idea unit, as in 43 below (the other examples have appeared above) :

43 Shantal say
44 that uncle Wille's wife is dead

Note that this strategy also results here in a satisfying pattern of parallel structure ('so Shantal say| ....., so Ma say' ....); a point to which we return later. Only one exception to the rule occurs, in the case of the complex sentence expressed in idea units 31 - 34, discussed above.

University of Cape Town

So far we have analysed the structure of substantive idea units in this narrative. These are contentful segments of speech which, in the prototypical case, correspond with a clause; are bounded by short pauses; are initiated by a connective and/or pause fillers of various kinds; contain one or more accented words with prominent (usually rising) pitch movement; end in a final rising contour and sometimes syllable-lengthening; and shift back to base pitch level for the start of a new unit. They make up roughly two-thirds of the total idea units in this particular narrative, the remaining idea units being either regulatory or fragmentary.

Regulatory idea units, of which there are seven, are either connectives (in six cases) or 'filler' words (in one case, 12 : 'whatyoucall now'). Five of the connectives are 'and so', either occurring on its own or together with pause fillers ('um') and repetition ('and and and so'). In all cases these serve no real textual purpose, since they are repeated at the start of subsequent substantive idea units; rather, they seem to have a floor-holding function, signalling cognitive planning activity between substantive units. Only one connective (10 : 'because why') is truly textual, marking the causal relation between preceding and following substantive idea units. The filler 'whatyoucall now' (12) is clearly cognitive in function, marking lexical access difficulty as the narrator searches for the word 'candle'. Both regulatory and fragmentary idea units are also pause-bounded segments of speech, but do not necessarily contain a prominent pitch glide; some comprise a series of level tones (4 : 'and so um um'). Fragmentary units, of which there are nine, are substantive idea units that are started, then broken off incomplete. Eight of the nine instances are associated either with lexical access difficulty, as in the following examples :

11 the the the um (target : candle)

15 and so the whole
16 the whole um (target : house)

or with delays in formulating a following clause :

(and so uncle Wille told my ma)
33 that um
(that his wife is dead)

The ninth case involves a false start entailing a reformulation where an incorrect pronoun is selected :

51 and now he's
(and now she's dead)

Assuming, then, that regulatory and fragmentary idea units are mostly the by-products of planning activity or formulation difficulties, we can focus attention on the contentful segments of speech in the text. Gee (1986, 1989) suggests that by removing hesitations, false starts, repairs

University of Cape Town

and other types of non-substantive material from the text, and collapsing those phrases that constitute separate idea units into their matrix clauses, one enables the line structure of the narrative to emerge : 'the "ideal" or underlying structure the mind is "aiming" at' (1989:288). In this and all other narratives in the data-base, my decision was to retain all connectives (including apparently non-essential ones, such as the ubiquitous 'and so') in the 'cleaned-up' versions of narratives, as well as discourse markers (e.g., 'you know', 'man', '*ne*', '*mos*') having speaker-oriented functions. On the other hand, fragmentary (incomplete) idea units, pause fillers (e.g., 'um', 'er', 'whatyoucallit') and repetitions that were obviously pause-fillers were removed. In the case of substantive idea units, isolated phrases (new or thematically significant topic NP's) were integrated with the clauses to which they belonged (eg., 'auntie Elsie's house / it started to burned out') and subject NP's with verbs of saying were joined to the clauses containing the reported speech (e.g., 'so my ma say / uncle Wille lies'). Idea units enclosing other types of dependent clauses (e.g., 'when the fire brigades came') were left as separate lines.

A second version of the 'death by fire' narrative is presented below, with its resultant, idealized line structure. Idea units are organized into numbered lines that are, in turn, grouped into stanzas and parts. Rather than continue with a detailed analysis of lines, stanzas and parts in this particular narrative, however, it will be more instructive at this point to broaden the investigation to consider narratives from the data-base as a whole. I therefore restrict my comments below to a few observations of key features that emerge in subsequent 'readings' of this narrative.

University of Cape Town

PART 1 : EVENTS LEADING TO DEATH

Stanza 1 - The house starts to burn

1 that LAST TIME /
and so it was HOLIDAY
2 and so that LAST time /
and so auntie ELSIE'S HOUSE / it STARTED to BURNED OUT
3 because WHY the CANDLE / it FELL
4 and so the WHOLE HOUSE STARTED to BURNED OUT

Stanza 2 - Attempts to put out the fire fail

5 and so they PHONE the fire BRIGADES
6 and so uncle CHRISTIE / that stay THERE by THEM
7 and so he did SAVE [1] the FIRE
8 and so when the fire BRIGADES CAME
9 and so it was TOO LATE

---

1 The child has selected an inappropriate word with 'save', since the following lines make it clear that the uncle's attempts to extinguish the fire were unsuccessful. Presumably the intended meaning is 'tried to put out'.

Stanza 3 - Auntie Mariah dies

10 and that last TIME /
and so when it was HOLIDAY
11 and so AUNTIE MARIAH DIE

PART 2 : EVALUATION OF THE DEATH

Stanza 4 - Reaction to death : grief

12 and so uncle WILLE CAME
13 and so uncle WILLE / told my MA / that his WIFE is DEAD
14 and so he was CRYING

Stanza 5 - Reaction to death : denial

15 and so SHANTAL TOLD / for my MA / here's uncle WILLE
16 so MA SAY / uncle WILLE? / what happened with uncle WILLE?
17 so SHANTAL SAY / that uncle WILLE'S WIFE is DEAD
18 so my MA SAY / uncle WILLE LIES!

Stanza 6 - The certainty of death

19 and so uncle WILLE went INTO the ROOM
20 and so uncle WILLE SAID / HE don't PLAY with his WIFE'S DEAD
21 and NOW she's DEAD

Examining the content of prosodically highlighted information within lines (words and phrases marked by prominent pitch movement and indicated by capital letters) helps to clarify the grouping of lines into stanzas that I have suggested here. Stanza boundaries in this narrative are identifiable by small shifts in perspective, referred to as 'staging' in the previous chapter. More specifically, these are shifts in thematic topic or timing of events. In the case of stanza 3, I have regarded the reintroduction of the time reference ('that last time, when it was holiday') - a repetition of the opening lines of the narrative - as marking a new stanza. The brevity of this stanza highlights the key event of the narrative - the aunt's death - which is first introduced here.

The patterning of lines within stanzas is responsible for their internal cohesion; the devices chiefly responsible for this are topic-chaining of NPs and, in certain cases, repetition (stanza 1) and parallelism of lines (as in the use of dialogue to structure stanza 5 : 'Shantal say .../ Ma say..'). Furthermore, each stanza has a focus (as defined in 4.3.7) - a line that represents the 'main point' of the stanza. These are underlined in the version of the narrative given below. It is characteristic of this and many other narratives in the sample that the focus line usually occurs at the end of a stanza, as a kind of punchline, and often represents the *outcome* of events described in that particular stanza. In fact, the captions that I have given as summary headings for each stanza generally correspond directly to the focus lines, illustrating how the focus also marks the specific contribution of each stanza to the overall sense of this narrative. As with the surfing

University of Cape Town

narrative of chapter 4, these lines form together a mini-text or paraphrase of the entire narrative. The thematic significance of the focus line is highlighted in several instances by the narrator's use of prosody. As was the case with the other children in this study, the characteristic or unmarked narrative intonation pattern is a rising tone at the end of lines. The rarer marked form of the falling tone occurs only when the emotionally laden theme (or refrain) of this narrative comes up - that of her aunt's death ('auntie Mariah die' (11), 'uncle Wille's wife is dead' (17) 'his wife's dead' (20), 'and now she's dead' (21)). Falling pitch thus has an important discourse-level function in the structuring of this and other narratives.

In the following chapter (6), we explore further the notion that the focus of stanzas often represents the outcome of events within a stanza, and examine resources other than prosody that child narrators use to mark the focal points of their narratives. Before moving on to consider other narratives in the data-base, however, it is worth mentioning two features of this narrative that set it apart from the classic, high-point structure described by Labov (1972) and Peterson & McCabe (1983) and as exemplified by the surfing narrative analysed in the previous chapter. Firstly, the Key Event (Polanyi 1989) of this story - the aunt's death - does not occur as a single high point, but as a refrain that is echoed at several points throughout subsequent stanzas (lines 11, 13, 17, 20, 21). The final stanza of Part 2 ends by reiterating the refrain and final outcome of events, echoing the ending of Part 1. As we shall see later, the tendency to structure narratives around echoed themes, rather than building up to, and then resolving, a single climactic event, is characteristic of a great number of the Cape Flats children's narratives. Secondly, the overall balance of content and structure in the two parts of this narrative is at variance with the classic high-point scheme. The first half of the narrative - comprising Part 1 - details the *events* being recalled, and their circumstances. This is separated from the second half by a brief two-line stanza that seems to stand on its own, in which the narrator backs up to the initial time-orienting line of the narrative and provides the final outcome of events (line 11), the brevity of this stanza compared with others lending emphasis to its content. The second half of the narrative (Part 2) is equal in length to the first but consists of three stanzas devoted solely to an *evaluation* of the events by exploring the emotional reactions of family members to the death. Again, we shall find later that the evaluative component is very often at least equal to, and sometimes more important than, the events themselves in these children's stories.

We turn now to an analysis of the line, stanza and part structure of children's narratives, taking into account the data-base as a whole.

University of Cape Town

5.2 Line, stanza and part structure

Each narrative in the sample was analysed into its line, stanza and part structure, following the procedure detailed in chapter 4. Where findings were quantified (usually in the form of calculated percentages), however, this was based solely on the three longest narratives from each child, as explained in chapter 1 (1.3.1). All the figures presented in tables in the remainder of this chapter are thus derived from the three longest narratives per child in each age-group. Illustrative examples, however, are not necessarily confined to this sub-set of narratives, but are drawn at times from the larger data-base.

Table 3 below shows that there are predictable increases in the mean length of narratives (calculated as the average number of lines) with increasing age. More striking than increments in overall length, however, is the development of stanza structure with age. In the youngest (three-year-old) group, roughly half (49%) of all personal narratives had no discernable stanza structure; the remaining half (51%) comprised multiple stanzas (on average, three stanzas). By four and five years we see substantially more narratives that are organized into stanzas : 78% of all four-year-old and 86% of five-year-old narratives had a multiple-stanza structure By six years, every one of the three longest narratives produced by children in this group had multiple-stanza structure (on average, five stanzas, but extending up to ten). From five years and increasingly at six, one sees an added level of sophistication in the ability to organize narratives not only into stanzas but also into larger units, i.e., parts.

Table 3 : Distribution of lines, stanzas and parts by age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
$\bar{X}$ number of lines per narrative	7	10	12	17
% single-stanza narratives	49%	22%	14%	0%
% multiple-stanza narratives	51%	78%	86%	100%
$\bar{X}$ number of stanzas (in multiple-stanza narratives)	3	3	3	5
% narratives with parts	0	0	10%	25%

University of Cape Town

5.3 Lines : mainline and offline propositions

We turn now to consider what kinds of propositions make up the lines of narratives. As we saw in chapter 4, the personal narrative requires more than just a recapitulation of events; the onus is on the narrator to provide, additionally, contextualizing information with which the listener may interpret the events, as well as to signal her perspective, attitude or feeling towards the events by evaluating them. In chapter 4, I referred to contextualizing and evaluative information collectively as 'State' propositions. In the analysis of children's narratives here, however, I have chosen to mark the two types of state propositions distinctively as either *orientation* or *evaluation*. Contextualizing information takes the form of what Labov (1972) and Labov & Waletzky (1967) called 'orientation' clauses, since these orient the listener to information such as who the participants were, or where and when the events took place, that is crucial to our understanding of what happened. Young children are, of course, still developing this sort of sensitivity to listeners' needs, so in this section we shall examine the extent to which three-to-six-year-olds in Kensington/Factreton are able to provide adequate contextualizing information (in the form of orientation clauses) when narrating. Evaluation, according to Labov, is the *sine qua non* of the personal narrative; it is how the narrator conveys the point of her story, or what makes it tellable, from her particular perspective. How evaluative information is presented may be subject to both social-cultural and developmental determinants; hence, one of the questions explored here is how the Kensington/Factreton children construe the point of their stories. Finally, the presence of Non-storyworld propositions was investigated, since the ability to temporarily 'step outside' of the storyworld, in order to reflect on situations or events within it, may require a degree of sophistication in narrating that young children do not fully possess.

University of Cape Town

Table 4 : Distribution of mainline (Event) and offline (State, Non-storyworld) propositions by age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Event propositions	**69%**	**62%**	**55%**	**52%**
State propositions	28%	35%	38%	39%
Non-storyworld propositions	3%	3%	7%	9%
	31%	**38%**	**45%**	**48%**

Table 4 shows that amongst the youngest group of children, a clear majority of narrative clauses (69%) are mainline clauses encoding Event propositions, while a minority (31%) are offline clauses, representing States (28% of offline clauses) or, occasionally, Non-storyworld information (3% of offline clauses). From three to six years, however, there is a steady increase in the amount of offline information in narratives with a corresponding decline in the proportion of event clauses, so that by six years, there is an almost equal balance between mainline (52%) and offline (48%) content. The presence of Non-storyworld clauses, while generally making up only a small proportion of narratives, shows gradual increases with advancing age.

State clauses as well as Non-storyworld clauses were further coded according to whether their primary function was ***orientation*** or ***evaluation***. Table 5 shows that the balance of orientation versus evaluation in State and Non-storyworld clauses across subject groups was roughly equal, except for the four-year-old group which tended to favour orientation rather more than other age-groups.

Table 5 : Percentage of offline propositions (State and Non-storyworld) classified as orientation or evaluation in each age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Orientation	47%	61%	47%	52%
Evaluation	53%	39%	53%	48%

University of Cape Town

Table 5 reflects the primary coding of state and non-storyworld clauses as either orientation or evaluation. However, both orientation and evaluation can be conveyed at a sub-clausal level, by means of words or phrases within a clause. Peterson & McCabe (1983; 1997) referred to these as instances of 'embedded' orientation or evaluation. In their analysis of children's narratives, they found that classifying types of propositions in a mutually exclusive way, as suggested by Labov (1972) and Labov & Waletzky (1967), was limiting :

> Our concern was that we found evaluation in particular (and to a lesser extent orientation as well) everywhere in a narrative, not just in those clauses that are classified as evaluative. A judicious choice of words, an addition of a particular adjective or adverb, a dependent clause or prepositional phrase - all can and did carry evaluative information. In fact, we found that although only 15% of children's narrative clauses were wholly devoted to evaluation, an additional, impressive 35% of their clauses had embedded evaluation in them ... Similarly, we found orientation embedded in numerous other clauses ... To miss such embedded orientation would be to miss children's impressive competence in this area. (1997:254)

Following Peterson & McCabe, therefore, each narrative proposition in the data here was examined for the additional presence of embedded orientation or evaluation. For instance, the opening stanza of a five-year-old's narrative was coded as follows. The primary coding of each clause itself is shown on the left and the secondary categories of embedded orientation and evaluation are shown in parentheses on the right. The categories themselves are defined and explained in the following discussion.

1	State	E-phys.	my mommy's grandma is dead	
2	State	O-loc.	she was by my ma for a whole weekend	(O-time)(E-intensifier)
3	Event		so she first went to go wash	(O-time)
4	State	E-neg.	and so she couldn't get the door open	(E-modal)
5	Event		so she screamed	(E-emotive)
6	Event		and shout	(E-emotive)

Line 1, which functions as an abstract for the narrative, is a State proposition, sub-classified as an evaluative (E) clause describing the physical state of a participant in the narrative. Line 2 is also a State proposition, whose primary function is orientation (O) to the location of this person when the events took place. However, it contains an embedded phrase ('for a whole weekend') orienting the listener to the timing of events (O-time), which also includes an intensifier functioning as an evaluative word ('whole weekend'). Line 3 supplies the first action of the narrative : it is an Event clause which has an embedded time marker ('first went'). Line 4 is a State proposition; as a negative statement, it is regarded as evaluative (E-neg), and it contains an embedded modal ('could'), which is also evaluative in function. Lines 5 and 6 describe Events, but include evaluative words with emotive connotations ('screamed' and 'shout').

Identifying embedded orientation and evaluation was done conservatively, in order not to over-use these categories and thus detract from their important role in narrating. As we shall see below, certain linguistic categories - for instance, modals and intensifiers - were regarded by definition as evaluative and were always labelled as embedded evaluation when they appeared. On the other hand, if one were to identify every reference to a person, object or location as embedded orientation, the result would be to make these categories virtually meaningless. In these cases, a word or phrase was coded as embedded evaluation or orientation only if it introduced information that was new to the discourse, and if elaborated in some way. For example, the Event clause 'we went to that small pools with a lot of water in' was coded for embedded orientation to location, but not 'we went to the beach' or 'I went to school'. Similarly, each time a new participant was introduced this was not labelled as embedded orientation to participants unless the information was linguistically marked, as in : 'my big sister and all my cousins did cry - even my big cousins', or '*met my nefie, my klein nefie, sy ma het nou die water*

University of Cape Town

ingegooi' [with my cousin, my little cousin, his mom threw the water in]. The only exception to this general principle was made in the case of orientation to time. The linguistic expression of many kinds of temporal relationships requires understanding of concepts of time that are rather difficult for very young children; not surprisingly, therefore, this category of orientation was very poorly represented amongst the three-year-olds, but showed substantial increments with increasing age. Given the important role of temporal reference in narrative, I wished to capture all references to the timing of events, whether clausal or embedded, in order to study their development qualitatively.

In defining all the sub-categories of orientation and evaluation used in this analysis, I drew on the coding manual developed for children's narratives by Peterson & McCabe (1983) but differed in several respects from them; some of these differences are pointed out in the following discussion of my findings. Table 6 below shows the frequency of occurrence of the sub-categories of orientation (both clausal and embedded) in the different age-groups. The figures in Table 7, on the other hand, reflect the total incidence of each sub-category for all age-groups. The same distinction applies to Tables 8 and 9 that appear in the subsequent discussion of evaluation.

Table 6 : Percentage occurrence of sub-categories of Orientation (clausal and embedded) in each age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Participants	47%	34%	34%	32%
Objects/features	26%	15%	15%	6%
Location	13%	15%	10%	12%
Time	5%	15%	22%	24%
Ongoing events	6%	16%	14%	17%
General case	3%	2%	4%	7%
General conditions	0%	3%	1%	2%

University of Cape Town

Table 7 : Incidence of sub-categories of Orientation for all age-groups combined

	No. clauses	No. embedded	Total no.	%
Participants	137 (32%)	88	225	**35%**
Time	62 (15%)	64	126	**19%**
Ongoing events	96 (22%)	0	96	**15%**
Objects/features	50 (12%)	31	81	**12%**
Location	41 (10%)	38	79	**12%**
General case	31 (7%)	0	31	**5%**
General conditions	7 (2%)	3	10	**2%**

5.3.1 Orientation

Of all the types of contextualizing information that children can and do provide, it is clear that at all ages they choose to relate information about the ***participants*** (chiefly people, but also animals) in narrative events more than any other category. Table 7 shows that over one-third (35%) of all orientation information was of this type. Included in this category are explanations of kinship relations ('that lady's my auntie'; '*ek het 'n suster nou, en sy het 'n* baby' [I have a sister now, and she has a baby]; 'but that wasn't a cousin'), various kinds of identifying information ('he were a policeman'; '*my broer is ook 'n skollie*' [my brother is also a *skollie*]; 'I'm Muslim'), as well as who did and who did not participate in events ('*Natasha en ek en my ma was alleen saam*' [only N. and I and my mom went]; '*onse* baby *het by my oupa gebly*' [our baby stayed with my grandpa]; 'my ma wasn't there').

In orienting to participants, these children often went to some lengths to establish that, as the listener, I understood the identity of participants. Appropriately enough, when the central characters were the child her- or himself, or someone with transparent identity (e.g., '*my ma*'), no orientation was given other than naming the person involved. However, when the characters were not known to the listener, children often used quite elaborate orientation to establish their identity, as demonstrated in extracts (1), (2) and (3) below. Also illustrated in (1) and (2) is the use of discourse markers *ne* and *mos*, borrowed from Afrikaans. '*Ne*' (which might be glossed as 'right?' or 'okay?') creates a shared context, enlisting the listener not just as an information recipient but as a participant to the storytelling; it is spoken with rising intonation, soliciting the

University of Cape Town

listener's acknowledgement. '*Mos*' apparently has a highlighting or 'watch this!' function in relation to either its preceding or following elements; '*mos*' itself is never spoken with stress but the word it highlights is given prominent stress. In (1), the first '*mos*' (line 3) serves to disambiguate the agent behind the first main event of the story (it is Duke, as opposed to his sister's friend, who chases Tommy). In line 5, the first '*mos*', reinforced this time by '*ne*', again establishes Duke as the actor, while the second *mos* highlights the following event ('kill') as a focus : 'he' is no longer new information, the agent of the action having been well established. I have followed Hymes (1982, 1985) and Minami (1996b) in regarding these discourse markers as punctuation devices, in this case marking phrase boundaries demarcating topically new or significant information.

(1) 1 you know my other friend *ne*
what my sister's friend?
2 and now you know Duke?
3 now he *mos*
chase for Tommy
4 there they fight each other

5 Duke *mos ne*
he *mos*
kill for Tommy
6 and so he scratch him
scratch him
.....

(2) 1 and *ne - ne*
my auntie Anne - auntie Anne
do you remember auntie Anne that I told you?
2 my mommy's auntie that I told you about it last time?
3 now she also had the 'flu
.....

(3) 1 that last time the matron's white people took us to -
Mr L. [and] them - took us to Sea Point
2 do you know Tania?
3 she took us
4 she took us .....

After participants, the second largest category of orientating information, when calculated for all age-groups (as in Table 7), was orientation to the ***time*** of events. However, this category showed the greatest variation between groups, increasing from only 5% of all orientation at three years of age to almost a quarter (24%) of orientation in the six-year-old group (see Table 6). Amongst the three-year-olds there were no time clauses and only four instances of embedded temporal words and phrases ('*gister*'[yesterday] (used twice), 'last night', 'first'). From four

University of Cape Town

years, children started to produce a few 'when' clauses ('when we went home ...') and at five years these expanded to include not only the simple past but the past progressive and future ('when she was finish bathing ...'; 'July, when he's so big as me ...'). At five years, too, the Afrikaans equivalents of 'when' clauses, '*toe wat*' and '*wat*', emerged ('*toe wat ek daar by die winkel gekom het ...*' [when I got to the shop]; '*wat ons by die huis kom, toe ...*' [when we got home, then ...]). By six years, children used as many as 42 time clauses, introduced by 'when', also 'while' ('and so while they still with us ...'), '*wat*', '*toe*' ('*toe ons daar by die brug gekom het ...*' [when we got to the bridge ...]) and '*as*' (with the meaning '*toe*' [when] : '*as ek gaan vir my diep in die water ...*' [when I went deep in the water ...]). The range of words and phrases conveying embedded time orientation increases markedly from four to six years to include not only specific time markers ('Saturday', '*die volgende dag*' [the next day], 'one morning'), but durative expressions ('for a whole weekend', 'for three days', '*tot Donderdag toe*'[until Thursday], 'for a while') and markers of sequence ('before', 'afterwards', 'first', 'after that').

Orientation to ***ongoing events*** formed the third largest category overall (see Table 7), although this also shows an age differential in that it made up only 6% of orientation in the three-year-old group, but between 14 and 17% of orientation in four-, five- and six-year-olds (Table 6). Peterson & McCabe (1983:221) defined this category as including only remarks in the past progressive tense (e.g., 'he was running down the road'). In the data here, however, it was necessary to broaden the definition, since Afrikaans does not have a past progressive. This category thus included comments (in either language, but principally in Afrikaans) in which the ongoing nature of the event was implied by the type of activity ('*toe le ek in die hospitaal*'[then I lay in the hospital], '*hy't geslaap*'[he was asleep]), or signalled by an adverbial ('I did watch the whole time TV'). three-year-old children who narrated in English were capable in some instances of using the past progressive, but used the category of ongoing events relatively seldom overall, preferring to relate the instantaneous events that made up their numerous Event clauses.

On the other hand, three-year-olds tended to favour descriptions of ***objects and features of the environment*** more than any other age-group. Examples of clauses in this category, taken from different ages, are : 'there's boats right at the back, then there's black fishes swimming' (describing the decor in a fast-food restaurant); '*ek het twee* bikes'[I have two bikes]; '*toe was daar 'n klomp bloed op onse stoep*'[then there was a whole lot of blood on our porch]. The proportion of orientation devoted to this category diminished steadily from four to six years of age, as older children provided a more diverse spread of orientation information in categories of ***location*** ('he was by our house'; 'the dog were under his wheel') and timing of events, as well as orientation to ongoing events. Orientation to ***general conditions*** occurred infrequently and only in

University of Cape Town

the four-, five- and six-year-old groups; this category included references to the weather, temperature or lighting conditions ('it was storming'; 'it was freezing cold'; '*dan's dit warm! warm! warm! daarin*'[then it was hot, hot, hot in there]; 'it was in the dark').

The final type of orientation that occurred in these data was that of ***general case***. This category is identical to that identified by Peterson & McCabe (1983) except that, in my analysis, these clauses were all, by definition, classed as Non-storyworld propositions, since they involve stepping out of storyworld time to describe events or situations which generally or frequently occur. At all ages these turned up as asides in the course of narrating specific past-time events ('Morne fights sometimes with Ady'; 'my daddy jogs'), but by six years they were being used in more sophisticated ways in narratives. Sometimes a statement of general case prefaced a story about a specific incident, as in '*my pa het al baie ongelukke gehad met 'n mes*'[my dad's already had a lot of accidents with a knife], or '*elke aand dan hardloop my hond weg*'[every night my dog runs away]. At other times a sequence of several general case remarks were used at appropriate points in a narrative - in the following example, in order to explain a medical procedure that the narrator himself had undergone : 'all daddies get it first, the daddy first get the blood, then they mix the children and the daddy and the mommy's blood together, they mix it'.

5.3.2 Evaluation

The first two categories of evaluation in Tables 8 and 9 represent clauses and sub-clausal (embedded) items in children's narratives that were focused on the *participants* in narratives. Just as a great deal of orientation in narratives involved description and identification of participants, so too a large chunk of the evaluation component of narratives consisted of comments on the ***internal*** (cognitive and emotional) ***states of participants*** or the ***physical state of participants***. Looking at evaluation clauses only (in Table 9), it is clear that of all the clauses in narratives whose primary function was evaluation, 54% fell into these two categories (23% consisting of comments on internal states of participants and 31% comments on physical states).

Internal states refer to cognitive and affective states either experienced by the narrator or attributed to others in the narrative. In all age-groups these most often took the form of descriptions, at clause level, of *emotions* ('I was scared, man!'; 'I really missed her'; '*toe's ek gelukkig*'[then I was happy]; '*sy's skaam*'[she's shy]) and, at a sub-clausal level, of embedded words or phrases with emotive force : 'then he cry'; 'she screamed and shout'; 'my mommy *skel* [scold] him'; '*ek het gelag*'[I laughed]; 'they rush my pa to hospital' (all these examples occurring in lines coded as Event clauses). Occurring somewhat less frequently were expressions of *desires*, including hopes and wishes. At clause level these usually involved the predicate 'want' or its Afrikaans equivalent '*wil*' ('my daddy wanted to hit my mommy'; '*toe wil die hond nie*

University of Cape Town

gelos het nie [then the dog wouldn't let go]), but occasionally 'wish' ('I wish[ed] that car can be bumped in') or, in one instance, 'shall' (where two Non-storyworld clauses functioned as a coda to a narrative : 'I still got the marks here on my hand. Shall I show you?'). In the five- and six-year-old groups only, desire was also expressed in embedded form via reported speech ('I ask my mommy "can I go with to the graveyard?"'; 'she said "I want also a lift"'). Closely related to desire, *intentions* referred to planned actions and were usually cast in the future ('and Diane's mommy is going to *skel'* [scold] - the sense of this example, from a three-year-old, being '...was going to *skel'*); again, however, in five- and six-year-olds, intention was often conveyed via reported speech ('*toe sê die vrou "ek moet die polisie nou bel'* [then the woman said "I must phone the police now]; '*toe sê my pa "as julle net weer by my hoenders kom vat, dan laat ek die hond julle doodbyt'* [then my dad said "if you come near my chickens one more time, I'll let the dog kill you]). Finally, *knowledge* (states of knowing or not knowing about something) was attributed to participants in clauses such as 'she don't know here come a car' and '*daai ander vrou het geweet wat is die man se naam*' [that other woman knew what the man's name was].

Descriptions of the ***physical state*** of participants were regarded by Peterson & McCabe (1983) as one type of orientation to participants; here, however, they were coded as evaluation because they were generally not neutral either in content or expression. They were counted separately because of their high frequency. They included descriptions of pain ('it was sore!'), illness ('my grandpa is sick, his eyes is stop over and there's lots of blisters on his feet'), the physical consequences of accidents ('and now my pa's *mos* blind'; 'he had stitches and behind his brain he have a big hole'; '*toe steek die vleis uit*' [then his innards were hanging out]) and, less often, states of fatigue or hunger ('*toe word ek moeg*' [then I got tired]; 'so I was hungry *ne*).

Looking at developmental trends (table 8), it seems that, despite their overall prominence, references to the mental and physical states of participants decreased with advancing age. This is related to corresponding increases in the older age groups of other categories of evaluation. As was the case with orientation, the narratives of older children offered a wider spread of different types of evaluation. Two categories in particular whose incidence increased significantly with age were judgements and relations of logic.

Only one single instance of a ***judgement*** cropped up in the youngest age-group (the subjective judgement 'then it's not nice chips'). Amongst the four-, five- and six-year-olds, judgements were most often *subjective judgements* of the narrator on the character of participants ('she a cry-baby bunter'; 'they rude'; *'die* baby *was stout*' [the baby was naughty]) and, much less often, of objects or places ('the hospital was nice'). Five- and especially six-year-olds showed more diversity in their subjective judgements, however : they offered opinions on the actions and behaviours of

University of Cape Town

Table 8 : Percentage occurrence of sub-categories of evaluation in each age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Internal states				
Emotion	17%	16%	13%	8%
Desire	3%	8%	6%	5%
Intention	5%	--	1%	1%
Knowledge	4%	2%	0.5%	2%
	29%	**26%**	**20%**	**16%**
Physical states	**23%**	**14%**	**14%**	**15%**
Judgements				
Subjective	1%	2%	2%	5%
Objective	--	1%	--	1%
Moral/cultural	--	--	--	3%
Comparisons	--	--	0.5%	0.5%
	1%	**3%**	**3%**	**10%**
Irrealis modality				
Negative	12%	7%	10%	6%
Hypothetical	--	--	0.5%	0.5%
Prediction	--	1%	2%	0.5%
Fantasy	--	--	4%	--
	12%	**8%**	**16%**	7
Logic				
Causal	1%	3%	4%	5%
Purpose	--	3%	1%	1%
Conditional	--	--	--	2%
	1%	**6%**	**5%**	**8%**
Discourse	--	**12%**	**12%**	**3%**
Modals	**10%**	**11%**	**9%**	**11%**
Compulsion	**8%**	**9%**	**5%**	**9%**
Intensifiers	**16%**	**11%**	**16%**	**21%**

University of Cape Town

Table 9 : Incidence of sub-categories of evaluation for all age-groups combined

	No. clauses	No. embedded	Total no.	%
Internal states				
Emotion	22 (6%)	80	102	12%
Desire	42 (11%)	4	46	5%
Intention	8 (2%)	3	11	1%
Knowledge	17 (4%) (23%)	0	17	2% **20%**
Physical states	121 (31%)	16	137	**16%**
Judgements				
Subjective	28 (7%)	2	30	3%
Objective	3 (1%)	5	8	1%
Moral/cultural	9 (2%)	2	11	1%
Comparisons	1 (0.5%) (11%)	2	3	0.5% **6%**
Irrealis modality				
Negative	70 (18%)	0	70	8%
Hypothetical	2 (0.5%)	0	2	0.5%
Prediction	7 (2%)	1	8	1%
Fantasy	4 (1%) (21%)	5	9	1% **10%**
Relations of logic				
Causal	33 (8%)	3	36	4%
Purpose	13 (3%)	1	14	1%
Conditional	7 (2%) (13%)	1	8	1% **6%**
Discourse markers	5 (1%)	49	54	**6%**
Modals	--	89	89	**10%**
Compulsion	--	70	70	**8%**
Intensifiers	--	156	156	**18%**

University of Cape Town

participants ('he went too far by the water with them'; 'she did always spoil my two sisters'), or of their motives and intentions ('*die vrou het aspris oor sy been gery*' [the woman deliberately rode over his leg]; 'he done it on purpose'), and expressed personal preferences or reactions ('I'll never like a parrot'; 'it's very hard'). *Objective judgements* arose when narrators cited the opinions of others; a couple of these cropped up in the four-year-old group, but the remainder were confined to the oldest children ('my cousin say I'm a parrot'; 'my daddy said I'm not his son').

Another sub-category of judgement that occurred only in the six-year-old's narratives was that of *moral* and *cultural judgements*. These arose when a child expressed a 'received wisdom', and showed the oldest children's developing awareness of societal norms and expectations as well as ethical issues. Examples of moral judgements were 'they mustn't laugh at their cousin' (censuring laughter at another's misfortune) and 'that's very bad for a person' (in reference to an aunt's smoking habit). Examples of religious/cultural judgements were 'so Jesus take him - and God' (explaining a death in the family); 'Muslims don't smoke' (an explanation for why a child plans never to smoke himself); and 'if you drink wine, then this part gets all full of sores' (also from a Muslim child whose culture prohibits imbibing of alcohol). Another of more local significance was the explanation offered by a child for the socially deviant behaviour of a handicapped woman in the community : 'the devil came, he come in her face'. Finally, *comparisons* were an infrequent type of judgement used by one five-year-old and a couple of six-year-olds ('the babies get it much sorer'; 'he's my best cousin').

Relations of logic refer to those evaluative comments in narratives that articulated logical connections between events. They are evaluative because they reflect the narrator's assessment of how circumstances are connected. *Causal* statements suggest why events occurred and are usually prefaced by 'because' ('I really missed her, because she give luxuries and Easter eggs too'), but occasionally other conjunctions ('he drinks lots of cooldrinks and water, that's why his feet get so thick'; 'my friend didn't cry, but that wasn't a cousin' - suggesting that the friend didn't cry at a funeral because she wasn't related to the deceased). Statements of *purpose* occurred in four-, five- and six- year-old narratives and expressed the narrator's sense of the purpose of an event ('uncle G. *was by Pretoria gewees saam met my* auntie *Sarie, hulle het gaan baklei daar*' [uncle G. was in Pretoria with my auntie S., they went to fight there]; '*en toe vat hulle haar hospitaal toe, om te kyk of sy nog lewe*'[then they took her to hospital, to see if she was still alive]). *Conditional* relations cropped up only in the narratives of the oldest (six-year-old) children and reflect the child's sense of the conditions under which a particular event occurs ('*as my pa kwaad word, dan hardloop my pa gou-gou vir hom mes*'[when my dad gets cross then he runs quickly for

University of Cape Town

his knife]; 'if he say "shut up!", then the dogs do what he say').

One category of evaluation that did not show clear developmental trends but fluctuated in incidence across age-groups was that which I have termed, following Berman (1997:237)[2] ***irrealis modality*** - comments on events or states which might have occurred but didn't, or which take us into the realms of the possible or the imagined. The largest sub-category here was comprised of *negative* statements of events that did not happen or expectations that were foiled ('the police never came'; 'the doctor done nothing'; '*ek het nie* [sweets] *gekry nie*' [I didn't get any sweets]). As Peterson & McCabe (1983:223) point out, 'these events that did not happen are extremely evaluative since there is literally an infinite set of events that did not happen in any given situation and these were selected from that infinite set.' Negative statements occurred at all ages, but at three- and four years of age were confined to simple statements of events or states that failed to occur, as in the examples given above. five- and six-year-olds were able to use negatives to mark critical turns of events in narratives; for instance, the following negative statements all identified a failure or inability, at a crucial point in the course of events, which had dire consequences : 'my daddy couldn't swim'; 'she couldn't get the door open'; 'she didn't see the car coming'; 'he didn't listen'. They also used modified negatives or 'approximators' (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973:218) to identify events or states that might well have occurred, but didn't ('my thin sister, she'*t* almost *verdrink*'[drowned]; 'the car almost knocked her over').

Hypothetical statements take narrative further into the realm of possibility via conjecture or speculation. Only two instances cropped up, both in the narratives of older children : one in a five-year-old's account of a family member's reaction to a near-fatal accident involving her aunt ('and so that lady's brother was getting almost like a temperature when he was hearing his mother could of get forever dead') and one in a six-year-old's explanation of the conditions that would require a blood test such as he had undergone ('all daddies what say - like um - Goosain's daddy now say Goosain's not his son, now they have to solve the problem at the blood transfusion'). Also included in this category was a small number of *predictions* of the outcome of states or events by four-, five- and six-year-olds ('now here was raining, so that they gonna slip now'; 'I hear the window [rattling in a storm], I hear the window want to break'; 'I'm gonna grow up and never smoke' [following a description of an aunt's excessive smoking]).

University of Cape Town

---

2 Berman (1997) includes hopes or desires and intentions in this category. I have considered these as references to internal states (see tables 8 and 9), since they focus exclusively on participants in narratives, rather than events.

Lastly, there were a few remarks that belonged clearly to the realm of *fantasy*, though embedded in otherwise credible accounts. These were confined to the five-year-old group and to just three children within this group. One commented, in the midst of a story about a road accident, that the cop involved 'turned into a devil', which may, of course, be a metaphorical expression rather than fantasy (though there were no other instances of metaphor in the data). A second child described how, after being injured in a car accident, he had 'watch[ed] the lady [doctor or nurse] cut my back open ... he take my bone out - so, eh? - so, so a broken bone, and now they put a spine in my back, a spine here'. In a separate narrative about the birth of his baby brother, the same child claimed that on delivery, the baby immediately shouted his name ('yes, he cry for me! He say "*boeta*! [brother]"'). In the third case, the child was explicit in ascribing what she fantasized to the workings of her imagination (this time in response to the frightening sounds of a thunder-storm at night): 'I think it's everything! I think what is it? I think it's the devil!'.

Discourse markers made up 6% of the total amount of evaluation in all age-groups (Table 9), but were clustered predominantly in the four- and five-year-old narratives (Table 8). These comprised clauses, phrases and single words that are extraneous to narrative content but are nonetheless evaluative because they function as interactive devices, drawing the listener into the telling of a story. At a clausal level, they consisted of attention-getters such as 'you know what?' or 'you know?' and 'I wanna tell you what happened' that usually prefaced a narrative telling, or injunctions to the listener inserted at points within the narrative, such as 'they drive mad, you must see' or 'now what [did] they do? they put me on the bed'. More often, though, discourse markers were single words : 'now' (not used in either a conjunctive or adverbial sense - 'now last night my dog and that big dog now fight'), 'yes' ('yes, he cry for me!'), 'man' ('I was scared, man'), 'okay?' ('I did go to Dr Sterris, okay?') and, most ubiquitous of all, *'mos'* and *'ne'*, discussed earlier.

The last three types of evaluation - modals, compulsion words and intensifiers - occurred, by definition, only at a sub-clausal level; they were fairly numerous in the narratives of all age-groups and showed little variation in incidence across ages (Table 8). They did, however, show developmental changes in type and range. ***Modals***[3] used by three-year-olds were limited to 'must/*moet*', used with past tense meaning, to convey obligation or compulsion ('*toe moet ek daar opklim*'[then I had to climb up there]; 'I said the dog must stop fighting') and 'can/*kan*' to convey ability ('*toe kan die pa nie vir hulle vang nie'* [then the dad couldn't catch them]). At four

3 I have used Quirk & Greenbaum's (1973:52-56) semantic classification of modal auxiliaries in analysing modal usage in children's narratives.

University of Cape Town

years, the past form 'could' appeared ('he couldn't take it off'), as well as the use of 'can/could' to express permission ('my mommy said I can buy me something'; 'I couldn't go to that man') and theoretical possibility ('I wish that car can be bumped in'). Present tense forms continued to be substituted, at times, for past forms in five- and six-year-old narratives, but the range of modals increased to include the past tense *'kon'* [could] (*ek kon nie uit 'n glas drink nie*'[I couldn't drink out of a glass]) and, at six years, 'shall', to express intention ('shall I show you?'). The incidence of words conveying ***compulsion*** was fairly evenly distributed across age-groups. At three years these were confined to the modals 'must/*moet*' (as in the examples above); from four years, the past form 'had to' emerged ('we first had to pray'; 'they had to inject me in my ear') and, in the six-year-old group only, 'needed to' ('my daddy needed to take a stick'; 'he did need to throw it in the grass').

Intensifiers are words or phrases used for the purpose of accentuating or highlighting other information in a line of narrative; they included, but were not limited to, Peterson & McCabe's (1983) category of 'gratuitous terms' (such as 'very', 'just', 'really'). All age-groups used adjuncts to emphasize degree or quantity : '*baie seer*'[very sore]; 'a lot of *skelms*'; '*'n klomp bloed*'[a whole lot of blood]; 'a big box full of knives'; 'a whole cut'; 'too far'; '*so warm*'[so hot]; 'I really missed her'; '*almal my ma se tande was vrot*'[all my mom's teeth were rotten]; 'much sorer'. From four years upwards, these words and phrases also expressed extremes of duration or frequency of time ('Olivia never wanted to eat'; 'she could of get forever dead'; 'my pa is still blind'; '*sy baklei nog altyd met die hond*'[she still always fights with the dog]; 'my *ouma* is already buried'; 'the whole night through'; 'she did always spoil my two sisters'; 'I must walk every time up and down'), as well as limiting or restricting conjuncts ('only a little water'; '*net twee oor*'[only two left]; '*vir hulle alleen*'[for them only]). Five and six-year-olds used the approximator 'almost' to highlight narrowly missed or impending events or states: 'she did almost *verdrink*'[drown]; 'he was almost getting like a temperature'; 'it's almost time for him to go'.

At all ages various focusing adjuncts were used in order to highlight specific parts of a narrative line. Most common amongst all age-groups was 'just' or '*net*', used not in a restrictive sense (as mentioned above) but to emphasize the following word or phrase which was often also accorded prominent intonation ('the door just open'; 'he just sitted there on the *stoep*'[porch]; 'I just cough and cough'; '"*as julle net weer kom by my hoenders ...*"'[if you just come near my chickens...]), as well as 'right' ('the car rode right on his leg'). The oldest children, the six-year-olds, also used 'even' ('even my big cousins did cry'; 'you can't even sleep') and '*daaiselfde*' ('*daaiselfde hond het die pad uit gehardloop*'[that same dog ran out into the road]). '*Mos*' -

University of Cape Town

categorized and discussed earlier as a discourse marker - has a similar focusing function. Finally, four-, five- and six-year-olds sometimes used intensifying adjectives : 'freezing cold'; 'in the dark night'; '*doodbyt*'[bite dead]; '*ernstig gesteek*'[seriously wounded (from stabbing)].

Two types of evaluation were considered separately from those listed in tables 8 and 9, because they mostly occurred over consecutive lines of narrative and overlapped with other categories in the coding scheme. These were the use of direct character speech and repetition. I use the term ***direct character speech*** here to refer to quoted speech where the narrator speaks in the voice of the character. Although not quantified here, it is worth mentioning for two reasons: firstly, because paralinguistic evaluative devices (i.e., gestures, facial expression and prosodic features such as emphatic stress, vowel elongation or onomatopoeia) were otherwise excluded from consideration here and, secondly, because of the relative prominence that this feature assumes in the oldest group of children. Direct speech did crop up, but infrequently, in the narratives of three-, four- and five-year-olds; it was only amongst the six-year-olds that it was used extensively and with effect as an evaluative tool. In all of the following examples the quoted speech was uttered with appropriate modifications of tone of voice and accompanying paralinguistic "affective expression" (as defined by Reilly 1992). In (4) - (8), the code switches that attend the direct quotes give added authenticity to the characters' voices :

(4) then he go send me for cigarettes
and then my mommy say
"*Pappie moenie meer* cigarettes *rookie,* [Daddy mustn't smoke any more]
'cause then it *mos* give you cancer"
[a mother's warning to the child's sickly grandfather]

(5) and so she did stand in the road
and so the boys still say "*Roshana! Kyk! Kyk agter!*" [Look! Look behind!]
[boys warning a child of an oncoming car]

(6) *en die* baby *was stout* [and the baby was naughty
en sy slaat vir hom in die gesig and she hit him in the face
en toe sê my ma "Don't hit him! Don't hit him!" and so my mom said ...]
[the narrator's mother scolding his older sister for smacking her baby]

(7) and so N. did say "Where's my boy? Where's my boy?"
his mommy said so
so she cried
and so my mommy say "*Djy gaan nie daar in nie, hoor djy my?*" [You don't go in there, you hear me?]
[a mother, N., crying for her drowned son and the narrator's mother's warning her not to venture into the water where he had drowned]

University of Cape Town

(8) that films was creepy films what I watched *ne*
then my daddy say "*Djy moet nou die film* watch" [You must watch the film now
then my mommy say "*Nee, nee, laat hulle gaan slaap* no, no, let them go to bed
want more dan moet hulle skool toe gaan" because tomorrow they have to go to school]
[parents disagreeing on whether their children should watch a late TV show]

(9) *en toe kom my pa daar* [and then my dad got there
toe sê my pa "Jissis! Dis te warm!" and my dad said "Jesus, it's too hot!"]
[a father's response to the heat inside a marquee]

(10) *die hond het hom vasgehou* [the dog was holding on to him
en toe hou die hond hom so vas and the dog was holding him like this
en toe sê my pa and so my dad said
"As julle net weer by my hoenders kom vat "if you come near my chickens again
dan laat ek die hond julle doodbyt!" I'll let the dog kill you]
[a father's threat to the thieves who tried to steal his chickens but were thwarted by the dog]

An important purpose of quoting direct speech is to provide what Labov (1972:372-3) called internal evaluation : evaluation that is conveyed through the narrative itself, for example by quoting the remarks of the narrator herself or a third person at the time the narrated events took place. As discussed in chapter 1 (1.2.2), Wolfson (1982) identifies direct speech as one of the key features of 'performed narratives', along with repetition (discussed hereafter), asides (discussed in the next section as 'Non-storyworld propositions'), CHP and various paralinguistic devices.[4] In an exploration of the oral narratives of adult speakers in southwest Scotland, Macaulay (1987) found that quoted direct speech displayed distinctive linguistic properties compared to other speech, in that it incorporated only certain kinds of discourse markers, contained more questions and imperatives and fewer coordinate clauses. As to its use as a rhetorical device, he concludes that :

> The use of quoted direct speech adds liveliness to a narrative, it provides the possibility of a different perspective, and it can give an impression of authentic recollection of an event … Its widespread effectiveness is a reflection of the skill which many speakers have of recreating dramatic dialogue that is appropriate to the protagonists and the scene. (p. 29)

Repetition refers to the repetition across consecutive lines of an entire clause or line of narrative. It is a transparent and powerful evaluative device in oral narratives (Labov 1972; Polanyi 1989) and also one of the most common ways in which young children signal the importance of particular propositions over others (e.g., Hoff-Ginsberg 1997; Berman 1997) Any

4 The term 'narrative performance' refers to an especially vivid and involved type of storytelling that resembles a dramatized reenactment.

University of Cape Town

type of proposition – state or event – may be repeated[5]; it is the repetition itself which signals the importance of the event or state to the narrator. In the Kensington/Factreton narratives, repetition emerged early as an evaluative tool and was a ubiquitous feature of narratives in all age-groups. Aside from its evaluative function, repetition plays an important role in creating local-level cohesion between lines in stanzas, as well as at the level of focus and theme in narratives. It is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6 (6.1.2), along with its incidence in each age-group.

Non-Storyworld propositions

Both orientation and evaluation clauses sometimes took the form of Non-storyworld asides. These were offline propositions that took a narrative momentarily off its course to offer comments, information or explanations from the perspective of outside the storyworld that have a bearing on the storyworld. Table 10 below shows that at three, four and fiveyears, the majority (70% - 75%) of non-storyworld propositions were orientation clauses (chiefly involving information relating to participants and general case) and the remainder evaluation clauses. At six years the balance shifted, however, as a much wider range of evaluative clauses, in addition to orientation, were used in non-storyworld ways.

Table 10 : Percentage of Non-storyworld propositions classified as orientation or evaluation in each age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Orientation	75%	70%	70%	54%
Evaluation	25%	30%	30%	46%

University of Cape Town

Six-year-olds were much more likely than younger children to depart from narrative events in order to provide a sequence of several non-storyworld clauses, in which they cast judgements on people or circumstances (subjective, objective, moral and cultural judgements, discussed above), or provided extended explanations of what normally happens in a particular situation (orientation to general case), in order to contrast or clarify their own narrated experience. They also used non-storyworld asides to explore likely, possible or wished-for connections between events in the storyworld and those outside of it (11,12,13 below) :

(11) Sometimes daddies they don't believe children
they say you dreaming or so!
[following a boy's account of how he had spotted a whale's tail in the sea, but his father had not believed him]

5 For this reason, repetition was quantified separately from the other types of evaluation.

(12) I don't know why me and my mommy moved
it's maybe - my daddy was Christian
and me and my mommy was Muslim
and so maybe when my mommy told my daddy that my mommy's Muslim
and so maybe that's why my mommy moved out
[speculating on the reasons for his parents' separation]

(13) I'd really like a baby dolphin in a pool for us
then I'd get on his back
[following an account of whales washed up on a beach]

5.4 Stanzas

The previous section examined the types of propositions that make up the line structure of narratives. Its main findings will be discussed further in section 5.6 below. We turn now to consider how these basic types of propositions - mainline and offline - patterned themselves in stanzas. Table 11 shows the four types of stanza structure that cropped up in each age-group. Each type is explained below.

Table 11 : Patterning of propositions within stanzas in each age-group

% stanzas composed of :	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Events only	25%	18%	16%	9%
Events + States	52%	42%	42%	42%
	56%	56%	55%	59%
States only	4%	14%	13%	17%
Ending in Outcome	19%	26%	29%	32%

The first type of stanza shown in Table 11 is that composed solely of Event clauses. In some cases an entire narrative was created by stringing together a set of events only, although, as we shall see in chapter 6, narratives of this type were confined mostly to the very youngest children, which partly accounts for the higher incidence of this type of stanza in the three-year-old group. At all ages, narratives sometimes included stanzas composed only of event propositions, such as the following stanza (20) from a six-year-old's account of her cousin's drowning. (The primary coding of each line in the narrative is indicated on the left in these examples).

(20) Event so we went [to the funeral]
Event all the people went
Event so we first had to pray
Event so then we had to go home

University of Cape Town

However, as Table 11 shows, stanzas comprised of events only decreased from a quarter of all stanzas amongst the three-year-olds to a much smaller proportion (9%) by six years, re-emphasizing our earlier finding that children are aware from an early age of the need to contextualize and evaluate the events they report on.

The second type of stanza structure (Events + States) is that in which one or more event is embedded in a context of orientation to, or evaluation of, the event. An example is (21), also from a six-year-old's narrative :

(21)	Event	but I - I SHOUTED the first time
	State (Orientation)	when they pricked me!
	State (Evaluation)	It was SORE

These, together with stanzas comprised of state propositions only (indicated as 'States only' in Table 11), were twice as likely to occur than event-only propositions even in the youngest (three-year-old) group of children, and by six years were at least six times more common than event-only stanzas. Stanza (22) consists exclusively of state propositions and comes from a four-year-old's narrative :

(22)	State (Evaluation)	then Morne didn't wanted to go in the boat
	State (Evaluation)	he was scared
	State (Orientation)	and Olivia was in the boat
	State (Evaluation)	Olivia wasn't scared

The fourth type of stanza shown in Table 11 is that ending in Outcome, a pattern that increases gradually with age from 19% of all stanzas in three-year-olds' narratives to just under a third of all stanzas produced by six-year-olds. 'Outcome' was introduced by Minami & McCabe (1991) and Minami (1996b) as an additional, second-level (sub-) category in Labovian analysis. As they defined it, lines coded as Outcome represent the results of specific actions that have immediately preceded it, either evaluatively ('I was scared) or in terms of physical consequences ('blood gushed out') or both ('I got a broken bone' – examples theirs). Minami (1996b:355) cautions that 'without any specific actions, by definition there could be no outcome; in other words, although an action can stand by itself, an outcome cannot. As a natural consequence, unlike "orientation" or simple "evaluation", outcome is not a free clause. Outcomes only follow actions and usually conclude stanzas'. (Note that 'actions' are equivalent to 'events' in the terminology of my study).

I adopted the category of outcome when early scrutiny of the Kensington/Factreton narratives indicated that stanzas composed of an orientation-action-outcome sequence were occurring with reasonable frequency. Using the terminology of my own study, a line that had been

University of Cape Town

assigned a primary coding of either Event or State was additionally coded as Outcome if it represented the result of preceding events. The definition of outcome used here was therefore equivalent to that of Minami and McCabe; however, since there are differences in some important respects in the style of narrating, the outcome category does not function in exactly the same way in Japanese and South African children. Japanese children's personal narratives typically consisted of collections of multiple experiences related to a particular topic, each experience being recounted in extremely brief, economical fashion, with stanzas comprised of only three semantically complete propositions, corresponding to three simple clauses. Analysing the personal narratives of Japanese elementary-school children (aged five to nine years), Minami & McCabe (1991) found that 18.8% of stanzas showed a canonical Orientation-Action-Outcome pattern, while an additional number displayed some variation on this pattern, viz., either Action-Outcome-Evaluation or simply Action-Outcome. These were considered variations on the canonical form, given that evaluative clauses are free clauses that can be inserted anywhere in a sequence and that orientation had often been supplied earlier in a narrative and was therefore not always necessary at the beginning of a stanza.

The South African children studied here were generally more garrulous than their Japanese counterparts : the average length of stanzas in all four age-groups was four lines, with a range from two to seven lines per stanza. Amongst those stanzas ending in Outcome, two patterns were discernable : an Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome sequence (illustrated in (23)) and an Event(s)-Outcome sequence illustrated in (24). Note that the additional presence of clauses whose primary coding was Evaluation was not taken into account when identifying stanzas as belonging to one of these two patterns. Thus, an Event(s)-Outcome sequence might have an evaluative proposition preceding or in-between events, and an Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome sequence might have one or more evaluative lines embedded amongst the events.

(23) State (Orientation) I was sitting on the bath
State (Orientation) so my foot is on the point [= edge]
Event and so my sister pull out [= off] my sock
Event (Outcome) and so I fall with my clothes in

(24) Event *'n ander oom by my pa se werk* [another man at my dad's work
hy't die masjien uitgehaal he took the machine out
Event *toe sny die masjien sy twee vingers af* the machine cut his two fingers off
Event *toe het hulle vir hom vroeg huis toe gestuur* then they sent him home early]
(Outcome)

University of Cape Town

Table 12 : Incidence of sub-types of Ending-in-Outcome stanzas per age-group

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Event(s)-Outcome	**86%**	**75%**	**63%**	**58%**
Orient.-Event(s)-Outcome	**14%**	**25%**	**37%**	**42%**

Table 12 shows that these two patterns shifted in inverse proportion to one another with increasing age : as the Event(s)-Outcome type steadily decreased from three to six years of age, the Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome pattern increased in frequency. This trend reflects the increase that we've already seen in stanzas including offline State information over and above Event propositions. It is interesting to note in this regard that stanza (24) does in fact begin with embedded orientation to participants, although the primary coding of the first line is an Event clause.

The figures in Tables 11 and 12 are based on the three longest narratives per child and thus reflect the fact that in the longest, multiple-stanza narratives a number of individual stanzas have an ending-in-Outcome form. However, if we take into account the narrative data-base as a whole, single-stanza narratives with the form Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome occurred in every age-group. A three-year-old, for example, produced the following three-line account (25) that captures, in incipient form, what becomes an archetypal means of patterning lines into stanzas :

(25) State (Orientation) we('ve) got a new bed
Event but Leroy did pee on it
State (Outcome) and now it is wet

In a four-year-old's sparse account of her uncle's death (26), the form is augmented by an initial Abstract line, which then recurs as the final Outcome of the stanza. Later on, as we look at how the different elements of narrative combine to form a coherent whole, we shall see that echoing of the Outcome proposition is a common feature of longer, multi-stanza narratives.

(26) Abstract my uncle drowned

State (Orientation) he was in a small boat
Event and then the wind blew him over
Event (Outcome) then he drowned

A five-year-old's narrative (27) provides an interesting variation on the form, with each element in the Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome sequence expanded into three lines (where, in fact, each group of three could just as well have been expressed as one line). The result is that each element

University of Cape Town

in the sequence is expanded into a stanza of its own :

(27)	State (Orientation)	you know – there was a bee hive *ne*
	State (Orientation)	there was a bee *ne*
	State (Evaluation)	and so he wanted to hurt my mommy man
	Event	and so my daddy took him away
	Event	so my daddy take him outside
	Event	my daddy open the window
	Event (Outcome)	and so he fly out
	Event (Outcome)	so he fly outside
	State (Evaluation)	and so no more bees come

In these examples (25 – 27) of narratives having the form Orientation-Event-Outcome, the outcome line represents the upshot of the narrated experience as a whole and not just the events of one particular stanza. In longer, multi-stanza narratives, as we shall see in the next chapter, outcome can function at both the local level of individual stanzas and a global level as the final outcome or key event of the narrated experience.

5.5 Parts

Table 3 revealed earlier that only five- and six-year-olds' narratives showed a level of organization above that of the stanza, where stanzas are grouped into parts. Of the three longest narratives produced by children in these age-groups, there were sixteen with part structure. These conformed to three basic types or patterns. In the first type, the stanzas comprising Part 1 dealt with the ***events and circumstances*** of the experience narrated, while the stanzas comprising Part 2 focused on ***evaluation*** of these events, by discussing the emotional reactions of the narrator and others to the events, and/or by supplying explanations for, or judgements of, the behaviour of participants in the events. Part 2 sometimes included lines in which particular events were re-stated or elaborated upon, but it usually did not provide any significant advancement on the plot of the narrative, its primary function, seemingly, being to evaluate the events described. Eight of the sixteen narratives with part structure followed this pattern. We saw one example in the 'death by fire' narrative analysed earlier in this chapter. In all eight cases, in fact, the narrative topic concerned rather emotive events – family deaths, injuries and serious fights – which perhaps lend themselves to extensive evaluation. One of the eight comprised three, rather than two parts : in this narrative, parts 1 and 2 dealt, respectively, with the events of an injury and the events of its treatment in hospital, while part 3 returned to the topic of the injury in order to speculate evaluatively on how and why events had occurred as they did.

A second pattern in narratives with part structure was for one part to shift away from the events or plot structure, as in type 1, but in this case for the purpose of offering a ***non-storyworld***

University of Cape Town

digression on some aspect of the experience. Three of the six-year-olds' stories conformed to this pattern. In one, the child detailed, in part 1, the events and circumstances that had required him, his father and mother to have blood tests performed. In part 2 he digressed for a few stanzas to explain the general procedure followed in blood testing, then returned in part 3 to resume the account of his own experience. In the second case, a boy recounted in part 1 of a narrative, a series of specific incidents involving a mentally and physically handicapped woman who had visited homes in the community to beg for food and been taunted by children, then in part 2 shifted to a discussion of this woman's general behaviour and appearance. In the third narrative, a boy told in part 1 of the time his aunt, who works in a hospital, had brought him syringes to play with, then, in part 2, digressed on the subject of his aunt herself and her smoking habits. In all three cases, the departure from the time and space of the narrated storyworld bore a specific relevance to the events within the storyworld : in the latter two cases, they formed a commentary on the character of the person that had led them to certain courses of action, and in the first case, as an information-giving aside, it justified specific behaviours of participants in the events.

The third pattern that emerged in narratives with part structure involved what Minami (1996b) calls '***multiple experiences***' linked to a single theme. In this, parts 1 and 2 comprised two separate stories, recounting experiences separated in the space and time in which they occurred but connected to a single topic or theme. For instance, one six-year-old told of two occasions on which thieves to his home had been thwarted by the actions of his dog, while a five-year-old recounted the events of an injury and, on another occasion, an illness, both of which had necessitated treatment at a hospital. Five of the sixteen narratives with part structure were accounts of multiple experiences. In section 6.2 of the following chapter, which deals with Staging, some of these are discussed in more detail for the linguistic strategies they employ to create explicit links between the parts of a narrative.

University of Cape Town

5.6 Summary and discussion

From the analysis of idea units in one narrative of personal experience, a prosodic pattern emerged whose chief characteristics appear to be shared with other narratives in the data, although this aspect of the analysis was not applied with the same depth to the data-base as a whole. It had the following features :

(i) Idea units typically began at or around the same mid-range pitch level (the child's base pitch level) which then, in most cases, rose sharply on an accented word or words, usually placed towards the end of the idea unit.

(ii) The prominent pitch glide on accented (focus) words was typically rising – either a single pitch rise or, where there was more than one peak of pitch prominence, a double rise.

Thus, rising pitch at the end of idea units was the characteristic or unmarked pattern for narrating.

(iii) Falling pitch contours at the end of idea units occurred much less frequently and were marked forms with a discourse-level function in structuring narratives.

(iv) Pauses (usually accompanied by inhalation) marked the boundaries between idea units, together with a return to the base pitch level for the start of new units.

(v) Idea units typically began with a connective (e.g., 'and so'), a pause-filler (e.g., 'umm') or other non-fluencies. The connectives in many cases appeared to have little, if any, semantic value and may, like the non-fluencies, simply reflect on-line planning of subsequent idea units.

The prosodic chunking of narrative texts corresponded quite systematically with syntactic units, most notably with clause structure. When non-fluencies and other kinds of non-substantive material were removed, an idealized line structure emerged, in which the majority of idea units coincided with single clauses (independent or dependent), each conveying one piece of information or one proposition.

Analysis of the content of these propositions in the three longest narratives produced by each child in the sample revealed the following :

(i) There was a steady increase, from three to six years of age, in the number of clauses conveying offline (contextualizing and evaluative) information relative to those conveying the action (mainline events) in narratives until, by six years, there was an almost equal balance between mainline and offline clauses.

(ii) Offline information consisted of either orientation or evaluation clauses, in roughly equal amounts, a small but increasing percentage of which were used at all ages to convey comments from a non-storyworld perspective.

(iii) In addition to clauses whose primary function was orientating or evaluative, children's narratives contained an impressive amount of embedded orientation and evaluation, at phrase and word level.

(iv) While children offered offline information in an ever-widening range of categories, they gave prominence at all ages to the people in their stories. Just under one-third of all clauses coded as orientation propositions were devoted to identifying people, indicating their participation or non-participation in events and explaining their connections to the narrator. And just over one-half of all clauses coded as evaluative were devoted to the narrators' assessments of the emotional, cognitive and physical states of participants in their stories.

University of Cape Town

The progressive shift in overall balance between mainline and offline content shown in these data is consistent with findings reported elsewhere for child and adult narratives. Minami's (1996b) study of Japanese children and adults' personal narratives found that, while preschoolers and elementary school children relied more heavily on action sequences, adults' narratives contained a predominance of non-sequential State clauses : as many as 66.7% of stanzas in adult narratives consisted exclusively of State clauses. Similarly, the adolescent and adult narratives of personal experience reported by Labov (1972), Labov & Waletzky (1967) and Polanyi (1989) generally contained a preponderance of State over Event clauses, as did the surfing narrative analysed here in chapter 4. The six-year-olds in this study are therefore tending towards an adult-like distribution of mainline and offline propositions.

Comparing the subjects of this study with other populations of children, in terms of the overall distribution of proposition types, yields some interesting points of similarity and difference. In Table 13 below, the oldest, six-year-old Kensington/Factreton children's narratives are compared with those of seven-year-olds from various cultural-linguistic groups in the United States reported by Peterson & McCabe (1997). The table depicts the spread of Action (i.e., Event), Evaluation and Orientation components, as well as 'boundary markers' (appendages such as Abstracts and Codas). In order to fit in with Peterson & McCabe's analysis, the figures for six-year-olds presented earlier in Table 2 were adjusted to allow for boundary markers as a separate category (i.e., those propositions coded as Event, Orientation or Evaluation which functioned as Abstracts or Codas were quantified separately as boundary markers). Bearing in mind that the South African group is a year younger and assuming that the trend for diminishing numbers of Event clauses and increasing State clauses continues with age, it is evident that the South African children evaluate more and focus less on Actions than their European North-American counterparts. Although their overall balance of Event versus State content is similar to that of African-American children, the Cape Flats children provide more descriptive material (in the form of Orientation) than their African-American peers. Only the Latino children offer significantly less Action and more State material than the South African group.

University of Cape Town

Table 13[6] : Cultural variation in distribution of types of propositions in personal narratives

% propositions that are :	African American 7-year-olds	Japanese American 7-year-olds	Latino/ Spanish dominant 7-year-olds	European/ North American 7-year-olds	South African/ Cape Flats 6-year-olds
Actions (Events)	48%	49%	30%	57%	50%
Evaluation	28%	24%	34%	15%	22%
Orientation	15%	27%	28%	23%	23%
Boundary Markers	8%	_	9%	4%	5%

In tables 14 and 15, all age-groups in the Kensington/Factreton sample are compared with children ranging from two to thirteen years of age reported in a Canadian study by Peterson & Biggs (1998). These authors analysed the personal narratives of children in three age-groups who had experienced trauma injuries requiring hospital treatment. One focus of their interest was the degree to which children embedded their accounts of personal injury within both an orientative and an evaluative context : narratives with more orientation and evaluation were assumed to be more coherent, since the narrated events were situated within a richer descriptive and emotional context. To enable a direct comparison between the two studies, the numerical data presented in tables 2 and 3 of this chapter were re-figured as the mean number of propositions coded as Action (Event), Orientation and Evaluation, and Peterson & Biggs' figures for each proposition type were converted additionally to percentages.

One point of difference between the two studies lies with the overall length of narratives : while narratives in both sets of children increase predictably in length with age, at six years, the Cape Flats children were producing longer narratives than their nine-to-thirteen-year-old Canadian counterparts. Of particular interest in terms of the discussion above, however, is the comparison between the two sets of data in the balance of Events to States at different ages. The Cape Flats three-year-old group is almost identical to the Canadian two-to-three-year-olds in the percentage proportion of Event versus State propositions. The Cape Flats four-year-olds are also directly comparable to the Canadian four-to-five-year-olds in the ratio of Events to States. From five

6 Adapted from Peterson & McCabe (1997).

University of Cape Town

Table 14[7] : Mean number of propositions encoded as Action, Orientation and Evaluation and mean lengths of narratives per age-group in Canadian children's personal injury narratives

Proposition type	2-3 years (X age:2.10)		4-5 years (X age:5.1)		9-13 years (X age:11.2)	
Actions (Events)	2.80	67%	4.93	63%	9.60	63%
Orientations	0.50	33%	0.87	37%	2.57	37%
Evaluations	0.87		2.07		3.07	
Total length	4.17		7.87		15.24	

Table 15 : Mean number of propositions encoded as Action, Orientation and Evaluation and mean lengths of narratives per age-group in South African/Cape Flats children's personal narratives

Proposition type	3 years		4 years		5 years		6 years	
Actions (Events)	5.12	69%	6.48	62%	6.80	55%	8.66	52%
Orientations	1.10	31%	2.40	38%	2.65	45%	4.14	48%
Evaluations	1.23		1.54		2.94		3.83	
Total length	7.46		10.43		12.39		16.63	

University of Cape Town

years, however, the gap between the two populations widens markedly as the South African children increase the average numbers of State propositions and correspondingly decrease the Action components in their narratives. The result is that at six years, the South African children are producing a significantly greater proportion of State propositions (orientation and evaluation) than their much older (nine-to thirteen-year-old) Canadian counterparts. While Peterson & Biggs (1998:62) comment that 'neither group of [Canadian] preschoolers provided very much orientative context to their narratives', the same is not true of four- and five-year-old Cape Flats children, for whom descriptive orientative information made up a little over 20% of their personal narratives. For those in their first year of school (the six-year-old group), the percentage of evaluative content exceeded that of older Canadian school-going children.

7 Adapted from Peterson & Biggs (1998)

In effect, then, in many of the Cape Flats children's narratives (and increasingly as they got older), the amount of offline content was roughly equal to, and sometimes greater than, the number of events related, and much of it pertained to the characters, their states and feelings. In the following story (14) from a five-year-old about two social events, although there is a clear focus on the theme of *getting a X ...* (conveyed via repetition and refrain, indicated in bold print), the balance of the story – and presumably an important part of its 'point' - lies with a discussion of who did and did not attend these events and who might have gone, but didn't

(14)
1 that last time
and so we went to Daneel's party
2 and so me and my auntie went
3 but my mommy wasn't with [us]
4 my mommy WAS probably going with
5 and so my mommy didn't wanted to go any more

6 so I saw for Carla there
7 (and Carla you still remember so Shafeeqa was there) [aside to Carla]
8 so me and Carla **get two boats** - small play - toy boats
9 and so me and Carla did **get that watches** - that watches and that boat still
10 and so we did **get a boats**

11 and then when auntie Lizzie them went to a *braai* [barbecue]
12 and so uncle Clive came to fetch us
13 and my daddy came with uncle Clive
14 and so we did **get a cooldrink** there - me and Carla

The following extracts (15) from a five-year-old's account of an incident in a department store illustrate how whole stanzas were sometimes devoted to a discussion of participants. (The narrative in its entirety is composed of six stanzas of four lines each) :

(15) Stanza 1

Natasha en ek en my ma was alleen saam	[Only N. and I and my ma went
Mr Roberts *het ons gebring*	Mr R. took us
en toe Mr Roberts *is toe skaam*	and then Mr R. was shy
en hy wil nie saam inkom nie	and he didn't want to come in with us]
.....	
Stanza 5	
en toe gaan ons huis toe	[and then we went home
toe is daar niemand nie	and nobody was there
dan moet ons daar by Tessa bly - tot later	then we had to stay with T. – until later
my ouma kom mos laat van aunty Katie *af*	my granny comes back late from aunty K.
en by aunty Myrtle	and with aunty M.

University of Cape Town

Stanza 6

toe kom ons weer huis toe	[then we went home again
toe is Bibi net daar - my ma se suster	then only B. was there – my mom's sister -
Bibi wil nie saam gekom het nie	B. didn't want to come with us
sy's skaam	she's shy]

Particularly amongst the older children, events were often evaluated at some length by describing the emotional reactions of the child's family members to events. We saw an example of this pattern in the 'death by fire' narrative, in which the narrator devoted fully half of her story to an evaluation of the significance of that death by describing her family's expressions of grief and denial. In the same way, another five-year-old's narrative, after describing in Part one the death of an elderly relative as a result of an accident in the bathroom, offers in Part two (given in 16) an evaluation of the incident by describing the reaction of the woman's son on hearing of the accident (in the first stanza), and a description of the good character of the victim (in the second) :

(16) and then after that - but my ma have got now a new house
and my brother stay in Mitchell's Plain
and after that - and so that lady's brother come here now by my ma
and so then my ma told that lady's brother
and so that lady's brother was getting almost like a temperature
when he was hearing his mother could of get forever dead

and she did always spoil my two sisters
she always liked to give them
and always liked to buy them
so she went dead in the hospital

In the data here, both the overall incidence of evaluation and the variety of evaluative devices increased with age. This is consistent with other developmental research findings : Labov (1972), Umiker-Sebeok (1979), Peterson & McCabe (1983), Bamberg & Damrad-Frye (1991), Berman & Slobin (1994) and Bamberg & Reilly (1996) have all demonstrated that the ability to 'flesh out' events in narrative with evaluative comments develops both quantitatively and qualitatively with age. Berman (1997:238) concludes that

> with time, children acquire the cognitive ability to adopt a narrator stance, which includes both attributing motivations to characters and expressing their own attitudes to and evaluation of the events described in their narratives.

What may be different about the Cape Flats data is the predominance of evaluative commentary focused on participants and the relatively young age at which this commentary centres on participants' states of mind. Peterson & McCabe (1983) found that the following four linguistic and paralinguistic devices were the most common types of evaluation across the age-groups (ranging from four- to nine-year-olds) in their sample : (i) gratuitous terms (e.g., 'very',

University of Cape Town

'really'), (ii) stressors (marked emphasis in voice), (iii) negatives and (iv) causal explanations. Bamberg & Damrad-Frye (1991) found that while the number of evaluative devices used by children aged five to nine years in narrating picture stories increased with age, only nine-year-olds and adults made wide use of the category of 'frames of mind' - referring to affective or cognitive states. Similarly, Minami (1996b) found that compared to adults, pre-school and elementary-school aged children offered markedly little commentary related to feelings and emotions. In contrast, the narratives here, reflecting as they do a central concern with people and their emotional, physical and cognitive states, suggest that even young pre-schoolers are capable of adopting a 'narrator stance' in the sense described by Berman.

Level one analysis also revealed the following characteristics of stanzas in the Kensington/Factreton children's narratives :

(i) Stanzas at all ages were groups of, on average, four lines. Narratives ranged in length from a single stanza (these decreasing rapidly after three years) up to ten stanzas.

(ii) Mainline and offline propositions combined themselves in stanzas in four main patterns, these showing age-related trends. Stanzas comprised of Events only decreased proportionately with age from 25% of all stanzas in the youngest age group to only 9% of stanzas produced by six-year-olds. Stanzas comprised of States only increased in incidence with age. Together with stanzas in which one or more events was placed in a context of evaluating or orientating States, these made up 55% - 59% of stanzas in all age-groups. A fourth, rather more specific, pattern that occurred increasingly with age was that comprised of either an Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome sequence or an Event(s)-Outcome sequence, in which the final line of the stanza represented the result of a preceding event or events in that stanza. The role of outcome propositions in narratives is discussed further in chapter 6.

Finally, amongst the two oldest groups of children, stanzas grouped themselves into parts, in 10% of five-year-olds' narratives and 25% of six-year-olds' narratives. Part boundaries marked (i) shifts from events and their circumstances to an evaluation of those events, (ii) shifts in and out of the storyworld, or, alternatively, (iii) transitions to separate but related experiences.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPING NARRATIVE COMPETENCE : LEVEL 2 ANALYSIS

This chapter takes the analysis of narratives further, to the second level of the framework proposed in chapter 4. At this level we examine how the propositions encoding the events and states of the narrated experience are connected to one another in the process of creating coherent narrative wholes. Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 explore, respectively, strategies of cohesion, staging and focusing in the Kensington/Factreton narratives and discuss their development with chronological age. Interactions between topic, narrative type, age and structural maturity are examined. Finally, comparisons are drawn with narratives reported for children elsewhere, as well as with a few personal narratives elicited from adults in Kensington/Factreton.

6.1 Cohesion strategies

Stanzas were defined earlier (4.3.4, Table 2) as groups of lines with internal patterning. Apart from the type and ordering of propositions in stanzas, discussed in chapter 5, internal patterning is created by various kinds of cohesion relationships, which form ties of meaning and logic between the lines of a stanza. Cohesive devices not only connect lines within stanzas, however; they also link stanzas to each other across the whole narrative. They 'spell out the connections that the speaker claims to exist within the material of the story ... such links are part of what stitches a text together into a meaningful whole ; they are like threads that tie language and, thus, also, sense together' (Gee 1991a:28). Thus, in analysing cohesion relationships here, we are examining children's ability to demonstrate or establish connections between the narrated events and states that were analysed in the previous chapter.

6.1.1 Connectives and clausal subordination

One of the simplest ways of setting up cohesion between propositions is by topic-chaining, where, for instance, the same topic NP is referred to in consecutive lines of a stanza. Examining **reference-maintaining devices** showed, predictably enough, that younger children tend to repeat in full a topic NP introduced as new at the beginning of a stanza, while later on they master various forms of pronominal reference. The process of maintaining and shifting reference is discussed in more detail in 6.2.

I also investigated narrative cohesion in the form of specific **connective devices**. These included line-initiating markers - coordinators, sequentials, adversatives and subordinators (temporal and logical connectives) – as well as devices embedded within lines : relative and complement clauses. Table 1 summarises the development of line-initiating connective forms with age. A little over half (54%) of the total number of lines in the three-year-olds' narratives began with a connective marker; at four years of age, this figure jumped

University of Cape Town

to 71% of the total number of lines, and thereafter increased in small increments to 72% and 77% of the total lines in the five- and six-year-old groups respectively. At all ages, Event propositions were more likely to be marked by an initial connective than State propositions.

Table 1 : Development of line-initiating connective markers across age-groups

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Number of line-initiating connectives	157	274	314	618
Occurrence as percentage of total number of lines	54%	71%	72%	77%
Percentage of Event lines beginning with a connective	59%	79%	76%	85%
Percentage of State lines beginning with a connective	44%	55%	66%	66%

Table 2 below provides details of the types of connective devices that marked the beginning of lines. It distinguishes those that perform a simple coordinating or sequential function (A) from those that link propositions by means of adversative, logical or more specific kinds of temporal relationships (B). This is because, as we saw in 4.3.5, connective markers are often superfluous in the case of relationships of straightforward co-occurrence or temporal sequence which can be conveyed simply by the ordering of clauses in narrating. Table 2 shows that the most frequently used of all line-initiating markers for all age-groups in English narratives was '(and) so', and in Afrikaans narratives '(*en*) *toe*'[(and) then], while 'and' and its Afrikaans equivalent '*en*' actually declined in incidence with age, as did '(and) then' and '(*en*) *dan*'[(and) then]. The favouring of '(and) so' to connect two events or states that occur either concurrently or chronologically appears to be a dialect-specific feature amongst the Cape Flats children. Peterson & McCabe (1991) and Hudson & Shapiro (1991) report that simple 'and' is the most frequent connective used in American children's personal narratives, followed by 'then'. In Peterson & McCabe's sample, one in four connectives used by four-year-olds involved 'then' (many in conjunction with 'and'), while 'so' was used by children of all ages as a marker of causal relationships between propositions. The Kensington/Factreton children's use of '(and) so' appears to be the equivalent of '(and) then', and is used by four-year-olds at a rate of one in three connectives. Just as Peterson & McCabe (1991) reported for 'and', the proposition following '(and) so' is more likely to be an event on the timeline than an offline state proposition.

University of Cape Town

In the surfing narrative analysed in chapter 4, 'and' was argued (in 4.3.5) to serve non-textual purposes. It could be argued, similarly, that the majority of line-initiating markers listed in Table 2 as 'coordinating / sequential' have no truly connective function, but rather reflect cognitive planning activity at the start of lines or idea units. Supporting this is the fact that, with age, there was an increasing tendency to use more specific temporal markers in conjunction with those listed under (A) : in the six-year-old group, 22% of lines beginning with 'and', '(and) so', '(and) then' or '(and) now' also contained temporal adjectives or conjunctions such as 'when', 'afterwards' 'first' or 'while' (these not necessarily occurring at the beginning of lines).

Table 2 : Percentage occurrence of sub-types of line-initiating connectives per age-group

Function	Type	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
(A) Coordinating/ Sequential	and	13%	15%	12%	8%
	en	6%	3%	3%	3%
	(and) so	19%	35%	31%	31%
	(and) then	21%	11%	10%	4%
	(en) toe	20%	24%	29%	35%
	(en) dan	16%	4%	1%	3%
	(and) now	1%	3%	3%	1%
	(en) nou	2%	1%	1%	0.3%
Sub-total :		**98%**	**96%**	**90%**	**85%**
(B) Adversative	but	1%	1%	1%	4%
	maar	-	-	1%	0.3%
Temporal	when	-	2%	3%	3%
	(toe) wat	-	-	1%	2%
	while	-	-	-	0.1%
Logical :					
Causal	because (why)	1%	-	3%	2%
	want/omdat	-	1%	0.3%	1%
Result	that's why	-	-	-	0.3%
Conditional	if	-	-	0.3%	1%
	as/of	-	-	0.3%	0.5%
Purpose	*om te*	-	-	-	0.8%
Sub-total :		**2%**	**4%**	**10%**	**15%**

University of Cape Town

Under (B) in Table 2 are listed those line-initiating markers that have a truly textual function in connecting two events or states in specific semantic relationships. These increased noticeably with age, forming only 2% of line-initiating markers in the youngest children and 15% in the oldest age-group. The most common types were 'but'/'*maar*', signalling contrasting or adversative relationships between two propositions, temporal 'when'/'*toe*'/ '(*toe*) *wat*', and 'because (why)'/'*want*'/'*omdat*', signalling causal relationships. However, the older children also showed a wider range of types of logical and temporal connectives, a development that coincides with an increase in subordinate clause structure with age. This trend is consistent with the developmental findings of Hudson & Shapiro (1991) and Peterson & McCabe (1987) for American children's personal narratives.

The overall heavy predominance of simple (type (A)) connectives in relation to more semantically complex (type (B)) connectives is also reported elsewhere to be the norm for narratives of personal experience. Comparing connective use across different genres of narrative (scripts, personal narratives and fictional stories), Hudson & Shapiro (1991) found that children use more simple conjunctions when narrating personal narratives and fictional stories and more advanced adversative and causal connectives when narrating scripts. Berman (1988), analysing picture story narration in Hebrew speakers, found that the use of temporal and logical subordinators introducing adverbial clauses showed a developmental progression from around 2% of all clauses amongst preschoolers to around 5% of clauses in school-aged children, rising to 8% of clauses produced by adults in this task. The children here, albeit functioning in a different narrative mode (personal narratives as opposed to picture story re-tell), produced somewhat greater numbers of line-initiating subordinators : temporal and logical subordinators introducing adverbial clauses comprised 6% of the total number of lines produced by five-year-olds and 8% of all the lines produced by six-year-olds. (These figures are not derived from Table 2).

Clauses introduced by these kinds of line-initiating connectives accounted for only a portion of the total amount of clausal subordination in narratives, however. Table 3 shows the increasing use of subordinate clauses that occurred with age in narrating. These included not only adverbial clauses introduced by the temporal and logical connectives listed in Table 2, but also subordinate object clauses and relative clauses. Examples of the former were '*toe sien my pa hulle hardloop so daar onder die venster deur*'[then my dad saw them running there under the window] and 'then the dogs do what he say', as well as many object clauses introduced by verbs of saying or knowing, such as 'my mom first said he mustn't go' and 'we didn't know the cat was dead'. Relative clauses were usually introduced by a relative pronoun, as in '*daar's drie manne wat verdrink het by die* beach' [there were three men who

University of Cape Town

drowned at the beach] and 'I did pee in my new pyjamas what my auntie gave me'.

Table 3 : Incidence of subordinate clauses per age-group, expressed as a percentage occurrence of the total number of lines

	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Number	13	22	36	131
% of total lines	4%	6%	8%	16%

In summary, as they got older, the children in this study used increasing amounts of lexical and syntactic connective devices. With age, also, they relied a little less on simple chaining of events and states in relations of co-occurrence or sequence. They learned to use more specific connectives and adverbial markers in order to explicitly convey temporal, adversative, causal and conditional relationships, amongst others, between propositions, as well as, increasingly, relative and complement clauses. These developments are predictable ways of developing textual cohesion, however, and, as we have seen, correspond generally with the findings of other researchers of developing narrative skill. In the remainder of this section I focus on three cohesion strategies that occurred with relatively high frequency in the Kensington/Factreton children's stories and which are a crucial, and more distinctive, aspect of the way in which their narratives are structured : the use of repetition, refrains and parallelism.

6.1.2 Repetition

The use of repetition to highlight the importance of certain propositions over others was mentioned in the discussion of evaluation in chapter 5 (section 5.3.2). Aside from its evaluative role in narrative, repetition is also, of course, one of the simplest ways of achieving surface cohesion, or internal patterning of lines, within stanzas.

Two main types of repetition emerged in the narrative data of this study : clausal repetition and repetition of a word or phrase. Clausal repetition was defined as an entire clause or line of narrative that was repeated across two (occasionally more) consecutive lines. The repetition might be exact, close, or a paraphrase of the immediately preceding line. *Exact repetitions* (1a, b) involved an exact replication of a preceding line or clause within a line. These made up 13% of all types of repetition in all age-groups.

(1a) then he cry for me
yes, he cry for me

b) I said "I don't want injections
I don't want injections"

University of Cape Town

Close repetitions replicated the content of the preceding line, but with the addition, deletion or substitution of a word or phrase. In the case of addition (2a,b), an additional word or phrase occurred in the second line, expanding slightly on the information conveyed by the preceding proposition. With deletion (3a,b), a word or phrase was elided in the second line, whereas in cases of substitution (4a,b), a deictic, pronominal or lexically elaborated form replaced a NP in the repetition. Together these made up 56% of all types of repetition in all age-groups.

(2a) she walk fast
she walk fast like that

b) *my* uncle *het verdrink* [my uncle drowned
in 'n klein boat*jie verdrink hy* in a small boat he drowned]

(3a) he get sore here by his ribs - a small sore
he did get sore

b) when she walked into the road
she did first walk

(4a) *toe gaat die kind dood* [then the child died
die baba van daai vrou het doodgegaan that woman's baby died]

b) my tummy was sore
so here was sore

Paraphrases (5a,b) reiterated the central idea conveyed by the preceding line using different words. They constituted 17% of all types of repetition in all age-groups.

(5a) my pa's *mos* blind
my pa can't *mos* see anything

b) she's big
she's in high school

Lastly, and counted separately from clausal repetition, there were *repetitions of a word or phrase* within a line (6a, b, c), which comprised 14% of all types of repetition.

(6a) I just cough and cough
b) *dan's dit warm! warm! warm! daar in* [then it was hot, hot, hot in there]
c) I must walk every time up and down the house - up and down

TABLE 4 : Percentage of narratives in each age-group containing repetition

3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
36%	38%	51%	54%

University of Cape Town

Table 4 shows that in the three-year-old group, 36% of all narratives contained at least one instance of repetition and that its occurrence increased slowly to just over half (54%) of all six-year-olds' narratives. The following short narrative, produced by a four-year-old boy in response to the question 'and did you ever go to the doctor?', illustrates several different types of repetition :

(7)
1 only when I was so small
2 when I was a baby
3 my tummy was sore *ne*
4 so here was sore *ne*
5 now it's not sore *ne*
6 and so it went away *ne*
7 and then I'm not by the doctor

This short narrative is almost entirely composed of repetitive couplets. In lines 1-2 and 3-4, there are, respectively, a lexical and deictic substitution for a word or phrase in otherwise exactly repeated lines in each pair, while a further couplet (lines 5-6) involves a paraphrase of an idea in each line of the pair. The single line 7 conveys the outcome of these events and provides closure by linking with the question that initiated the story.

6.1.3 Refrains

Closely linked to repetition is the reiteration of the content of a proposition across stanzas in a narrative, in the form of refrains. Refrains were defined here as occurring across non-consecutive lines at different points in the narrative; they were not necessarily exact or close repetitions, but sometimes a theme or idea that was repeated, in the same or different words. Most often the repeated proposition was an echo of the original, but at times, as we shall see, refrains functioned contrastively in the form of opposing themes.

TABLE 5 : Percentage narratives in each age-group containing one or more refrain

3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
44%	76%	77%	77%

Table 5 shows that one or more refrain is found in a little under half of all three-year-old narratives and in as many as three-quarters (76% – 77%) of four-, five- and six-year-old narratives. Whereas repetition functions on a local level, binding consecutive lines in a stanza, refrains create cohesive links across longer stretches of narrative. They are a particularly powerful evaluative device in that they alert the listener to those aspects of the narrated experience that are distinctive or significant from the narrator's perspective. In the process they set up themes that run through and intersect the narrative as a whole. Given their high

University of Cape Town

incidence of occurrence in these data, it will be worthwhile to look a little more closely at the content of refrains and where they are placed in narratives.

One way in which refrains operated was by echoing the outcome of a narrated experience. In the 'death by fire' narrative analysed in 5.1, the outcome of all the events reported in Part 1 (a candle fell, the house started to burn, attempts to douse the fire failed) was that an aunt died ('auntie Mariah die'). This key event was then reiterated at various points (*viz.*, at the ends of stanzas) throughout the remainder of the narrative, in different words ('his wife is dead'; 'uncle Wille's wife is dead'; 'he don't play with his wife's dead'; 'and now she's dead') and marked further in several of these instances by distinctive alterations in intonation. This was a strategy common to many accounts of death (as in (8) below, where the refrain-as-outcome is also stated at the outset in an Abstract), and injury (9), where the refrain is augmented in some stanzas by repetition) :

(8) Abstract :

ek het twee oupas en twee oumas gehet	[I had two grandpa's and two grandma's
en my een ouma het gesterf	and my one grandma died

Stanza 1

sy het siek geraak	she got sick
en toe le sy in die bed	and then she lay in the bed
toe gaan slaap sy	then she went to sleep
en toe het sy siekte gekry	and then she got (a) sickness
en blase gekry	and (she) got blisters

Stanza 2

en toe wat ons weer opgestaan het	and when we got up again
en toe maak ons my ouma wakker	and then we woke my grandma up
en toe het my ouma nie wakkergeskrik nie	and then my grandma didn't wake up
toe's my ouma dood	then my grandma was dead

Stanza 3

en toe neem hulle vir my ouma dingus toe	then they took my grandma to the thing
om te kyk of sy nie dood is nie	to see if she wasn't dead
en toe vat hulle haar hospital toe	and then they took her to hospital
om te kyk of sy nog lewe	to see if she was still alive
en toe is sy dood - -	and then she was dead

Stanza 4 : Resolution

ek het opgestaan	I got up
en toe huil ek - -	and then I cried
en toe klim ek weer in die bed	and then I got back into bed]

University of Cape Town

(9) Extract from a five-stanza narrative about a child knocked down in the road by a car (the fifth stanza comprising a coda). Here the refrains highlight two key outcomes :

Stanza 1 ends : so the car ride right on his leg

Stanza 2 ends : so the car went on his leg

Stanza 3 ends : and was sore here by his ribs – a small sore
he did get sore

Stanza 4 ends : and a whole cut was here
a whole cut was here by him

Some variations on the refrain-as-outcome pattern ocurred. In some cases the refrain conveyed a 'negative' outcome - one that might have, or almost, occurred, but didn't, as in stories of near-drownings (10, 11) :

(10) Extract from a three-stanza narrative about a family outing to the beach :

Stanza 1 ends : and we [= my mommy and I] didn't *verdrink* [drown]
Stanza 2 ends : and so my thin sister she't almost *verdrink*
Stanza 3 ends : and my daddy did almost also *verdrink*

(11) Extract from a four-stanza narrative about an incident at the beach :

Stanza 1 ends : but I didn't went dead
I swallow some water in

Stanza 3 ends : and so I did swallow some water in
and so I almost went dead

Stanza 4 ends : and I tell her 'now make quick
because I swallowed some water in'

Similarly, in a story about a gang-fight in the street (12), it was the failure of an anticipated or desired outcome to materialize that was the key point of the story, carried by the refrain :

(12) Extract from a four-stanza narrative :

Stanza 2 ends : the police never came out
and so the police never came

Stanza 4 ends : the police were not there yet

At times, refrains carried two opposing or contrasting outcomes. This is shown in the following account (13) from a five-year-old about an incident on a camping holiday where a baby would only sleep when being driven in a car; as soon as the car stopped, the baby started crying again :

University of Cape Town

(13)

Stanza 1	1	then the baby want to sleep
	2	and then them is sleeping in the caravan
	3	and daddy ride the car - for the baby - ride the car
	4	**and then she *stil*** [quiet]
Stanza 2	5	my daddy drive
	6	and then for the car stop
	7	and then the car don't ride
	8	**and then he cry**
Stanza 3	9	and the car ride again
	10	then is **him *stil*** [quiet] again
	11	**then him sleep**
Stanza 4 : Resolution	12	then my daddy give the baby to me
	13	then I keep [hold] him

The same phenomenon was also forcefully expressed in one four-year-old's fantasy narrative[1] (14) involving a mother rescuing children from an evil bogeyman. As in narrative (13), most stanzas comprise a series of Events–Outcome sequences in which, in this case, each stanza ends with recurring, opposing outcomes of danger (the man hurt me/the boy) and rescue (mother saved me/the boy). While the events themselves are not necessarily logically or chronologically connected, the deeper imagery, of a small child in opposition to a powerful, ugly man, emerges clearly through the refrains.

(14)

1	I saw a stranger	
2	that stranger pushed him in the water	
3	I saw another boy small - small just like that	
4	and another man pushed him right in the water	
5	and his **mommy had to catch him**	
6	he was just so red	[= the strange man]
7	his face was ugly	
8	and his back was full of ants	
9	I saw him in the dark	
10	and **I was scared**	
11	and so he put me into the pool	
12	he jump in the big pool	
13	and **he drowned me**	

1 As a fantasy narrative, this was excluded from the analysis and quantification of personal narratives. It is included here out of interest, however, as one of very few fantasy narratives that were structurally coherent : note not only the regularly-placed refrains but also the parallelism of lines in many stanzas. In this child's case, several of her narratives featured her mother prominently, either in circumstances threatening to the mother herself or in the role of rescuing her child - projections which made sense when I discovered that her mother had been recently hospitalized for psychiatric treatment.

University of Cape Town

14 and so my mommy had to cut his back off
15 and my mommy had to put him in the pot - to burn him up
16 so my mommy chucked him into the water
17 and then my **mommy catched me**

18 I couldn't go to that man
19 that man come and ask me where's my mommy
20 and so he come
21 **he come and hurt me**

A pattern that assumed prominence only in the oldest group of children was for the refrain conveying the final outcome of events to be stated at the outset of a narrative, either as part of an Abstract or constituting an Abstract in itself, and then recurring at intervals subsequently in the narrative, usually at the ends of stanzas. Narrative (8) above is an example of this form. A somewhat less common variation occurred where a refrain opened and closed a narrative, or one part of a narrative, thus bringing it full circle. For instance, a girl describing her grandfather's illness begins Part 1 of her account with a statement of outcome : 'and my grandpa is sick / he's in the hospital'. In an intervening three stanzas she tells of the circumstances and events that led him to this point, concluding Part 1 with the echo 'and so he went to hospital / and now he's sick'. Twenty of the forty-eight longest narratives produced by six-year-olds conformed to one of these patterns, compared to three in the four- and five-year-old groups respectively and only one in the three-year-old group.

Although the pattern of refrain-as-outcome occurring at the ends of stanzas was very pervasive in the data, refrains did not always convey the outcome of experienced events, nor did they necessarily conclude stanzas. For example, the extracts below (15a,b) are from a lengthy narrative in two parts, in which a child described how she and her father had had a car accident, following which a fight, involving a knife and physical assault, had taken place between her father and the driver of the other car. The actual events of the crash and the ensuing fight were sparsely reported and not entirely clear (perhaps having been confusing to the child at the time); what does emerge clearly, however, are sets of competing themes, carried by refrains that run through the narrative from beginning to end. Their placement tends to be more random, and not necessarily at the ends of stanzas. One pair of themes (a) sets up the 'bad guy' as being alternately scared or scary, against her father as being invincible; another (b) contrasts the 'bad guy's' intentions with those of her and her father. In all cases, the refrain is purely evaluative, being a subjective judgement, a statement of desire or intention, or expression of an emotional state :

(15a) I was too scared of that man / he's scared *versus* my daddy's strong / my daddy's strong / he can break your neck like that

University of Cape Town

b) and he wanted to hit us
ja – he wanted to stab my daddy
he done it on purpose

versus

I didn't want my daddy to be dead
my daddy don't want his bumper off

Although a refrain, like repetition, can and did occur at any point in personal narratives, it should be clear from the examples given thus far that they tended to constellate at the ends of stanzas as the final line or lines. This tendency was so common that I calculated how many of the total number of stanzas in each age-group's narratives were marked at the end by a refrain and/or repetition. Table 6 below shows how prevalent this pattern was : it occurred in around one-third of the total stanzas produced by the youngest group and increased to almost two-thirds of the stanzas making up the six-year-olds' narratives. The significance of this configuration is discussed further in the final section (6.3) of this chapter.

Table 6 : Percentage of total stanzas in each age-group whose final lines comprised a refrain and/or a repetition

3 years	**4 years**	**5 years**	**6 years**
32%	42%	52%	60%

University of Cape Town

6.1.4 Parallelism

A third device that contributed to coherence both within and across stanzas was parallelism of lines. Parallelism was defined here as two or more consecutive lines showing parallel lexical and /or syntactic structure. Repetitions of some kinds would therefore also be coded as parallelism; however, there are several kinds of parallelism other than that generated by exact or close repetition. The first two sub-categories used here were adapted somewhat from those of Bennett-Kastor (1986). *Structural parallelism* was defined, following Bennett-Kastor, as recurrence of the grammatical structure of a sentence or clause throughout one or more consecutive clauses in the narrative, while the lexical items themselves vary (16 a - d) :

(16a) I did cry
my big sister and all my cousins did cry
but my friend didn't cry

b) my auntie said 'do you want *pappa* to stay here *of* [or] come home?'
so I say 'I want *pappa* to come home'
so my *tietie* [auntie] say 'I also want *pappa* to come home'
my *tietie* did say 'I don't want *pappa* to go'

c) my dog isn't scared for other dogs
he is stronger than other dogs
my dog did fight already one dog

d) they hit me
then they pinched me
then they knocked me over

On the other hand, what I have termed *lexical parallelism* occurred where there was reiteration of the structure of the entire clause as well as lexical content, as in (17) (this is equivalent to Bennett-Kastor's 'global parallelism') :

(17) a whole cut was here
a whole cut was here by him

Thirdly, included in my definition was a recognition that patterns of lines, such as *abab* or *abba*, can also be created by parallelism :

(18a) he mustn't go *a*
and so he did go *b*
he didn't listen *a*
and so he went *b*

b) *toe neem hulle vir my ouma dingus toe* *a* [then they took my grandma to the thing
om te kyk of sy nie dood is nie *b* to see if she wasn't dead
en toe vat hulle haar hospitaal toe *a* and then they took her to the hospital
om te kyk of sy nog lewe *b* to see if she was still alive]

c) my cousin tripped over the wire *a*
she's big *b*
she's in high school *b*
so my cousin tripped over the wire *a*

d) I say my sister mustn't cry *a*
she just say 'leave me – leave me *a*
come take me down *b*
come take me down to my aunties' *b*

Parallelism of these kinds contributed significantly to the internal patterning of lines within stanzas in the narratives of children at all ages. Like refrains, however, it also at times created cohesive links across stanzas. An example of this occurred in narrative (13) above, where the young narrator described in three successive stanzas with parallel line structure how, when her father stopped driving the car, the baby cried and when he drove again the baby was quiet. Amongst the five-and six-year-olds, parallelism was sometimes set up through the use of dialogue (see also 'direct character speech' – 5.3.2); we saw this operating within stanzas in examples 16 (b) and 18 (d) above, as well as in the 'death by fire' narrative analysed at the beginning of chapter 5. Dialogue also functions cohesively across stanzas in several instances : for instance a narrative (19) about a social event describes in parallel lines occurring at the end of three successive stanzas the reactions of people on entering a hot marquee. The parallel lines in this instance also function as a refrain for the narrative.

University of Cape Town

(19) Stanza 1 ends :

en dan gaan ons daar in	[and then we went in there
en dan's dit warm! warm! warm! daarin	and then it was hot, hot, hot in there]

Stanza 2 ends :

en toe my ma ingaan	[and when my mom went in
toe sê my ma ***'hier's so warm in die kamer'***	then my mom said 'it's so hot in this room']

Stanza 3 ends :

en toe my pa kom daar in	[and when my dad came in there
toe sê my pa ***'Jissis! Dis te warm!'***	then my dad said 'Jesus, it's too hot!']

Creating structural or thematic links across the stanzas of narratives becomes more problematical when narratives recount more than one separate experience related to a particular theme, as described in 5.2.3). In the following section, on staging manoeuvres in narrating, we shall look at some examples of these narratives and see how patterns of refrains and parallel lines are used to create links not only across stanzas but also across parts of a narrative representing accounts of separate experiences.

Table 7 : Percentage narratives per age-group containing one or more instances of parallelism

3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
62%	62%	83%	83%

Table 7 shows that 62% of three- and four-year-old's narratives contained at least one instance of parallelism of lines within and/or across stanzas, and that this figure increases to as much as 83% of the older children's narratives.

The following highly evaluative narrative (20) by a five-year-old, describing her fear during a thunderstorm at night, illustrates how parallelism, repetition and refrains very often came together in the structuring of a personal experience. Stanza 1 follows an Orientation-Event(s)-Outcome sequence, with lines 2,3 and 5 conveying the only event propositions in the entire narrative. The couplet representing the outcome, made up of lines 4 and 5, is repeated in parallel lines at the very end of the narrative (lines 15 – 17) as a refrain – an *abab* pattern linking the first and last stanzas. In the intervening stanzas, stanza 2 shows perfect parallelism in the repeated *abab* lines (8 – 11) 'I was here / and the window was breaking', while stanza 3 is comprised of three structurally parallel lines 'I think X'.

University of Cape Town

(20) 1 you know
when I was sleeping in my bed
2 my mommy take [=switch] the light off
3 and so God made the thunder, man
4 and so **I was scared**, man
5 and so **I ran in mommy's bed**

6 and so I hear the window
7 and so I hear the window want to break
8 I was here
9 and the window was breaking
10 I was here
11 and the window was breaking

12 I think it's everything!
13 I think what is it!
14 I think it's the devil!

15 and **I was scared**
16 **I was scared**
17 **I ran in mommy's bed**

6.2 Staging

The previous section examined some of the cohesive ties that bind together lines within stanzas, as well as stanzas to one another. We turn next to consider the question of how narratives 'move' or shift in perspective across stanza and part boundaries. Three specific questions are dealt with in this section. Firstly, how are transitions from one stanza to the next effected? In other words, what linguistic means are employed at stanza junctures to mark the small shifts in perspective that characterise new stanzas? Secondly, what happens when a narrative recounts more than one experience? How are connections made between larger chunks – *viz.*, parts – of a narrative text? Thirdly, is the relationship of successive stanzas to preceding ones necessarily one of chronological advancement of the events narrated, or are there other kinds of temporal moves that occur from one stanza to the next?

6.2.1 Shifts in reference marking beginnings of stanzas

In his analysis of children's picture story narrations, Bamberg (1987) argued that, in order to build cohesive texts, there are three basic ways a narrator can 'move' through a narration. The first involves using a *character as anchor-point* : here, a character's identity is established at the outset and subsequent clauses refer to that character's actions, internal states, whereabouts etc., with reference-maintaining devices holding the identity constant. The second involves a *temporal anchor-point* : the narrative is anchored in a temporal origin and from there a time-line is established, along which various temporal sequences can be placed. Again, this strategy relies on specific linguistic devices that establish temporal reference. The

University of Cape Town

third is the use of a *location anchor-point* : the location where the narrative originates is stated towards the beginning and from there on the narrator comments on changes of location.

Applying this framework to a line and stanza analysis, I looked at whether transitions to new stanzas were marked by explicit references to changes in character, time or location. The opening main clause of each stanza in each child's three longest narratives was examined for the presence of references to a new person, a change in the time of events or a change in location of events. Where these occurred, the subsequent lines of that stanza were scanned to determine whether reference to the new character, time or location was sustained in the remainder of the stanza, either explicitly (via pronominal or deictic reference, for instance) or implicitly (for example, where it is evident that the events described in that stanza take place in the changed location). Table 8 shows the results of this analysis.

Table 8 : Shifts in reference to person, location and time marking stanza beginnings, expressed as a percentage of the total number of stanzas per age-group

Stanzas beginning with explicit shifts in :	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Person	43%	41%	43%	38%
Location	27%	27%	29%	28%
Time	4%	13%	24%	24%

University of Cape Town

At all ages, the transition to a new stanza was marked most often by shifts in focus to a different participant (person) in the events. That is, a little more or less than 40% of all stanzas in each age-group opened with mention of a different or new character *relative to the preceding stanza*, while subsequent lines in the stanza referred to that character's actions, internal or physical states and so on. In all cases, the initial reference to the character had to be given lexical specification (e.g., 'my mommy's grandma', 'a stranger', 'uncle Greg', '*daai klein jongetjie*', but not 'she' or '*hy*') in order to be included in the quantification, although references to that character in the following lines might be pronominal.

In the narrative below (21), concerning a grandmother's death, the narrator's moves from one stanza or 'take' to the next are governed partly by chronology (including two explicit temporal markers in the form of 'when' clauses), but primarily by shifts in focus on participants (these and subsequent references to them in the same stanza are indicated by underlining). The narrative opens with an abstract in which the grandfather and grandmother

are introduced and the final outcome of events stated. In the second stanza the opening main clause refers to 'my grandpa' (subsequently 'him'), the remaining lines describing his movements. Stanza 3 opens with a shift to focus on 'my grandma', who is then referred to in lines 9 through 13, describing her death, as 'she' and 'her'. The next stanza introduces 'the doctor' in its opening line (and 'he' subsequently), whose pronouncements concerning the grandmother are reiterated in the following lines. ('My uncle' in line 14 is ignored as he is not referred to again in this stanza or elsewhere). Stanza 5 shifts the focus to the narrator and her personal reactions, thoughts and feelings about her grandmother, while the final stanza shifts again to 'my mommy' (subsequently 'she'), whose decision as to who could attend the funeral is the subject of this stanza. The narrative is also an example of a two-part structure in which Part 1 deals with the events and circumstances of the grandmother's death and Part 2 with the reactions of participants to that death. It moves forward in essentially chronological fashion, but is interwoven with patterns of parallel lines, repetition and refrains ('had a heart attack'; 'died / is dead') which echo the outcome of the experience.

(21) **Stanza 1 - Abstract** : I had two grandparents; both died.

1 my (grand)pa AND (grand)ma had a heart attack
2 I had two (grand)mas and pas
3 **so they both dead**

Part 1
Stanza 2 : Grandpa moved to live with us

4 when they finish getting married [i.e., divorced?]
5 so my (grand)pa went there
6 and so - and my (grand)pa went there by us
7 so we had him

Stanza 3 : Grandma had a heart attack and died

8 and so my (grand)ma, when she had a heart attack
9 so she moved
10 and so she had a heart attack
11 and so we had to rush her to the hospital
12 and so my mom must hold her
13 **so she did die**

Stanza 4 : The doctor confirmed that grandma was dead.

14 and so my uncle did phone for the doctor
15 so the doctor said that she's dead
16 that she'd had a heart attack
17 and so **he said that she's dead**

University of Cape Town

Part 2
Stanza 5 : I really missed grandma

18 so I did cry
19 I did cry for her
20 I really missed her
21 because she give luxuries – and Easter eggs too
22 and she was my friendly (grand)ma
23 I only have that ma – and my other (grand)ma

Stanza 6 : Mom didn't want me to go to the funeral

24 and I ask my mommy "can I go with to the graveyard?"
25 so my mommy said "no"
26 she didn't want me to go

Shifts in location were the second most frequent means of marking the transition to a new stanza. Table 8 showed that around 28% of all stanzas across the four age-groups opened with mention of a change in the location of events relative to the preceding stanza. Used less often, but increasingly with age, were explicit time references to mark the beginnings of new stanzas. These occurred in only 4% of opening main clauses in the stanzas of three-year-olds, but increased to 24% of those of five- and six-year-olds. As with reference to participants, the references to location or time were lexically explicit (e.g., on the grass there, by Wingfield, to the day-hospital, when it was her birthday, when I woke up again, afterwards, the second time) and signalled shifts in the time or place of events relative to the preceding stanza.

In the following narrative (22), a five-year-old recounts an injury to his mother. Unlike the previous narrative (21), the focus on participants remains more or less constantly on one key figure, his mother, as the narrator works and re-works the events, circumstances and outcome of her accident. (In stanza 5 there is a shift in psychological subject, but to the indefinite 'they' – i.e., some relevant but unspecified people, while 'the doctor' (lines 13 and 17) seems to refer not to a person, but to a clinic or hospital). Instead of shifting focus on participants, this child uses shifts of location and time (underlined) to mark the major segments of his story. The opening lines of stanza 1 locate the events of Part 1 as occurring in the road, on the way to the market. As we move from one stanza to the next in Part 1 there is not a clear temporal progression of events, but rather a repeated statement of the outcome or key event ('ma fall' – this refrain indicated in bold print) along with a slight recasting of the circumstances or events which led to this outcome. Part 2 opens with a shift in location 'to the doctor' where the mother was treated and recovered, events covered in stanzas 5 and 6. Part 2 also moves the narrative forward in a chronological sense. However, in Part 3, the narrator shifts the account backwards in time and location ('because why when she walked into the

University of Cape Town

road') to revisit the scene of the accident; this time, in order to offer a new piece of information and a slightly different evaluative explanation for the events that occurred.

(22) **Part 1 : In the road, on the way to the market**
Stanza 1 : Ma falls

1 yesterday my ma had to walk in the market ne
2 okay here my ma walk in the road
3 **here my ma fall**

Stanza 2 : Ma tries to stand up, but falls

4 and when my ma stand up
5 and my ma stand up like this
6 **and then she fall here on her leg**
Stanza 3 : Ma's leg twists; she falls

7 and then my ma stay like this
8 because why did turn around like this[her leg]
9 that did turn around
10 **then she fall**

Stanza 4 : Ma's leg twists; the glass cuts her

11 cause why when she [her leg] turn around like this
12 the glass cut her here

Part 2 : At the clinic
Stanza 5 : Ma's leg is treated

13 then now they did take her to the doctor
14 then they put that bandage over her leg
15 then they give a long needle
16 for the – let all the blood come out – the blood
17 then she did stay three days in the doctor – there by L.

Stanza 6 : Ma's leg is better; she leaves

18 and then my ma's waiting for us
19 because why my ma's leg is now better
20 and now come ma out the doctor

Part 3 : The road revisited
Stanza 7 : Ma doesn't know the car is coming; her leg twists

21 because why when she walked into the road
22 she did first walk
23 **she don't know here come a car**
24 **she twist her leg like this**

University of Cape Town

Stanza 8 : Ma doesn't see the car coming; her leg twists

25 **she didn't see the car**
26 **then the leg turn around like this**

6.2.2 Staging manoeuvres delineating Part structure

Staging becomes more complex when a narrative recounts more than one separate experience. In 5.2.3 we saw that of the narratives with part-structure, five told of multiple experiences linked to a single topic or theme. One of these is (23) below, in which Part 1 tells of an injury and part 2 an illness experienced by the five-year-old narrator. The common theme that binds the two experiences is the treatment he received from a doctor for each of these conditions, a connection that is made via refrains carrying recurring themes of injury or actions performed upon his back and his mouth respectively. However, the narrator also makes certain other explicit linguistic links between the two accounts. There is a symmetry or parallelism in structure and content between the two stories. Both open with an explicit temporal reference 'yesterday' (which we probably should interpret as meaning 'at some specific time in the past') and a statement, in the lines of the first stanza (i.e., stanzas 1 and 4), of the events or states which necessitated treatment from a doctor. In both, the second stanza (i.e., stanzas 2 and 5) opens with a shift of location/person in the form of 'I went to the doctor', the remainder of the stanza (and a further one in Part 1) detailing the specific procedures carried out by the doctor. Both stories end with the doctor putting something into a part of his body : 'they put a spine in my back' (ending Part 1) and '(he) put it (a stick) right in my mouth' (ending Part 2).

(23) **Part 1 : Injury story**

Stanza 1
1 yesterday I did ride my bike in the road
2 a car come
3 and he bump me on my back – with my bike

Stanza 2
4 and now I did go to the doctor
5 and now what they do, they put me in the bed
6 and then what they do, I did lay so on my back
7 and watch the lady cut my back open
8 and what's in there – what's wrong with my back
9 and so there comes a lot of blood out here

Stanza 3
10 take it – take it with a glove
11 he take my bone out – so eh? so, so a broken bone
12 and now they put a spine in my back
a spine here

University of Cape Town

Part 2 : Illness story

Stanza 4

13 **Abs.** and now yesterday also I did also be sick

14 I did go to Dr Sterris
15 because why my tonsils throat sore ne
16 and every time my mother look in my mouth

Stanza 5

17 and then I did go to Dr Sterris okay?
18 he did put a light on
19 and take the stick
20 and put it right in my mouth
right in my mouth with the stick

In effecting the transition from the first story to the second, the narrator's repeated use of 'also' in the opening (Abstract) line of Part 2, along with the reintroduction of a time reference, assists in conveying to the listener the fact that there is a connection between the story to follow and that preceding it. Similar devices are used in other multiple event stories. For example, a six-year-old's narrative told of two separate accidents that had involved her cousin in the road near her home. Part 1 opens with the line

'<u>that time</u> my cousin did walk in the road'

and proceeds to relate how the cousin was almost knocked over by a car. Part 2 opens with an Abstract line

'<u>AND the other time</u> and so the bicycle knocked her over <u>again</u>',

the time reference and the use of 'again' serving to establish that a separate incident, related to the first, is to follow.

Narrative (24) below is another example of multiple experiences combined into a single coherent account. Here a five-year-old relates, in Part 1, how a car rode over his big girl dog and, in Part 2, a separate occasion when a car rode over his puppy. Lines 1 and 2 are in response to the question that prompted this narrative ('*Nou wat van <u>jou</u> honde – baklei hulle ooit*?'[now what about your dogs – do they ever fight?]) and introduce a theme that will be picked up later. The ensuing narrative as a whole is in two parts, each organized around one of two chief 'characters' or participants (indicated by underlining) : the girl dog (Part 1) and the puppy (Part 2). Each participant is specified at the outset of each account (lines 3 and 12 respectively) and referred to pronominally as '*sy/haar*'[she/her] (Part 1) or '*hom*'[him] (Part 2) in the subsequent stanzas which deal with events involving the one and then the other character. The final stanza of Part 2 (lines 17 and 18) shifts the focus back to the girl dog, who is about to produce more puppies; by drawing together the two chief characters, this stanza

University of Cape Town

neatly links the two stories together and serves as a Coda to the narrative as a whole. As with narrative (23) above, the narrator also makes use of an Abstract line (12) to introduce the second story and link it in theme to the first. Aside from these staging manoeuvres, the two stories are held together by a series of refrains. The narrator elaborates two themes : (i) his dogs fight (lines 1,2 and 9 in Part 1) and (ii) his dogs get hit by cars – the latter theme carrying across both stories in lines 3,4,10, 11,12 and 15. The final line ('we'll be giving those puppies away') makes perfect sense as part of the coda to this narrative, with its implication of 'dogs are just too much trouble'.

(24) **Part 1 : The girl dog**

Stanza 1

1	***hulle drie honde baklei ook***	[those three dogs fight too
2	***hulle wil altwee baklei saam met ene***	the two always want to fight with one

Stanza 2

2	***'n kar het al vir ons meisie hond omgestamp op die koppie***	a car already hit our girl dog on the head
4	***en 'n kar het al op haar voet gery***	and a car already rode on her foot
5	*toe was daar 'n klomp bloed op onse stoep*	then there was a lot of blood on our porch

Stanza 3

6	*sy het nie dokter toe gegaan nie*	she didn't go to the doctor
7	*en toe raak hulle weg*	and then they went away
8	*en die seer raak nou weg*	and the sores went away
9	***maar sy baklei nog altyd met die honde***	but she still always fights with the dogs

Stanza 4

10	***som karre hulle sien nie haar voet nie***	some cars they don't see her foot
11	***en dan ry hulle op haar voet***	and then they ride on her foot

Part 2 : The puppy

Stanza 5

Abs 12	***en hulle het een puppy van ons doodgery***	and they killed one puppy of ours
13	*'n* uncle *het saam met 'n bruin kar gekom*	a man came with a brown car
14	*en die* puppy *het vorentoe gekom*	and the puppy came forward
15	***en toe ry hulle op hom***	and then they rode over him
16	*toe begrawe hulle vir hom*	then they buried him

Stanza 6

Coda 17	*maar daai groot meisie hond van ons sy kry weer* puppies	
18	*maar ons gee dit weg*	but that big girl dog of ours she's having puppies again/but we're giving them away]

University of Cape Town

6.2.3 Chronology and manipulations of temporal sequence

Finally, we come to the issue of chronological sequencing of events. It is characteristic of these children's narratives that movement from one stanza to the next does not necessarily entail an advancement of the plot or event structure. In narrative (22) above, we saw how the narrator worked and re-worked the key event of Part 1 of his story – his mother falling in the road - each stanza comprising a different 'take', as it were, on the same experience. In Part 3, having resolved the incident by describing his mother's recovery following medical treatment, he returned to the time and place of the accident to offer a fresh angle on the events of Part 1.

Deviating from the chronology of events in the original experience is a strategy employed by mature narrators who may, in the course of narrating, manipulate time by various means - for instance, by inserting background information or making use of flashbacks at critical moments, or by dwelling evaluatively on key events. These techniques are widely considered to be hallmarks of a good narrative, since they have the effect of capturing listener interest and heightening suspense (Labov 1972; Polanyi 1989; Schiffrin 1984). In studying the narratives of young children, however, it is necessary to distinguish between chronological deviations that are deliberate manipulations and those that are the result of confusion regarding the actual order of events (or possibly poor understanding of the events themselves). Peterson & McCabe (1983) found that at four years of age, the dominant structure of children's narratives was what they termed a 'leap-frogging pattern' – a 'disordered recapitulation of several events' (1991: 152) in which the narrator jumps from one event to another unsystematically while leaving out certain important events, thus placing a heavy burden of reconstruction on the listener. By five years of age, however, most narratives in Peterson & McCabe's sample followed the temporal sequence of experienced events. Similarly, Berman's (1988) developmental analysis of story retelling found that from age five, children were capable of sequentially chaining chronologically related events.

Bearing in mind that two timelines are involved in narrative analysis – the timeline of the actual experience and the timeline of the narrative (Peterson & McCabe 1983) - I identified in my own analysis, for each age-group, those narratives which displayed disordered chronology such that it was difficult or impossible to reconstruct the original experience. The remaining narratives, for which this was not the case, I examined for the presence of manipulations of temporal sequence. The results are presented below.

Table 9 : Percentage narratives in each age-group displaying disordered chronology

3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
74%	43%	9%	0%

University of Cape Town

Table 9 shows that virtually three-quarters (74%) of three-year-olds' narratives and a little under a half (43%) of four-year-olds' narratives were characterised by temporal disorganisation in the recapitulation of events. By five and six years of age, the percentage of narratives displaying this feature had dwindled to 9% and zero respectively, a finding wholly consistent with that of the studies reported above. It follows, therefore, that in the remaining proportion of narratives it was possible to reconstruct the timeline of the actual experience with relative ease. However, as the examples below illustrate, even when children have grasped chronology, they do not necessarily choose to narrate events in strict chronological order. Table 10 indicates the percentage of narratives in each age-group that were not considered to have 'disordered chronology' (as discussed in relation to Table 9), yet displayed one or more types of manipulation of temporal sequencing in the reporting of events.

Table 10 : Percentage narratives per age-group displaying manipulations of temporal sequence

3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
0%	3%	14%	48%

The most common form of temporal manipulation occurred where successive stanzas provided re-takes on an important event contained in a preceding stanza, often adding new information relevant to that event. In the following extract (25) from a long narrative, a six-year-old describes the crucial events leading to the death of her uncle. Both stanzas relate that he left the 'dance' (nightclub) and that the driver of the car made a critical turn (the significance of this latter event being underscored via repetition within and across stanzas, indicated in bold print). To this information the first stanza adds orientating information as to the location where this occurred (the stop-street outside the day-hospital) and the second stanza adds the evaluative comment that the uncle didn't have a seat-belt on.

(25) and so when he came off the dance [i.e., when he left the dance]
and so there was a stop-street there
and there's *mos* day-hospital
now there – **so that man did turn – the driver**
and so he turns

and so he did leave the dance
he didn't have seat-belts on
and so they turn the car
and so they turn into the wall

University of Cape Town

Somewhat differently, in the following account (26) of a grandfather's death, the first stanza provides a brief summary of the critical events in a three-line Orientation-Event-Outcome sequence, while the following stanza elaborates on the details of the events and outcome (the latter functioning as a refrain, indicated in bold). The narrative as a whole unfolds not along a progressive time-line, but by successive 'unpacking' of chunks of information : the Abstract conveys the final outcome of the experience in a single line; this is expanded in the first stanza into the archetypal three-line form that encapsulates the entire content of the narrative; the second stanza unpacks this further by enlarging on and explaining the events of the first; the final stanza resolves the experience and brings the narrative full circle with its final echo of the opening line. Note the familiar patterning of refrains at the ends of stanzas, which occur regardless of whether the move from one stanza to the next is one of chronological advancement or not.

(26)	1	**Abs** ***my oupa is dood***	[my grandpa is dead
	2	*my oupa het daar by die winkel daar goete gaan koop*	
	3	*toe kom daar 'n man*	and then a man came
	4	***en toe ry die man my pa om***	and then the man rode my grandpa over
	5	*daai man het agtertoe gekyk*	that man was looking backwards
	6	*hy kan nie vorentoe gekyk het*	he couldn't look forwards
	7	*en daai man het altyd "piep piep piep" gemaak*	
	8	*om die kar vinnig te ry*	and that man kept going 'poop poop'
	9	*toe ry daai man my pa om*	to drive the car fast then that man rode over my grandpa
	10	*toe brand hulle my pa uit*	then they cremated my grandpa
	11	*want ons was in die xx*	because we were in the (church?)
	12	*en **my oupa was in die kis***	and my grandpa was in the coffin]

In another variation, a stanza repeats, line by line, using different language, the content of a preceding stanza. In extract (27) a child describes the crucial event in an accident he witnessed, while in (28) parents dispute the functions of a tongue-depressor obtained from a day-hospital :

(27) we saw a bus *ne*
so he turned around *ne*
and **the wheel fell off**

now the bus is riding
and the wheel is turning
and **the wheel fell off**

University of Cape Town

(28) so my mommy said she wanted to make some suckers with it
so my daddy said 'no'
and so my daddy said 'no - **it's to put in your mouth**'

so my mommy said 'I want to use it for suckers'
my daddy still say 'no'
because **it's to put in your mouth**

In the following section (6.3) we shall see that at all ages children produce some proportion of narratives that are straightforwardly chronological in their retelling of an experience. However, what Tables 9 and 10 suggest is that as the temporal ordering of events becomes increasingly understood, so too the tendency to depart from strict temporal sequence increases. In the oldest group of six-year-olds, not one of their three longest narratives could be classified as displaying disordered chronology (Table 9), yet almost half of these narratives contained at least one instance of temporal manipulation (Table 10). Both stanza and part boundaries were used as points of departure from chronology, as should be clear from the examples given heretofore in this section. It is possible to regard this tendency as aberrant or deficient only if one accepts the assumption that a linear event-structure is the norm for personal narratives. It appears to have been the norm for the older children in Peterson & McCabe's (1983) sample, for whom a 'classic' Labovian high-point pattern was the dominant narrative structure, but not for the subjects of several other studies - e.g., Gee (1991a,b, 1997), Hicks (1991), Champion et al (1995), Riessman (1997), Mishler (1997) – who produced coherent narratives without adhering to a linear reporting style. As Gee (1991b:20) comments, 'the fundamental function of narrative in human life is not to report a chronological sequence of events, but to signal a perspective on events and create a satisfying pattern of themes one has drawn from one's various social traditions'. How the Kensington/Factreton children signal their own unique perspectives on their experiences in constructing the stories of their lives is the subject of the final section of this chapter.

University of Cape Town

6.3 Focus and Theme

The highest level of narrative structure is that of focus and theme. As we saw in chapter 4, focusing is the system whereby a narrator marks certain propositions as more crucial to the telling than others, or distinguishes key events and states from those which are properly background or clarificatory. It sets up salient themes or images within and across stanzas. For the listener (and the narrative analyst), our ultimate interpretation of the narrative rests on our 'reading' of the focused material, which is the total of the most highly evaluated content of the narrative.

The analysis of narratives in these data so far has shown that both the beginnings and the ends of stanzas tend to be marked in certain characteristic ways. The thematic topic of a stanza (or part) is usually indicated by shifts of person, time or location (relative to the preceding stanza) that occur in its opening lines, and by chained reference to that topic in subsequent lines. On the other hand, focused material tends to cluster in the closing lines of stanzas. One third of all six-year-olds' stanzas end with a proposition representing the outcome of events in that stanza (5.2.4, Table 11). Almost two-thirds of all six-year-olds' stanzas end with one or both of the following : (i) repetition of a narrative line or, much less commonly, of a word or phrase within a line; (ii) a reiteration or echoing of a proposition that occurs at least once elsewhere in the narrative, in the form of a refrain (this chapter, Table 6). Several example narratives were given in section 6.1.3 in which refrains (some accompanied by repetition) concluded stanzas and coincided with the outcome of events – either in a local sense of the experience contained within that particular stanza, or as a final outcome of the narrated experience.

While these were prominent patterns amongst the older children, not all narratives conformed to this pattern, and, especially in younger age-groups, some proportion of narratives were less coherent in structure. When the focusing system in each individual narrative was examined in detail across all age-groups, certain distinctive patterns, or narrative 'types' emerged. The distribution of these types showed age-related trends, but was also related to narrative topic. They are discussed below.

6.3.1 Narrative types based on the focusing system

In examining focused material in individual narratives, I took into account both 'contential' and deictic evaluation (Polanyi's (1989) terms) as these were defined in 4.3.7. Clause-level (propositions with a primary coding of Evaluation) and embedded (sub-clausal) evaluation, as described in 5.3.2, comprised contential evaluation, as did marked falling tones (marking focus at the level of the idea unit, as described in 5.1). Repetition and refrains were the chief means that narrators used to create deictic evaluation; these were particularly powerful focusing devices since they direct attention to key images and themes running through a narrative that are distinctive or significant from the narrator's perspective.

Four main types of narrative emerged, based on an analysis of how the focusing system operates. Table 11 displays the overall incidence in the data (for all age-groups combined) of each narrative type. Table 12 shows the proportion of narratives in each age-group that conformed to each of the four types – i.e., it shows the distribution of types in relation to each other per age-group. Figures 1 – 4, on the other hand, provide a visual display for each narrative type of how its incidence is distributed across the age-groups.

University of Cape Town

Table 11 : Incidence of narrative types for all age-groups combined, expressed as a percentage of total number of three-longest narratives

Type A	Event strings with, optionally, some Orientation, but no Evaluation and no focus	28%
Type B	Event strings with repetition of key events or states creating points of focus	9%
Type C	Refrains carrying recurring themes (events or states) create the prominent focus	28%
Type D	Refrains conveying the outcome of events create the prominent focus.	35%

Table 12 : Frequency of narrative types as a percentage of total narratives in each age-group

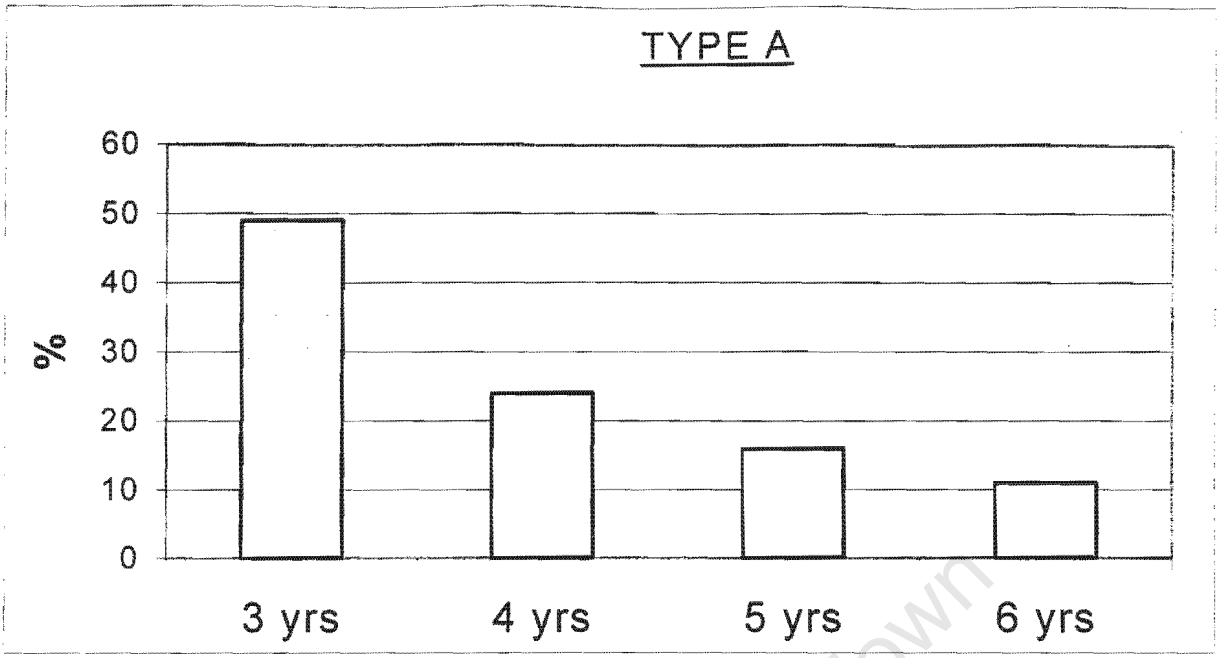
	3 years	**4 years**	**5 years**	**6 years**
Type A	57%	30%	20%	10%
Type B	15%	8%	6%	8%
Type C	23%	35%	31%	25%
Type D	5%	27%	43%	57%

University of Cape Town

Type A narratives

Structurally the least mature category, type A narratives were characterized minimally by a series of two or more Event propositions, reported either chronologically or in temporally disorganized fashion. In addition to these events, there might be some contextualizing Orientation clauses. However, clauses with a primary coding of Evaluation were scarce or altogether absent, and there was an absence of any form of repetition or refrain. Hence, these narratives lacked a clear focus. In total, 28% of all narratives were of this type (see Table 11); however, they were clustered chiefly in the youngest, three- and four-year-old, age-groups (see Figure 1). Further evidence of the relative immaturity of this narrative type arises from the fact that both brevity and lack of chronicity are associated with these narratives : the majority - 70% - of all single-stanza narratives in the data were type A, as were over half – 56% - of all the narratives categorised (in 6.2, Table 9) as displaying disordered chronology.

Figure 1



University of Cape Town

However, while all type A narratives lacked an obvious focus in the sense that this was defined above, there was some variation within this category in two dimensions of structural maturity : chronicity and the inclusion of orientation clauses. In a little under one-half (47%) of type A narratives, events were related in temporally disorganized fashion, while in just over one-half (53%) events were reported chronologically. On the other hand, roughly one quarter (27%) of type A narratives were made up of Event propositions only, whereas in the remaining three-quarters (73%) of narratives, Event propositions were embedded in a context of one or more Orientation clauses. Both these dimensions were age-related : Event-only narratives were produced only by three-year-olds and two four-year-old children, while non-chronological type A narratives arose only in the two youngest age-groups and in one five-year-old.

The story below (29) from a three-year-old, about a visit to the circus, is an example of a non-chronological narrative composed virtually entirely of Event propositons that are supplied in apparently haphazard fashion. It starts and ends abruptly, carries no contextualizing orientation to participants, time or location of the events, and, since no single event is assigned prominence, it has no clear perspective or 'point'. This kind of narrative conveys no sense of structural unity other than simple chaining of topic NPs from one line to the next.

(29)	1	*ek het olifant gesien*	[I saw (an) elephant
	2	*die tier het die olifant gewas*	the tiger washed the elephant
	3	*hulle gooi hom hier in die water*	they threw him here in the water

4	*toe kom die olifant uit*	then the elephant came out
5	*en die olifant is weg –*	and the elephant went away
	EN die perd – EN drie perdes	and the horse – and three horses
6	*dan jaag die perde vir die olifant*	then the horses chased the elephant
7	*en byt die perd vir die olifant*	and the horse bit the elephant]

On the other hand, a five-year-old gave the following account (30) of an accident requiring a trip to the doctor. While composed entirely of events, *none of which are assigned any particular prominence via evaluation*, these events are nonetheless reported in chronological sequence and embedded within a small amount of orientating context.

(30)	1	*ek het 'n* plastic *sak ingesluk*	[I swallowed a plastic bag
	2	*en toe kom die* uncle	and then the man came
	3	*toe moet ek met die kar dokter toe gaan*	then I had to go to the doctor in the car
	4	*toe was hulle my gesig*	then they washed my face
	5	*en toe le ekke op die kooi*	and then I lay on the bed
	6	*toe't ek 'n klomp pyp – klomp naalde – op my gehet*	then I had a lot of pipe – lot of needles on me
	7	*en toe kom haal my ma my*	and then my mom came to fetch me
	8	*en toe sit hulle so 'n ding om my*	and then they put this kind of thing on me
	9	*toe gaan ons huis toe*	(hospital identification bracelet) then we went home

Similarly, a six-year-old's brief tale of an accident in the home (31) is organized, despite the absence of any evaluative device, in a structurally coherent fashion by means of an Orientation-Events-Outcome form (lines 1-4), followed by a brief stanza which provides a resolution to the outcome of events.

(31)	1	and my mommy did still walk with hot water
	2	and so my cousin – she's in high school
	3	and so my cousin tripped over the wire
	4	and so it [the hot water] fall on her leg - -
	5	and so they went to hospital
	6	and so they put a bandage on it

University of Cape Town

Comparing narrative (29) with narratives (30) and (31), then, one sees a progression of maturity in terms of their event structure, which is predictable given the differing ages of the narrators. But we should note that if the events that made up an experience were not themselves coherently structured, then the reporting of those events is likely to reflect this, regardless of age. The experience on which narrative (29) is based – a visit to the circus - is one that typically would have a fairly unstructured organization, as compared to, say an experience of personal injury (as in 30 and 31) which has an inherent causal organization (Hudson & Shapiro 1991). In these data, many of the accounts of social outings were similar to the narratives Peterson & McCabe (1983) elicited about 'trips' and parties, which they described as tending to comprise lists of actions without any functional integration.

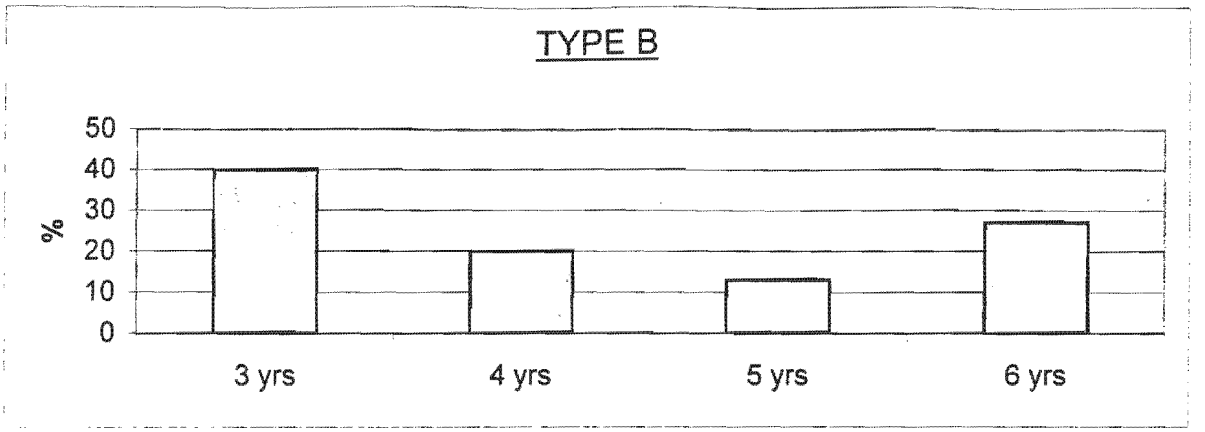
Type A narratives correspond broadly to the 'primitive patterns' in Peterson & McCabe's (1983) developmental scheme that were most prevalent in the youngest children in their sample. Direct comparisons between their classification of narrative types and my own are difficult because the basis for classification is different in each case, Peterson & McCabe's concern being the extent to which the event structure of a narrative approximates a 'high point' structure. However, some type A accounts, such as (29), might qualify as a 'leap-frogging' narrative, in which the narrator 'jumps from one event to another, but clearly leaves out various major events such that it is difficult to reconstruct the original events' (p.43). On the other hand, (30) is closest to their 'chronological pattern', described as containing 'only a-then-b event clauses ... a description of successive events ... temporally rather than structurally integrated' (p.44). Narrative (31) here might also be classified as a 'chronological' pattern in Peterson & McCabe's terms, yet, as we've seen, it conforms to the State-Events-Outcome organizing principle for stanzas, with the addition of a resolution of the outcome; consequently it shows a coherent structural integration over and above the ability to narrate a simple temporal sequence.

Type B narratives

Type B narratives were typically composed of Events as well as State propositions coded as Orientation and/or Evaluation. The chief feature that distinguishes them from type A narratives, however, is that one or more of these events or states is assigned prominence by means of repetition, thus creating points of focus within the event structure of the narrative. This repetition almost invariably occurred in the final lines of stanzas. These stories were generally longer than type A narratives, with all except three being composed of multiple stanzas.

University of Cape Town

Figure 2



Of the total number of three longest narratives from each child, a relatively small proportion - 9% - were type B (see Table 11). Figure 2 shows that their highest point of occurrence was in the three-year-old group, although they were present to some extent in all age-groups. Amongst the youngest (three- and four-year-old) children, they were as likely to have a non-chronological event structure as they were to report events chronologically. However, in several respects they represented a more mature pattern relative to type A narratives : first, they tended to be longer; second, the use of repetition highlighted the significance of certain events or states over others; and third, they were more likely to include other lines with a primary coding of Evaluation.

Amongst the oldest, six-year-old, children, type B narratives occurred relatively infrequently, representing 8% of all narratives in this group (Table 12). They formed an interesting sub-category, however, since they represented a type of narrative that, despite having relatively little evaluation other than that created by the repetition of certain propositions, had nonetheless an organized and coherent event structure. Some examples, from six-year-olds, are given below. Narrative (32) is organized on an Orientation-Events-Outcome basis, with the repetition of the final Outcome line forming the focal point of the story. We can note that in terms of Peterson & McCabe's developmental scheme, it would probably be classified as an (immature) 'Ending-at-the-High-Point' structure, since the narrative would be seen as terminating at the focal point without resolution. Peterson & McCabe (1983:42) labelled this a 'developmental approximation to the classic pattern', commenting that 'we usually perceived the child as simply ending too soon, or forgetting to resolve the high point action.' However, in the context of the structural features that have emerged in the analysis of the data here – specifically, the prevalence of the Orientation-

University of Cape Town

Events-Outcome sequence as an organizing principle for stanzas - narrative (33) looks like a complete, if brief, episode.

The longer narrative (33) resembles a 'high point' structure as defined by Peterson & McCabe (1983) : it opens with an Abstract (line 1), followed by orientation to participants, location and ongoing events; it proceeds to supply 'rising actions' (those leading up to the climactic event (Hudson *et al* 1992)) in the event clauses of lines 6, 7 and 8, culminating in the repetition in lines 9 and 10. These two lines could be considered the 'high point' of the narrative by virtue of the double evaluation which occurs here : the use of direct character speech and repetition of the entire proposition. (Indeed there is no other primary evaluation anywhere else in the narrative).They are followed by a resolution of events in the 'falling actions' (actions following the climax and resolving it (*ibid.*)) that make up the remainder of the narrative. In fact, it is debatable whether this would qualify as a 'classic high point' story, since the central event ('I got burned') is stated at the outset in an Abstract, and omitted from the sequence of events in the story itself. Like narrative (32), the focal point of the narrative is not so much an event as a participant's *emotional reaction to an event*, encoded by direct character speech.

(32)

1	*ek het 'n suster nou*	[I have a sister now
2	*en sy het 'n* baby	and she has a baby
3	*en sy gee net pak vir die* baby	and she just gives the baby hidings
4	*en die* baby *was stout*	and the baby was naughty
5	*en sy slat vir hom in die gesig*	and she hit him in the face
6	*en toe sê my ma* "don't hit him!	and then my mom said …
7	don't hit him!"	

(33)

1	look – I burned there with water [indicates scars]
2	I was sitting on the bath
3	and so my sister pull out my sock
4	so my [foot?] is on the point [= edge]
5	and so when my sister pulls up my sock
6	and so I fall with my clothes in
7	so my daddy jumped off the *musallah* [prayer-mat]
8	and so they took me to hospital
9	and so I said "I don't want injections!
10	I don't want injections!" - -
11	and so I laid in my cot
12	and so I get lots of toys –
13	and I get a party also
14	and so I was four years old [i.e., in the hospital]

University of Cape Town

15 and so - when I was okay
16 and so I went home
17 and so I had a [gown?]
18 and my arm was laying so
19 so the bandage was round my neck
20 and I must walk every time up and down the house
up and down

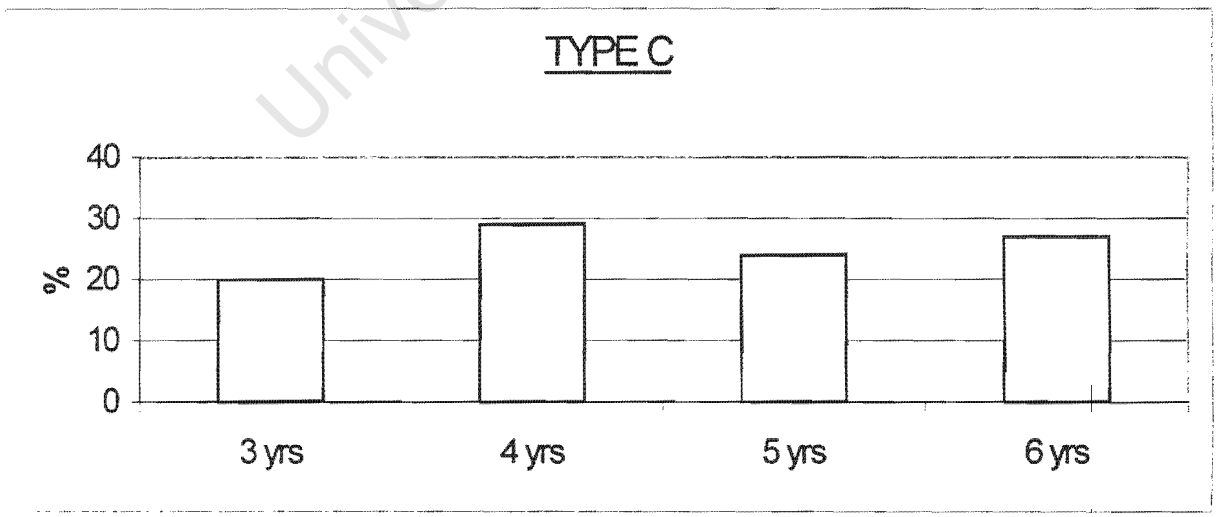
As we've seen, type B narratives were numerically quite small in the data here. It is important to note, however, that repetition of propositions was not confined to this category. Where narratives carried refrains as well as repetition, they were defined as either type C or type D, categories that are discussed below.

Type C narratives

In the discussion of refrains (6.1.3), we distinguished refrains that reiterate the outcome of events (usually placed at the ends of stanzas) from those that echo themes (which are more randomly distributed throughout a narrative). Type C narratives were characterised by refrains conveying recurring themes (encoded as events or states), rather than the outcomes of narrated experiences. In addition to this type of refrain, these narratives sometimes included repetition of one or more propositions, and almost always contained other types of primary evaluation (i.e., clauses assigned a primary coding of Evaluation). However, focus was achieved most prominently via refrains carrying recurring themes, which was the defining feature of the type C narrative.

University of Cape Town

Figure 3



This narrative type made up 28% of the total narrative data (Table 11). Figure 3 shows that the type C narrative shows no great variation in its distribution across age-groups. However, if we look at its occurrence relative to other narrative types produced in each age-group (Table 12), we see that the incidence of type C narratives increases after three years of age as types A and B decrease, and then drops again at five and six years as the type D (refrain-as-outcome) pattern becomes more dominant.

Refrains tended to function in two distinct ways in type C narratives, depending on the narrative topic. About one-half (49%) of these narratives dealt with topics of injury, illness, accidents and, to a lesser extent, death. These are subjects which tend to lend themselves to organization around a crisis event. However, in type C narratives these subjects were dealt with by assigning prominence not to one climactic event or state, but rather to aspects (sometimes unexpected ones) of the narrated experience that were significant from the narrator's point of view. Thus, for example, in an account by a six-year-old of her cousin's death by drowning, the focus was placed not on the events of the drowning itself, which was dealt with in relatively unevaluated language, but on the responses of various people to the event, expressed (via refrains) in repeated contrasts between what were judged appropriate, compassionate reactions ('persons A and B cried/ were sad') and negatively sanctioned reactions ('persons C and D laughed/ were rude'). From an adult perspective, there is, of course, nothing intrinsically odd, or immature, about this sort of bias : one has no difficulty imagining, for example, a competent adult narrator making the point, through a story, 'When my cousin died, what struck me was the different ways in which members of our family reacted'. This would likely result in a different story altogether from one which began 'Let me tell you about how my cousin died', but one which has no less validity as a narrative of personal experience.

The remainder of type C narratives were on topics such as outings, pets, domestic and neighbourhood incidents that did not necessarily involve a crisis event at all. Accounts of family outings to the beach (a reasonably common topic), for example, were more likely to involve recall of a number of events and circumstances that were pleasurable or exciting but none of which stood out as being more significant than others. Where these took the form of type C narratives, refrains carried recurring events of eating, clothes getting wet, adults scolding, and so on; these narratives were not organized around one central event because this was not the nature of the experience.

A phenomenon which overlapped both these categories of topics was that of narrating multiple experiences. Just under a quarter (22%) of type C narratives were accounts of multiple experiences. Narratives (23) and (24), given earlier in 6.2, are examples of type C

University of Cape Town

narratives dealing with topics of injury and illness that are also accounts of multiple experiences. In the first (23), an account of two separate occasions of injury and illness respectively, the focus is not on a single or central event of crisis in either story; rather, refrains carry recurring themes of (i) injury to, and actions performed on, the narrator's back (in Part 1) and his mouth or throat (in Part 2); and (ii) going to the doctor. In narrative (24), refrains elaborate two themes, as discussed earlier, (i) dogs fighting and (ii) dogs getting hit by cars, both involving multiple incidents rather than one single episode. In these cases, the point of the narrative is to elucidate the common aspects of diverse experiences rather than offer a particular angle on a single experience. In a different category of topic, narrative (14) discussed in chapter 6 is an example of a type C narrative of multiple experiences on the subject of social events. Like (23) and (24), the separate experiences are connected by the focus on the common aspect of each social event - in this case it is the refrain of 'getting a X' that links the different social occasions described.

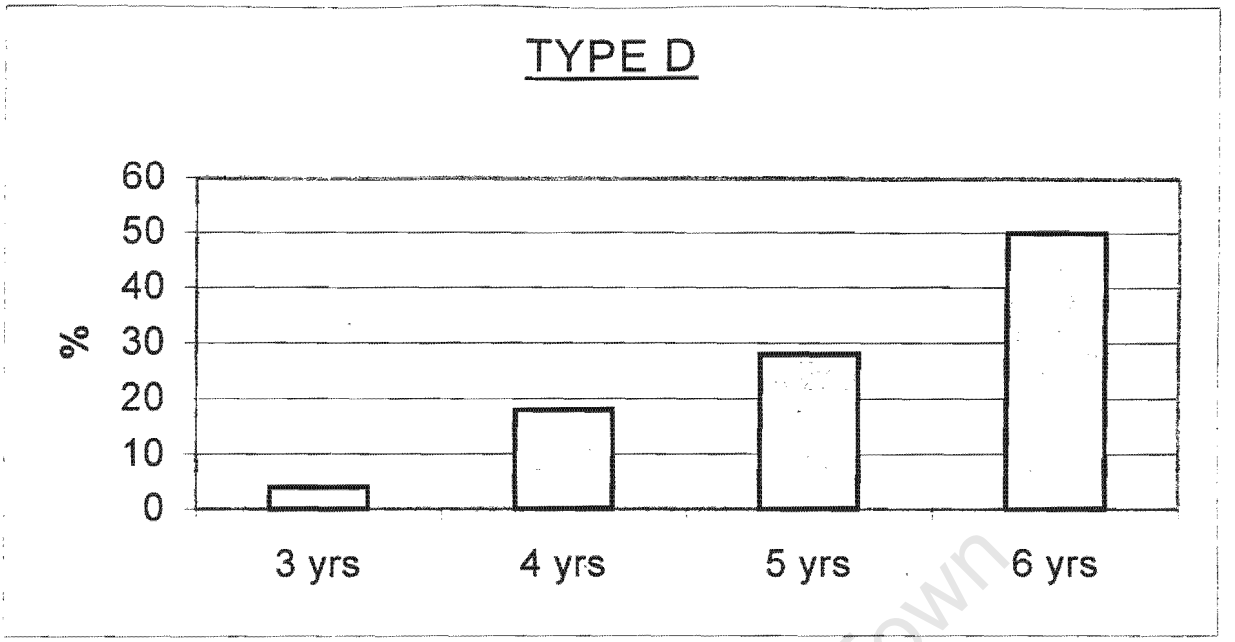
Type D narratives

The distinctive feature of type D narratives was the presence of refrains echoing the outcome (or outcomes) of the narrated experience. In the great majority of cases, these refrains were located at the ends of stanzas, as described in 6.1.3. The significance of the proposition carried by the refrain was often highlighted by other evaluative devices : the use of final falling tones, repetition of the entire proposition, and a high density of other lexical and syntactic evaluation devices. Just over one-third (35%) of type D narratives contained, additionally, refrains carrying recurring themes, rather than outcomes. Some examples of type D stories already given in full in this chapter are narratives (8), (13), (20), (21) and (22).

This category of personal narrative was numerically the largest, with 35% of the three longest narratives from all age-groups being type D's (Table 11). In its distribution relative to other narrative types in the different age-groups, however, it shows, interestingly, inverse proportions to the type A narrative : Table 12 shows that in the three-year-old group its incidence is as low as 5% of all narratives; from here it rises progressively with age to constitute 57% of all six-year-old narratives. Similarly, its spread across age-groups shown in Figure 4 is a mirror image of type A shown in Figure 1.

University of Cape Town

Figure 4



University of Cape Town

There were further indices of the relative maturity of this narrative type. Firstly, only one type D narrative (from a three-year-old) showed disordered chronology. Secondly, as a category, these narratives were more likely than those of any other type to include features of Abstracts (most often including a statement of the outcome) and Codas, as well as resolution of the final outcome of events. In addition to these features of structural maturity, type D narratives also tend to display, as we've already seen, other means of creating focus, such as repetition of propositions and refrains carrying recurring themes.

Type D narratives differed in a significant respect from type C in their handling of topics involving a central crisis event. With type C stories we saw that topics of injury, illness, accidents and death made up 49% of narratives in this category. These topics, which usually involve one significant event of crisis, were dealt with in the type C narrative by focusing on aspects of the narrated experience other than the central climactic event, or, alternatively, by focusing on common aspects of repeated incidents of the same event. On the other hand, as many as 72% of type D stories involved these topics. In all but two cases, the refrain conveying the outcome of events encoded a central crisis event, i.e., 'X (named person) died/ had a heart attack / drowned / got run over / got sore / fell / became ill / cut his leg open', etc., that was echoed through the narrative (as in examples 8, 21 and 22). In the two exceptional cases, as well as the remaining 28% of type D stories, refrains either functioned in the same way, repeating the outcome line (as in example 20), or they followed one of the less

common variations on this pattern described in 6.1.3 : they carried contrasting outcomes (as in example 13) or a negative outcome (examples 10,11,12).

Since the majority of type D narratives revolve around a key event of crisis, they provide an interesting comparison with the 'classic' high-point form of Labovian analysis. In the high-point structure, events build up in a linear fashion to a single point of crisis, which is dwelled on evaluatively, and then resolved via some concluding *post hoc* events. By contrast, in the prototypical type D form, the crisis event, which is equivalent to the outcome of events, is stated at the outset in an Abstract, then echoed at subsequent points in the narrative, usually at the ends of stanzas. This echoing occurs regardless of whether movement from one stanza to the next involves a chronological advancement of the plot, a different 'take' on the same events, or a successive 'unpacking' of the core plot (as described in section 6.2.3).

For this group of children, then, type D refrain-as-outcome narratives seem to represent a canonical form equivalent to, but different from, the 'classic' high point structure, at least as far as narrating experiences of crisis events is concerned.

6.3.2 Relationships of canonical form, topic and age

Type D narratives were not only concentrated numerically in the oldest age-group, as shown by Figure 4; they also showed a bias in terms of topic. We've seen that as many as 72% of type D stories involved topics of injury, illness, accident and death. And if we look at the six-year-old children's three longest narratives, we find that 75% of them were concerned with these topics. This figure represents a higher proportion of these topics than is found in the data as a whole. In chapter 3 (Table 1) we looked at the distribution of narrative topics per age-group taking into account the total number of narratives produced, and not just the three longest from each child : in the six-year-old group 50% of all narratives involved these topics (numbers 1,2,3 and 13 combined). Thus, topics of illness, injury, accidents and death tend to yield narratives of greater length. Overall, there is a concurrence of this particular category of topic with age, length of narrative, narrative type and structural maturity.

These relationships are interesting in the light of findings reported elsewhere. Peterson & McCabe (1983) found that narratives about personal injury in children aged four to nine years were typically those that were longest and the most well-structured (i.e., conformed to classic, High-Point structure). The only discrepancy between their findings and my own in this regard concerns narratives of death, which, as discussed in 3.2, were notably devoid of evaluation in Peterson & McCabe's data yet highly evaluative and amongst the most well-structured in my own. Other research has found injury and trauma to be significant content of adults' early memories of the past. McCabe *et al* (1991) asked young adults to recall their earliest childhood memories (defined as any time between two and eight years of age), as well

University of Cape Town

as adolescent memories (defined as twelve to eighteen years), of specific incidents. They found that narratives of injury and death formed a significant proportion of early childhood recollections, but not of adolescent memories. Similarly, Mullen (1994) found that a quarter of all of the earliest memories solicited from adults involved trauma or potential harm.

What is the connection between children's recall of traumatic early life events soon after their occurrence and adults' recall of the same events later in life? Nelson (1992) and Fivush *et al* (1995) have argued that children must be able to organize memories for events into coherent narrative form in order for those memories to become properly autobiographical : 'It is the canonical narrative form that gives personal memories their structure and allows them to be integrated into the developing life story' (Fivush *et al* 1995:34). Since researchers concur that narratives of personal experience generally conform to canonical structure by the time children are five or six years of age, this theory helps explain the inability of adults to access specific memories from the earliest years of life (so-called 'childhood amnesia'). As we have seen in this study, and elsewhere, very young children are less able to organize information about personal experiences coherently in narrative form. Developing narrative skill assists the encoding and organization of experiences and strengthens the events in memory, in a process termed the 'narrativization of memory' (Nelson 1996).

However, research suggests that the emotional content of early memories may also play an important role in their recall. Since experiences of injury and death tend to involve a fairly high degree of emotion, including fear and distress, it has been theorised that this factor contributes to their accessibility to recall (e.g., Mullen 1994; Liwag & Stein 1995). The relationship between emotionality and narrative coherence is not clear, however. One theory holds that the greater the emotion experienced by a child during an event, the more coherently or canonically organized their narrative about it will be. This would be a logical conclusion from the finding of this study and of Peterson & McCabe (1983) that narratives of personal injury show a strong tendency towards greater length and adherence to canonical narrative form. On the other hand, as discussed earlier, Menig-Peterson & McCabe (1978) found that the topic of death produced narratives strikingly lacking in evaluation – an essential component of personal narrative structure. Similarly, Peterson & Biggs (1998) report on clinical studies of individuals suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder who display a flattening or minimizing of emotional response in reporting their experiences. The assumption in both cases (and one that is applied as well to the phenomenon of repressed memories of childhood abuse), is that the acute distress arising from some experiences produces a defensive denial mechanism.

University of Cape Town

It is difficult to tease out the relationships between emotionality and narrative coherence without knowledge of the degree of distress actually experienced by a child during the narrativized incident. This is what Peterson & Biggs (1998) attempted to establish in their study of narratives elicited from children aged between two and thirteen years who had experienced trauma injuries requiring emergency treatment at a hospital. They obtained stress ratings for each child by asking parents or other witnesses to rate the child's degree of distress at the time of the injury experience, and correlated these with the degree of structural coherence in the child's narrative about the experience. Their analyses produced some clear-cut findings : children who were more distressed at the time of the experience were more likely to provide a substantial amount of orientating background information – e.g., relating to place and background of the injury – however, they provided less, and not more, evaluation of the experience.

It is not possible, of course, in the present study, to assess the intensity of emotion originally aroused by the various experiences of injury and death narrativized here. However, in 5.3 a quantitative comparison between Peterson & Biggs' (1998) data and my own showed that the Cape Flats children not only produced longer narratives (on all topics) than the Canadian children, but, at six years of age, generated significantly greater proportions of both orientation and evaluation than their older (nine- to thirteen-year-old) Canadian peers. What has emerged clearly in this study is that, relative to findings reported for children elsewhere, there is a high degree of evaluative commentary and that much of it is focused on people and their states of mind. This was particularly evident in descriptions of participants' emotional reactions to traumatic experiences.

To illustrate these points, we might look for a moment at the sub-category of death narratives in the oldest six-year-old group of Kensington/Factreton children, in the light of suggestions that narratives on highly emotive topics are reported with a flattening or absence of evaluation. There were twelve such narratives that concerned the deaths of people (as opposed to animals), nine of whom were family members (cousins, uncles, grandparents) and three of whom were residents of the community somewhat more distanced from the child. The circumstances of death included car accidents, heart attacks, drownings and assault. Two of the narratives were categorised as type C and the remaining ten as canonical type D's. On average, 27% of propositions per story had a primary coding of Evaluation. That is, aside from the deictic evaluation arising from the use of refrains and repetition, and aside from embedded evaluation and reported speech, just over a quarter of narrative propositions were devoted solely to evaluative commentary (and in some narratives as much as half the propositions). Evaluation in these lines was concentrated on the following few sub-categories,

University of Cape Town

in roughly descending order of frequency : (i) judgements – both of characters' attitudes or personal characteristics ('they rude'; 'she was my friendly ma') and of their actions ('*hy't* beer *gedrink*'; '*hy't te vinnig gery*'), including critical failures to act ('the doctor done nothing for him'; 'he didn't listen'); (ii) descriptions of emotional or mental states ('so-and-so cried/ didn't cry'; 'she changed her mind'); and (iii) descriptions of physical states ('his eyes was still open'; 'he had a hole in his brain'). A key feature of this evaluative commentary is that much of it can be seen to derive from the reactions and opinions of adults in the children's home environment. In 3.2, it was argued that, given the context of shared living with extended families, children are exposed not only to death itself but to adults' interpretations and emotional responses to those deaths, allowing children to process the experience at deeper and more meaningful levels that are then reflected in their narratives.

6.3.3 Forms of the personal narrative not centred on crisis events

As we've seen, however, not all of the personal narratives produced by children in this study related experiences of high drama or emotional significance, and some that did chose not to focus on the crisis event itself but on other aspects of the experience. How has the framework for analysis developed here assisted in elucidating forms of the personal narrative other than those involving a crisis event? In answering this question, we will also examine the limitations of high point analysis in explaining the structure of narratives that do not conform to Labov's classic scheme for narrating, yet which seem to qualify as narratives of personal experience.

In his later thinking on the subject of narrative analysis, Labov (1997:397) acknowledges the bias inherent in both the type of stories on which his theory is based and the contexts in which these were elicited. His informants were 'ordinary people ...(whose) narratives were an attempt to convey simply and seriously the most important experiences of their own lives ... They deal with the major events of life and death, including the sudden outbreak of violence ...'. Indeed, the narrative on which the analysis in this article is based is an account of a bar-room brawl, culminating in the climactic lines (p. 398):

> 'An' nex' thing I know I'm layin' on the floor, blood all over me,
> An' a guy told me, says,
> "Don't move your head.
> Your throat's cut"'

Labov nonetheless defends this orientation as follows :

> I don't believe that this focus on serious and momentuous issues limits the scope of the analysis. Rather, the use of narrative to deal with issues of life and death highlights the abilities displayed in more casual, humorous, or even trivial accounts. In the less serious and more frequent deployment of narrative, techniques are practiced to perfection; in the more serious domain, they are put to the test. (1997:397)

University of Cape Town

He also acknowledges that since his narratives were elicited in the context of sociolinguistic interviews with an attentive, interested (and essentially passive) interviewer as audience, they are to a large extent decontextualized monologues and display a generality that is not found in narratives that serve an argumentative point-making purpose in interactive, and sometimes competitive, conversational contexts. He suggests, however, that where conversational narratives are of a 'monologic' kind that command the attention of of the audience fully, these will best exemplify the principles on which his scheme is based, whereas other kinds of conversational stories may require a different approach (*ibid.*, p. 397).

The context and method of narrative elicitation employed in this study was, of course, very similar to Labov's, having been based on that of Peterson & McCabe (1983) who adapted Labov's methodology to interactions with children. This particular methodology seems well suited to the elicitation of 'serious and momentuous' topics, as evidenced by the high proportion of narratives on experiences of injury, accidents and death. The technique rests on the use by the interviewer of narrative prompts, the most successful of which were often those that themselves centred on traumatic or dramatic events. However, if the success of a sociolinguistic interview is measured by the degree to which it resembles an authentic conversational interaction, then this aim was also achieved in this study. Many narratives were produced not in response to prompts but to diverse and often unexpected topics that arose in an evolving conversation, and not all of these involved events of crisis. Some of these call into question the relevance of high point analysis to other kinds of conversational narratives.

In his later refinement of his narrative model, Labov (1997) remains insistent on not only the principle of temporal sequence but also the critical presence of a high point, which he newly designates the 'most reportable event', defined as 'the event that is less common than any other in the narrative and has the greatest effect upon the needs and desires of the participants in the narrative (is evaluated most strongly)' (p. 406). Labov argues that since storytelling requires an extended turn at conversational talk, a narrative must hold sufficient interest for one's listeners to sanction the granting of this space; it is the presence of a most reportable event that justifies automatic reassignment of speaker role to the narrator. 'A narrative of personal experience is essentially a narrative of the most reportable event in it...the construction of narrative must logically and existentially begin with the decision to report the most reportable event' (p. 406)

The narrowness of this conception of the function of personal narratives arises precisely from the fact that the stories elicited by Labov were collected as a relatively decontextualized set, in response to standard, repeated interviewer questions, for the purpose

University of Cape Town

of analysing their common structural properties. As Edwards (1997:139) puts it, 'It is not a matter of naturalness, but of activity' : these narratives have the nature of "campfire tales" or set-piece productions, of interest for what they are about, rather than what they accomplish as conversational acts.

In fact, narratives arising spontaneously in conversation serve a multitude of functions. In children's peer groups, narrative is used as political activity, to help negotiate social alliances and social ranking (Goodwin 1990). In child and adult friendship groups, narrative is an important tool in the construction of identity, since it affords a means of trying out new positionings and identities of participants in the group and exploring 'possible selves' (Coates 1996; Kyratzis 1999). A story can also serve as a display of understanding, alliance or non-alliance with prior stories in conversation (Schegloff 1997) as well as with arguments, positions or points arising in conversation. Riessman (1997) has argued that the persuasive function of narratives in social interactions needs recognition on a par with the referential and evaluative functions identified by Labov. Narratives of personal experience, grounded in the details of a specific past episode, can provide strong and direct evidence for a particular position, claim or assertion that the teller is trying to make; hence they are particularly well suited to this persuasive, point-making function.

The following conversational narrative (34) reported by Brown & Yule (1983) offers a clear example of this. (The extract was used by them to illustrate notions of thematisation and staging in discourse; its presentation here in line and stanza form and the interpretation that follows is my own). B's narrative here is a response to the assertion (underlined by me) made in conversation by L. His 'entrance moves' are typical of transitional talk between embedded conversation and the narrative proper that occurs as speakers indicate their need for an extended conversational turn. The onus is on the speaker to demonstrate that the story to follow is topically coherent with the talk that has immediately preceded it (Polanyi 1985). B signals agreement with L's point ('that's right'), then solicits L's involvement/participation with the discourse device ('Do you know') which invites the listener's participation in accomplishing the transition in information status (Schiffrin 1987). His entrance move ('I remember something which points this up very well') is an explicit announcement that a story is about to be told that has a bearing on the previous speaker's assertion; it is also a bid for floor-holding.

Of interest is that the ensuing narrative has only two events on the time-line :

I gave a seminar on phonetics and the brain	(line 4)
I bought a new pair of shoes	(line 14)

University of Cape Town

These are not temporally ordered in Labov's terms and the second is in fact reported as a dependent clause which disqualifies it as a narrative clause; hence, B's story would not meet Labov's criteria for a minimal narrative. Intuitively, however, this account of a specific, distant past experience has the feel of a personal narrative. The final line may qualify as a 'most reportable event', but not because it is the culmination of a series of dramatic complicating actions (and not because of its content). Its significance must be appreciated in the light of the detailed build-up of orientating and evaluative information, all intended to create a picture of shaky confidence in the presence of an expectation of academic expertise. Against this background the narrator counterposes the simple (both linguistically and in terms of its everyday banality) act of buying a new pair of shoes. We can also note that while several lines in stanzas 1 and 2 are strictly-speaking, in Labov's terms, contextualizing orientation clauses, they are nonetheless also evaluative, a point which highlights the limiting effect on narrative analysis of insistence on tying form strictly to functional categories of description.

(34) **Assertion** L : I think if your physical appearance is erm sort of neat and well-controlled and so on, this gives at least a superficial feeling that one's going to give a neat and well-controlled performance

Entrance B : That's right. Do you know I remember something which er points this up very well something that Gill said

Stanza 1

1 and it's now I suppose er er eight years ago
2 when erm what's that Russian chap's name who was here for a while?
[L : Shaumyan]
Shaumyan yeah
3 when he was here
4 erm I gave a seminar on phonetics and the brain
5 which I later wrote up in Work in Progress
6 but never did anything with erm to my slight regret

Stanza 2

7 but I - but that was the first time I'd ever ventured beyond as it were orthodox phonetics in in public
8 erm and it was in front of our department after its first amalgamation I think
9 and er one or two people from outside were also present
10 so in very many ways I was before an unknown public – relatively speaking
11 er talking about somewhat unfamiliar territory of a very speculative nature
12 but claiming expertise

Stanza 3

13 and I remember that one of the things I did
14 was buy a new pair of shoes

University of Cape Town

Examining the personal narratives of teachers at the creche offered some insights into how the stories of adults in the same speech community compared with those of the children in this study. Since my conversations with teachers were not recorded with the intention of eliciting narratives (see 1.3.1), those that did crop up were told in the service of some point of discussion; they were conversational activities themselves, rather than extraordinary experiences being told for their own sake.

In (35) below, teacher E. told me of the time a colleague at the creche was obliged to venture into a rough area of the neighbourhood known as '*Die Gat*' (an area described in 2.2.2). The narrative arose in the context of a discussion we were having about how living standards in Kensington/Factreton compared with those in other Cape Flats communities. Like the previous narrative, E's story serves to substantiate her claim (underlined) that 'this area is dangerous'. The event structure consists of three sequential events on the time-line (parentheses enclosing events that were reported as contextualizing, dependent clauses) :

(a) R. escorted the child into the area. (line 3)
(b) The child explained to her where he lives. (lines 4 and 5)
(She came to the place,
she went in).
(c) She demanded that the child's father take her home by car. (line 12)

None of these qualify as particularly highly reportable. The focused material is the repetition in the final lines (8-9 and 13-14) of stanzas 3 and 4, that describe R's emotional response to the place and serve as the narrative's refrain. What is interesting is that E never explains what is so shocking or frightening about the place : 'what was going on down there' (line 9) is not elaborated. E supports her opening assertion by focusing on R's emotional state rather than by providing information on events or circumstances.

(35) … You know there's forever chaos at the bottom there. I never really like to ride in that area, because it's like entering into Manenberg and that places, I would say, you know. I wouldn't want to put my foot in that area, *ja*.
[K : 'cause you actually think it's dangerous?]

Assertion E : [nodding agreement] <u>It's actually dangerous</u>

Stanza 1
1 uh poor R. was stuck one evening with one of the children that stay down there
2 luckily he's not here in the creche anymore
3 and then she had to take him down, as it's called, to the *Gat*

Stanza 2
4 and then there, the child explained to her where he lives
5 and then he said, I don't know, he explained the name of the place
6 I wouldn't know it, some dog's name, Bruno or something like that

University of Cape Town

Stanza 3

7 my goodness, when R. came to the place
8 **she was so shocked**
9 **she was so shocked to see what was going on down there**

Stanza 4

10 she actually, when she went in
11 she wanted to come out again
12 and she demanded the child's father to take her home with the car
13 **'cause she was so scared**
14 **she was really scared that day**

In somewhat similar vein are the following brief tales from two five-year-olds. In (36), a response to a story about a visit to the doctor, rather than elaborate events of the experience, the narrator chooses to focus on an evaluation of the doctor's generous nature. The two events, in lines 4 and 5, serve only as illustrative evidence of this stated opinion. In (37), the point of the story, as confirmed by the ensuing discussion, is the grandmother's evaluation of what *might* have happened in a particular circumstance. The most reportable event (granny's prediction, line 5) is, as it were, a non-event.

(36) 1 yes I was by the doctor
2 that doctor in Kensington is a really nice one
3 he like to give you sweets

4 and that one day – that neighbours from ours took me to the doctor
5 that doctor gave me a whole packet of sweets

(37) 1 you know *ne*
that man that rides fast with the *bakkie* [van] and that boyses
2 and when that man is riding on the *bakkie ne*
3 and that three boyses they were fighting – in the *bakkie*
4 then that other man ride fast
5 and so my granny said
that children gonna fall out the *bakkie*
[K : Oh – and what happened?]
Just that
[Child B : Did they fall out?]
Hey? No! They GOING to fall out but they NEVER!

Narrative (38) below, from teacher R., is about a conflict of attitudes towards the use of English : R herself speaks English and sees it as having equal status with Afrikaans, but she is judged as perceiving herself 'high and mighty' for using it in a situation where the majority were speaking Afrikaans. Her story is an interesting example of the use of direct character speech (an evaluative device which, as we've seen, is used increasingly and with effect in the narratives of the oldest children in this study) to frame the point of a narrative. In stanza 1,

University of Cape Town

which provides the orientation to events, an 'us' versus 'them' conflict is set up in the introduction to the participants (lines 1-3)

we speak English
they were Afrikaans

and continued in the parallel lines 4 and 5

we were there
they were looking at us

In stanza 2, dialogue is used to structure the conflict, again in parallel lines following an **abab** pattern, as R. tries to resolve the situation, but is denied an explanation each time :

I asked '…?' / **she** said 'no'
I asked ' …?' / **they** said 'no'

In stanza 3 the nature of the conflict is finally exposed : again, what **they** think (lines 11 and 12) is contrasted with what is in **our** minds (lines 13 and 14). The final line (15) serves as a coda and restates the problem : that's the way people think (i.e., view English).

R's framing of the conflict by means of reported speech, referred to by Kyratzis (1999:431-2) as 'rounds of duetting voices' (I said / she said / then I said), is an effective device whereby narrators position themselves with regard to societal attitudes or institutions; they animate the voices of those representing the stances they are positioning themselves against, as well as their own voices. In terms of high point analysis, however, this narrative once again proves difficult to analyse, in part because the event structure is comprised almost entirely of quoted speech. Labov (1997:399) acknowledges that 'the question of ordering events within quotations is a difficult one'; however, if one suspends Labovian notions of temporal sequence, the narrative's inherent coherence becomes obvious.

(38)

Assertion …You know, if there's a lot of people Afrikaans there, and you speak English, it's for them so something that you think you are HIGH. And I think that's the way people – I figure it – they view it like that because if you speak English you are THE people. I don't really know, but I don't view it that way.

Entrance Because I've noticed that with myself, I've noticed that with myself, you know

Stanza 1

1 Now me and Ethel speaks English
2 and when we went one day to a workshop
3 and uh most of the teachers there were Afrikaans
4 and we were there
5 they were looking at us like that, you know [demonstrates look]

University of Cape Town

Stanza 2

6 And I asked Ethel "why's this people staring at us?"
7 she said "no, I don't know"
8 and I asked them "look here, excuse me, is there a problem?
9 you want to know something?"
10 they said "no, it's nothing wrong"

Stanza 3

11 then this one woman told me, she said "yes
12 because if you speak English then we think you so high and mighty" –
13 but it wasn't that way
14 because we don't keep us like that

Coda 15 But it just shows you. So I took it always that way, that's in people's mind, you know.

[K : So they think that you're sort of trying to be 'above yourself', in a way, if you speak English?]

Exactly, exactly, that's the way I view it. I don't know about others, but for me, English it's a down-to-earth language, the same with Afrikaans, you know.

Narrative (39), from a six-year-old boy, performs a similar function to the teacher's above, of the storyteller evaluating the behaviours of others and positioning or justifying himself in relation to these behaviours - in this case by aligning himself with Islamic customs. It is a clear example of the use of narrative in constructing a personal and social identity. In Labovian terms, however, it is a more or less unanalysable unit, in part because of the lack of a 'most reportable event' and in part because Labov offers no criteria for determining boundaries between narrative units (i.e., are parts 1 and 2 a single narrative or should they be considered as two separate units of discourse?). Analysed into stanzas and parts, the narrator's staging of the narrative becomes clearer.

The preceding conversation had progressed from a description of his mother's frequent visits to a hospital for lumbar punctures to a discussion, with a friend, of 'things one is given in hospitals' (medicine, 'stuff to eat'). The narrative commences on the same topic : the boy relates in Part 1 how his aunt, who works in a hospital, brought home some empty syringes for him and his cousin to play with. Lines 3, 4 and 5 comprise a sequence of three actions, the only mainline events in the narrative. Part 2 is comprised only of State clauses : it is a Non-storyworld discussion of the implications of his aunt's smoking habit. The point of his story, finally, appears to have little to do with the events of the syringe incident; rather, it seems to be that, despite the fact that his aunt works in a hospital, she indulges in some unhealthy habits. The point is made by the opening lines of each Part of the narrative (lines 1 and 9) which convey habitual activity, rather than events : 'my auntie she work by the hospital

University of Cape Town

/ but sometimes my auntie she smoke'. The narrative becomes a vehicle for the child's judgement (moral and subjective) of his aunt whom, in one respect, he benefits from, while in another he sanctions negatively. These judgements are conveyed through a set of logical, embedded clause relations conveying consequences, conditions, predictions and explanations.

(39) **Part 1**

Stanza 1

1 my auntie she work by the hospital
2 then she bring us needles with no needles in – water needles
3 last time she bring us this whole fat needle – this whole fat one
4 so we put water in it
5 and we squirt it to each other

Stanza 2

6 but it's hard to press that thing in
7 it's very hard
8 you must press hard hard hard

Part 2

Stanza 3

8 but sometimes my auntie she smokes –
9 and that's very bad for a person
10 um – your lungs get BLACK

Stanza 4

11 if you drink wine
12 then this part gets – all full of sores

Stanza 5

13 that's why – I'm gonna grow up and never smoke
14 because I'm Muslim --
15 Muslims don't smoke

Another narrative from teacher R (40, below) arose in the context of a discussion about a woman, resident in the community, whom we both knew. The woman and her children, who had previously attended the creche, had received psychiatric treatment following the discovery by social workers of a highly disturbed home environment. As with R's previous narrative (38), the event structure is composed almost exclusively of dialogue ('I said / she said'). However, while in (38) the narrative's point was constructed through the content of speaker's exchanges, in this case the content of the dialogue is banal and inconsequential. The point of this unremarkable exchange, supplied more or less explicitly in the final stanza, is the sociability of the woman, despite her problems; it is the fact that she was capable of engaging with R. in an ordinary, polite and socially acceptable way that is remarkable and that prompts R to like her.

University of Cape Town

We can note that, aside from the (non-storyworld) meta-comment at the end of the narrative ('she's a really sweet woman / she's got a problem but I like her'), R has embedded her evaluative commentary within the events of the experience itself. As with her previous narrative (36), she has allowed the narrative quite literally to 'speak for itself' by animating the voices of its participants. The words spoken by the woman with the problem, both in their content and their tone, offer the evidence that she is likable, as much as R's overt comment (stanza 4) on the significance of the exchange. The difference is one of internal versus external evaluation, as defined by Labov & Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972) : external evaluation involves the narrator stopping the narrative (or stepping out of the storyworld, in the terms of this analysis), to turn to the listener and tell her what the point is, whereas internal evaluation is embedded into the events of the storyworld, allowing the narrative itself to convey the experience. Labov (1972) found a characteristic reliance on the latter amongst black working class speakers, in contrast with white middle class speakers who favoured the more distancing external evaluation.

(40)

Stanza 1

I got [= met] her on Monday, hey
Funny, I got her on Monday walking past here
And I said um "*Hoe gaan dit met jou*?" ["How are you?"]
She say "*Nee goed, sê* hello *vir* teacher"["Fine, say…" ?addressed to child with her]
toe sê ek hello *vir* xx [so I said hello to xx]

Stanza 2

She always thank me when she see me
because I gave her some clothes
So I told her I'm still busy taking out my daughter's small clothes
and I [will] give it to her
and she told me yes, whenever she got a chance she'll come around

Stanza 3

So I told her if she do come
'cause she was coming next week
I'll keep it here in my class
and if she do come
must just pop around here

Stanza 4

but then, she's a really sweet woman
I don't know but - she's got a problem
but I like her

The narratives analysed in this section were not accounts of crisis events but dealt rather with more mundane and ordinary life experiences. What they show is that when the events of an experience are not intrinsically highly reportable, or of interest for their own sake, their role in narrating tends to be merely in the service of evaluation; they provide the

University of Cape Town

scaffolding for, or illustrative example of, a central position (judgement, opinion, attitude or affective state).

Obviously it is not possible to draw generalized conclusions from only a few examples as to the characteristics of adult narratives in this speech community, and indeed it was not an aim of this study to do so. However, from the brief investigation above, it emerged that the conversational narratives of adult teachers showed the use of key organizational devices - refrains, repetition and parallelism - that characterised children's stories. Furthermore, they illustrate as much as the children's, that what is brought into focus by means of these devices in the telling of an experience is not necessarily 'what happened' (i.e., events themselves), but the people involved and these people's cognitive and affective states or reactions to the circumstances in which they find themselves. With the oldest child narrators, as with adults, these inner states are frequently expressed in ways that are deeply embedded in the narrative itself, by giving voice to people via direct character speech. This feature contributes to the 'performed' quality of their narratives; however, they are not restricted to, or exclusively reliant on, internal evaluation : older children, like adults, also make non-storyworld, external-to-the-narrative comments that serve as a meta-commentary on their experiences.

What has also emerged here (and earlier, in 6.3.1) is the difficulty involved in applying Labov's 'classic' model for narrating, both to narratives recounting dramatic or traumatic life events and to those centred on more mundane experiences. Likewise, attempting to apply Peterson & McCabe's (1983) developmental coding scheme (based on degree of approximation to high point structure) yielded narrative units that appeared deficient in some crucial aspect or even simply unanalysable. These authors ran into difficulties themselves with subsequent applications of the scheme : when McCabe, Capron & Peterson (1991) analysed the childhood and adolescent recollections of young adults, they found that some proportion of these narratives took the form of so-called 'primitive' (developmentally immature) patterns associated with the youngest children in their (1983) study, causing them to re-think these categories. As Edwards (1997:145) points out, the danger with narrative schemes aquiring a normative status is that

> exceptions to the pattern can be dismissed as not being "well formed" instances, rather than empirical disproofs ...Normative idealization makes Labov & Waletzky's structural categories dangerous when used as a set of precoded analytic slots for an actual story's contents. The temptation for analysts is to start with the categories and see how the things people say can be fitted to them.

6.3.4 'Oral' or 'literate' narratives?

A final issue considered here is the degree to which the Kensington/Factreton children's narratives represent 'oral' or 'literate' language characteristics. The high

University of Cape Town

occurrence of repetition, refrains and parallelism suggests that these are key structural devices contributing to local level cohesion as well as the global coherence of the narratives presented here. These devices were used in increasing amounts in the narratives of children aged from three to six years, and were also found to feature in the narratives of adult teachers from the same speech community.

Repetition, parallelism and refrains have generally been characterized as hallmarks of oral discourse styles and 'performed' narratives, in contexts ranging from epic poetry (Lord 1960) and biblical psalms to the narrative style of oral (Hymes 1981,1982) and residually oral (Gee 1986, 1991b; Michaels 1981, 1991) cultures in the United States. They are also traditional stylistic devices in a number of Southern African oral narrative forms, including Sotho and Xhosa folk tales (Makgamatha 1988; Scheub 1975), Zulu oral poetry (Koopman 1988) and various more specific forms of African oral artistry, such as praise poetry, hunting songs and children's songs and rhymes (Finnegan 1970). For example, in the praise poems of the Nguni people of South Africa, one of the most specialized and complex forms of poetry found in Africa, poems are built up in stanza form, made up of a succession of lines, with syllable numbers bound together by repetition and parallelism as well as rhythm and other prosodic devices (Finnegan 1970). In much of this material, these organizational devices traditionally served, in part, a mnemonic purpose, as an *aide-memoire*, for the narrator (as well as the audience). However, they are not the sole domain of oral-formulaic traditions; the same devices are found in purely literate work from non-oral traditions, such as Old English and Old Germanic written poetry (Roger Lass, personal communication).

Within the literature on children's narratives, Gee (1991b:10) has described parallelism and repetition (along with other features such as as rhythmic phonological devices and 'involving' rather than merely informing the audience) as rendering a 'poetic', as opposed to a 'prosaic' style of narrating. He portrays, for instance, a seven-year-old Black American narrator as 'not primarily interested in making rapid and linear progress to "the point". Rather, she is interested in creating a pattern out of language, within and across her stanzas, much like a painting or a poem, a pattern that will generate meaning through the sets of relationships and contrasts that it sets up' (1991b:11). The relevance of this description to some of the narratives in these data is obvious. A good example is narrative (20), presented earlier - the account of a child's fear during a thunderstorm at night - which has dense patterning of form, producing an overall effect that is strikingly poetic.

However, it would be simplistic to identify the narratives collected for this study with 'oral' or 'non-literate' discourse traditions simply on the basis of the high incidence of these devices. In some research literature, the oral / literate dichotomy has been equated with the

University of Cape Town

contrast between 'topic associating' and 'topic-centred' modes of narrating, the former associated with working-class black speakers in the United States and the latter with white middle-class speakers (e.g., Michaels 1981, 1985; Collins 1985; Michaels & Collins 1984; Gee 1985). Being topic-centred means to focus on a single topic or experience and to develop a theme by means of a linear progression of information and lexically specific referential, spatial and temporal relationships. By contrast, the topic-associating style involves developing a series of implicitly related topics; the thematic focus of the narrative must be inferred through anecdotal association and attention to marked prosodic cues, in the absence of lexically explicit statements of the overall point of the integration. It is argued that the former style of narrating translates easily into the expository written mode of narrating in schools, whereas the latter conflicts with it (Michaels 1991). The Kensington/Factreton children's stories cannot be said to resemble a topic-associating style, however. We've seen here that the oldest children in this study use connectives and adverbial markers to explicitly convey temporal, adversative, causal and conditional relationships between propositions, as well as complex relative and complement clauses. They supply evaluative and non-storyworld comments to articulate logical connections between events and to explore connections between what did happen and what might have happened. Shifts in topic at stanza boundaries are lexically specified and links between stories overtly signalled.

Perhaps the explanation lies with Hymes' (1990) proposal (discussed in 4.2.1) that the patterning of verses and stanzas via repetition and parallelism is potential in every language and speech community, but are likely to become prominent only when people 'lapse into the performance' of a story. Hymes also suggested that it may be what children in any community bring to school, though it will tend to be diluted or washed out by formal education. In the next chapter, we will see some evidence to support this latter suggestion when we compare the teachers' conversational narratives with those that they model in the classroom.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 7

CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

This chapter explores the discourse experiences of the preschoolers (three-to five-year-olds) of this study in their classrooms at the creche. The aim is to assess the role of the preschool environment in fostering children's competence in narrative and other forms of decontextualized language that are argued to be crucial for successful literacy acquisition. Section 7.2 provides an overview of the range and types of discourse engaged in by six children of differing ages during the course of a school morning, as well as their conversational partners. Section 7.3 analyses in greater depth teacher talk during two standard preschool activities that are centred on narrative discourse : story-time and news-time.

7.1 Theoretical framework

Although formal instruction in reading and writing begins only once a child enters the school system in Grade 1, for many children the process of acquiring knowledge about literacy starts much earlier than that. The term 'emergent literacy' has been used to refer to knowledge about written language accumulated prior to the initiation of formal reading instruction. The extent of emergent literacy knowledge that children bring to school varies enormously, however, depending on the degree of support for literacy they have experienced in their home and preschool environments. The tacit rules and expectations that parents and teachers bring to literacy events may differ in significant ways between social groups (Heath 1982, 1983). There is evidence that measures of home literacy environments (i.e., the extent to which homes provide experiences with literacy and print and the level of interest and value placed on literacy in the home) are more critical to later literacy success than are measures of socio-economic status (Dickinson 1994; Toomey & Sloane 1994). Consequently, much research effort has concentrated on the question of specifically which kinds of preschool language and literacy experiences are the critical ones predictive of success in literacy achievement.

While a great deal of research and intervention has focused on phonemic awareness (e.g., phoneme-grapheme associations, rhyming) and exposure to print and bookreading experiences, other influential work by Catherine Snow and David Dickinson (Snow 1991a, 1994; Snow & Dickinson 1990; Dickinson 1991; 1994) has demonstrated the centrality of certain types of oral language skills to success with literacy. Much of their theory is based on evidence from the Home-School study - a longitudinal investigation of the impact of naturally occurring language experiences on the literacy development of children from low-income families in Boston. Snow and Dickinson argue that different preschool language experiences differentially influence later reading and writing achievement. Phonological decoding and experiences with print (for example, through exposure to books and instruction in the uses of

University of Cape Town

print) develop skills and concepts that are critical for the early stages of literacy acquisition (Grades 1 and 2), where the emphasis is on mastery of lower-level decoding skills. Practice in the use of decontextualized oral language, on the other hand, provides linguistic resources that support later stages of literacy acquisition, in middle and higher grades of school, involving higher-level reading comprehension and production of organized, cohesive texts. Decontextualized language skills may be developed, in part, through bookreading experiences with adults, but also by many kinds of oral interactions that do not involve direct contact with print, such as narrating past experiences, giving explanations, planning future activities, developing extended topics in conversation, and engaging in pretend play that involves verbalizing dramatic plans, roles and actions.

Most of the children who were the subjects of this study had attended the Kensington creche for a full five working-days a week since the age of about one year. This means that the preschool environment has a potentially very significant role in shaping their early language experiences and preparing them for the demands of formal schooling. In recording classroom interactions, my aims were threefold : first, to identify the different types of oral discourse that children engaged in during the course of a typical school day; second, to associate these different types of child-talk with conversational partners (peers or teachers) and the types of activities in which they occurred (e.g., free play, story-reading by a teacher); and third, to analyse teacher talk in order to determine the extent to which opportunities are provided for engagement in extended forms of discourse, decontextualized language and talk which is specifically focused on literacy events and activities. The assumption underlying these analyses was derived from the work on literacy theory discussed above, *viz.*, that particular kinds of language experiences in preschool support literacy and school achievement. These involve engagement in extended turns of talk about topics distanced from the immediate physical and social context of speaking.

University of Cape Town

7.2 Child talk

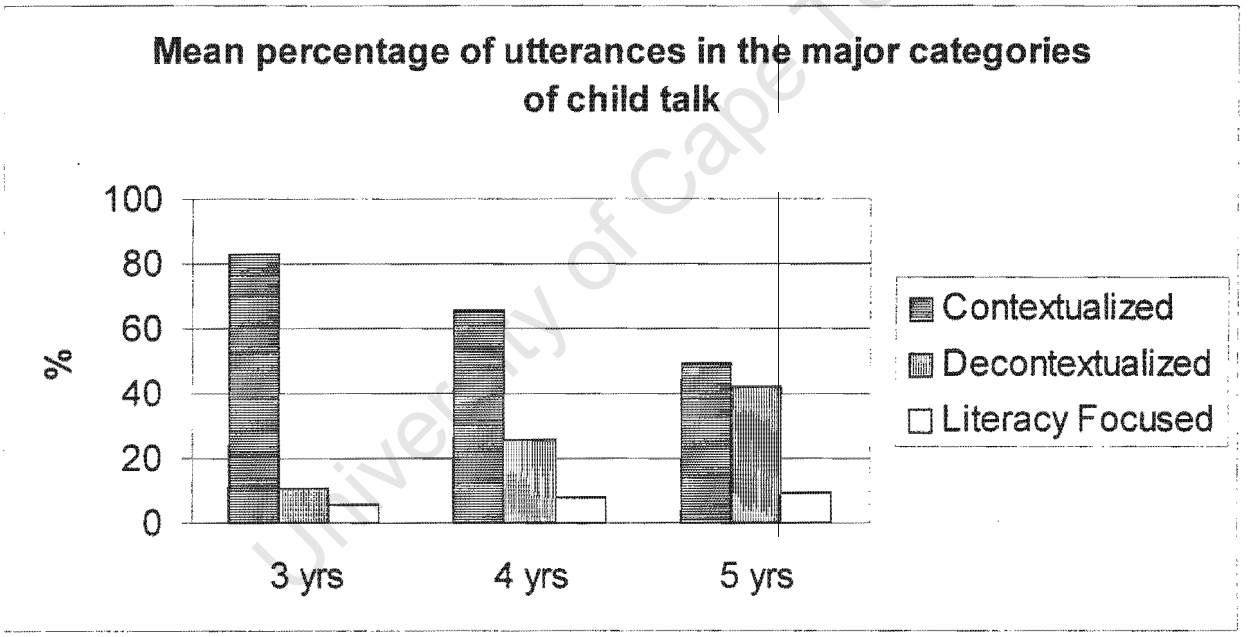
For the purposes of the first two aims, six children (a pair of three-, four- and five-year-olds respectively) were tagged with portable body microphones as described in chapter 1 (1.3.1) which provided more or less continuous recordings of each child's talk, both in the classroom and playground, for the duration of a school morning, yielding a total of just over 20 hours of talk. In the transcription and coding of these recordings (carried out by Wolson 1992), child utterances were classified according to whether they were **contextualized** (having an immediate referent in the here-and-now context of speaking) or **decontextualized** (having non-immediate reference). A third category of child talk was termed **literacy-focused** (utterances made in reference to written language). Table 1 and Figure 1 below indicate the

proportions of utterances occurring in each of these three general categories, while Table 2 lists the sub-categories that were identified within these three major lines of talk and the percentage of utterances in each. The definitions used for all sub-categories in the coding of data are supplied in Appendix 4.

Table 1 : Mean percentage of child utterances in the major categories of talk

	Contextualized	Decontextualized	Literacy-focused
3 years	83%	11%	6%
4 years	66%	26%	8%
5 years	49%	42%	9%
Average % :	66%	26%	8%

Figure 1



University of Cape Town

7.2.1 Types and distribution of child talk

For children in all three age-groups, the greatest amount of time was spent in contextualized (present, or here-and-now) talk. As Table 2 shows, this mostly comprised 'control talk', centred around controlling others' behaviour (e.g., 'give me the puzzle', 'you mustn't push', 'look at here'), and 'commentary' on ongoing events, including objects ('I making a puzzle'), others' behaviour ('she don't want to give me bubblegum'), tattle tales ('she put sand on me') and insults ('you a cry-baby'). Contextualized talk occurred in all activities throughout the school morning. It was rarely organized into a connected unit of discourse, occurring chiefly in the form of isolated utterances.

Table 2 : Mean percentage of child utterances in the sub-categories of talk

Type of talk		3 years	4 years	5 years	Average
Control	**(C)**	25%	26%	19%	23%
Commentary	**(C)**	29%	19%	14%	20%
Pretend	**(D)**	2%	15%	27%	14%
Elliptical	**(C)**	17%	13%	9%	13%
Talk re past	**(D)**	8%	9%	6%	8%
Inquiry	**(C)**	8%	7%	4%	6%
Skill routine	**(LF)**	4%	4%	9%	6%
Narrative	**(D)**	1%	0%	5%	2%
Non-immediacy	**(D)**	1%	1%	2%	2%
Unanalysable		1%	2%	3%	2%
Book-reading	**(LF)**	1%	3%	0%	1%
Talk re print	**(LF)**	1%	1%	0%	1%
Personal preference	**(C)**	3%	1%	0%	1%

C = Contextualized ; D = Decontextualized ; LF = Literacy-Focused

The proportion of time spent in contextualized talk decreased somewhat with age, while decontextualized talk increased from 11% (at three years) to 42% of five-year-olds' talk. This increase is predominantly accounted for by the category of 'pretend talk', centred around play, where a child represented one object with another or engaged in fantasy talk. This occurred almost exclusively in the context of play with peers, and not with teachers. In contrast to contextualized talk which comprised mostly single utterances, pretend talk usually involved extended and elaborated discourse. A sample extract from a pretend talk narrative was discussed in chapter 3 (3.4.2). Other forms of decontextualized language, besides pretend talk, occurred with low frequency. Significantly, in terms of the focus of this study, talk about past or future events made up only 8% of all the talk recorded from children of all ages. Furthermore, since 'talk about the past' was defined for the purposes of coding as any utterance in the past tense, much of this referred to immediate past events (e.g., '*ek het gemors nou*'[I've made a mess now], 'I was standing here') and relatively little to distant past events. Children also did not spontaneously produce personal narratives with any great frequency in the course of their routine school activities : of the six children recorded, in over 20 hours of talk, only four narratives were identified – three accounts of personal experience and one short retelling of a fictional narrative. These findings are consistent with those of Kyratzis (1999:432), who reports that, while preschoolers frequently produce dramatic play

University of Cape Town

narratives during free play with peers, narratives of personal experience are rare in friendship group talk at preschool.

Finally, talk that was specifically literacy-focused was generally rare. Included in this category were book 'reading' or discussion (a child's talk while paging through a book), talk about print (any utterances referring to writing) and skill routines such as rhyming that have been linked to literacy acquisition. Table 2 shows that, on average, only 1% of time was spent on either book-reading or talk about print. A small range of books was on display in the classrooms, but observation showed that book-reading activities were seldom encouraged or initiated by teachers outside of the storytime routine, in which the teacher read a book to the class as a whole. The figure of 1% for book-reading represents times during the school day when children paged through and talked about books themselves. This occurred with only two of the six children, on two occasions when a book was laid in front of them by a teacher during times designated by the curriculum as 'educational activity' periods. On neither occasion did the teacher remain present to mediate the child's book-reading activity. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the low priority of book-reading activity, talk about print occurred only rarely and, in most of these cases, was prompted by the research assistant's note-taking, which provoked isolated comments such as 'look there, she writing', 'why you write on there?' and 'I want to write, must I write on here?'. The amount of time spent in literacy-focused activities did not increase markedly with age; consequently, even those children in their final year prior to formal schooling were experiencing very limited opportunities to engage in language activities overtly centred on written language.

7.2.2 Conversational partners

Child utterances were also coded according to whom they were addressed to. Table 3 shows that at all ages, children spent very little time interacting with teachers. When they did initiate talk with teachers, it was generally brief - either information-giving in response to a teacher question or 'tattle-taling' - and rarely extended beyond one conversational turn. In contrast, talk to peers was far richer in content and sustained over longer periods, particularly in the category of pretend talk.

Table 3 : Mean percentage of child utterances addressed to teachers and peers

	Peer	Teacher
3 years	92%	8%
4 years	88%	12%
5 years	82%	18%

University of Cape Town

Table 4 : Interaction between conversational partner and type of child talk

	Contextualized	Decontextualized	Literacy-focused
Peer	90%	90%	74%
Teacher	10%	10%	26%

Table 4 illustrates the relationship between conversational partner and type of talk engaged in by the children. Only 10% of both contextualized and decontextualized utterances were directed at a teacher, and somewhat more (26%) of their literacy-focused talk. The great majority of their experiences with either decontextualized or literacy-focused language are therefore obtained in the context of peer-talk. Practical constraints certainly dictate to a large extent the amount of time teachers are able to spend engaging individual children in talk, given a ratio of over forty children to two teachers per class. The role of factors dictated by the school curriculum is discussed below. However, as we shall see in section 7.3, the limited amount of time that children spend interacting with teachers may also be a function of what Dickinson (1991) refers to as 'teacher agenda', i.e., beliefs held by teachers with regard to language teaching and styles of interaction.

7.2.3 Curriculum constraints

Observation in the classroom showed that the activities making up the school morning fell into three main categories. Small Group times were periods when children were engaged in activities organised, but not directed by a teacher. Typically, at these times, the class was divided into smaller groups that were assigned particular types of activity – for instance, being seated at tables for art-work or puzzles, on the floor with construction toys, or in the doll's house corner for doll play. While in theory, small group sessions offer the opportunity for teachers and selected children to engage in extended discussions arising from these activities (Beals *et al.* 1994), in practice the large numbers of children in these classrooms meant that teacher mediation in small groups was negligible, beyond the stage of setting up the activities. Large Group times were periods when all the children and a teacher were gathered together to participate in newstime, story-reading, or a language-development session. These activities were both organised and directed by a teacher and explicitly geared to language and educational aims. In Free Play times, however, no structure was imposed by teachers at all; these included break time for outside play, meal-times and periods in between activities when children moved freely about the classroom.

University of Cape Town

Figure 2

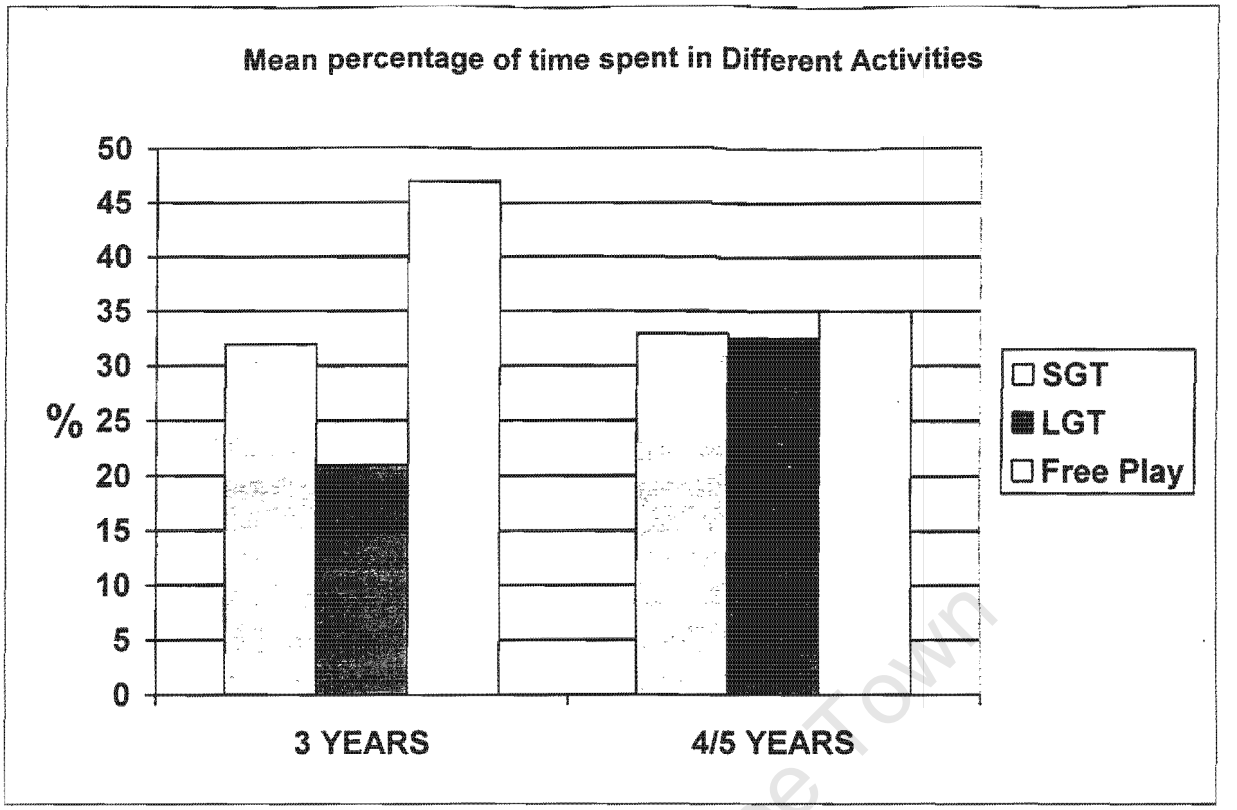


Table 5 : Mean percentage of child utterances in the three categories of talk occurring in Large Group, Small Group and Free Play times

Type of talk	Large Group time	Small Group time	Free Play
Contextualized	9%	36%	55%
Decontextualized	3%	45%	51%
Literacy-Focused	27%	28%	45%

University of Cape Town

Figure 2 shows that while three-year-olds at the creche spend proportionately more time in Free Play than either of the other two activities, the older, four- and five-year-old children spend roughly equal amounts of time in each of the three categories of activity. Table 5 shows the interaction of type of activity with type of talk engaged in by children. For all age-groups of children, most of their language experiences of all types occurred during Free Play times, which were neither structured nor mediated by teachers, as well as in Small Group times which were only minimally mediated by teachers. This includes their experience of decontextualized language which, as we've seen, derives mostly from engagement in pretend talk with peers as communicative partners. Table 5 also shows that very little child talk overall occurred in the context of Large Group times. (The figure of 27% for Literacy-focused talk must be viewed in relation to the generally very low incidence of this type of talk). Yet Large Group times were designated explicitly within the school curriculum as language-

centred events. In the next section, on teacher talk, we examine why it is that children are contributing so little to these language-oriented periods of the school day.

7.3 Teacher talk

Material used for the analysis of teacher talk was obtained from several hours of recording of large-group discourse sessions in the four-to five-year-olds' classroom at the creche, as described in chapter 1 (1.3.1). Below I analyse two such sessions in some depth : a fictional story-reading and a newstime session conducted by a teacher. Both are routine events in nearly every preschool classroom and offer a potentially rich arena for extended discussion of non-present topics

7.3.1 Analysis of a fictional story-reading session

The strong link between early book reading experience – specifically, joint book reading with adults – and success in literacy development at school, has been widely established. Within this line of research, it has been argued that it is not pre-schoolers' book reading experiences *per se* that is significant, but the interactions which surround these events – i.e., the ways in which adults mediate children's encounters with text (e.g., Snow 1994; Heath 1983; Teale & Sulzby 1987). Beals, de Temple and Dickinson (1994), reporting on findings of the Boston Home-School Study, present persuasive evidence of positive correlations between the amount of nonimmediate talk experienced by preschoolers during bookreading with parents and teachers and their later performance on tests of language and literacy skills. They stress that it is the specific content of the talk, and not the overall amount of talk that counts : the total amount of talk about a book at the age of four was unrelated to later measures of language and literacy development. Beals *et al* argue that 'while some benefits are likely to accrue simply from exposure to books, the full value of reading can only be realized if the adult and child engage in conversations that support meaning construction' (p. 21). More specifically, the essential quality of nonimmediate talk surrounding bookreading is that it moves beyond the visible text and illustrations, in order to explain characters' behaviours, speculate about motives or causes, make predictions, draw inferences, make connections between the story and the children's own experiences, or discuss word meanings.

The following discussion examines the discourse role of one teacher of a four-to five-year-old class in a story-time session. The book read was a version of the 'Musicians of Bremen' tale, in which a boy and a group of animals outwit a band of robbers to gain occupation of a house. As one of a small selection of books available in the classroom, it had been read to the children on previous occasions and was thus a familiar story. The session took place in the typical school story-time format with the entire class of children seated on a

University of Cape Town

mat on the floor around the teacher, who sat on a chair with the book angled in such a way that the children could follow the story from the pictures.

A full transcript of the book-reading session is given in Appendix 5. The teacher's utterances are indicated by 'T', while 'C' marks the responses or interjections of either one or more than one child. The discourse as a whole is organized as follows. In lines 1 to 5, the teacher announces the title of the story, enjoins the children to listen, and commences with the classic opening convention for the fictional story genre 'Once upon a time …', signalling the transition to storyworld. Her narrative proceeds from lines 5 through to 116, interrupted only occasionally by comments (enclosed in parentheses) directed at controlling children's behaviour on the mat. The story's closure is marked linguistically by the fictional convention 'they lived happily ever after' (line 114), and prosodically by final falling intonation and vowel elongation on 'they never want to be seen again' (line 116). Following this, in lines 117 to 144, the teacher directs the discourse, over a series of exchanges between herself and the children, to an evaluative commentary on aspects of the story's content. This consists chiefly of her explicitly elaborating a moral to be drawn from the story, in the form of a warning on the consequences of stealing.

Looking more closely at the teacher's narrative itself (lines 5 – 116), it seems to be composed of two distinct parts. Her telling of the story starts off as a more or less verbatim reading of the text, characterised by recurring phrases and syntactic constructions associated with this genre of written fiction – e.g., 'I'm going to seek my fortune', 'off they went, jiggery jog', 'he hadn't got far when he met a _'. Around line 47, a perceptible shift occurs in the style of the teacher's narration, from 'book language' to colloquial speech. The transition coincides with a shift in the story's written text from repetitive, formulaic occurrences that set up a background of characters and motives to a densely packed sequence of complicating actions. From this point, the teacher's 'telling' becomes largely a paraphrase of the text and adopts many features characteristic of oral, as opposed to literate, discourse. Her syntax takes on characteristics of the vernacular (e.g., 'they bought them lots of food'; 'the bull … stuck him with his horns'); she uses colloquial expressions (e.g., 'and the robber goes / hey / what's happening here'; 'uh-uh / I'm getting out of here'), non-storyworld asides that solicit the involvement and participation of children ('and you know what?'; 'hey?'; 'can you see them?'), and pitch alterations to animate the voices of characters.

Considering the extract as a whole, how does the teacher assist the process of taking meaning from the story text, and what are the implicit rules and expectations surrounding this speech event? Firstly, while preserving certain of the linguistic conventions of fictional texts, the teacher adjusts her 'reading' of the story in the direction of an oral style that incorporates

University of Cape Town

features of the vernacular dialect and reduces the distance between text and receivers. Secondly, and related to the first strategy, she builds into her narration a number of specifically child-oriented comments that serve to solicit the involvement of her listeners ('you know what?', 'hey?'), clarify parts of the text ('can you see them?'), or provide explanatory sub-text ('it wasn't a man / it was the – goat'; 'but of course that was the dog / hey?'). Although these are phrased as questions, or spoken with questioning intonation, they are rhetorical and seek no response other than simple affirmation. Thirdly, she includes a small number of genuine questions on the story's content that are aimed at eliciting a specific response. There are six of these that occur both during the narration and in the discussion following the story. Examining these more closely, however, it appears that only one is an open-ended question (i.e., a question that has several or many possible answers) :

(line 119) *hoekom's hulle bang* / why they scared

The remaining five are closed-ended questions (i.e., questions with only one or two possible answers). of one of the following kinds : (i) a question, or a statement spoken with rising intonation, that requests a single word or simple NP in response-

e.g., (line 7) what's the boy's name

(line 10) he hadn't got far when he met a –

or (ii) a question that solicits either a yes or a no in response :

e.g., (line 138) should you steal from one another

Since the latter is, in effect, also rhetorical, this means that very few questions are aimed at inviting any active verbal participation in the story-telling process.

Fourthly, the most explicit strategy used by the teacher to mediate the book-reading process is her provision at the end of the story of a moral for the tale. This final portion of the session (lines 118 – 144) comprises nonimmediate talk that connects the content of the story to codes of behaviour in the world. The teacher achieves this chiefly through a series of embedded statements that spell out relations of cause and effect ('that happens when …'; 'because'; 'that's why …'; 'if … then') or issue imperatives ('if you want something / you ask'; 'you don't steal'). However, none of these invite discussion or participation from the children in the process of deriving the import of the story's meaning. The only possible responses to the closed-ended and rhetorical questions posed in lines 136 to 141 are a single word and a simple negative, leaving no place either for extended discussion or for an alternative interpretation or construction of meaning.

7.3.2 Analysis of a newstime session

'Newstime' (known as 'sharing time' in American classrooms and research literature) is a standard routine in preschool and early elementary school classrooms in which, prompted

University of Cape Town

and supported by the teacher, individual children are invited to relate significant experiences that have occurred in the past few days or weeks. As such, it is potentially an important context in which children can practise and develop narrative skills. It is also very often a context in which teachers both organize and respond to children's verbal offerings and thus communicate implicit or explicit messages about *how* to structure a narrative account. 'Teachers typically play an active role at sharing time, interjecting questions and comments that attempt to clarify and extend the child's original contributions' (Michaels 1991:308). Michaels' (1981,1985,1991) work on newstime narratives in the United States has demonstrated the educational dilemmas that result when the narrative styles of some children conflict with those expected and valued by schools.

At the Kensington creche, the newstime routine was embedded in a more broadly conceived group discourse activity that usually included some religious instruction, such as the telling of a Bible story, as well as discussion of the date, weather and seasons and singing a few songs relevant to these areas of knowledge. Recordings of these sessions thus offered an opportunity to examine not only the practice of personal narrative in the classroom, but also the strategies that teachers use to shape children's discourse in general, the expectations and implicit 'rules' that they bring to bear on language use in the classroom, and the opportunities they provide for developing decontextualized language skills. To assist in identifying these processes, a coding system was constructed for analysing teacher talk, loosely based on that of Dickinson (1991), and summarised in Table 6. Three aspects of teachers' language were considered : the **speech acts** encoded in her utterances, since these are indicative of what she is trying to achieve with language; the **topic** or content of her utterances, since this reveals the extent to which her language is decontextualized; and the role played by her utterances in **topic development**, which indicates the degree to which children are given opportunities to construct meaning at the level of discourse.

A transcript of one newstime session is provided in Table 7. Each of the teacher's turns at talk was coded for all three categories on Table 6. Where successive utterances within one conversational turn differed in content or function, these were coded separately. Codings are indicated on the right of the transcript, and major topic shifts (discussed below) are identified in bold print within the text.

University of Cape Town

Table 6 : Categories and coding symbols used in analysis of teacher talk during newstime

Speech Acts	**Definition**	**Coding**
Questioning	Real question : requests information unknown to speaker.	Qr
	Pseudo-question : designed to test hearer. (Includes requests to 'name X')	Qp
Informing/ explaining	Informing of facts about the world, past events, codes of moral conduct; providing explanations.	Inf
Projecting non-present	Planning future actions; engaging in pretence or imagining; inferring or interpreting others' utterances.	Proj
Controlling	Directing behaviour or actions of others; announcing control of discourse itself.	Con
Managing Interaction	Showing attention, approval, or echoing previous speaker without making any specific semantic contribution.	Man
Topic/content	**Definition**	**Coding**
Present talk	Talk restricted to present objects or events, ongoing activities or talk; personal feelings or preferences.	Pres
Non-present talk	Talk about non-present people or objects; future events and past events.	NP
Didactic talk	Talk conveying concepts, facts, information, or moral imperatives.	Did.
Analytical talk	Talk that explicitly conveys cause, motive, reason, condition or other logical connections.	Anal.
General Response	Talk that merely echoes or shows attention to previous speaker turn.	GR
Topic Development	**Definition**	**Coding**
Initiates topic	Introduces new topic or a new exchange within a topic.	I
Maintains topic	Maintains interaction without making any specific or new semantic contribution.	M
Extends topic	Develops topic of previous utterance, by elaborating or adding new information.	E
Additional coding for questions:		
Open-ended question	Has many possible responses.	Qo
Closed-ended question	Has only one or two possible answers	Qc

University of Cape Town

Table 7 : Transcript and coding of a newstime session

I	**Opening**	
T :	okay / can we start now	Con Pres IQc
C :	[chorus] yes	
T :	are you all finished talking	Con Pres IQc
C :	[chorus] yes	
T :	right / now / we gonna / today is / we first of all / we first ask the weather / - and the four seasons / - and the twelve months / and then I'm gonna ask you something else /	Proj NP I
II	**Preschool knowledge and concepts**	
	Topic 1 : Dates	
T :	right / who can tell me what is today / -	Qp Did IQc
C :	Friday	
T :	I wish it was Friday / -	Proj Pres E
	look here / you don't shout / you put up your hand /	Con Pres M
	today is – / Monday *	Qp Did IQc
C :	[chorus] Monday *	
T :	today is –	Qp Did IQc
C :	[chorus] Monday *	
T :	Monday */ right	Man GR M
	and who can tell me / what is the date today / who's clever with the date	Qp Did IQc
C :	I	
C :	I	
C :	Monday	
T :	no / today is the - / nineteenth /	Inf Did E
C :	[chorus] nineteenth	
T :	nineteenth of –	Qp Did IQc
C :	[chorus] August	
T :	of –	Qp Did IQc
C :	[chorus] August	
T :	that's better / it's the nineteenth of August / yes / -	Man GR M
	Topic 2 : Weather	
	and / if you look outside / what do you think / what's the weather gonna be today	Qp NP IQo
C :	cold!	
C :	warm!	
C :	cold!	
T :	what's it gonna be today	Qp NP IQo
C :	[chorus] warm	
T :	warm / -	Man GR M
	it will be this morning a bit cold / because why the sun's coming out / so	Inf Anal E
	it'll be warm today / -	
	is there leaves blowing / -	Qp Pres IQc
C :	[chorus] no	
T :	what's the leaves doing now	Qp Pres IQc
C :	they standing still	

University of Cape Town

T : standing still / — Man GR M
that means it's gonna be - / warm today yes / - right / - — Inf Anal E
now lets first sing the weather song / - okay / lets clap our hands — Con Pres I
T&C: [sing together : what does the weatherman say today / say today / say today (x2)
today he says its sunny / today he says its Monday (x2)
the nineteenth of August]

Topic 3 : Seasons

T : lets ask / - umm / Ryan / name me the four seasons / please — Qp Did IQc
stand up / - - — Con Pres M
C : spring / autumn / winter
T : sit down / - — Con Pres M
lets ask . for Sharnel / . louder / - name me the four seasons — Qp Did IQc
C : spring / summer / autumn / winter
T : very nice / — Man GR M
lets all say it / - spring * – — Con Pres I
C : [chorus] spring * / summer / autumn / winter
T : very nice / . — Man GR M

Topic 4 : Months of the year

now I'm going to ask / . for Hilary / to name me the twelve months/ — Qp Did IQc
Hilary / make it loud hey / — Con Pres M
C : [sings : January February March April May June July August September October November December]
T : very nice / — Man GR M
lets all say it / but we don't shout / we say it nice and soft hey — Con Pres I
C: [sing together months of year]
T : that's very nice / — Man GR M

Topic 5 : Clothing & weather

now you know when it's warm / then what happens if you get warm / - d'you put on your raincoat / and your boots / or what — Qp Anal IQc
C : no
T : what d'you wear when its warm — Qp Did IQc
C : shorts
T : some shorts — Man GR M
C : and sweater
T : and a sweater yes / — Man GR M
and if it's a nice day of a Saturday when you at home / then what happens early morning / what your mommy say / . it's warm today / what you gonna do today / - you are gonna go to the – — Qp Anal IQc
C : [chorus] beach
T : beach / — Man GR M
and what you wear when you go to the beach — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] bather
T : a bather yes / - — Man GR M
and shorts also / the boys also wear shorts/ and the girls can wear shorts / - — Inf Did E
and d'you wear your socks and shoes — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] no
T : sometimes children wear their . sandals / or their / wear / they are bare feet hey — Inf Did E
C : *soffie* / um *so- so-*
T : hey — Man GR M

University of Cape Town

C : *dingus / sloffies* [thingummy / flip-flops]
T : *sloffies* yes / like you say yes / . Man GR M

III Newstime
Topic 1 : Church
(i) Who went to church?
right / now / yesterday was Sunday / you know that Inf Did I
C : [chorus] yes
T : now / - who went to church yesterday Qr NP IQc
C : I
C : I
C : not me
T : didn't you go / Man GR M
why not Leonard Qr NP EQo
C : was sick
T : oh you were sick / oh Man GR M
C : teacher we didn't go
T : didn't you go to church also / why Qr NP EQo
C : [xxx] my sister's eye's blind
T : oh your sister's eye is blind / shame / Man GR M
who went to church yesterday Qr NP IQc
C : [chorus of responses]
T : now / who went to church Qr NP IQc
C : [chorus of responses]
T : did you go to church yesterday / Sharnel /
stand up and tell me what did you learn / what happened / .
what did you learn in church yesterday /
what did the priest tell you Qr NP IQo
C : teacher / you know / the – priest said / that you must share /
and you mustn't fight / and and and you must help each other / and then .
if somebody fall / then you mustn't laugh / you must . always try to help one another
T : that is very nice / Man GR M
did you hear / - so you were listening to what was going on in church /-
Proj NP E
do you listen in church Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] yes
T : hey / Man GR M
Sharnel listened very nice / . Proj NP E
and so what did you think about when the . when the . priest tell you that
Qr NP EQo
C : uh – so I said I won't laugh
T : oh / that's very nice / - Man GR M
so . he's talk about - / love / - Proj NP E
(ii) Teachings of the church
Now what is love / - why must we love one another / . must you hate one
another / fight with one another / or what Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] no
C : love one another
T : does God say you must . hit each other / and bite each other Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] no
T : what do God say / we must – Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] love one another

University of Cape Town

T : yes / um Darren — Man GR M
C : is a is the devil tell you the wrong thing to do
T : then does the devil tell you to do wrong things / yes / — Man GR M
and you don't want to be the devil / — Inf Did E
what you want to be — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] God's children *
T : God's children * / yes / - - you want to be - / God's children / . — Man GR M
If you want to be the devil's children / what what do devil's children do / . hey — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus of responses]
T : hey — Man GR M
C : they do fight
T : hey — Man GR M
C : [chorus] they fight
T : they fight / yes — Man GR M
C : *skollies* [gloss?]
T : yes / — Man GR M
and do you want to be the devil's children — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] no
T ; uh uh / you don't want to be the devil's children — Man GR M
C : [unintelligible sequence] fight the devil
T : do you want to fight the devil — Man GR M
C : ja
T : is it / — Man GR M
yes but now remember / what Sharnel said / and you see somebody get hurt /
what must you do — Qp Anal IQc
C : [chorus] help
T : you must help / — Man GR M
must you laugh at each other — Qp Did IQc
C : [chorus] no
T : no / — Man GR M
you must help one another / in that way / you have love for one another / . even
amongst your friends / — Inf Did E
if Jean's got a sweet / and um . Darren haven't got a sweet / what should he do — Qp Anal IQc
C : [chorus] must share
T : he must share / . — Man GR M
but that doesn't mean Darren must grab the sweet / or take it / or steal / .
you must - / ask / if you want / um / Jean can have a sweet / . or /
Darren can have a packet of chips / then they will give / but you don't steal
and you don't take from each other / - — Inf Did E
and if somebody hit you / then you / and you hurt that person /
what must you do / you must say - / sorry * — Qp Anal IQc
C : [chorus] sorry *

(iii) Who went to church?

T : hey / - who else went to church also — Qr NP IQc
C : not me
T : didn't you go — Man GR M
C : [chorus of responses]
T : and so what did you / what happened in church / - — Qr NP IQo
hm / - nothing happened / . my — Man GR M
C : [unintelligible statement]

University of Cape Town

T : oh / oh / Man GR M

Topic 2 : Weekend

(i) What happened on the weekend?

now listen here what happened on the weekend / where'd you go to Saturday / by / who came to visit you or what / . or where did you go to / or / were you at home playing all the time / playing with your friends Qr NP IQo

C : [chorus of responses]

T : Moegamat / . you went to your grandma / . is it / that's very nice / Man GR M
Who went out for the weekend / . huh Qr NP IQc

C : [chorus of responses]

T : that's very nice / Man GR M

(ii) Teacher's weekend

and you know where I went to / - I went out / . I went to town / - and then / - - there we went to the Golden Acre / . and I bought me a nice ice-cream / - and then I rode there by Devil's Peak / with the car / and we came down with the car / and then we got home / and then we also watched video / - and then / . we had some children there / playing with us there / . and I was playing with the children hide and seek / - and d'you know what / - - when I finished there so we thought no no / now here we gonna go / we gonna jog around the block / and you / we start to jog right around all the children with us / . ooh it was a nice day and I was jogging around / it was a bit of cold / but I wasn't worried you know / because *lekker* [nice] warm outside *jong* [boy]/ . and then when I finished / . I went to the fish shop / . and to buy me a nice burger / and then Ryan I went to Milky Land also you know that / . and I saw a big car there on top / . on Hard Rock / . and the people's watching all there / and the people was swimming and the children were swimming / ooh I wasn't even worried about them / because why I had a nice big burger / . *lekker* burger / - that was my day / - and then I got home / - I watched again video / - and there was a nice story on M-Net / and so I watched that fillum again / and when I finished / - and so I went to bed / - you see / . I had a very nice weekend / what about yours Inf NP I

C : teacher / I did go out wi wi wi with my mommy and my daddy / and I and I and I saw a broken [door?] / and I went to play [golf?]

T : is it / now look at there / he also went out with his mommy and his daddy / - hey Man GR M

C : teacher / *ek het 'n emmertjie en 'n* [2 sylls.] [I have a bucket and a -]

T : *is dit* / - [really] Man GR M
waar's um / jou vriend dan / - is hy nie daar by jou nie Qr NP Iqc
[Where's your friend then? Isn't he there with you?]

C : *nee* [no]

T : *haai* [exclamation] Man GR M

(iii) Knife stories

C : teacher / teacher

T : yes Man GR M

C : *hulle't my ander vriend met die mes gesteek*
[they stabbed my other friend with a knife]

T : [gasps] *vir wie't hulle gesteek met die mes* [who did they stab with a knife?] Qr NP EQc

C : *ma / my vriend* [my friend]

University of Cape Town

T : *hoekom / wat het hy gemaak / was hy stout gewees / - wat het hy gemaak* Qr NP Eqo
[Why? What did he do? Was he naughty? What did he do?]
C : *hy't iets gedrink* [He drank something]
T : *sien jy / hy's die duiwel se kind ne / hy moenie saam met [2 sylls.] speel wat mes steek nie* [You see, he's the devil's child. He mustn't play with ? who stab] Proj NP E
C : teacher
T : yes Jodie Man GR M
C : my brother got a [xx] with a knife / and the blood also fell here
T : is it / yes / Man GR M
if you see children playing with the knives / you must tell their mommies its very dangerous / . hey / . we don't [xx] of the devil / so we God's children Inf Anal E
C : somebody want to hurt me with a knife / so I kicked the knife
T : ooh but you strong / are you Rambo / - my gosh / that's very nice / . he's Rambo Proj NP E
yes / - that's very nice Man GR M
C : teacher
T : yes Man GR M
C : I did I did saw a boy with a um with a with a with a big knife in his hand
T : ne / . Man GR M
that is very dangerous / never play with a knife hey / that is a thing that can stab you / - very dangerous Inf Did E
C : teacher / he did almost stab me / I did I did kick the knife
T : ooh but you strong hey / - my Proj NP E
C : [unintelligible question]
T : yes I must lead you / if somebody stab me then you must guide me Inf Anal E
C : [chorus of knife stories]
T : ooh yes / ooh the knives is coming out too much out now / there's too much Knives Con Pres E
C : teacher / the other day I did [unintelligible sequence] / I did just kick the knife like that
T : yes / okay / Man GR M
because we gonna stop the Bible / Con Pres I
'cause otherwise it's just gonna be a whole knife story / - and a killing / - Inf Anal E
C : teacher / yester – yesterday
T : the last one now Con Pres M
C : they did hit for [xx] with a panga here
T : ooh / but you got terrible friends Proj NP E
C : teacher / teacher
T : yes / okay okay okay / yes Sharnel / what's your problem Man GR M
C : [unintelligible sequence] / they did stab for uncle Peter in his heart / and for uncle Christie in his neck
T : ooh yes / that is bad / Proj NP E
ooh I don't want you to go [home worrying about?] knives / because you live the whole day with the knife / and the knife is very dangerous / . Inf Anal E
no knife story thank you / - Con Pres E
because if you gonna talk about the knife / then everybody kill each other with a knife here / - Inf Anal E

University of Cape Town

IV Closure

okay / - now lets go on our knees and we pray / quickly / . so we can / . end this Bible / - - - I want you all on your knees / go down / - - - is your eyes all closed
Con Pres I

C : [chorus] yes

T&C: [chant together : thank you for the world so sweet / thank you for the food we eat / thank you for the birds that sing / thank you God for everything]

7.3.3 Teacher's structuring of the discourse

The teacher's structuring of the discourse as a whole proceeds through four stages, marked as I to IV on the transcript. The first is the opening phase, in which she secures the children's attention and announces the sequence and structure of how the session will roceed. From here on, each successive move to the next stage of the discourse (and, usually, to successive topics and sub-topics within each stage) is signalled by a discourse marker – 'right', 'now', 'so' or 'okay', assigned distinctive prosodic marking – in addition to lexical specification of the new topic.

The move to the second stage ('right / who can tell me what is today') initiates a focus on developing selected areas of preschool knowledge and concepts. In this stage of the discourse, the teacher controls successive shifts of topic (from 1 to 5); within each she poses a series of pseudo-questions (see Table 9), and occasionally informing statements, designed to test and teach these concepts. Virtually all her questions are closed-ended, having a single correct response (often a single word) or a limited choice of answers.

The next move, to stage III, newstime, is introduced by the discourse markers 'right / now /' and the orienting reference 'yesterday was Sunday / you know that', which provides the link to the first topic for news : church. Following a few false starts, the teacher's repeated question 'Who went to church?' is rewarded with a positive response. However, after expressing her approval of the child's contribution ('so you were listening to what was going on in church', 'Sharnel listened very nice'), the teacher uses it as a means to effect another topic shift : her interpretive comment 'so he talk[ed] about love' is the link to a discussion of the church's moral teachings. Personal narratives are temporarily off the agenda; the teacher again frames the discourse interaction here as a series of closed-ended, pseudo-questions, that this time are related to God and the devil, or good and bad behaviour. Some are intended to elicit either a yes/no answer or a single word or phrase from a limited choice; others pose moral dilemmas of the kind 'if situation X arises,what is the correct way to behave?', yet also require a simple (and apparently often-practised) response.

Following this, the teacher returns to newstime mode on the theme of 'who else went to church?', but this time fails to elicit any positive response. Concluding that 'nothing

University of Cape Town

happened [in church]', she moves ('now listen here') to her second topic for news : 'what happened on the weekend?'. After briefly responding to (but not extending upon) one child's contribution to this subject, she supplies a fairly lengthy and detailed narrative account of her own activities at the weekend, ending with an encouragement for the children to follow suit. At this point or shortly after, another topic switch occurs, but this one (and for the first time) introduced by a child, whose account of a stabbing (which may or may not have actually happened at the weekend) sets off a spate of child-initiated stories on this subject. The first of these is responded to by the teacher with several topic-extending questions ('Who? Why? What did he do'). However, clearly feeling that the topic is unsuitable and not wishing to encourage it further by asking questions, she responds to subsequent narratives with interpretive and moral commentary, and eventually resumes control of the discourse by shutting down the topic (e.g., 'last one now', 'no knife story thankyou'). In moving to closure ('okay / - now lets go on our knees and we pray'), she exhorts them in the words of the song to 'thank God for the world so sweet'.

7.3.4 Interaction of topic, speech acts and topic development

Given the designation of this particular group activity in the school curriculum as a combination of newstime, religious instruction and reinforcing of preschool concepts, one would expect the analysis of topic and content to reveal a substantial amount of teacher talk that is not context-bound, but decontextualized in nature. Indeed, the breakdown of the results of topic coding in Table 8 below shows that 50% of the teacher's utterances were not bound to the present context. These included talk coded as non-present, as well as didactic and analytical speech which were, by definition, almost always related to non-present subjects. This proportion is higher than that occurring in teacher talk generally, as measured throughout the school day, a fact which highlights the importance of this discourse activity as an opportunity to practice decontextualized uses of language.

Examining the speech acts encoded by her utterances reveals something of the teacher's intentions and preoccupations in the discourse. Table 8 shows that fully 37% of teacher talk was concerned simply with managing the conversational interaction without making any specific or new semantic contribution to it. These were utterances that occurred in response to a child's prior turn at talk and were coded as Managing (speech act) – General Response (topic) – Maintaining (topic development). They were mostly either a repetition of all or part of a child's previous utterance or a general comment to indicate approval or attention ('right', 'yes', 'very nice', 'okay', 'oh', 'ne', 'shame', 'is it' [= really], etc.). Another 11% of teacher utterances (those coded as Controlling) served to control either the behaviour or actions of children in the present situation (e.g., 'don't shout', 'put up your hand', 'lets

University of Cape Town

Table 8 : Percentage of teacher utterances coded in the sub-categories of Speech Acts, Topics and Topic Development

Speech Acts		
Questioning	-real	11%
	-pseudo	22%
Informing/Explaining		12%
Projecting Non-Present		7%
Controlling		11%
Managing interaction		37%
Topics		
Present		13%
Non-present		20%
Didactic		21%
Analytical		9%
General Response		37%
Topic Development		
Initiates		36%
Maintains		41%
Extends		23%
Additional coding :		
- Closed-ended questions		27% of all utterances
- Open-ended question		7% of all utterances

University of Cape Town

sing'), or the discourse itself in the present context of speaking (e.g., 'we gonna stop the Bible now', 'the last one now'). Taken together, this means that about half (48%) of teacher utterances made no contribution at all to the meaning or content of the discourse. This 48% accounts for nearly all of the talk that was restricted to the present time and context of speaking (i.e., topic-coded as Present or General Response).

Consequently, the remaining half of teacher utterances that were decontextualized in topic, were used for the purposes of questioning, informing or projecting the non-present. These, then, could potentially be used to create sustained and elaborated discussion of non-present topics. 33% of these utterances were questions, designed specifically to elicit a turn at talk from children. However, as Table 9 illustrates, the great majority of these questions (34 of 43) were closed-ended, most being used didactically as pseudo-questions designed to test knowledge of one or possibly a few correct answers. Genuine (or real), open-ended questions, of the kind that would promote discussion and open up the possibility of extended interactions, were used with far less frequency; only seven occurred in total, all being attempts to elicit newstime narratives. Another 12% of utterances were used for the purpose of informing or explaining. These were didactic or, less often, analytical comments that spelled out facts ('today is the nineteenth', 'sometimes children wear sandals [to the beach]') or codes of moral conduct ('you don't steal', 'if situation X arises, you should act as in Y'), sometimes offered explanations ('never play with a knife / that is dangerous'), or told of past events (e.g., the teacher's narrative of her weekend). These utterances do not by themselves invite or require a response, but many of them were expansions on a previous child contribution (coded as Extending the topic). Likewise, of the remaining 7% of utterances (coded as Projecting Non-Present), many were interpretive responses to a child's previous statement.(e.g., 'so he's talk about love'; 'ooh / but you got terrible friends').

Table 9 : Types of questions asked by teachers

Question type occurrences	**Example**	**No.**
Pseudo-questions, closed ended	do you listen in church? what d'you wear when it's warm?	27
Pseudo-questions, open-ended	what's the weather gonna be today?	2
Real questions, closed-ended	who went to church? *vir wie't hulle gesteek met die mes?*	7
Real questions, open-ended	what happened on the weekend? what did you think about when …?	7

Table 8 showed that the vast majority of teacher talk serves either to initiate or to maintain the conversational interaction without expanding on children's utterances. Topics are typically controlled and introduced by the teacher, who then initiates a series of exchanges

University of Cape Town

related to that topic. In the typical case, these exchanges are initiated by a closed-ended question which, by its nature forecloses the possibility of an extended reply. The children's response is therefore a single word or simple phrase, to which the teacher replies with a general response of approval before initiating the next question on that topic or introducing a new topic. During part III of the session, there is more use of open-ended questions as initiating moves and more attempts to expand on children's replies, by making interpretive remarks or asking further leading questions. However, as we shall see in the next section, both the questions and the expanding utterances are driven by the teacher's own agenda and, in consequence, are not particularly successful in generating extended discourse.

7.3.5 Teacher agenda

From the analysis above, it appears that the teacher's chief aims in this discourse context are (i) didactic (to instruct the children in prescribed areas of preschool knowledge), and (ii) moral (to convey codes of moral conduct in which good versus bad behaviour is equated with being 'God's children, as opposed to 'devil's children'). In both cases, she pursues these aims by framing the interaction as a set of mostly 'testing' questions to which there are usually only one or a closed set of possible 'correct' answers. Given this agenda, the implicit expectation for 'newstime' is not necessarily to provide the children with opportunities to practise extended discourse. For instance, the introduction of 'who went to church?' as a topic for news seems designed, from the teacher's point of view, chiefly as a kick-off point for raising a discussion of Good and Evil – as evidenced by her prompting of, and response to, Sharnel's narrative ('what did you learn?' and 'what did you think about?'). The child's answers to these probing questions serve only as a lead to pursuing the teacher's own agenda, rather than being used as an opportunity to elicit an extended line of discourse from the child. The topic, in any case, proves generally unsuccessful as a source of newstime narratives, as witnessed by the failure (in iii) to evoke any response at all.

In contrast, the topic of weekend activity seems more genuinely intended on the teacher's part as an attempt to elicit narratives. It is interesting, given the methodology of this study, that the teacher uses a narrative 'prompt' of her own as a means of encouraging children to supply their own accounts of their weekend. Her concluding comment 'you see / I had a very nice weekend / what about yours') is a direct and unambiguous invitation to supply a narrative of personal experience. Two points are of particular interest here. Firstly, the teacher's narrative of her weekend is strikingly different in structure and style from those analysed in chapter 6 (6.3.3). It is a good example of what Peterson & McCabe (1983) and McCabe et al (1991) referred to as a 'chronological narrative' – essentially a 'laundry list' (1991:151) of relatively unevaluated sequential events substantiating the theme of 'I had a

University of Cape Town

good time' - and quite unlike the evaluative, richly coherent, performed stories that she produced in informal adult-to-adult conversation. Secondly, as a model for a narrative of personal experience (which it seems clearly intended as), it fails signally to elicit the desired response. The narratives which immediately follow this account appear to be loosely connected, if at all, to the topic of 'what I did at the weekend'. However, the second child-initiated narrative's introduction of a knife-stabbing theme proves very successful, by contrast, in eliciting a spate of similar accounts.

The speaking situation in this 'newstime' session is thus highly constrained, both by the framework of (question-response) interaction set up by the teacher, and by her narrowly prescribed choice of topics. The former ensures that children's opportunities for engaging in extended discourse are few. As far as the latter is concerned, it is interesting that the teacher's concern with the contrast between good and bad values or codes of conduct is played out in the tension over control of the discourse topic. 'Stabbings' win out over 'church' in the popularity stakes – perhaps partly because of the apparently widespread appeal of 'gory' topics amongst children (cf. Peterson & McCabe 1983), but also perhaps because of the prevalence and the reality of violence in these children's life experience.

7.4 Summary

This part of the research was concerned with the extent to which the preschool classroom offers supports for narrative and other types of decontextualized language. The analysis of child talk showed that children's discourse during a typical school morning is mostly grounded in the here-and-now. The amount of decontextualized talk engaged in did increase with age, but largely due to the growth of one particular category – that of pretend talk centred around play activities – that occurred almost exclusively amongst peers during times not mediated by teachers (free play and small group sessions). Other forms of decontextualized language, including narrative, arose with very low frequency in children's discourse during a typical school day.

Analysis of teacher talk revealed that teachers do to an extent build nonimmediate and analytical talk into large-group bookreading and newstime sessions. However, a major limitation to the potential value of this talk arises from the fact that verbal exchanges typically proceed through a closed loop of topics and questions controlled by the teacher, allowing very little possibility of extended replies or discussion. This is a feature of classroom discourse noted by researchers in other school environments. For instance, Kutz (1997) observes that many classrooms are 'dominated by a restricted discourse pattern generally described in terms of Initiation/Response/Evaluation (IRE) : a rapid exchange in which a teacher initiates questions, students respond with single word answers, and the teacher in turn offers a brief

University of Cape Town

teacher evaluation – "right" or "no". Despite the fact that this pattern offers students little opportunity for the kind of extended talk that lets them work out their ideas … the IRE pattern predominates in schools, partly as a result of its true, but hidden purpose : classroom control' (p. 168). Against this type of interaction we have evidence that 'decontextualized language skill requires opportunities to construct meaning at the level of discourse, which requires several utterances or multiple speaker turns addressing the same topic' (Dickinson 1991:267).

In a general sense, the findings reported in this chapter are consistent with those from schools in the United States (Dickinson 1991) and Britain (Tizard & Hughes 1984) in which children had relatively few opportunities for engagement in extended discussion of the kind that supports narrative and literacy development. However, Dickinson's (1991) work suggests that while structural constraints (in this case, issues of control, adult-child ratios and inadequate physical facilities) are obvious limiting factors, teachers' agendas – their 'sense of what matters' (p.292) – are also a significant influence on how they conduct interactions with children in the classroom. Creating awareness among teachers of the importance of providing extended, 'cognitively challenging' conversations (as described by Beals *et al.* (1994)) with children would go some way in closing the gap of advantage in the knowledge and skills that children bring to formal schooling.

University of Cape Town

CONCLUSIONS

In this final section, I review the main findings of this study in relation to the aims and questions set up in chapter 1 (1.1) and indicate useful areas for future research.

Chapter 2 demonstrated that, for children on the Cape Flats, the task of acquiring language and literacy skills is one that may be uniquely difficult within the South African context. In their homes, children may be addressed in L2 English by their parents, but in non-standard Afrikaans by grandparents, while parents and grandparents speak Afrikaans amongst each other. At preschools, vernacular Afrikaans and English are used interchangeably with no emphasis on standard forms in either language; children develop proficiency in the range of vernacular codes in the repertoire and learn to switch according to the demands of communicative situations. On entering primary school, however, they are placed in either English or Afrikaans-medium classes where they face new and difficult linguistic demands for which they may be ill-prepared : they are required not only to separate the lexical and syntactic forms of each language in ways that may seem counter-intuitive and that have previously not been consciously understood, but also to learn alternative, standard forms of expression, although the vernacular remains the appropriate language choice at home. The task for many of those in the English-medium entry classes is complicated by inadequate exposure to L1 or standard English outside the classroom. These children perform poorly on the standard language tests in local use, which are invariably biased towards the norms for monolingual speakers of standard English (see, e.g. Malan 1981; Jacobson 1983; Christie 1987; Kemp 1987). Added to this is the legacy of political and educational policies that have ensured a generally inferior quality of education for the parents and grandparents of the children in this study and for which no swift or easy redress is available to the children themselves.

University of Cape Town

It is against this background that children enter the formal school system. Aged six or seven years, they come to the classroom with ways of representing experience that are coherent, structured and sense-making, and which draw on the linguistic resources of the diverse languages and codes of their speech community. As chapter 3 revealed, they have mastered a repertoire of distinct textual genres that include the personal narrative, scripts, plans, dramatic play narratives, fictional story retellings, original fictions, fantasy narratives and collaborative accounts. To these they bring material from their own life experiences, as well as from folk-lore and fiction (the latter derived mostly from the media and, to a lesser extent, written story). They use narrative to process the meanings of experiences both traumatic and mundane, profound as well as comical; these range from the nature and impact

of death, the experience of violence in their community, accidents, illness, divorce and birth, to social events, mishaps and disagreements. They situate their narratives within a rich descriptive and emotional context, producing high proportions of orienting and evaluating commentary relative to children from several other backgrounds elsewhere in the world. Much of this commentary is focused on people – the participants in narrated events – whose emotional, physical and cognitive states occupy a central place in their accounts.

While the orientation of this study was to view personal narratives as rooted in social contexts of discourse interactions, the narratives themselves were also analysed, in chapters 4, 5 and 6, as evidence of children's developing ability to produce autonomous and coherent linguistic texts. A distinctive feature of narratives at all ages was the increasing use of repetition, refrains and parallelism as key organizational devices for achieving coherence. More specifically, the following principles underlay narrative construction : (1) a tendency to produce stanzas of, on average four lines, organized on a State-Event(s)-Outcome basis; (2) the openings of stanzas (and parts) usually contain shifts of person, location or time (in order of frequency) marking the introduction of thematic sub-topics; (3) the final lines of stanzas, often coinciding with the Outcome proposition, tend to be marked as the focus of the stanza, using one or more of the following options for creating focus : (i) prosody (marked falling tones on focused words towards the ends of lines); (ii) lexical, syntactic and discourse evaluation devices; (iii) repetition of all or part of the content of the line; (iv) repetition of the content of a line in another stanza. In some cases the focus lines move the action of the stanza forward – i.e., they constitute a sequence of key events or states; more commonly, however, they are repeated at intervals throughout the narrative as a series of refrains.

In canonical form, therefore, these narratives differ from the classic, Labovian 'high point' form in two key respects. Firstly, they tend to be structured around echoed themes rather than a single climactic event. Secondly, by five years, these children (like children elsewhere) are capable of sequentially chaining chronologically related events; however, they frequently choose to manipulate temporal sequence – most commonly via a technique in which successive stanzas comprise a slightly different 'take' on the same event.

Attempts to apply to these narratives the Labovian model, or developmental schemes based on it, render a misleading picture of deficiency or impoverishment. On the other hand, the analytical framework that was developed and rationalized in chapter 4 proved helpful in identifying both individual and age-related strategies that children worked with in negotiating narrative texts. The lesson from this and other research across social and cultural groups is that there are many different ways to tell a good story and, correspondingly, various routes that a child might adopt on the way to mastering textual competence. I would hope that the

University of Cape Town

framework for analysis developed in this study might eventually offer a guide in a more practical sense, as well, to teachers and clinicians faced with children from varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds, for understanding divergent types of discourse. The identification that was made in this study of four age-related narrative types could also be of use in educational and remedial settings, although more work is needed to refine these descriptive categories.

In searching for supports for narrative and other forms of extended discourse in the classroom context, the findings of chapter 7 confirm the observation of Beals *et al* (1994:20) in the United States that 'school data reveal the rich potential of classroom experiences but show that this potential is not always realized'. The younger, preschool children in my study engaged in very little spontaneous production of either personal narratives or other forms of decontextualized talk during the course of a typical school morning. Even during large-group sessions that were specifically language-centred, such as newstime and bookreading, there were few genuine opportunities to practice narrative skills or to engage in extended talk on nonimmediate topics. What does occur in the preschool is increasing amounts of pretend talk, which is distinguished by being both elaborated, extended discourse and having non-immediate reference. Although pretend talk might be considered a weak form of decontextualized language since there is to some extent shared negotiation of meaning amongst the children participating in it, there is evidence of correlations between symbolic play and reading achievement (Pellegrini 1984; Pellegrini & Galda 1991). Furthermore, since pretend talk occurs predominantly with peers as conversational partners, it seems that peer interaction in the preschool may be an important facilitator of language growth.

An important question raised by this research concerns the degree of similarity or difference between the narrative structure with which a child may be operating and that expected in an academic context. Schools rely to a large extent on narrative modes of information presentation. There is plenty of evidence that children whose narratives conform to the expected norms for school will participate more effectively in classroom discourse and are evaluated as better students by teachers. Yet, by six or seven years of age, when children commence their formal schooling, they have spent at least four years telling stories in their families and social or cultural differences in ways of telling are already striking. A closely related question, then, is what happens to this style of narrating as children progress through the school system. Does it hamper their acquisition of the expository mode of narrative that formal education requires? Does it get 'washed out' as Hymes (1982) suggests, by formal education? We need detailed, descriptive, qualitative investigations of the types of oral and written discourse that prevail in primary and high school classrooms.

University of Cape Town

Finally, given that the preschool environment provides little intentional support for the mastery of extended forms of discourse, this means that the home must be the chief domain where personal narratives of the kinds observed here are nurtured and developed. The children in this study are all from low-income homes where parental education levels are generally low. My unsubstantiated impression that opportunities for access to print and written story are limited in these homes has received some support from research by Willenberg (1996) who investigated the emergent literacy knowledge and home supports for literacy of preschool children in Kensington/Factreton. Willenberg's subjects were drawn from two schools in the area : the working-class Factreton Primary and the lower-middle-class Kenmere Primary. Although the latter group scored higher on both measures than the working-class group, both sets of children displayed poor emergent literacy knowledge and had limited access to home supports for literacy as measured by personal interviews conducted with parents.

On the other hand, housing shortages entail that extended families usually occupy homes in overcrowded fashion, while neighbourly interaction and socialization are a central part of daily life. Kensington/Factreton has also been a relatively stable community historically, in that many families have been settled there for several generations. My impression is that these kinds of factors contribute to a rich oral discourse culture, which is alluded to in the content and style of the children's narratives, as well as in their peer interactions. The next stage of research would logically be aimed at studying discourse patterns in the home environment, as the primary setting in which children are accustomed to hearing and producing stories.

The speech data collected in family homes in this study (described in chapter 1) may serve as useful pilot- or ground-work for this future research. Anonymous observation proved successful in providing a record of a wide range of everyday interactions within a family, and hence a means for observing the kinds of family interactions in which narrating is likely to occur. In order to properly explore home environments as sources of developing narrative skill, it would be necessary to use this as a starting point for identifying and tapping into those specific and circumscribed contexts of speaking, particularly family discourse interactions, that are conducive to the production of narratives.

University of Cape Town

Endnote

In this dissertation I have referred to the languages spoken on the Cape Flats as 'Cape Flats English/Afrikaans', in preference to the traditionally-cited 'Coloured English/Afrikaans', for two main reasons. Firstly, the term 'Coloured' is rejected by many people formerly classified as such (see Wood 1987 for a discussion of the concept of a 'Coloured' identity); secondly, the term 'Coloured English', at least, wrongly implies a clear-cut link with ethnicity. The dialect is spoken largely, but not exclusively, by people formerly classified 'Coloured' in South Africa; at least some of its characteristic features are shared by some people of Indian and Xhosa descent (Mesthrie 1994) and some working-class whites (Shirk 1985). Conversely, Mesthrie & McCormick (1993) point out that the speech of people classified 'Coloured' in Natal seems to have more in common with other English dialects in that province than with the 'Coloured English' of the Cape Flats. These facts argue strongly for a regional rather than an ethnic label. However, it must be acknowledged that the designation 'Cape Flats English' is neither wholly accurate nor satisfactory since, firstly, the Cape Flats include several areas where Xhosa-speakers reside and, secondly, a smaller but significant number of 'Coloured' speakers of this dialect live outside the Cape Flats in neighbourhoods such as District Six, the Bo-Kaap and Woodstock that surround the city centre.

University of Cape Town

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, M.S., Kertoy, M.K., Sherblom, J.C. & Pettit, J.M. (1994) Children's narrative productions: A comparison of personal event and fictional stories. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 15, 149-176.

Armstrong, J.C. & Worden, N.A. (1989) The slaves, 1652-1834. In R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (Eds.) *The shaping of South African society, 1652-1840* (pp. 109-183). Cape Town : Maskew Miller Longman.

Bamberg, M. (1987) *The acquisition of narrative : Learning to use language*. Berlin : de Gruyter.

Bamberg, M. (1997) *Narrative development : Six approaches.* New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bamberg, M. & Damrad-Frye, R. (1991) On the ability to provide evaluative comments : Further exploration of children's narrative competence. *Journal of Child Language*, 18, 689-710.

Bamberg, M. & Reilly, J.S. (1996) Emotion, narrative and affect : How children discover the between what to say and how to say it. In D. Slobin, J. Gerhardt, A. Kyratzis, & J. Guo (Eds.) *Social interaction, social context and language* (pp. 329-342). Mahwah NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Barnes, L. & Mahomed, F. (1994) Arabic code-mixing in SAIE. *Language Matters : Studies in the languages of Southern Africa*, (25), 96-134.

Barthes, R. (1977) Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives. In S. Heath (Ed.), *Image - Music – Text* (pp.79-124). New York : Hill & Wang.

Beals, D.E., DeTemple, J.M & Dickinson, D.K. (1994) Talking and listening that support early literacy development of children from low-income families. In D.K. Dickinson (Ed.) *Bridges to literacy : children, families and schools* (pp. 19-40). Cambridge, MA : Blackwell.

Bennett-Kastor, T. (1986) Cohesion and predication in child narrative. *Journal of Child Language*, 13, 353-370.

Berman, R.A. (1988) On the ability to relate events in narrative. *Discourse Processes* 11, 469-497.

Berman, R.A. (1995) Narrative competence and storytelling performance : How children tell stories in different contexts. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 5(4), 285-313.

Berman, R.A. (1997) Narrative theory and narrative development : the Labovian impact. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 235-244.

Berman, R.A. & Slobin, D.I. (1986) *Coding manual : Temporality in discourse*. Cognitive Science Program, University of California, Berkely.

Berman, R.A. & Slobin, D.I. (Eds.) (1994) *Relating events in narrative : A crosslinguistic developmental study*. Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1989) *Conversational structure of children's oral narratives*. Paper presented at the Boston University Conference on Language Development, October 1989.

University of Cape Town

Blum-Kulka, S. (1997) *Dinner talk : Cultural patterns of sociability and socialization in family discourse*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Blum-Kulka, S. & Snow, C.E. (1992) Developing autonomy for tellers, tales, and telling in family narrative events. *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 2 (3), 187-217.

Brown, G. & Yule, G. (1983) *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

Brown, G., Currie, K.L. & Kenworthy, J. (1980) *Questions of intonation*. London : Croom Helm.

Bruner, J. (1986) *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chafe, W. (1979) The flow of thought and the flow of language. In T. Givon (Ed.), *Discourse and syntax* (pp.159-181). New York : Academic Press.

Chafe, W. (1980) The deployment of consciousness in the production of a narrative. In W. Chafe (Ed.), *The pear stories : Cognitive, cultural and linguistic aspects of narrative production* (pp. 9-50). Norwood, NJ : Ablex.

Chafe, W. (1982) Integration and involvement in speaking, writing and oral literature. In D. Tannen (Ed.) *Spoken and written language* (pp.35-54). Norwood, NJ : Ablex.

Chafe, W. (1993) Prosodic and functional units of language. . In J.A. Edwards & M.D. Lampert (Eds.) *Talking data : Transcription and coding in discourse research* (pp. 33-42). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Champion, T., Seymour, H. & Camarata, S. (1995) Narrative discourse of African American children. *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 5, (4), 333-352.

Chang, C. (1998) The development of autonomy in preschool Mandarin Chinese-speaking children's play narratives. *Narrative Inquiry*, 8(1), 77-111.

Cheshire, J. (1982) *Variation in an English dialect : A sociolinguistic study*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Christie, P. (1987) *An investigation into the receptive language of a non-standard English-speaking group of children using the Carrow Test of Auditory Comprehension of Language*. Unpublished research report, University of Cape Town.

Coates, J. (1996) *Women talk*. Oxford : Blackwell.

Collins, J. (1985) Some problems and purposes of narrative analysis in educational research. *Journal of Education*, 167, 57-70.

Corsaro, W.A. (1981) Entering the child's world : Research strategies for field entry and data collection in a preschool setting. In J.Green & C. Wallat (Eds.) *Ethnography and language in educational settings* (pp. 117-146). Hillsdale, NJ : Ablex.

Crystal, D. (1969) *Prosodic systems and intonation in English*. London : Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (1975) *The English tone of voice*. London : Edward Arnold.

University of Cape Town

Crystal, D. (1981) *Clinical linguistics*. Vienna : Springer Verlag.

Crystal, D. (1982) *Profiling linguistic disability*. London : Edward Arnold.

Cummins, J. (1983) Language proficiency and academic achievement. In J. Oller (Ed.), *Current issues in language testing research* (pp. 230-283). Rowley, MA: Newburg House.

Da Costa, Y. (1984) *A politico-geographical image of the Kensington/Factreton group area in Cape Town*. Unpublished MA thesis, University of South Africa.

Daiute, C. & Nelson, K. (1997) Making sense of the sense-making function of narrative evaluation. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 207-215.

Davids, A. (1990) Words the Cape slaves made : A socio-historical-linguistic study. *South African Journal of Linguistics*, 8 (1), 1-24.

Deumert, A. (1994) *Standardization and establishment of Afrikaans in the nineteenth century*. Paper presented at Linguistic Society of South Africa Conference, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Dickinson, D.K. (1991) Teacher agenda and setting : constraints on conversation in preschools. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds) *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 255-301). Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dickinson, D.K. (1994) Introduction : Directions in literacy theory and intervention programs. In D.K. Dickinson (Ed.) *Bridges to literacy : Children, families and schools* (pp. 1-15). Cambridge, MA : Blackwell.

Douglas, C. (1984) *A preliminary investigation into the intonation patterns of a small sociolinguistically definable group of South African speakers*. Unpublished research report, University of Cape Town.

Du Bois, J.W., Schuetze-Coburn, S., Cumming, S. & Paolino, D. (1993) Outline of discourse transcription. In J.A. Edwards & M.D. Lampert (Eds.) *Talking data : Transcription and coding in discourse research* (pp. 45-89). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Edwards, D. (1997) Structure and function in the analysis of everyday narratives. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 139-146.

Eisenberg, A.R. (1985) Learning to describe past experience in conversation. *Discourse Processes*, 8, 177-204.

Elphick, R. & Shell, R. (1989) Intergroup relations : Khoikhoi, settlers, slaves and free blacks, 1652-1795. In R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (Eds.) *The shaping of South African society, 1652-1840* (pp. 184-239). Cape Town : Maskew Miller Longman.

Ely, R. & McCabe, A. (1993) Remembered voices. *Journal of Child Language*, 20, 671-696.

University of Cape Town

Ely, R., Gleason, J.B., & McCabe, A. (1996) "Why didn't you talk to your Mommy, honey?" Gender differences in talk about past talk. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 29 (1), 7-25.

Fasold, R. (1990) *The sociolinguistics of language*. Cambridge, MA : Blackwell.

Feagans, L., & Short, E.J. (1984) Developmental differences in the comprehension and production of narratives by reading disabled and normally achieving children. *Child Development*, 55, 1727-1736.

Field, S.P. (1990) *The politics of exclusion : A case study of the Factreton area.* Unpublished M.Soc.Sci. thesis, University of Cape Town.

Finnegan, R. (1970) *Oral literature in Africa*. Nairobi : Oxford University Press.

Fivush, R., Haden, C.A. & Adam, S. (1995) Structure and coherence of preschoolers' personal narratives over time : Implications for childhood amnesia. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 60, 32-56.

Garman, M. (1990) *Psycholinguistics*. Cambridge University Press.

Gee, J.P. (1985) The narrativization of experience in the oral style. *Journal of Education* 167 (1), 9-35.

Gee, J.P. (1986) Units in the production of narrative discourse. *Discourse Processes* 9, 391-422.

Gee, J.P. (1989) Two styles of narrative construction and their linguistic and educational implications. *Discourse Processes* 12, 287-307.

Gee, J.P. (1991a) A linguistic approach to narrative. *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 1 (1), 15-39.

Gee, J.P. (1991b) Memory and myth : a perspective on narrative. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds) *Developing Narrative Structure* (pp. 1-25). Hillsdale, New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gee, J.P. (1997) Thematized echoes. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 189-196.

Gee, J.P. & Grosjean, F. (1984) Empirical evidence for narrative structure. *Cognitive Science*, 8, 59-85.

Goodwin, M.H. (1990) *He-said-she-said : Talk as social organization among black children.* Bloomington : Indiana University Press.

Goodwin, M.H. (1997) Towards families of stories in context. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 107-112.

Green, J.L. & Wallat, C. (Eds.) (1981) *Ethnography and language in educational settings.* Hillsdale, NJ : Ablex.

Grimes, J. (1975) *The thread of discourse*. The Hague : Mouton.

Gumperz, J.J. (1982) *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge University Press.

University of Cape Town

Gumperz, J.J. & Berenz, N. (1993) Transcribing conversational exchanges. In J.A. Edwards & M.D. Lampert (Eds.) *Talking data : Transcription and coding in discourse research* (pp. 91-121). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Halliday, M.A.K (1967) Notes on transitivity and theme in English : Part 2. *Journal of Linguistics*, 3, 199-244.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1978) *Language as social semiotic*. London : Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1976) *Cohesion in English*. London : Longman.

Harvey, J.H., Stein, S.K. & Scott, P.K. (1995) Fifty years of grief : Accounts and reported psychological reactions of Normandy invasion veterans. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 5 (4), 315-332.

Heath, S.B. (1982) What no bedtime story means : Narrative skills at home and school. *Language in Society*, 11, 49-76.

Heath, S.B. (1983) *Ways with words : Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S.B. (1984) Taking a cross-cultural look at narratives. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 7, 84-94.

Heath, S.B. (1986) Separating "things of imagination" from life : Learning to read and write. In W. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.) *Emergent literacy : Writing and reading* (pp. 156-172). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hicks, D. (1990) Narrative skills and genre knowledge : Ways of telling in the primary school grades. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 11, 83-104.

Hicks, D. (1991) Kinds of narrative : genre skills among first graders from two communities. In A.McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds) *Developing Narrative Structure* (pp. 55-87). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hoff-Ginsberg, E. (1997) Frog stories from four-year-olds : Individual differences in the expression of referential and evaluative content. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 223-227.

Holman, J.D. (1984) *Coloured education in South Africa, 1948-1976.* Unpublished thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Town.

Horrell, M. (1970) *The education of the coloured community in South Africa, 1652-1970.* Johannesburg : South African Institute of Race Relations.

Hudson, J.A. (1986) Memories are made of this : General event knowledge and the development of autobiographic memory. In K. Nelson (Ed.) *Event knowledge : Structure and function in development* (pp. 97-118). Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

University of Cape Town

Hudson, J.A. (1990) The emergence of autobiographic memory in mother-child conversation. In R. Fivush & J.A. Hudson (Eds.), *Knowing and remembering in young children* (pp. 166-196). NY : Cambridge University Press.

Hudson, J.A. (1993) Reminiscing with mothers and others : Autobiographical memory in young two-year-olds. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 3, 1-32.

Hudson, J.A. & Nelson, K. (1986) Repeated encounters of a similar kind : Effects of familiarity on children's autobiographic memory. *Cognitive Development*, 1, 232-271.

Hudson, J.A. & Shapiro, L.R. (1991) From knowing to telling : the development of children's scripts, stories, and personal narratives. In A. McCabe & C.Peterson (Eds.), *Developing Narrative Structure* (pp. 89-136). Hillsdale, New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hudson, J.A., Gebelt, J., Haviland, J. & Bentigegna, C. (1992) Emotion and narrative structure in young children's personal accounts. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 2, 129-150.

Hymes, D. (1968) The ethnography of speaking. In J. Fishman (Ed.) *Reading in the sociology of language* (pp. 99-139). The Hague : Mouton.

Hymes, D. (1981) *"In vain I tried to tell you". Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics.* Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hymes, D. (1982) Narrative form as a "grammar" of experience : Native Americans and a glimpse of English. *Journal of Education* 164 (2), 121-142.

Hymes, D. (1985) Language, memory, and selective performance : Cultee's "Salmon Myth" as twice told to Boas. *Journal of American Folklore*, 98 , 391-434.

Hymes, D. (1990) Thomas Paul's *Sameti* : verse analysis of a (Saanich) Chinook jargon text. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 5 (1), 71-106.

Innes, D. (1975) *Disqualified : A study of the uprooting of the coloured people in South Africa.* London : Africa Publications Trust.

Jacobson, F. (1983) *An investigation of the oral language production of 6-year-old 'Coloured' children.* Unpublished research report, University of Cape Town.

John-Steiner, V. & Panofsky, C. (1992) Narrative competence : Cross-cultural comparisons. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 2(3), 219-233.

Kemp, M.A. (1987) *Non-standard English features according to the LARSP profile in 3- and 5-year-old children.* Unpublished research report, University of Cape Town.

Koopman, A. (1988) Schematic representations of mnemonic patterns in Zulu oral poetry. In E.R. Sienart & A.N. Bell (Eds.) *Catching winged words : Oral tradition and education.* Durban : Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre.

Kotze, E.F. (1984) Afrikaans in die Maleierbuurt : 'n diachroniese perspektief. *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe*, 24, 41-73.

University of Cape Town

Kotze, E.F. (1989) How creoloid can you be? Aspects of Malay Afrikaans. In M. Putz & R. Dirven (Eds.) *Wheels within wheels : Papers of the Duisberg Symposium on pidgin and creole languages* (pp. 251-264). Frankfurt : Peter Lang.

Kutz, E. (1997) *Language and literacy : Studying discourse in communities and classrooms.* Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann.

Kyratzis, A. (1999) Narrative identity : preschoolers' self-construction through narrative in same-sex friendship group dramatic play. *Narrative Inquiry*, 9 (2), 427-455.

Labov, W. (1972) *Language in the inner city : studies in the Black English Vernacular.* Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press.

Labov, W. (1997) Some further steps in narrative analysis. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 395-415.

Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1967) Narrative analysis : oral versions of personal experience. In J. Helm (Ed.) *Essays on the verbal and visual arts* (pp. 12-44). Seattle : University of Washington Press.

Lanham, L.W. (1978) South African English. In L.W. Lanham & K.P. Prinsloo (Eds.) *Language and communication studies in South Africa : Current issues and directions in research and inquiry* (pp. 138-166). Cape Town : Oxford University Press.

Lanham, L.W. & MacDonald, C.A. (1979) *The standard in South African English and its social history*. Heidelberg : Julius Groos Verlag.

Lass, R. (1995) South African English. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.) *Language and social history : Studies in South African sociolinguistics* (pp. 89-106). Cape Town : David Philip.

Liles, B.Z. (1985) Cohesion in the narratives of normal and language-disordered children. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research*, 28, 123-133.

Liles, B.Z. (1987) Episode organization and cohesive conjunctives in narratives of children with and without language disorder. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research*, 30, 185-196.

Liles, B.Z. & Purcell, S. (1987) Departures in the spoken narratives of normal and language-disordered children. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 8, 185-202.

Liwag, M.D. & Stein, N.L. (1995) Children's memory for emotional events : The importance of emotion-related retrieval cues. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 60, 2-31.

Lord, A.B. (1960) *The singer of tales*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Macaulay, R.K.S. (1987) Polyphonic monologues : Quoted direct speech in oral narratives. *IPRA Papers in Pragmatics*, 1(2), 1-34.

MacLachlan, B.G. & Chapman, R.S. (1988) Communication breakdowns in normal and language learning-disabled children's conversation and narration. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 53, 2-7.

University of Cape Town

Makgamatha, M.P. (1988) The language and style of the Northern Sotho "Nonwane" production. In E.R. Sienart & A.N. Bell (Eds.) *Catching winged words : Oral tradition and education.* Durban : Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre.

Malan, K. (1981) Non-standard English syntax in 12-year-old 'Coloured' children. *South African Journal of Communication Disorders*, 28, 68-80.

Malan, K. (1996) Cape Flats English. In V. de Klerk (Ed.) *Focus on South Africa. Varieties of English around the world, General Series.* Amsterdam : John Benjamins.

Mandler, J. (1984) *Stories, scripts, and scenes : Aspects of a schema theory.* Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mandler, J.M. & Johnson, N.S. (1977) Remembrance of things parsed : Story structure and recall. *Cognitive Psychology*, 9, 111-151.

McCabe, A. (1996) *Chameleon readers : teaching children to appreciate all kinds of good stories.* McGraw-Hill.

McCabe, A. & Peterson, C. (1990) *Parental styles of narrative elicitation.* Paper presented at the Fifth International Congress of Child Language, Budapest, Hungary, July 1990.

McCabe, A. & Peterson, C. (Eds.) (1991) *Developing narrative structure.* Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

McCabe, A. & Peterson, C. (1991) Getting the story : a longitudinal study of parental styles in eliciting narratives and developing narrative skill. In A.McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds) *Developing narrative structure* (pp.217-253) . Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

McCabe, A., Capron, E. & Peterson, C. (1991) The voice of experience : The recall of early childhood and adolescent memories by young adults. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.) *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 137-173). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

McCormick, K.M. (1989a) *English and Afrikaans in District Six : A sociolinguistic study.* Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town.

McCormick, K.M. (1989b) Unfiltered talk : a challenge to categories. *York Papers in Linguistics*, 13, 203-214.

McCormick, K.M. (1990) *Language shift in District Six : snapshots and frames.* Paper presented at 25th International Conference on Contrastive Linguistics and Cross-Language Studies, Rydzyna, Poland.

McCormick, K.M. (1995) Code-switching, code-mixing and convergence in Cape Town. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.) *Language and social history : Studies in South African sociolinguistics* (pp. 193-208). Cape Town : David Philip.

University of Cape Town

Meng, K. (1987a) Narrating and listening in kindergarten : first findings with 3-year-olds. In H. Gei ner (Ed.) *On Narratives : Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Speech Communication, June 22-27 1986* (pp. 130-149). Frankfurt-Main.

Meng, K. (1987b) *Preschool children's narrative competence : Findings on the interaction between narrator and listener*. Paper presented at the 4th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, July 1987, Lund, Sweden.

Meng, K. (1990) *Narrating and listening in kindergarten*. Handout for the workshop "Narrative development in children" of the 5th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Budapest, July 1990.

Meng, K. (1992) Narrating and listening in kindergarten. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 2(3), 235-252.

Menig-Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1978) Children talk about death. *Omega*, 8, 305-317.

Merritt, D.D. & Liles, B.Z. (1989) Narrative analysis : Clinical applications of story generation and story retelling. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 54, 429-438.

Mesthrie, R. (1992) *English in language shift : the history, structure, and sociolinguistics of South African Indian English*. Cambridge University Press.

Mesthrie, R. (1993) Nineteenth-century attestations of English-Afrikaans code-mixing in the Cape. *Language Matters*, 24, 47-61.

Mesthrie, R. (1994) *Sociohistorical syntax : tracing the origins of unstressed do in Cape Flats English*. Paper presented at 10th Sociolinguistic Symposium of Great Britain, University of Lancaster.

Mesthrie, R. (1995) Introduction. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.) *Language and social history : studies in South African sociolinguistics*. Cape Town : David Philip.

Mesthrie, R. & McCormick, K. (1993) Standard and non-standard in South African English : Sociolinguistic perspectives. In D. Young (Ed.), *Proceedings of the English Academy of Southern Africa Conference, University of Cape Town, July 1992*. Language Education Centre, School of Education, University of Cape Town, 28-45.

Mesthrie, R. & West, P. (1995) Towards a grammar of Proto South African English. *English World Wide*, 16 (1), 105-133.

Michaels, S. (1981) "Sharing Time" : Children's narrative styles and differential access to literacy. *Language in Society*, 10 (3), 423-442.

Michaels, S. (1985) Hearing the connections in children's oral and written discourse. *Journal of Education*, 167 (1), 36-56.

Michaels, S. (1991) The dismantling of narrative. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.) *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 303-351). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

University of Cape Town

Michaels, S. & Collins, J. (1984) Oral discourse styles : Classroom interaction and the acquisition of literacy. In D. Tannen (Ed.) *Coherence in spoken and written discourse*. Norwood, NJ : Ablex.

Miller, P.J. & Sperry, L.L. (1988) Early talk about the past : The origins of conversational stories of personal experience. *Journal of Child Language*, 15, 293-315.

Miller, P., Potts, R., Fung, H., Hoogstra, C. & Minz, J. (1990) Narrative practices and the social construction of self in childhood. *American Ethnologist*, 17 (2), 292-311.

Milroy, L. (1987) *Observing and analysing natural language : A critical account of sociolinguistic method*. Oxford : Blackwell.

Minami, M. (1996a) Japanese children's personal narratives. *First Language*, 16, 339-363.

Minami, M. (1996b) Japanese preschool children's and adults' narrative discourse competence and narrative structure. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 6, 349-373.

Minami, M. & McCabe, A. (1991) Haiku as a discourse regulation device : A stanza analysis of Japanese children's personal narratives. *Language in Society* 20, 577-599.

Mishler, E.G. (1997) A matter of time : When, since, after Labov and Waletzky. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 69-73.

Mullen, M.K. (1994) Earliest recollections of childhood : A demographic analysis. *Cognition*, 52, 55-79.

Nelson, K. (1986) Event knowledge and cognitive development. In K. Nelson (Ed.), *Event knowledge : Structure and function in development* (pp. 87-118). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Nelson, K. (Ed.) (1989) *Narratives from the crib*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press.

Nelson, K. (1990) *Origins of narrative competence*. Paper presented at the International Child Language Conference, Budapest, Hungary, July 1990.

Nelson, K. (1992) Emergence of autobiographical memory at age 4. *Human Development*, 35, 172-177.

Nelson, K. (1996) *Language in cognitive development : Emergence of the mediated mind.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Ninio, A. & Snow, C.E. (1996) *Developmental Pragmatics*. Boulder, Co.: Westview.

Norris, J.A. & Bruning, R.H. (1988) Cohesion in the narratives of good and poor readers. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 53, 416-424.

Pan, B.A. & Snow, C.E. (1999) The development of conversational and discourse skills. In M. Barrett (Ed.) *The Development of Language*. Sussex : Psychology Press.

Pellegrini, A.D. (1984) The effect of dramatic play on children's generation of cohesive text. *Discourse Processes*, 7, 57-67.

University of Cape Town

Pellegrini, A.D. & Galda, L. (1991) Longitudinal relations among preschoolers' symbolic play, linguistic verbs, and emergent literacy. In J. Christie (Ed.) *Play and early literacy* (pp.47-68). Albany, NY : State University of New York Press.

Peterson, C. & Biggs, M. (1998) Stitches and casts : emotionality and narrative coherence. *Narrative Inquiry*, 8 (1), 51-76.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1983) *Developmental Psycholinguistics : three ways of looking at a child's narrative*. New York : Plenum.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1987) The connective 'and' : Do older children use it less as they learn other connectives? *Journal of Child Language*, 14, 375-382.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1991) Linking children's connective use and narrative macrostructure. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.) *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 29-53). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1992) Parental styles of narrative elicitation : Effect on children's narrative structure and content. *First Language*, 12, 299-322.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1994) A social interactionist account of developing decontextualized narrative skill. *Developmental Psychology*, 30, 937-948.

Peterson, C. & McCabe, A. (1997) Extending Labov and Waletzky. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 251-258).

Polanyi, L. (1985) Conversational storytelling. In T. van Dijk (Ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, vol. 3. New York : Academic Press.

Polanyi, L. (1989) *Telling the American story : a structural and cultural analysis of conversational storytelling*. Cambridge : MIT Press.

Preece, A. (1987) The range of narrative forms conversationally produced by young children. *Journal of Child Language*, 14, 353-373.

Preece, A. (1992) Collaborators and critics : The nature and effects of peer interaction on children's conversational narratives. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 2 (3), 277-292.

Prince, G. (1987) *A Dictionary of Narratology*. University of Nebraska Press.

Propp, V. (1968 [1928]) *The morphology of the folktale*. Austin : University of Texas Press.

Quirk, R. & Greenbaum, S. (1973) *A University Grammar of English*. London : Longman.

Reese, E. (1999) What children say when they talk about the past. *Narrative Inquiry*, 9 (2), 215-241.

Reilly, J.S. (1992) How to tell a good story : The intersection of language and affect in children's narratives. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 2 (4), 355-377.

Reinhart, T. (1984) Principles of gestalt perception in the temporal organization of narrative texts. *Linguistics* 22, 779-809.

University of Cape Town

Riessman, C.K. (1991) Beyond reductionism : Narrative genres in divorce accounts. *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 1, 41-68.

Riessman, C.K. (1997) A short story about long stories. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 155-158.

Rodino, A., Gimbert, C., Perez, C., Craddock-Willis, K. & McCabe, A. (1991) *Getting your point across : Contrastive sequencing in low-income African-American and Latino children's personal narrative*. Paper presented at the 16th Annual Conference on Language Development, Boston University, October 1991.

Romaine, S. (1984) *The language of children and adolescents : The acquisition of communicative competence*. Oxford : Blackwell

Roth, F. & Spekman, N. (1986) Narrative discourse : Spontaneously generated stories of learning-disabled and normally achieving students. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 51, 8-3.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1975) Notes on a schema for stories. In D. Bobrow & A. Collins (Eds.), *Representation and understanding* (pp. 211-236). New York : Academic Press.

Sachs, J. (1980) The role of adult-child play in language development. In K. Rubin (Ed.), *New directions for child development. Vol. 10. Children's play*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass.

Sachs, J. (1983) Talking about the there and then : The emergence of displaced reference in parent-child discourse. In K.E. Nelson (Ed.), *Children's language*. Vol. 4. New York : Gardner Press.

Schegloff, E.A. (1997) 'Narrative analysis' thirty years later. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 97-106.

Scheub, H. (1975) *The Xhosa Ntsomi*. Oxford : Clarendon Press.

Schiffrin, D. (1981) Tense variation in narrative. *Language*, 57(1), 45-62.

Schiffrin, D. (1984) How a story says what it means and does. *Text*, 4(4), 313-346.

Schiffrin, D. (1987) *Discourse markers*. Cambridge University Press.

Schiffrin, D. (1994) *Approaches to discourse*. Oxford : Blackwell.

Schroder, S. & Terhorst, E. (1990) *Towards the development of a narrative schema in children.* Paper presented at the Congress for the Study of Child Language, Budapest, July 1990.

Scollon, R., & Scollon, S.B.K. (1981) *Narrative, literacy and face in interethnic communication.* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

Scollon, R. & Scollon, S.B.K. (1984) Cooking it up and boiling it down : Abstracts in Athabaskan children's story retellings. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Coherence in spoken and written discourse* (pp. 173-197). Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

University of Cape Town

Shell, R.C.L. (1994) The Tower of Babel : The slave trade and creolization at the Cape, 1652-1834. In E.A. Eldredge & F. Morton (Eds.) *Slavery in South Africa : Captive labour on the Dutch frontier* (pp. 11-39). Pietermaritzburg : University of Natal Press.

Shirk, M. (1985) *Language contact in a lower socio-economic suburb of Cape Town : non-standard linguistic features in White and 'Coloured' pre-school children.* Unpublished research report, University of Cape Town.

Shiro, M. (1997) Labov's model of narrative analysis as an emerging study in discourse. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 309-314.

Silva, M.J. & McCabe, A. (1996) Vignettes of the continuous and family ties : Some Latino American traditions. In A.McCabe (Ed.), *Chameleon readers : Teaching children to appreciate all kinds of good stories*. New York : McGraw-Hill.

Sleight, C.C. & Prinz, P.M. (1985) Use of abstracts, orientations, and codas in narration by language-disordered and nondisordered children. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 50, 361-371.

Snow, C.E. (1983) Literacy and language : Relationships during the preschool years. *Harvard Educational Review*, 53, 165-189.

Snow, C.E. (1991a) *The theoretical basis of the Home-School study of language and literacy development.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 7, 1991, Chicago.

Snow, C.E. (1991b) Building memories : The ontogeny of autobiography. In D. Cicchetti & M. Beeghly (Eds.), *The self in transition : Infancy to childhood* (pp. 213-242). Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

Snow, C.E. (1994) Enhancing literacy development : Programs and research perspectives. In D.K. Dickinson (Ed.) *Bridges to literacy : Children, families and schools* (pp.267-272). Cambridge, MA : Blackwell.

Snow, C.E. & Dickinson, D.K. (1990) Social sources of narrative skills at home and at school. *First Language*, 10, 87-103.

Snow, C.E. & Imbens-Bailey, A. (1997) Beyond Labov and Waletzky : the antecedents of narrative discourse. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 197-207.

Sokolov, J.L. & Snow, C.E. (Eds.) (1994) *Handbook of research in language development using CHILDES.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Spindler, G. (Ed.) (1982) *Doing the ethnography of schooling.* New York : CBS Publishing.

Stein. N.L. & Glenn, C.G. (1979) An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children. In R.O. Freedle (Ed.), *New directions in discourse processing; Vol. 2, Advances in discourse processes* (pp. 255-282). Norwood, NJ : Ablex.

University of Cape Town

Stein, N.L. & Albro, E.R. (1997) Building complexity and coherence : Children's use of goal-structured knowledge in telling stories. In M. Bamberg (Ed.), *Narrative development : Six approaches*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Sulzby, E. (1986) Writing and reading : Signs of oral and written language organization in the young child. In W.H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy : Writing and reading* (pp. 50-89). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Sulzby, E. & Zecker, L.B. (1991) The oral monologue as a form of emergent reading. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.) *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 175-213). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Swart, C.C. (1983) *Windermere : From peri-urban area to suburb (1920's to 1950's)*. Unpublished BA (Hons.) thesis, Department of History, University of Cape Town.

Teale, W.H. & Sulzby, E. (1987) Literacy acquisition in early childhood : The roles of access and mediation in storybook reading. In D. Wagner (Ed.) *The future of literacy in a changing world*. Pergamon Press.

Tedlock, D. (1977) Toward an oral poetics. *New Literary History*, 8, 507-19.

Tizard, B. & Hughes, M. (1984) *Young children learning*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Toolan, M. J. (1988) *Narrative : a critical linguistic introduction*. London : Routledge.

Toomey, D. & Sloane, J. (1994) Fostering children's early literacy development through parent involvement : A five-year program. In D.K. Dickinson (Ed.) *Bridges to literacy : Children, families and schools* (pp.129-149). Cambridge, MA : Blackwell.

Traill, A. (1995) The Khoesan languages of South Africa. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.) *Language and social history : Studies in South African sociolinguistics* (pp. 1-18). Cape Town : David Philip.

Umiker-Sebeok, D.J. (1979) Preschool children's intraconversational narratives. *Journal of Child Language*, 6, 91-109.

Van der Rheede, I. (1983) *'n Sosiolinguistiese ondersoek na taalgebruik in Belville-suid*. Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa.

Watson, K.A. (1973) A rhetorical and sociolinguistic model for the analysis of narrative. *American Anthropologist* 75, 243-264.

Weaver, P.A. & Dickinson, D.K. (1982) Scratching below the surface structure : Exploring the usefulness of story grammars. *Discourse Processes*, 5, 225-243.

Wells, G. (1985) *Language development in the pre-school years*. New York : Cambridge University Press.

Willenberg, I.A. (1996) *The emergent literacy development of pre-schoolers and their home supports for literacy*. Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Cape Town.

University of Cape Town

Wolf, D. (1985) Ways of telling : Text repertoires in elementary school children. *Journal of Education*, vol. 167 (1), 71-87.

Wolf, D., Moreton, J. & Camp, L. (1994) Children's acquisition of different kinds of narrative discourse genres and lines of talk. In J.L. Sokolov & C.E. Snow (Eds.), *Handbook of research in language development using CHILDES* (pp. 286-323). Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Wolfson, N. (1978) A feature of performed narrative : the conversational historical present. *Language in Society*, 7, 215-237.

Wolfson, N. (1982) *CHP : The conversational historic present in American English narratives*. Dordrecht, Holland : Foris.

Wolson, L. (1992) *An investigation of the preschool language experiences of disadvantaged preschoolers in Cape Town*. Unpublished research report, Department of Logopaedics, University of Cape Town.

Wood, T.H. (1987) *Perceptions of, and attitudes towards, varieties of English in the Cape Peninsula, with particular reference to the 'Coloured Community'*. Unpublished Masters thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 1

Background to the families from whom speech recordings were obtained in homes.

A) Family network

GRANDMOTHER & GRANDFATHER

Family 1 :	Family 2 :	Family 3 :
MOTHER (N)	MOTHER (K)	MOTHER (Z)
FATHER (E)	FATHER (Y)	FATHER (Y)
CHILD 1 (A) (1 year)	CHILD 2 (Y) (2 years)	CHILD 3 (T) (2 years)
	+ Father's parents + Father's brother, wife & son, 3 years	

B) Patterns of language use

Grandfather and grandmother ran a small shop, an extension to their house in Kensington. They were of Indian descent and spoke Konkani and Afrikaans as first languages. All three sets of parents spoke Afrikaans with grandmother and grandfather. Grandmother spoke some Konkani to the grandchildren, but otherwise she and grandfather tended to address them in Afrikaans.

The whole extended family was Muslim and consequently several Arabic terms formed a small part of their lexicons, in addition to some loan-words from Konkani.

Family 1 : Father E. was a surveyor and his wife N. had qualified as a teacher, although she was not working outside the home at the time of recording. Mother's family background was Afrikaans. She said she spoke mostly English to her husband (although on the recordings she almost always addressed him in Afrikaans) and both parents spoke English to their child (this was borne out by the recordings). They lived adjacent to grandmother and grandfather, in an extension of the house.

Family 2 : Mother K. was also a housewife and her husband Y. a teacher. They reported speaking mostly Afrikaans to each other and English to their child (although mother said she sometimes addressed the child in Afrikaans). Father's family, with whom they lived, spoke mostly English, but some Afrikaans ('Afrikaans for reprimands').

Family 3 : Father was the child's primary caretaker before his death, which occurred shortly after recordings commenced, while mother worked. The parents spoke mostly Afrikaans to each other and to their child. The child, T., was described as Afrikaans-dominant, in contrast to her two cousins. After the father's death, she was cared for during the day by mother N. (family 1), who initially switched from using Afrikaans with T. to English with A., her own son (see recording extract 3), until T's English improved.

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 2

Non-standard English and Afrikaans lexical usage and lexical borrowings among Muslim speakers

Table 1 : Non-standard English lexical usage in the Kensington/Factreton data

by,	(at)	I wasn't by the beach; I wasn't by the dentist yet
		there by the swings; here by the creche
	(with)	by my ma; by my mommy (Q : where do you stay?)
	(in)	by Yasmin's class
	(to)	I talk English by my mommy
		so she go by a hospital
		that lady's brother come here by my ma
		I did go by the deep water
	(on)	do you know where I did go by the Easter Sunday?
with	(by)	with the aeroplane
	(in)	we were riding with my daddy's car there, *ne*
come/go with	(with us, me)	then my daddy came with at the work
		my ma did also go with
in	(to)	I was scared to go in the beach
		so I had to go in bed; so we all went in bed
	(at)	and so my mommy was in the doctor
		in the work
on	(in)	the childrens is there on the pool
till	(to)	we walk far from the train till here
us	(our)	a puppy in us house and a big dog in us yard
us	(we)	us did eat
them	(they)	so them fight with my brother; last night them did fight
they	(them)	my mommy *mos* went with they to beach *mos*
he	(it)	a car come and he bump me on my back
his	(he)	his open his mouth just so big
him	(he)	then him bite me
him	(his)	he can't swim with him leg
me	(myself)	then I scratch me
Proper Name + them		Mickey stay there by auntie Marion-them

so (to indicate the size, quantity or nature of a thing or an action) :

my mommy is going to buy **so** a knife (indicates length with hands)
a sailing board is **so** (indicates size with hands)
we also got **so** a kokis at our house (i.e. similar to the ones present)
Olivia colour over the lines and then she make **so** (makes a mark on paper)
I came **so**, ne ... and I make **so** into his leg (describing with gestures a fight)
I got only **so** brothers (indicates number with fingers)

a	(the)	We got a sailing board and a train; the train can't work and a sailing board is so.
		So she go by a hospital.

University of Cape Town

because why (because)		and so I did fall outside, because why Morne make me sore
can't	(doesn't)	the train can't work
can	(could)	I wish that car can be bumped in
make dead	(kill)	and then they did make me dead
make closed	(wrap up)	so I took that towel and I made me closed
fetch	(take)	and so the ambulance came to *mos* fetch me to the hospital
take for	(take)	my mommy did take for me by the doctor
pass	(pass by)	did you pass there?
late time	(late)	so the next morning, it was late time, *ne*
two times	(twice)	we did go visit them two times
whole day	(for the whole day)	my teacher put them in the corner whole day, then they must stand whole day
far	(a long way)	we walk far from the train till here I did see a accident, far *ne*
mad	(Adv)	they ride mad, you must see
still	(already)	I had my birthday still
	(?)	the boys stand on the girls still
all	(a lot of?)	we did go to give our auntie all fruit
up	(finished)	so all the food was up
childrens	(children)	the childrens make so

Table 2 : Non-standard Afrikaans lexical usage in the Kensington/Factreton data

	Standard Afrikaans		
in	(*onder*)	*dan le ek lekker in die sambreel*	[then I lie nicely under the umbrella]
op	(*uit*)	*dan gooi hulle 'n klomp kinders op die venster*	[then they threw a bunch of children out of the window]
	(*in*)	*toe vlieg my pa op die lug*	[then my dad flew in the sky]
by	(*in*)	*toe vlieg ek by die lug*	[then I flew in the sky]
hom	(*sy*)	*hy is daar by hom huis*	[he's there at his house]
		toe brand hom hol	[then his arse burned]
onse	(*ons*)	*en onse huis het gebrand*	[and our house burned]
		nie onse baby *nie*	[not our baby]
almal	(*al*)	*hulle baklei op die hoek, almal die kinders*	[they fight on the corner, all the children]
		toe was almal my ma se tande vrot	[then all my mom's teeth were rotten]
al	(*almal*)	*dan kom al in*	[then everyone came in]
'n	(*die*)	*ons het gesien 'n polisie ry dan*	[we saw the policemen ride then]
geklei(*baklei*)		*hulle het by die huis geklei*	[they fought at home]
popo, pee		*hy het gepopo en gepee*	[he pooed and peed]
kom	(*word*)	*toe kom hy siek*	[then he got sick]
gaat	(*gaan*)	*toe moet ek gaat pee*	[then I had to go pee]
mis	(*verlang*)	*toe mis ek vir my ma*	[then I missed my mom]

University of Cape Town

boeta	(*broer*)	*en toe skiet hulle my boeta*	[and then they shot my brother]
jongetjie (*seun*)		*toe brand die vrou en die jongetjie in die kar*	[then the woman and the boy burned in the car]
manne	(*mans*)	*twee manne verbrand*	[two men burned]
poppensie, poppentjie		*ek gaan 'n poppensie teken* (*pop, poppie*)	[I'm going to draw a doll]
boere [white Afrikaners, police]	(*polisie*)	*toe* phone *hulle die boere*	[then they phoned the police]
ope, oepe	(*oop*)	*dan staan die deur ope* *dan maak hulle die agterdeur ope*	

Lexical borrowings among Muslim speakers

Among Cape Muslim speakers borrowing occurs not only from English into Afrikaans in informal styles, but also, in cultural-religious registers, from Arabic and Malayu into both English and Afrikaans. Examples (from Davids 1990; Wood 1987; Barnes & Mahomed 1994) are : *Eid, Eid-dag* (Arabic: religious festival); *boeka* (Malayu : to break the fast at sunset during Ramadaan); *kanala, kanallah* (Malayu, *karna Allah* : please); the greeting *as-salam-u-alaikum* (Arabic : peace be upon you).

Wood (1987) claims that Arabic and Malayu loanwords are more likely to occur in an Afrikaans linguistic context than an English one and that they may be perceived by some speakers to be Afrikaans words. In my own data, however, the following loanwords cropped up in the conversations and narratives of Muslim children in both English and Afrikaans contexts : *Allah* (Arabic : God); *al-hamdu-lillah* (Arabic : thanks/praise to *Allah*); *batcha, batja* (Malayu : read/recite e.g. the Qur'an). Many Muslim children attend a *madrasah* (Islamic school) in the afternoons, where they receive religious instruction and learn some Arabic; however, the loanwords mentioned here are likely to be incorporated into everyday English or Afrikaans usage.

Indian languages are another source of loanwords in families of Indian descent (some, but not all, of whom are Muslim). Languages such as Konkani, Gujarati and, less frequently, Tamil, may still be spoken by grandparents in some homes where English and/or Afrikaans have become the first language of subsequent generations. In the extended family from whom I collected speech recordings in Kensington, Konkani loanwords representing kinship relations and expressions of respect were used routinely by the children and grandchildren of Indian immigrants; these included *naani* (maternal grandmother), *bhaana* (older sister), *maamu* (uncle), *bes* (invitation to sit), and *maaf* (sorry). In their informal use of Afrikaans, these words appeared alongside frequent borrowings from English as well as Arabic religious expressions of their Islamic faith, yielding a rich, polyglottic lexicon that is a reflection of a multi-faceted linguistic and cultural heritage.

University of Cape Town

Table 3 : Lexical borrowings among Muslim speakers

Borrowings from Arabic and Malayu	
Eid, Eid-dag	Arabic : religious festival
boeka	Malayu : to break the fast at sunset during Ramadaan
kanala, kanallah	Malayu, *karna Allah* : please
as-salam-u-alaikum	Arabic : peace be with you
Allah	Arabic : God
al-hamdu-lillah	Arabic : thanks / praise to *Allah*
batcha, batja	Malayu : read/recite the Qu'ran
madrasah	Arabic : Islamic school
Borrowings from Konkani, Gujarati or Tamil	
naani	maternal grandmother
bhaana	older sister
maamu	uncle
bes	invitation to sit
maaf	sorry

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 3

Preschools and Schools in Kensington/Factreton

A) Preschools

1. **Factreton Play Centre** Sunderland Street Factreton
Council-run; caters for poorest families in Factreton, the majority Afrikaans-dominant. Nominal fees.

2. **Kensington Creche** 12th Avenue Kensington
Subsidised by Union of Jewish Women and the state. Draws children from Kensington and Factreton. Fees R140 per month

3. **Gateway Childrens Centre** 8th Avenue Kensington
State subsidised. Draws children from Kensington and Factreton. Fees R 220 per month.

4. **Watersprite nursery school** 9th Street Kensington
Caters for better-off families in Kensington, the majority English-speaking. Higher fees – R250 per month; has some trained teachers and a Parent-Teacher-Association.

B) Primary schools

1. **W.D. Hendricks Primary** Acre Road Factreton
Afrikaans-medium only.
Caters for the poorest section of the community in Factreton.
Fees are nominally R100 per annum, but since many parents are unemployed this is not enforced.

2. **Sunderland Primary** Sunderland Street Factreton
Dual medium.
Approximately equal numbers of English- and Afrikaans-medium classes in each grade. Number of English classes relative to Afrikaans has increased steadily over the last decade.
Fees R100 per annum.

3. **Factreton Primary** 16th Avenue Factreton
Dual medium.
2 English- and 1 Afrikaans-medium class in each grade. Previously, reverse proportions of English to Afrikaans classes existed. With the shift to increasing numbers of English classes occurring from the lower grades up, from 2001 Grade 1 will be English-medium only.
Fees R150 per annum.

4. **Wingfield Primary** Factreton Avenue Factreton
Dual medium.
Started as an Afrikaans-only school; introduced an English medium pre-primary class in 1991 and have expanded since then to include English classes in roughly equal proportions to Afrikaans classes up to Grade 7.
Fees R200 per annum

University of Cape Town

5. **H.J. Kroneberg Primary** Nyman Street Kensington
Dual medium changing to English-medium.
Pre-primary to Grade 3 only. Feeder school to Windermere Primary.
Afrikaans-medium classes are phasing out; only one mixed-medium class still exists in Grade 3.
Fees R240 per annum.

6. **Windermere Primary** 10th Avenue Kensington
Dual medium changing to English-medium.
Grades 4 to 7 only. Receives children from H.J. Kroneberg Primary.
Afrikaans-medium classes phasing out.
Fees R250 per annum.

7. **Kenmere Primary** 10th Avenue Kensington
Dual medium.
Originally an Afrikaans-only school, now has only three Afrikaans-medium classes remaining, in grades 5 to 7.
Fees R350 per annum.

8. **St John's Catholic School** 8th Avenue Kensington
English-medium only.
Semi-private, state-aided church school.
Highest fees : R375 per annum.

C) High schools

1. **Windermere High** Boston Street Factreton
Dual medium.
More Afrikaans- than English-medium classes. Caters mostly to Factreton families.
Fees R200 per annum.

2. **Kensington High** Sunderland Street Kensington
Dual medium.
More English than Afrikaans classes : in each grade, four English to two Afrikaans classes.
Number of English classes has increased on a regular basis over the last few years.
Fees R400 per annum.

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 4

Definitions of child-talk categories

Contextualized talk

Control talk : talk aimed at controlling the behaviour of others via imperatives (e.g., 'cross your legs'; 'don't throw sand'); statements in the first person intended to control ('Idon't want no laughing) and directives in the third person ('she mustn't take our crayons').

Commentary : comments on ongoing events, present objects or behaviour (e.g., 'I jump over the car'; 'these are matron's mugs'; 'she don't want to give me bubblegum'); attention-getting challenges ('you can't catch me', 'I win'); tattle-tales ('teacher, Dylan throw sand') and insults ('you just like a monkey').

Elliptical/ Moodless utterances : single words, minor utterances ('Good morning Mrs Jones'), vocatives and exclamations.

Inquiry : questions relating to actions taking place in the present time (e.g., 'where are you going?'; 'where did you get this?').

Personal preference : statements in the first person stating what the child likes or wants (e.g., 'I don't want to give your bangle back'; 'I like Robyn and Jade').

Decontextualized talk

Pretend talk : any utterance involving the pretence of one object standing for another (e.g., 'here is your gun'), make-believe or fantasy ('I'm going to be the baker'; 'they two are going to jail').

Talk about past/future events : any utterance cast in the past or future tense (e.g., 'I was standing here'; 'I did have a party'; 'I'm gonna bring your bangle back').

Narrative : a minimum of two utterances encoding a specific, distant past, real event, including fictional stories

Non-immediate talk : talk about objects or events outside of the present context (e.g., 'I haven't got toys there by my house'); talk demonstrating knowledge of the world ('it looks like army children'; 'boys can also model'; metaphors and associations ('just like a butterfly).

Literacy focused talk

Skill routines : rhyming ('three, four, five, I caught a fish alive'; 'Sandy Meier, *gebakte eier* [cooked egg]'); learned phrases; counting.

Book reading/discussion : talk while paging through a book, asking questions about a book, pointing out pictures and objects and pretend reading.

Talk about print : any talk referring to writing ('look, there she writing'; 'it's got a lot of names *ne*).

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 5

Transcript of a fictional story-reading session in the preschool classroom

T : now this story's about Jack and the - / robbers *
C : robbers *
T : (now listen to the story / -
You better listen hey / come / - - sit / they all want to see / - -)
Now once upon a time there was a boy and his name was –
C : Jack
T : what the boy's name
C : Jack
T : one morning / he set out to seek his fortune / -
And he hadn't got far / when he met a -/ cat
C : cat
T : miaou miaou / went the cat / - -
Where are you going Jack / - asked the cat / -
I'm going to seek my fortune / -
Miaou / said the cat / may I come with you / -
Yes / said Jack / - the more the merrier / -
So they went / jiggery jog / jiggery jog / jiggery jog /
(Shh shh)
they went a little further / and they met a dog / -
woof woof / - where are you going Jack / asked the dog /
I'm going to seek my fortune / said Jack /
May I come with you /
Yes / said Jack / - the more the merrier /
So off they went / jiggery jog / jiggery jog / jiggery jog /
(if you don't sit down I'm gonna put you in the corner over there hey / - -
sit over there)
they went a little further / and then they met a goat / - -
then the goat said to them / Jack / where are you going /
and Jack said / I'm going to seek my fortune / -
then the goat said / can I come with you / -
and Jack said / yes / come along / the more the merrier /
and jiggery jog / jiggery jog / jiggery jog / they went / -
and they went a little more further / - and then they met a . bull /
and the bull said to Jack / where are you going to / Jack / -
and Jack said / I'm going to seek my fortune / -
(shhh – listen)
and then / the bull said / can I come with you /
Jack said / yes / come along / the more the merrier / -
And then they went / - jiggery jog / jiggery jog / -
And not long they met a rooster / -
The rooster was standing on top of the tree / - on the – on on the house / -
He's crowing there / cockadoodledoo /
And the . fox said / the rooster said / - Jack / where are you going to /
And Jack said / I am going to seek my fortune / -

University of Cape Town

The rooster said / can I come along with you / -
And then he said / yes / come along / the more the merrier / -
And then they all start to walk / -
Then / they walking / and walking / until it became dark / -
Then they was so tired / they were looking for a place to stay / -
And there was no place / -
And then they thought they'd keep on walking and walking / -
And as they were walking / they came to a house / -
And then Jack told the others / keep quiet /
Now he went to go look / who's inside the house / -
Then he went to the window / -
And then / when he went / . there he saw the robbers / . were busy inside there / -
Can you see them [displays picture in book] / - - all those robbers inside / - -
They were busy counting – money / -
So Jack went back / . he told the others / . hey / listen here guys /
There's somebody in the house there /
I think they are robbers and they stealing the people's money / . he said / -
And then he said to them / now listen to me carefully / -
I want you all to make a noise / . he said / -
But first / - lets go inside the house / quietly / -
Then they went inside the house /
And Jack / was afraid that the robbers would come back /
But / when he came inside the house / they were out already (2 sylls.)
Each one found a place to hide / -
So when he was (2 sylls.) / - he put the cat / in the rocking chair /
The dog / under the table / . the goat / upstairs / . the bull / in the . cellar / .
The rooster / flew up / onto the roof / . and Jack / went to the / - bed / -
In the middle of the night / the robbers sent one man back / to the house / . to fetch the money / -
Then / soon / . one man came running back /
Hoo hoo / he said / -
And the robber goes / hey / what's happening now [deep voice]
He said / - I got a terrible fright / and . this is what I saw / . he said /
When I went inside the house / and tried to sit in the rocking chair / -
But / . there was a old woman knitting / .
And she stuck her needles in me / -
And they said what /
Yes / - and you know what else / - when I got inside there/ - there was . a. something/
It was scratching me behind my back / - he said /
What / - he said yes /
And then the other robbers said / oh oh / I'm not going to go inside that house there /
Because there is definitely something there /
(Ryan / will you please keep quiet / -)
and you know what / then they sent the second robber to go inside / -
oooh / he came running again /
you know what / when I went to the table to get some money /
there was a shoe-maker / under the table / -
and he stuck his scissors in me / -

University of Cape Town

but of course / that was the dog hey / -
and . I tried to go upstairs / . but there was a man flashing xx /
and he knocked me down with his flashing stick / -
it wasn't / - a man / - it was the / - goat *
C : goat
T : and then I tried / to go down to the cellar /
But there was a man / down there / chopping wood /
And he knocked me back with his axe / -
But it wasn't a man / . it was the / - bull /
The bull took his horns / and stuck him with his horns hey / -
And you know what happened / -
And the robber said / uh uh / I'm getting out of here / I'm never going to go there again
And you know what / . the robbers thought / . hey / lets leave the money
And then they look at the house / and they started to run out of the house there /
And they never went back there /
And you know Jack and his friends / . they lived there /
And the money / they bought them lots of food /
and they bought them lots of clothes for them /
and then they lived happily ever after in the house /
and the robbers / . they never went back to the house again /
and they never want to be seen again / hey *
C : [interrupts with a question]
T : *hulle's bang ja / ne / hulle's bang hulle gaan /.*
Hoekom's hulle bang / - huh / - why they scared /
C : [unintelligible reply]
T : who made a noise / -
The bull made a noise / yes /
And that happens when the people steal money / then the other people see them hey/-
And then they catch you there / and the people chase you / -
So the robbers go / never again I'm going to steal money / -
Because that is what happens / if you steal / then you get caught out /
And that's why the people said / we go back to that house again / - no ways / -
And the boys / and the goat / and the . pig / not the pig / and the rooster / -
They live happily in the house there / can you see the picture here / - -
I'm going to show you / - there's the cow
C : [various interruptions]
T : I'll show you man / - -
Because they were stealing the other people's money /
there was nobody in the house hey / -
you call people / - yes / you call people that steal money / what you call them /
C : robbers
T : robbers yes / - should you steal from one another / -
Should you steal one another's money / -
T : who made a noise / -
The bull made a noise / yes /
And that happens when the people steal money / then the other people see them hey/-
And then they catch you there / and the people chase you / -
So the robbers go / never again I'm going to steal money / -
Because that is what happens / if you steal / then you get caught out /
And that's why the people said / we go back to that house again / - no ways / -
And the boys / and the goat / and the . pig / not the pig / and the rooster / -

University of Cape Town

They live happily in the house there / can you see the picture here / - -
I'm going to show you / - there's the cow
C : [various interruptions]
T : I'll show you man / - -
Because they were stealing the other people's money /
there was nobody in the house hey / -
you call people / - yes / you call people that steal money / what you call them /
C : robbers
T : robbers yes / - should you steal from one another / -
Should you steal one another's money / -
C : no
T : should you steal one another's fruit
C : no
T : no hey / if you want something / you ask / and then you will get /
But you don't / - steal / - it's not nice / . to steal / - okay /

University of Cape Town