Grace: the logogenesis of freedom

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ABSTRACT In this article I consider a two-page autobiographical recount which appears at the end of Nelson Mandela's book *Long Walk to Freedom* as a summary of his life and what he has learned from it. My aim is to illustrate the role of a detailed analysis of single texts in the field of discourse analysis, as opposed to studies of selected variables across a corpus of texts. The analysis is conducted within the general theoretical framework of systemic functional linguistics, with special attention to transitivity, mood, theme, grammatical metaphor, lexical relations, conjunction, tense, phase, process type, hierarchy of periodicity, polarity, continuity, elaboration, extension and the analysis of images in multimodal text. Through these procedures I show the way in which Mandela reconciles the linear unfolding of his life history with the deepening understanding of freedom that gives meaning to his life – by means of a spiral texture (evoking the oral tradition of his native tongue) which returns again and again to the meaning of freedom at different levels of abstraction. The effect, I think, is inspirational – with no tinge of bitterness or betrayal; rather a message of hope and wisdom – grace personified. The approach exemplifies a positive style of discourse analysis that focuses on hope and change, by way of complementing the deconstructive exposé associated with critical discourse analysis.

KEYWORDS: *critical discourse analysis, discourse analysis, genre, multimodality, systemic functional linguistics*

1. The text

By way of concluding his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela (1995, 1996) retells the story of his life and how it has reshaped his understanding of freedom. For many readers it is a moving and inspirational text, confirming the grace and wisdom of a man who changed his world and looks back

over his achievements with great humility. For discourse analysts, the challenge lies in showing how this is achieved – both with respect to theory and analysis, and with respect to what we want our theory to do for us, especially where we want to use it to intervene in social processes (as advocated by critical discourse analysts; see Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard, 1996; Janks and Ivanic, 1992; Kress, 1996). I take up a little of this challenge here, drawing on systemic functional linguistics to explore the text in relation to the generalized system of meanings it instantiates. In addition I consider the roles of text and image in a multimodal version of the text (as framed by two photographs and margin notes in Mandela, 1996).

The text in question comprises the final six paragraphs of Mandela (1995), which follow a section break. Here I interpret the text generically as a recount, and divide it into major phases, Orientation ^ Record of Events ^ Re-orientation (for discussion of the recount genre see Martin 1985, 1992, 1997; Martin and Plum, 1997). In addition I have highlighted in small caps the meanings that move the recount forward from one stage to another in Mandela's life (see Appendix for guide to other style features).[1]

Example 1
[Orientation]
I was not born with a hunger to be free. I WAS BORN free – free in every way that I could know. Free to run in the fields near my mother's hut, free to swim in the clear stream that ran through my village, free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls. As long as I obeyed my father and abided by the customs of my tribe, I was not troubled by the laws of man or God.

[Record of Events]
It was only when I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion, when I discovered as a young man that my freedom had already been taken from me, that I began to hunger for it. AT FIRST, AS A STUDENT, I wanted freedom only for myself, the transitory freedoms of being able to stay out at night, read what I pleased and go where I chose. LATER, AS A YOUNG MAN in Johannesburg, I yearned for the basic and honourable freedoms of achieving my potential, of earning my keep, of marrying and having a family – the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life.

BUT THEN I slowly saw that not only was I not free, but my brothers and sisters were not free. I saw that it was not just my freedom that was curtailed, but the freedom of everyone who looked like I did. That is WHEN I JOINED THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, and that is when the hunger for my own freedom became the greater hunger for the freedom of my people. It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk. I am no more virtuous or self-sacrificing than the next man, but I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed when I knew my people were not free. Freedom is indivisible; the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.

It was DURING THOSE LONG AND LONELY YEARS that my hunger for the freedom of

my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black. I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.

WHEN I WALKED OUT OF PRISON, that was my mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both. Some say that has now been achieved. But I know that this is not the case. The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.

[Reorientation]
I HAVE WALKED THAT LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, FOR MY LONG WALK IS NOT YET ENDED. (Mandela, 1995: 750–1)

Informally speaking, the Orientation phase sets the story in time and place, introducing its main character and the habitual behaviours of his early days. Then the time line begins to unfold as we transition through the Record of Events chronicling Mandela's life. Finally, as the events culminate, we move to a retrospective Reorientation which both summarizes the chronicle and bridges from 'present' to 'future' concerns.

In calling this text a recount, we are placing it among the genres available for the reconstruction and evaluation of experience. By way of exploring its social function, Mandela's recount can be usefully compared to other story genres, such as the following personal recount recorded by Guenter Plum (1988):

Example 2
[Orientation]
Well I've always wanted one [old English sheepdog; GP].

[Record of Events]
And I made enquiries for about 12 months, prior. And I was able to get a young bitch, nine weeks old, from a friend. No, it wasn't a friend then; I didn't know her then but it turned out to be a good friend, Harriet U. up at Winston Hills. She had this young bitch that she was going to keep herself and she decided that she'd let it go. So we got her. That was our Sophie. And so we started to show her of course. I think her first show was the day she turned 3 months old. She was eligible for it and I think she won her class. And, yes, she did win her class that day; it happened to be our championship show, the old English sheepdog championship show.

[Reorientation]
And we just took it from there. Every weekend we brushed her . . . off to dog shows, you know, joined the rat race. No, I thoroughly enjoy it.

Compared with Example 2, Mandela's text reads more like history than narrative, since it deals with a much longer time line and is especially concerned with its interpretation (the meaning of freedom).

Another useful point of comparison would be historical recounts of institutional experience, in the following example:

> **Example 3**
> . . . By the mid twenties, big changes took place to meet the needs of the fishing industry and government fisheries managers. The Board began to employ full-time scientific staff, and Technological Stations were established in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Prince Rupert, British Columbia. The staff quickly became multi-disciplinary. At the Biological Stations physics and chemistry were added to zoology in recognition of the importance of understanding fish habitat. At the Technological Stations zoologists did some initial work on refrigeration of fish, but chemists, bacteriologists, and engineers soon took over responsibility for industrial research and development.
>
> During the depression years the fisheries research and development program was maintained despite constrained budgets. Facilities for volunteer investigators could only be provided to those with independent financing, and the small permanent staff endured a ten-percent reduction of salaries. During the World-War-II years that followed, there was the additional setback of loss of some staff to war service . . . (W. R. Martin, 1991)

Compared with Example 3, Mandela's text is more personal, focussing on the individual life of the writer; note that there are no individuals named in Example 3, whose main protagonist is the Fisheries Research Board of Canada.

We might also compare Mandela's recount with a text from secondary school geography dealing with the destruction of habitats:

> **Example 4**
> Man has been making animals rare and even extinct for thousands of years, and one of the main ways man has achieved this is BY THE DESTRUCTION of their habitat. The destruction of a habitat MEANS THAT the vital balance between an animal and its environment is disturbed. In ancient times the destruction of habitat and the extinction of animals was quite small. Since then it has rapidly increased. People began to make more use of machines and industrialisation occurred bringing with it changes which would destroy the face of the earths environment forever. As the demands grew wood and later coal, supplied the resources needed, this in turn RESULTED IN THE DESTRUCTION of forests and habitats. At the same time that industrialisation was taking place humans were settling in new parts of the world. Whenever they settled, nests were cut down and farms established. This destroyed the habitat of many animals.
>
> THE EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIALISATION and the need of more land DUE TO THE GROWTH OF POPULATION seriously AFFECTED WILDLIFE and still is today already half the worlds tropical rainforests have already been destroyed or irreversibly damaged. This reckless ravaging of some of the most amazing habitats on earth MEANS THAT by the year 2000 the destruction will be complete and the world will be without these areas.

Compared with Example 4, Mandela's text is more story than explanation, since it unfolds largely through setting in time rather than explicit causal connections between one event and another (note the explicit causality highlighted in small caps in the preceding Example).

We could continue positioning Mandela's recount in this way for some time (see Martin, 1997; Martin and Plum, 1997; Rothery and Stenglin, 1997 on story genres; and Coffin, 1997; Veel and Coffin, 1996, on the genres of history). Cutting short the discussion, we can place Example 1 generically as autobiographical recount, as opposed to personal recount (Example 2), historical recount (Example 3), historical account (Example 4) and a range of affine but not so closely related narrative and expository genres (see Martin, 1985, 1993, 1996, in press, for discussion). Unlike the rest of Mandela's autobiography, however, the text reconstrues and interprets a great deal of time in just seven paragraphs, and in this respect it is more like the chronicles of history than the narratives of everyday life. How does Mandela manage so much time and value in so little time?

2. Abstracting freedom

Mandela begins his story using relatively concrete language. Participants (people, places and things) are realized as nouns; qualities (descriptive and attitudinal) are realized as adjectives; processes (doings and happenings) are realized as verbs; assessments of epistemic and deontic modality are realized as modal verbs; and logical connections are realized as conjunctions. Some examples follow, illustrating the choices Mandela uses to construct his childhood, and symbolizing[1] perhaps in their directness the untroubled nature of his life (labelling from Halliday, 1994; see also Halliday, 1989 [1985], on spoken and written language).

participant as Thing (noun)
I, fields, hut, stream, village, mealies, stars, bulls, father . . .

quality as Epithet (adjective)
free, clear, broad

process as Process (verb)
was born, to run, to swim, to roast, rise, obeyed . . .

assessment as Finite (modal verb)
could

logical relation as Textual Theme (conjunction)
as long as

As the recount continues, however, the relation of meaning to wording becomes much more indirect (Martin, 1993). Alongside participants realized as nouns, we find processes, qualities and modal assessments realized as nouns as well (contrast the direct realizations in small caps alongside each example):

process as a Thing (noun)	
this desire	I DESIRED freedom
hatred	They HATED the prisoner
quality as a Thing (noun)	
a hunger to be free	I was HUNGRY to be free
dignity	They were DIGNIFIED
narrow-mindedness	They were NARROW-MINDED
inhumanity	They were INHUMANE

assessment as a Thing (noun)

achieving my potential	I achieved what I COULD
truth	It wasn't TRUE
responsibilities	I MUST act

And as part of this pattern of abstraction, causal relations that might otherwise have been realized as connections between clauses are realized inside the clause as nominalized Agents which act on other nominalizations and initiate events. Note here the agentive role of *this desire for the freedom of my people* . . . in relation to *my life* and four pivotal transformations:

logical relation as Agency (inside the clause)
It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk.

Language of this kind is a long way from language in which people act, and do things to other people and things. We've entered a world of abstraction, which typifies the writing of uncommon sense discourse across institutions and disciplines and which a trained lawyer and politician like Mandela has learned to control (Halliday, 1989 [1985], 1994, 1998, refers to language of this kind as involving grammatical metaphor). The advantage of this language for Mandela is the range of meanings it makes available to him to interpret his life, meanings not available in the relatively straightforward language of his Orientation.

This range of meaning can be explored in three steps, with reference to Halliday's experiential,[2] interpersonal and textual metafunctions – focussing on the notion of freedom. Experientially, as we have noted, the text opens by construing freedom as a quality, technically an Attribute realized by an adjective – the kind of realization we associate with spoken language in informal registers and with child language in our culture:

'free' as descriptive Attribute
I was not born with a hunger to be *free*.
I was born *free* – *free* in every way . . .
free to run . . .
free to swim . . .
free to roast mealies . . .

Subsequently, freedom is generally realized as an entity, and once nominalized it can take on a wide range of participant roles. We have already taken note of freedom as an Agent of change (*It was this desire for freedom . . . that transformed . . .*). In addition, in action processes it becomes a commodity that can be exchanged:

freedom as abstract commodity (Goal)
when I discovered . . . that my *freedom* had already been taken from me,
. . . it was not just my *freedom* that was curtailed, but the freedom of . . .
A man who takes away another man's *freedom* is a prisoner of hatred . . .
if I am taking away someone else's *freedom*

when my *freedom* is taken from me.

In mental processes it functions as an object of desire:

'freedom' as abstract Phenomenon
that I began to hunger for it (*freedom*).
At first, as a student, I wanted *freedom* . . .
Later, . . ., I yearned for the basic and honourable *freedoms* of . . .
. . . that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited *freedoms* I was allowed

As an entity in relational processes it is subject to classification and transformation.

'freedom' as abstract Carrier or classifying Attribute
It was only when I began to learn that my boyhood *freedom* was an illusion,
Freedom is indivisible . . .
. . . that my hunger for the *freedom* of my own people became a hunger for the *freedom* of all people, white and black.

'freedom' as abstract Token or Value
. . . that is when the hunger for my own *freedom* became the greater hunger for the *freedom* of my people.

Once nominalized it can also function circumstantially, as an abstract destination, and even as an abstract companion along the way.

'freedom' as abstract circumstance of Location
I have walked that long road to *freedom*.

'freedom' as abstract circumstance of Accompaniment
But I can only rest for a moment, for with *freedom* come responsibilities . . .

Nominalization, in other words, puts virtually the entire transitivity system of English at Mandela's disposal as far as talking about freedom is concerned. We'll return to the question of just how he marshals this potential later in this article. Note at this point that it is the circumstantial realization (*long road <u>to freedom</u>*) that establishes the extended lexical metaphor that consolidates Mandela's interpretation of his life:

EXTENDED LEXICAL METAPHOR
When I walked out of prison . . . We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road . . . I have walked *that long road <u>to freedom</u>*. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.

This lexical metaphor is of course a familiar one in our culture; and Mandela elaborates it in his own terms towards and during his Reorientation phase. The relevant lexical strings, based on hyponymy and co-hyponymy, are *journey, road, road, way, walked, taken the final step/the first step, tried not to falter, made missteps,*

climbing, climb, my long walk; and *to rest, rest, dare not linger* – working up the phrasing that provides the title of his book.

Interpersonally, it is the freedom as commodity motif that is of most interest since it is as a commodity that freedom is objectified as something that can be taken away – and this gives rise to the question of who to blame. The key passages follow:

> when I discovered as a young man that ***my freedom*** *had already been taken from me*

> I saw that it was not just ***my freedom that*** *was curtailed*, but **the freedom of everyone who looked like I did . . .**

> . . . *A man who takes away* ***another man's freedom*** is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if *I am taking away* ***someone else's freedom***, just as surely as I am not free *when* ***my freedom*** *is taken from me*.

Mandela selects the passive three times, taking up the experiential option of leaving out the Agent implicated. The result interpersonally is a clause in which 'freedom' functions as Subject, as part of what Halliday calls the Mood element. For Halliday it is the Mood function which governs the nature of a proposition's arguability – as reflected in tags and elliptical responses such as those suggested here (Martin, 1992, 1995a).

Mood	**ResidueMood tag**	
my freedom had already	been taken from me,	hadn't it?
– Had it?		
(my freedom) that was	curtailed,	wasn't it?
– Was it?		
my freedom is	taken from me,	isn't it?
– Is it?		

So alongside not specifying who is taking freedom away (an experiential option), Mandela structures the argument interpersonally as having to do with freedom, not oppressors. Oppressors are also backgrounded in the two active clauses, where they do function as Subject. In one, Mandela talks generally about what happens when a non-specific man (*a man*) takes away another's freedom; in the other, it is Mandela himself, in a hypothetical clause, who is modally responsible (Table 1). The effect of these selections is to eschew blame, and once again it is the grammatically metaphorical language that enables the semantic drift (contrast the congruent *they put me in jail* with the metaphorical *my freedom was taken away*).

TABLE 1. *Modal responsibility and freedom*

Mood (Subject ^ Finite)	*Residue*
my freedom had already[3]	been taken from me
(my freedom . . .) that was	curtailed
(A man) who takes . . .[4]	. . . takes away another man's freedom
(if) I am	taking away someone else's freedom
(when) my freedom is	taken from me

TABLE 2. *Theme is to New as Mandela is to freedom (exemplified)*

Theme	*Transition*	*New*[5]
I	was born	free
I	yearned for	the basic and honourable freedoms . . .
that I	could not even enjoy	the poor and limited freedoms . . .
my people	were not	free
I	am not	truly free
If I	am taking away	someone else's freedom
just as surely as I	am not	free
we	have merely achieved	the freedom to be free
I	have walked	that long road to freedom

Textually the dominant pattern involving freedom has Mandela as Theme and freedom as New. This happens 17 times in the text, overwhelming other patterns of information flow. If following Fries (1981; and see Martin 1992, 1995b) we take the pattern of Themes as constructing a text's method of development and the pattern of News constructing its point, then what we have here is a favoured pattern in which Mandela is point of departure for the message and changing conceptions of freedom are what he's on about. We can sum up this drift in texture as Mandela's angle on freedom. Some of the examples are shown in Table 2.

Much less often, freedom plays a complementary role as Theme, often where the New is what Mandela learns freedom to be.

> **my boyhood freedom** was an illusion.
> **the hunger for my own freedom** became the greater hunger for the freedom of my people.
> **Freedom** is indivisible; (the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.)

Strikingly, at three pivotal moments in Mandela's career, theme predication is used to foreground freedom as both Theme and New.

[having left home]

> It was only when I began to learn that **my boyhood freedom** was an illusion, when I discovered as a young man that **my freedom** had already been taken from me, that I began to hunger for it.

[on joining the ANC]

> . . . I saw that it was not just **my freedom** that was curtailed, but **the freedom of everyone who looked like I did**. [That is when I joined the African National Congress . . .]

[living outside the rule of law]

> It was **this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect** that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk.

Again, it is the grammatically metaphorical language that facilitates the texture; in simple terms, the noun *freedom* is a lot more grammatically mobile than the adjective *free*.

3. Enlightenment

In the previous section we surveyed the range of meanings which an abstract construal of freedom made available to Mandela. Equally important is the way in which these meanings interact with each other as the text unfolds (their logogenesis; Halliday, 1993a). The impact of the text lies very much in the contingency of meanings, and in general terms what shapes this texture is the way in which two stories are mapped onto each other: the story of Mandela's day-to-day experience as he moves through space and time, alongside the story of his political development as his understanding of freedom transforms. His journey, in other words, is more than a physical one; it is a metaphysical journey as well – a spiritual quest, towards enlightenment. How exactly does this unfold?

The text is a recount; it moves through time. Temporal linearity is managed grammatically through linkers (*at first, later, then, when, when, during, when* – as highlighted in Example 1) and tense (generally past – Orientation *I was born . . .* then past in present, as the recount joins the present – Reorientation: *I have walked . . .*). This is reinforced through the lexis that names stages in a cycle of life: e.g. *born, boyhood, young man, husband, family* and the lexis that phases us through the steps along the way, both verbal *when I began to learn, I began to hunger for it, achieving my potential, has now been achieved, achieved the freedom to be free, is just beginning, is not yet ended* and nominal *the final step of our journey, the first step on a longer and even more difficult road.*

This movement through time is reconstrued by Mandela as movement through space – the extended journey metaphor I have outlined. And through the grammatical metaphor, the journey is not just a journey through physical space, but a walk towards an abstraction – to freedom. Through these steps movement in space/time acquires the possibility of depth; the text develops from two-dimensional to three-dimensional progression.

To construe depth Mandela constructs his walk to freedom as a mental quest. Life is about learning:

- free in every way that I could know
- when I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion[6]
- when I discovered as a young man that my freedom had already been taken from me
- But then I slowly saw that not only was I not free
- I saw that it was not just my freedom that was curtailed
- but I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed
- when I knew my people were not free

- I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated
- But I know that this is not the case
- But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill
- one only finds that there are many more hills to climb

And life is about change:

- the hunger for my own freedom became the greater hunger for the freedom of my people
- It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk.
- It was during those long and lonely years that my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black.

What the learning and transformation achieve is a steadily unfolding conception of freedom, throughout the text from beginning to end. Ideationally speaking we can recognize seven phases of understanding, corresponding to seven stages of Mandela's life.

(i) 'boyhood freedom'

- Free to run . . . free to swim . . . free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls

(ii) 'as a student'

- the transitory freedoms of being able to stay out at night, read what I pleased and go where I chose

(iii) 'as a young man'

- the basic and honourable freedoms of achieving my potential, of earning my keep, of marrying and having a family – the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life

(iv) 'joined the African National Congress'

- the hunger for my own freedom became the greater hunger for the freedom of my people . . . to live their lives with dignity and self-respect

(v) 'during those long and lonely years' [in prison]

- my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black

(vi) 'when I walked out of prison'

- to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others

(vii) [as President]

- . . . But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.

In the first three phases Mandela is oriented to himself, as he moves through stages of life.

[stages of life . . . freedom to]

- childhood freedom 'to play'
- adolescent freedom 'to be independent'
- mature freedom 'to support a family'

In the next two phases Mandela re-orients himself to the needs of his own people, and then of his entire community (including his oppressors). Individual freedom ***to*** do things transforms into communal freedom ***from*** oppression.

- factional freedom 'for my people'
- communal freedom 'for all people'

Finally Mandela develops his more abstract appreciation of freedom as freedom to respect and enhance the freedom of others and to get on with things freedom positions him as responsible ***to*** do.

- democratic freedom 'to respect/enhance freedom of others'
- institutional freedom 'with freedom come responsibilities'

Overall, enlightenment is organized as three waves of recontextualization – first, three stages of Mandela's life, which taken together constitute the first stage of his reorientation to the needs of his people and then his country as a whole, which taken together constitute the first stage of his move from personal liberty to the freedom to respect freedom and finally freedom with responsibilities.

(1) personal freedom
  [I] individual freedom
    (i) childhood freedom 'to play'
    (ii) adolescent freedom 'to be independent'
    (iii) mature freedom 'to support a family'
  [II] factional freedom 'for my people'
  [III] communal freedom 'for all people'
(2) democratic freedom 'to respect/enhance freedom of others'
(3) institutional freedom 'with freedom come responsibilities'

The texture of these phases, in terms of global information flow is also significant. In the paragraphs, we find a consistent pattern with an introductory hyper-Theme (or 'topic sentence'; Martin, 1992, 1993) followed by its elaboration.

The first hyper-Theme introduces boyhood freedom, the second introduces adolescent and mature freedom, the third freedom for black Africans and the fourth communal freedom for both oppressor and oppressed:

> I was not born with a hunger to be free. I was born free – free in every way that I could know.
> = . . .
>
> It was only when I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion, when I discovered as a young man that my freedom had already been taken from me, that I began to hunger for it.
> = . . .
>
> But then I slowly saw that not only was I not free, but my brothers and sisters were not free.
> = . . .
>
> It was during those long and lonely years that my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black.
> = . . .

With the move to abstract freedom the hyper-Theme introduces the following paragraph, but does not specify the new phase of understanding:

> When I walked out of prison, that was my mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both. Some say that has now been achieved. But I know that this is not the case.
> = . . .

That is saved for a later, penultimate sentence in the paragraph (a more newsworthy position):

> For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

Similarly in the final paragraph of the recount, the hyper-Theme introduces its elaborating clauses:

> I have walked that long road to freedom.
> = . . .

But the final phase of freedom, institutional freedom, is reserved for the concluding sentence of the book.

> for with freedom come responsibilities . . .

Globally then, Mandela's understanding of personal freedom as liberty (freedom to act and freedom from oppression) is treated as a kind of retrospective – his angle on his life, as given by the volume as a whole. However, once we move to the present[7] (*has now been achieved, have walked*), Mandela's ultimate conception of freedom (freedom to respect freedom, freedom with responsibilities) is positioned late in the paragraphs as news, prefaced in each case with the conclusive conjunction *for,* consummating our journey.

The newsworthiness of Mandela's ultimate conception of freedom is further enhanced by the summative nature of the recount's final paragraph in relation to the first five paragraphs, and of the recount itself as a synopsis of the autobiography as a whole. Thus final position in the clause, the paragraph, the genre (our

text) and the macro-genre (the book) harmonizes to foreground the responsibility of respecting freedom as the point of this story of Mandela's life (Fries, 1981; Martin, 1995b).

4. Engagement

Henderson (1996: 293), in his review of Mandela's autobiography, comments that 'it is as much a spiritual as a political work'. We have dealt in some measure with the spiritual dimension of the text, as far as enlightenment is concerned. What about its politics? Because the journey to freedom is not simply one that Mandela has invited us to observe; it is a trip he takes us on – an engaging quest. How does Mandela involve us as he moves along his way?

One striking pattern throughout the text is in Mandela's sense of audience – the resources he uses to take account of readers' beliefs and expectations and realign them with his own. For example, the text contains no fewer than 21 negative clauses, each concerned with explicitly denying something someone might have thought. These are listed here by paragraph:

> I was not born with a hunger to be free.
> I was not troubled by the laws of man or God.
>
> I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion[8]
> the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life.
>
> But then I slowly saw that not only was I not free
> but my brothers and sisters were not free
> I saw that it was not just my freedom that was curtailed
> I am no more virtuous or self-sacrificing than the next man
> I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed
> when I knew my people were not free.
>
> I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom
> just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me
>
> But I know that this is not the case
> The truth is that we are not yet free
> the right not to be oppressed
> We have not taken the final step of our journey
> For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains
>
> I have tried not to falter
> I have made missteps along the way
> and I dare not linger,
> for my long walk is not yet ended.

On five occasions Mandela replaces mistaken beliefs:

> I was not born with a hunger to be free.
> I was born free . . .
>
> Some say that has now been achieved.
> But I know that this is not the case.

> The truth is that we are not yet free;
> we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed.
>
> We have not taken the final step of our journey,
> but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road.
>
> For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains,
> but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

Alongside countering mistaken ideas, Mandela deals throughout the text with mistaken expectations. This 'in spite of something, something else' motif is outlined here:

> At first, as a student, I wanted freedom ONLY for myself, the transitory freedoms of being able to stay out at night, read what I pleased and go where I chose. Later, as a young man in Johannesburg, I yearned for the basic and honourable freedoms of achieving my potential, of earning my keep, of marrying and having a family – the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life. But then I slowly saw that not only was I not free,
>
> But then I slowly saw that NOT ONLY was I not free, but my brothers and sisters were not free.
>
> I saw that it was NOT JUST my freedom that was curtailed, but the freedom of everyone who looked like I did.
>
> I am no more virtuous or self-sacrificing than the next man, but I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed when I knew my people were not free.
>
> I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.
>
> I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.

In the first three of the preceding examples, concession is reinforced by continuity markers (*only, just*; Martin, 1992) which enhance the counterexpectation. In all, Mandela uses 14 of these markers to adjust his remarks to readers who might have expected more or less than he means.

[adjusting]

- It was only when I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion
- I wanted freedom only for myself
- not only was I not free, but
- it was not just my freedom that was curtailed, but
- I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed
- we have merely achieved the freedom to be free
- the first step on a longer and even more difficult road
- For to be free is not merely to cast off one's
- The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning

- one <u>only</u> finds that there are many more hills to climb
- I can <u>only</u> rest for a moment

[aspectual]

- when I discovered as a young man that my freedom had <u>already</u> been taken from
- we are not <u>yet</u> free
- my long walk is not <u>yet</u> ended.

Some of these mistaken beliefs and expectations Mandela explicitly acknowledges as his own:

- but I <u>found</u> that I could <u>not</u> even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed
- when I <u>discovered</u> as a young man that my freedom had <u>already</u> been taken from me

Others, such as *I was <u>not</u> born with a hunger to be free*, seem to be aimed at readers. In any case, our naiveté is not the issue; Mandela does not explicitly source mistaken beliefs and expectations to anyone other than himself. Rather, the unfolding text involves us in a journey during which errant suppositions are both acknowledged and refined. We are not just watching. We are taken along on the ride.

Alongside this pattern of alignment, we find a constellation of features which continually clarify and reinforce Mandela's position, lest there be any doubt about what is being asserted. One aspect of this involves what Halliday (1994) refers to as 'elaboration' (rewording meaning from one group/phrase, clause or sentence to the next; cf. the discussion of paragraph hyper-themes involving elaboration above):

GROUP/PHRASE ELABORATIONS
I was born free
= free in every way that I could know.

At first, as a student, I wanted freedom only for myself,
= the transitory freedoms of being able to stay out at night, read what I pleased and go where I chose.

Later, as a young man in Johannesburg, I yearned for the basic and honourable freedoms of achieving my potential, of earning my keep, of marrying and having a family –
= the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life.

that was my mission,
= to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both

= we have merely achieved the freedom to be free,
= the right not to be oppressed.

CLAUSE ELABORATIONS
It was only when I began to learn that my boyhood freedom was an illusion,

= when I discovered as a young man that my freedom had already been taken from

Freedom is indivisible;
= the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.

A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred,
= he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness.

The truth is that we are not yet free;
= we have merely achieved the freedom to be free,

SENTENCE ELABORATIONS
I was born free – free in every way that I could know.
= Free to run in the fields near my mother's hut, free to swim in the clear stream that ran through my village, free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls.
= As long as I obeyed my father and abided by the customs of my tribe, I was not troubled by the laws of man or God.

A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness.
= I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me.
= The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.

The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed.
= We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road.

For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.
= The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.

In addition Mandela makes frequent use of extension (Halliday, 1994) to accumulate meaning, in series of two, three and even five coordinated clauses:

That is when I joined the African National Congress,
+ and that is when the hunger for my own freedom became the greater hunger for the freedom of my people.

the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them,
+ the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.

Free to run in the fields near my mother's hut,
+ free to swim in the clear stream that ran through my village,
+ free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls.

the transitory freedoms of being able to stay out at night,
+ read what I pleased
+ and go where I chose.

the basic and honourable freedoms of achieving my potential,
+ of earning my keep,

> + of marrying and having a family
>
> It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life,
> + that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one,
> + that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal,
> + that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home,
> + that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk.

I would argue that both patterns, realignment and reinforcement, reflect a rhetoric more strongly associated with speaking than writing (Gee, 1990; Olson, 1994; Ong, 1982). This is hardly surprising since Mandela was groomed, like his father before him, to counsel the rulers of his Thembu people. These skills he learned by observing tribal meetings in which all men were free to voice their opinions, but at which the opinions of councillors carried great weight.

> I noticed how some speakers rambled and never seemed to get to the point. I grasped how others came to the matter at hand directly, and who made a set of arguments succinctly and cogently. I observed how some speakers used emotion and dramatic language, and tried to move the audience with such techniques, while others were sober and even, and shunned emotion. (Mandela, 1995: 25)

Of course we have no extant record of precisely what Mandela heard. But the influence of the publicly spoken discourse he studied is more than apparent, if we draw parallels to related orality around the world (Hymes, 1995; Whitaker and Sienaert, 1986). Consider, for example, the following speech from Australia, given by Vincent Lingiari on the occasion of the handover of a lease of 1250 square miles, formerly part of Wave Hill Station, by the (then) Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Les Johnson, to the Mura Mulla Gurindji Company on 16 August 1975 (Lingiari, 1986) – as translated by Patrick McConvell.

> The important White men are giving us this land ceremonially, ceremonially they are giving it to us.
>
> It belonged to the Whites, but today it is in the hands of us Aboriginals all around here.
>
> Let us live happily together as mates, let us not make it hard for each other.
>
> –
>
> The important White men have come here, and they are giving our country back to us now.
>
> They will give us cattle, they will give us horses, then we will be happy.
>
> They came from different places away, we do not know them, but they are glad for us.
>
> We want to live in a better way together, Aboriginals and White men, let us not fight over anything, let us be mates.
>
> –
>
> He [the Prime Minister] will give us cattle and horses ceremonially; we have not seen them yet; they will give us bores, axes, wire, all that sort of thing.

> These important White men have come here to our ceremonial ground and they are welcome, because they have not come for any other reasons, just for this [handover].
>
> We will be mates, White and Black, you [Gurindji] must keep this land safe for yourselves, it does not belong to any different 'welfare' man.
>
> –
>
> They took our country away from us, now they have brought it back ceremonially.

Space precludes a detailed analysis here; but the audience-oriented patterns of realignment and reinforcement are readily apparent, even in translation from the original Gurindji. The text unfolds in cycles (as presented here), returning four times to the point the White men took away Gurindji land, but are now giving it back – including a gracious[9] message of reconciliation as far as living together as mates is concerned. Local realignment and reinforcement thus harmonizes with global text structure here, much as it does in Mandela's recount. The major difference between the texts is that Mandela also draws on the resources of written language (i.e. grammatical metaphor), to map orality (cycles) onto linearity (temporal unfolding) – a mapping which gives rise to a spiral texture through which our understanding of freedom deepens as we are carried along. Reasoning along these lines, we might suggest that Mandela has reworked the autobiographical recount genre, blending features of western literacy with aspects of Thembu orality – in order to fashion the new meanings that interpreting his life demands.

Before closing this section, it is perhaps worth noting that Mandela's rhetoric of engagement makes us feel included rather than instructed. He doesn't tell us what to think; rather, taking our misconceptions into account, he lets us in on what he has learned. In this respect his rhetoric reflects his understanding of leadership, which he learned as a child, in the court of the Thembu regent:

> As a leader, I have always followed the principles I first saw demonstrated by the regent at the Great Palace. I have always endeavoured to listen to what each and every person in a discussion had to say before venturing my own opinion. Oftentimes, my own opinion will simply represent a consensus of what I heard in the discussion. I always remember the regent's axiom: a leader, he said, is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go on ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realising that all along they are being directed from behind. (Mandela, 1995: 25–6)

5. Recontextualization

So far I have explored Mandela's recount with respect to system – especially transitivity, mood, theme, grammatical metaphor, lexical relations, conjunction, tense, phase, process type, hierarchy of periodicity, polarity, continuity and elaboration. In this regard I have dealt with intertextuality implicitly, with reference to the climate of meaning immanent in our culture (as outlined in Halliday, 1994; Martin, 1992; Matthiessen, 1995). I have also explored some local weather, where it seemed important to deal concretely with intertextuality – Examples 2–4 to situate the genre; the two quotes from elsewhere in the

autobiography and Vincent Lingiari's speech to highlight the orality of Mandela's recount. Along both time scales of analysis, my approach has been selective, reflecting my reading of the text. As analyses accumulate and results converge, my reading, I expect, aligns with the reading position naturalized by the recount. How might this be confirmed?

One tack is to consider closely related texts, and for the recount under consideration here we have the recontextualization published in *The Illustrated Long Walk to Freedom* (Mandela, 1996). The last two pages of this edition of the autobiography position an elided[10] version of the recount in relation to two images and margin notes, as outlined in Figure 1. Following Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), this multimodal presentation consists in broad outline of two multimodal triptychs. Down the left-hand margin of page 202 (Mandela, 1996) we have the triptych formed by an image of a young boy and the following notes:

> [above photo of young boy] On the day of the inauguration I was overwhelmed with a sense of history. In the first decade of the twentieth century, a few years after the bitter Anglo-Boer war and before my own birth, the white-skinned peoples of South Africa patched up their differences and erected a system of racial domination against the dark-skinned peoples of their own land. [below photo of young boy] The structure they created formed the basis of one of the harshest, most inhumane, societies the world has ever known. Now, in the last decade of the twentieth century, and my own eighth decade as a man, that system had been overturned forever and replaced by one that recognised the rights and freedoms of all peoples regardless of the colour of their skin. (Mandela, 1996: 202)[11]

Across the pages we have the image/verbiage triptych formed by the abridged recount, with the photo of the young boy to the left, and a bigger photo (which takes up all of page 203 and spreads over a fifth of page 202) taken from the back of the crowd at Mandela's presidential inauguration, featuring the South African flag. Space precludes a detailed analysis of the two images here. In brief, the smaller photo, in naturalistic colour, features the head and upper torso of a primary school-aged African boy (medium shot). He is in the foreground, facing us, at eye-level, but focussing on something out of frame to our left. His right arm is raised in a clenched fist salute which forms a vector at a 45° angle to the triptych, reinforced by a parallel stripe on his sleeve and the fact that he is leaning to our right. The boy is wearing an orange shirt with white horizontal stripes on its body, four of which form a vector at 90° to his salute. Behind him is a crowd of what appear to be other school children, out of focus, some of whom are also saluting.

The larger photo, in naturalistic colour, is dominated by a large South African flag (medium shot). It is being held, at a 45° angle, by someone in a large crowd; the vectors formed by the flag's design are at 90° to the flagstaff, towards the lower right-hand corner of the image. The flag is at eye-level (since we are standing higher up, a few rows back). The crowd is overwhelmingly African; we see only the backs of their heads, out of focus in the immediate foreground, in focus around the flag, and increasingly out of focus towards the stage. Their gaze forms

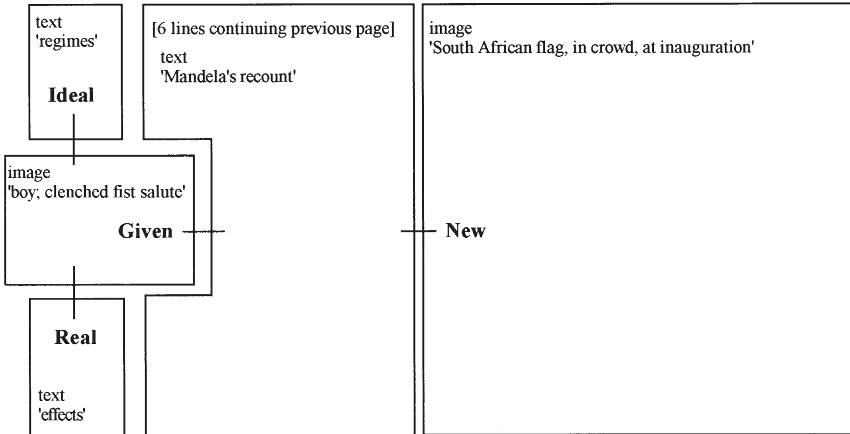

FIGURE 1. *Outline of the illustrated recount (Mandela, 1996)*

an unresolved vector towards the centre of the stage, which is outside the frame of the photo in the distance to our left.

Read in relation to one another, the images involve both similarity and contrast. As for similarities, the crowds are African; and the gatherings are constructed as political by the two symbols (the clenched fist salute and the flag). In both images the vectors formed by gaze are to our left and unresolved. The vectors formed by the boy's salute and striped shirt point in the same directions as those formed by the flagstaff and the flag's design. Beyond this, the bold black typeface above and below the boy's image, along with his orange shirt and white stripes corresponds strikingly with the colour and design vectors of the South African flag. The relationship between the images is further enhanced by contrasts – the young boy vs the mature crowd; the boy facing us vs the spectators' backs; the boy gesturing with his arm vs the flag waving in a crowd. I take these parallels and differences as evidence that we are meant to read one image in relation to the other, mediated by the recounted text, as the triptych presentation implies.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) suggest a reading of polarized images in which the left is glossed as Given and the right as New and this seems to fit the left–right triptych under discussion here. To the left, as Given, we have a young individual, gesturing with his arm; to the right, as New, we have a symbol of nationhood, aloft in a crowd of mature spectators. Mediating this relation in the triptych we have Mandela's recount, in which a boy becomes the president of the republic, and through which the freedom to play evolves into the freedom to govern (with responsibilities). Such is the nature of the photographic modality that the two images tend to linearize as Given and New the spiral texture of the recount; but, as noted, the colours and vectors of the left-hand triptych resonate so strongly with the flag that a spiral movement from youthful solidarity[12] to mature nationhood is implied. Note as well that we observe the boy, and his peers,

and are in this sense excluded from the politics constructed by his salute (which might even be read as protesting against us, though we are not addressed by his gaze); with the image of the flag, however, we are included in the crowd, and aligned with their celebration of Mandela's inauguration. Thus the triptych reinforces both the enlightenment and engagement motifs of the original monomodal recount, with the recount mediating the transition from personal to institutional values.

The top–down triptych is also polarized; Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) suggest the terms Ideal and Real for the top-to-bottom opposition, characterizing the Ideal as the generalized essence of the information, the Real as more specific, down-to-earth or practical information. In this triptych the semantic contrast seems to be between systems of government and their consequences. Above the photo Mandela deals with both the inauguration of a new republic and erection of the former apartheid regime; below, Mandela notes the effect on people of first the old regime (harsh and inhumane) and then the new (respect for the rights and freedoms of all peoples regardless of the colour of their skin). Linking these messages is the hybrid image of the boy, who can be read either as a protesting victim of old, or a celebrating champion of the new; the ambiguity of the clenched first salute (protest or celebration) thus mediates both facets of the triptych's Ideal and Real, with youthful zeal translating system into practice (see Figure 2).

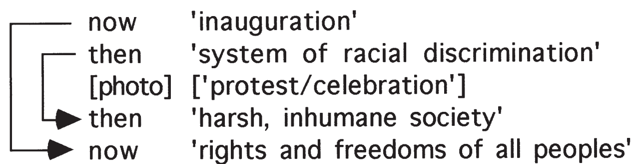

FIGURE *2. Mediating Ideal and Real in the left-hand triptych*

Alongside enhancing the meaning of Mandela's recount, the interlocking multimodal triptychs also extend it. The key meaning here is the boy's salute, which seems at first blush to contradict Mandela's Orientation: 'I was not born with a hunger to be free'. Recall, however, that it was this salute which mediated Ideal with Real, through its ambiguity in the left-hand triptych, and which resonated strongly with the flag in the right-to-left one. The very meaning which is hard to reconcile with Mandela's recount is in fact foregrounded as the apex of the semiotic vortex constructed by the multimodal text.

I suspect that the new meaning here has to do with regeneration. The margin notes recontextualize Mandela's recount with respect to the wider context of South African history (*in the first decade of the twentieth century . . . now, in the last decade of the twentieth century*). Another aspect of this recontextualization is the absence of Mandela himself from the images here, though his presence is implied by the unresolved gaze of the inauguration crowd, by his 'rebirth' in the photo of

the boy, and perhaps even by the unresolved gaze of the boy, since to his right we have the previous page and the rest of the book, throughout which Mandela's image figures prominently.[13] In each case, the virtual Mandela is realized to the left, as Given, in relation to a range of News (i.e. the flag, the president, the politicized youth, respectively). Arnheim's reading of the meaning of diagonal vectors reinforces these points. For Arnheim (1982: 107) diagonal vectors such as those formed by the salute and flagstaff are characterized as 'releasing', while those formed by the shirt stripes and flag are 'holding'. In these terms, the salute and flagstaff point forward to future accomplishments, supported by the shirt stripes and flag of the youth and nation that will get the work done.

As Mandela comments in his margin notes, the apartheid system had been 'overturned forever'; in this sense Mandela's journey has ended. The interlocking triptychs construct his legacy – one nation, united, underpinned by a generation of empowered youth for whom the freedom to respect and enhance the freedom of others is point of departure. By the time Mandela published the 1996 edition, the long walk has almost ended; the triptychs make way for others to carry on.

6. Grace

In this article I have tried, from my own specific reading position, to analyse this instance of discourse in relation to the meanings I have been trained to decode. If allowed a reaction, the term that comes to mind is *grace*, in every meaning of the word. The gracefulness with which the recount unfolds, the charm of its rhetoric, the goodwill to all peoples ... I cannot help admiring the texture, and the Mandela it construes for me. In this kind of reaction I am not alone. Consider for example the evaluative terms used promotionally on the covers of the 1995 edition: *anger, sorrow, love, joy, grace, elegance, riveting, brilliantly, emotive, compelling, uplifting, exhilarating, epic, hardship, resilience, triumph, clarity, eloquence, burns with the luminosity of faith, invincible, hope, dignity, enthralling, great, indispensable, unique, truly stunning, extraordinary, vivid, unusual, courage, persistence, tolerance, forgiveness, extraordinary, well worth, greatness, epic, struggle, idealism, inspired, cynicism, compulsory.* What is the appeal?

I suspect we are examining here Mandela's ability to naturalize radical values in terms that disarm rather than confront. Both the recount and its multimodal recontextualization promote a politics of freedom that involves respecting and enhancing the freedom of others. Put into practice, this involves more than an end to apartheid and reconciliation with its perpetrators. Ultimately it involves the reconfiguration of a global economic order which distributes resources so unevenly that it has to be propped up by all manner of unbearable regimes. In a sense then, Mandela is promoting socialism in the name of freedom; he naturalizes a comfortable reading position for those who might oppose his aims, and at the same time gives his sympathizers an inspirational shot in the arm. If discourse analysts are serious about wanting to use their work to enact social change, then they will have to broaden their coverage to include discourse of this

kind – discourse that inspires, encourages, heartens; discourse we like, that cheers us along. We need, in other words, more positive discourse analysis (PDA?) alongside our critique; and this means dealing with texts we admire, alongside those we dislike and try to expose (Wodak, 1996).

Let me close with two more comments. The first is that discourse analysis inevitably involves multimodal analysis, even if we begin with language. Traditionally, the extra-linguistic has been glossed as context and (i) ignored; (ii) discussed in common-sense terms; or (iii) analysed on an interdisciplinary basis with apparatus borrowed from another discipline (psychology, sociology, philosophy, cultural studies and the like). The alternative explored here is to construe context as a social semiotic, model it as a system of meanings and treat it as additional texture. Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) pioneering work in this transdisciplinary project[14] was drawn on earlier in order to unpack the multimodal discourse in Mandela (1996). Whether we adopt an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary perspective on discourse analysis is an important variable. I expect that modelling context as meaning is the more promising tack for sign-oriented linguists, since it encourages them to explore new ground and renovate their discipline in ways that are perhaps long overdue.

The final point I would make is that specific instances of meaning do matter, alongside our studies of generalized instances, of corpora, and of systems as a whole. In part, this issue is simply a matter of perspective: the more variables we are interested in, the fewer texts we can analyse. So the challenge lies in developing frameworks in which system can be brought into focus without losing contact with text, and text can be explored in detail without losing contact with system.[15] In this article I have leaned towards the instance, in order to focus on the contingency of meanings as they unfold from one step to another in a single text (Halliday, 1987, 1993c; Martin, 1995a). This local contingency is critical to understanding the social impact a text may have, on political developments in South Africa, for example, or on linguistic changes to the recount genre. In both connections it is important not to lose sight of grace in discourse, as outlined here.

We have taken a short stroll through meaning – in order to value an instance of semiotic weather in relation to a climate of political change. As socially engaged discourse analysts, however, our journeys have just begun. No doubt this new journal will guide us on our way.

NOTES

My thanks to Malcolm Coulthard and his colleagues at the University of Birmingham for the opportunity to present an early version of this article in September 1997, and for their insights during and following the presentation; and to Anne Cranny-Francis, Rick Iedema, Teun van Dijk and Theo van Leeuwen for their guidance on revisions.

1. Cf. Halliday (1971) who explores the role of grammar symbolizing consciousness in Golding's *The Inheritors*.

2. Halliday's ideational metafunction has two subcomponents, the experiential and the logical; we are focussing on the experiential here.
3. The Mood adjunct *already* is part of Mood; it has not been separately labelled here.
4. For Halliday Finite and Predicator conflate in the simple present; so *takes* appears as both Mood and Residue.
5. I am adopting a minimalist position here, simply taking the last group or phrase of the clause as New, based on an unmarked reading of the clause with the tonic falling on its last salient syllable; parts of what I have called transition could arguably be taken as New in a carefully reasoned clause by clause analysis.
6. Or, undoing the nominalization, *I was deluded.*
7. Following Halliday (1994), the tense choice is [past in present], the 'what happened still matters now' option.
8. Semantically, if not grammatically negative: *an illusion* = 'not real'.
9. Paul Kelly (1991) comments on his song celebrating Vincent Lingiari's achievements as follows: ' "From Little Things Big Things Grow" is dedicated to Vincent Lingiarri, the Gurindji stockmen and their families who walked off Lord Vestey's cattle station in 1966 thus initiating a land claim that lasted 8 years. The Whitlam government handed back much of the Gurindji country in 1974, Gough Whitlam himself pouring dirt into Vincent Lingiarri's cupped hands in a ceremony symbolizing the legal restoration of their lands. From this simple action of walking off in 1966 many consequences flowed'.
10. The elisions are presented in the Appendix; the larger cuts are to paragraphs 3 and 4. Paragraphs 4 and 5 from 1995 (communal and democratic freedom) are collapsed in the 1996 version.
11. This text is taken from pages 747–8 of the 1995 autobiography, a couple of pages before the end of the book.
12. Neither triptych resolves the question of whether the boy's salute is to be read as is a sign of protest or of celebration.
13. The previous pages feature images with a photo of Mandela and his daughter on stage during the inauguration, on top of smaller photos of visiting dignitaries – Fidel Castro, Benazir Bhutto, Yasar Arafat, the Duke of Edinburgh and four unnamed Arabs (in royal Saudi Arabian dress).
14. See also Kress (1997), O'Toole (1994).
15. For discussion see Halliday (1991, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c, 1993a, 1993b), Halliday and Matthiessen (forthcoming), Nesbitt and Plum (1988).

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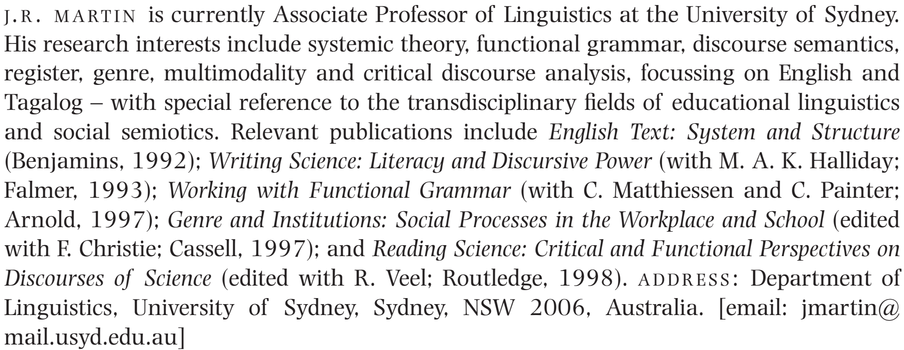

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APPENDIX: Wordings from Mandela (1995: 750–1) which are elided from Mandela (1996: 202), by paragraph:

[free in every way that I could know.] . . . [near my mother's hut] . . . [and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls]

. . . [as a student] . . . [freedom only for myself,] . . . [as a young man in Johannesburg,] . . . [and honourable] . . . [– the freedom not to be obstructed in a lawful life].

. . . [not only was I not free, but my brothers and sisters were not free. I saw that] . . . [I am no more virtuous or self-sacrificing than the next man, but I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed when I knew my people were not free. Freedom is indivisible; the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.]

. . . [as well as I knew anything] . . . [A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.] . . .

[Some say that has now been achieved. But I know that this is not the case.]

. . . [I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way.]

Note. Other style features in this article: bold type is used for highlighting; italics for citations in running text; small caps for realization of counterexpectation through continuity; underlining for through conjunction; equals sign for elaboration (Halliday, 1994).