PLAY-BY-PLAY TALK ON RADIO: AN ENQUIRY INTO SOME RELATIONS BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CONTEXT

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Abstract

The theory that informs this study is Systemic Functional linguistic theory. The major focus of this study is on the description of the register of play-by-play talk. The data for this study was collected by recording onto cassette tapes several Australian Rugby League commentaries from different radio stations. The data primarily used in this study are two Australian Rugby League radio commentaries: one from the commercial radio station, 2GB, and the other from the Australian national radio station, ABC. Both commentaries took place on Sunday afternoon on the 14th July, 1996, and they focus on the same event: the Rugby League professional match between the North Sydney Bears and the Sydney City Roosters. The research focuses on the language which is used to relay the game, 'play-by-play talk'.

Although it is generally agreed that there is such a thing as 'play-by-play talk', there is scant research into the specific characteristics of this talk, or into the contextual features which motivate it. Thus, in order to study this specific variety of language, the study begins by making a broad-based description of the textual and material environment of play-by-play talk. It is argued that the textual environment consists of two language activities: the 'Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast' and the 'commentary'. The description focuses on the linguistic frames that distinguish these two language activities from those which precede and follow them. The study then constructs an operational definition of play-by-play talk and applies some linguistic criteria to the language of the commentary in order to extract language which satisfies this definition. To this end, the linguistic criterion which proves to be most useful is the successive-temporal conjunction *and now*. Play-by-play talk is found to be a monologic language variety which enters the talk of the commentary at different points in time and for varying time periods. Once play-by-play talk is extracted from the talk of the commentary, it is analysed from three different grammatical perspectives: the interpersonal, the experiential and the textual. The results of the analyses are quantified and displayed in a series of tables and diagrams, and the patterns of choices which emerge from the analyses are discussed in terms of a description of the register properties of play-by-play talk and in terms of the kind of contextual information construed. Chapters Five, Six and Seven end with a summary profile of the grammatical choices along with a summary of the kind of contextual information these choices construe. Some of the findings from this study are that the subject matter of play-by-play talk centres on a very limited set of activities and participants; that individuals are prioritised; that the activities of the game of Rugby League are construed as active, aggressive, and often violent in nature; that there are few grammaticalised attitudes; and that the text is structured in a way that mirrors the actions which it is encoding. The approach and findings of this research highlight some ways in which a register may be located, analysed and profiled.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

These days with all the modern technology there is to choose from, radio remains one of the most accessible media of information and entertainment. While music programmes make up a significant proportion of broadcasts, radio relies most significantly on the spoken word to convey its messages.

Unlike face to face communication and many other forms of spoken communication where interactants rely on a variety of semiotic resources such as facial expressions or gestures to obtain feedback, on radio, there is no visual feedback and communication relies on the one-way direction of sounds. The sounds of the disembodied spoken word drift into the listeners' lives and have the ability to ignite an imagery of great power — a power made possible through the listeners' own powers of imagination, derived from their own discourses in life.

Talk which takes place on radio is the focus of this study, and while this type of talk is often referred to by the single term, 'broadcast talk', there is, in fact, a variety of types of talk which take place on radio, each characterised by its own content and interactive style, its own purpose(s) and its own format. There has been a variety of analyses of radio-based talk: DJ talk (e.g. Montgomery 1988, 1991), talk-back radio (e.g. Hutchby 1991; Lewis 1983 cited in Moran 1992; Potts 1989), radio talk-show therapy (Gaik 1992), radio dramas (e.g. Lewis 1991), news (e.g. Bell 1991), news interviews (Heritage & Greatbatch (1991), and sports commentary (e.g. Crystal and Davy 1969; Ferguson 1983; Kuiper, 1996). The kind of talk which is focused on in this study concerns the last mentioned type of radio talk: radio sports commentating.

In this variety, research has primarily focused on commentaries such as horse racing, ice hockey, American football, and cricket. This study concentrates on broadcasts centring on

professional Rugby League in Australia. The Rugby League radio sports commentary is a popular radio programme in Australia and is readily recognised by listeners for what it is. And, like other sports broadcasts, it possesses certain properties which set it apart from other programmes on the radio. Before proceeding to a discussion of the central aims of this study I would like to outline some of the reasons why Rugby League radio sports commentating has been chosen as the focus of this study.

1.1 Motivation for the Present Study

The motivation for the present study arises from my experience with radio sports commentating and the game of Rugby League in Australia, along with my interest in language itself. The first time that I listened to a Rugby League radio sports commentary was in 1987. That I had never bothered to listen to a Rugby League broadcast before was largely due to my feeling of disconnection with the sub-culture of Rugby League and my general 'dislike' of most contact sports. The only experience I had had of the game of Rugby League was in 1975 when I accompanied a friend to a professional match. This event confirmed my suspicions that Rugby League was a rough and violent contact sport which was watched by rather rowdy spectators in cold and uncomfortable circumstances. In some ways my impressions of Rugby League during the 70's may not have been so far off the mark, and may also have been influenced by media reports of the time. Hutchins and Phillips (1997: 165) observe that 'excessively violent matches raged in the late 1970s with "all-in brawls" a regular feature'. Even into the latter part of the next decade Rugby League was described as 'one of the most gratuitously violent games in the world' (Burchell 1987: 42).

It was with interest then that, several years later, I found that the subject of Rugby League and Rugby League radio sports broadcasts arose in conversation with Australian men who, it would seem, would not be readily associated with such a seemingly violent contact sport. I found that these men not only enjoyed the Rugby League radio commentary but that their references to Rugby League radio commentaries and Rugby League games revolved around allusions to fond memories of boyhood and afternoons with friends

reliving great matches and exchanging snippets of information about what they had seen or heard. These men listened to the Rugby League commentaries and found them not only entertaining but an important part of being a fan of Rugby League in Australia. Although I could listen to their descriptions with interest, I had difficulty understanding their affection for the rough and tough game of Rugby League, and the seemingly raucous sports broadcast that kept them informed of the game.

With the background provided me by my Rugby League friends, I again listened to the commentaries. It seemed that somehow the speakers were able to not only convey the happenings associated with the game taking place, but were able to engender a sense of camaraderie between one another, and between themselves and the listeners—a sense of 'belonging to the group'. At the same time, the words of the sports broadcast seemed to exclude people like me who were outside the community of Rugby League enthusiasts. Indeed, later, in conversation with a professional Rugby League radio commentator as part of the research for this study, the commentator spoke of an 'inner circle of knowledge' of Rugby League enthusiasts.

The challenge posed to me by my Rugby League friends was to analyse the language to see how it was able to exclude those outside this so-called 'inner circle'. Certainly, to 'speak' Rugby League, whether that be as a commentator or as a fan, is to be able to deploy a shared set of meanings. The set of shared meanings, as I interpret them from what both commentators and my Rugby League friends have related, are linked very closely with a range of life experiences connected with Rugby League in Australia. To quote Wilkins, a professional Rugby League radio commentator, those in the Rugby League inner circle have from childhood 'watched the game, played it in the backyard, know the players, know the moves, know the passes' (Wilkins 1995), and to 'speak' Rugby League as an Australian Rugby League radio commentator requires this kind of background and more. During interviews with two professional commentators I posed the question as to whether a professional American football commentator could do an Australian Rugby League commentary. The answer from both commentators was essentially an emphatic 'No'.

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Their reasons were based on both cultural and linguistic grounds as is demonstrated in the following short excerpts from those interviews.

Q. Could a professional American football commentator call a game of Rugby League in Australia?

A. *Wilkins:* Well I think it takes a long time to understand the game. It would be a bit like me going over there and calling the game of gridiron without the knowledge of all the nuances. You can't leave little bits out...

Q. What bits do you think they might leave out?

A. *Wilkins:* ... It could be just a subtle comment about the language of the game or they're speaking the wrong term. If you were to say something like 'the Brisbane Bronco's DEfence' [emphasis on first syllable] ... you've immediately ostracised half your listeners there because they won't cop that. So there is a language of the sport. And if they tripped up once that would be it. It'd be all over ... but I wouldn't feel it was terribly Australian, I guess ... I just feel that you need to have grown up with the code over a number of years to understand its full impact, to be associated with the history of the game ...You have to have strong links to the past to inspire, to identify with ... (1995).

A. *Peters:* He wouldn't get past first base because people wouldn't put any credibility in it. It would be like me going over there and learning all about their game and trying to put some excitement into it ... they would know that I'd never been a part of it (1993).

The connection between language and cultural context is inherent in each of these answers and this leads me to the first questions of interest for this study: 'What are the linguistic properties of a sports commentary?', 'What are the shared meanings conveyed in an Australian Rugby League radio broadcast?' and 'Why are these particular meanings deployed and not others?' This study aims to address these questions.

As a popular sport in Australia, particularly in New South Wales, Rugby League receives a considerable proportion of media coverage, and indeed, has been at the centre of a major media ownership battle (Masters 1997; Whitson 1998). While there is a plethora of popular literature on Rugby League including literature concerned with the media battle for ownership in the mid-90's (e.g. Masters 1997), players' biographies (e.g. Freeman 1997), player's and commentator autobiographies (Hyde 1995), encyclopaedias of Rugby League

(e.g. Andrews 1992), books on 'how to play' Rugby League by famous personalities (e.g. Raper 1972), and humorous observations of Rugby League (e.g. Roach 1995) there are no academic studies specifically focused on the language of Australian Rugby League radio broadcasts.

Previous studies of other kinds of sports broadcasts as well as studies which have included some discussion of sports broadcasts have included descriptions of phonological aspects (Crystal and Davy 1969; Kuiper 1996; Kuiper & Haggo 1985; Kuiper and Austin 1990; Pawley 1991), syntactic and lexicogrammatical features (Ferguson 1983; Pawley 1991; Marriott 1996; Hoyle 1993; Crystal & Davy 1969), formulaic expressions and clichés (Kuiper & Haggo 1985; Kuiper & Austin 1990; Pawley 1991; Wanta & Leggett 1988), episodes or discourse stages (Crystal & Davy 1969; Pawley 1991; Ferguson 1983; Kuiper & Austin 1990; Martin 1992; Hasan 1999), and the relationship between commentary and aspects of the context in which it occurs (Hasan 1999; Martin 1992; Ferguson 1983; Marriott 1996; Halliday, MacIntosh & Strevens 1964; Halliday 1977). Throughout these studies there is reference to 'play-by-play' talk and 'colour' commentating, with most studies agreeing that these two types of talk differ on a number of linguistic levels. However, no systematic means of identifying exactly what is 'colour' commentating or what is 'play-by-play' talk has been suggested nor which features of the context motivate their use. Furthermore, although reference is made to some of the contextual constraints on sports broadcasting, such as short-term memory overloading (e.g. Kuiper 1996), there are no studies which offer an analysis and description of the relationship between contextual features and specific linguistic features of the sports broadcast.

It is not difficult to ascertain when listening to a sports broadcast that it comprises a variety of language events and situations. There is the programme itself (which in the present study is the programme which is aired on a Sunday and thus for the present purposes is called the Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast, or SASB) which is set within the broader spectrum of programmes aired by the radio station. The sports broadcast centres on a specific material event, which in Rugby League is referred to as the 'match of

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the day', and the talk which takes place during the match of the day is generally referred to as the 'commentary'. It is during the commentary that the events and happenings of the match of the day are relayed to the listeners through what is generally referred to as 'play-by-play' talk.

Relaying the action of a game of Rugby League is at the very heart of the sports broadcast. When a radio station broadcasts a game of Rugby League, it employs specific speakers for specific tasks, and one speaker is assigned the role of 'play-by-play' commentator. The importance of this particular task can be seen in the kind of advertising which a radio station conducts. It is the play-by-play commentator who is foregrounded and the relaying of the events of the game is advertised as the radio station's claim to offer its listeners 'live league action' (*RLW* 1996: 4). In short, the relaying of the sports event on radio appears to be the *raison d'être* for the sports broadcast. Therefore, given the centrality and importance of the relaying of the action in a sports broadcast — play-by-play talk — this study focuses primarily on this activity and aims to develop a means of delimiting the set of meanings which are associated with this talk.

The question of 'why' certain meanings are deployed in a situation and not others however, has still not been addressed. In order to address this question, a specific view of language is assumed, one which sees language as variable according to the contexts in which it is used. To this end, the present study primarily utilises Systemic Functional Linguistic theory. This is because this theory is arguably the most comprehensively developed theory in which the relationship between language and context is shown to be theoretically motivated. A more detailed explanation of the central aims of this study follows in the next section.

1.2 Central Aims of this Study

In this study the SASB, the commentary, and play-by-play talk are viewed as three levels of talk associated with an Australian Rugby League radio sports broadcast. Theoretically, each of these levels of talk can be interpreted as a 'register'. Without pre-empting the

theoretical discussion in Chapter Two to too great an extent, we can briefly define register here as 'language variation according to use', or alternatively, 'a specific set of linguistic choices made in response to a specific situation'. Register is a key concept in Systemic Functional linguistic (SF) theory, which is the theory upon which this study is based. In this theory, the concept of register arises from the view that 'variation in language is systematic' and that this variation is 'non-accidentally' related to the social contexts in which language is used (Hasan 1987a: 120). SF theory thus prioritises paradigmatic relations between linguistic phenomena, and between contextual phenomena, such that both language and the social system in which it is located are viewed as systems of choices.

In any study which focuses on register variation, a central concern is the notion of 'probability' (Halliday 1991a: 33). According to Halliday, the founder of Systemic Functional linguistic theory, the system of language is 'inherently probabilistic' in that some options are generally more likely to be chosen than others. This is borne out in Halliday and James' (1993) study of polarity and primary tense in English, which is discussed in Chapter Four. Polarity turns out to be a skew system where the more likely choice is 'positive', while primary tense is shown to be close to an equiprobable system where either past or present tense is equally likely to be chosen overall. With regard to the study of specific registers however, Halliday argues that 'one of the significant differences between one register and another is a difference in probabilities in the grammar' (Halliday 1985c 8-9).

Questions relevant to this study are therefore: What are the choices made in the language of Rugby League Radio commentating? And if a specific register, as SF theory claims, is 'non-accidental' variation according to a specific social context of use, what are the motivating forces behind the linguistic choices made in a Rugby League radio commentary?

In order to address these questions I first interpret the SASB, the commentary, and play-by-play talk as separate registers. In fact, they each represent different degrees of delicacy

in terms of register characterisation. This is because the contextual variables associated with each vary in generality. Those relevant to play-by-play talk are considerably more constrained than they are for either the commentary (which itself contains several linguistic activities) and the SASB, which would be considered the most general register category of the three. Arguments along these lines have been raised by Biber (1994) in his discussion of registers and degrees of generality, and the relation of these to the number of situational parameters that can be identified for different language activities (see Chapter Two).

The sports broadcast that this study focuses on is the Sunday afternoon radio broadcast of a professional game of Rugby League. This is referred to as the SASB (Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast). By using the analogy of a camera lens, we could say that from a wide angle setting, the SASB can be viewed as a single activity—a programme within a radio station's regular broadcast schedule. In order to show how this programme is set apart from other programmes on radio the SASB in this study is described in terms of the kind of language activities which begin and end it, the nature of the material situational setting in which it takes place, and some of the institutional characteristics of this setting.

From a slightly closer perspective we can see that one significant activity within the SASB is the commentary, and in this study this is defined as the talk which takes place within the same time frame as the sporting event. The commentary begins and ends at the times that the 'match of the day' begins and ends. It is the activity specifically aligned to the game taking place, and it is the activity that is anticipated during 'pre-game' talk. The commentary is analysed according to the choices in polarity and primary tense, much along the lines that Halliday and James (1993) did for English in general, in order to show how choices in the commentary compare with the systemic probabilities in the language system as a whole. The underlying question here is: Does the commentary show a pattern of choices in polarity and primary tense which can serve to identify it is a separate register category?

Like the SASB, the commentary is not a homogeneous activity. If we zoom the lens of our camera into the commentary we can see that interwoven into the commentary is a variety of activities, the most dominant being the play-by-play description of the events taking place on the field of play. The play-by-play talk is the most delicate register identified in this study. In order to identify it however, we need some kind of operational definition. Therefore the views of those people who create play-by-play talk, the commentators themselves, are considered. These views are then assembled and brought together to form a 'core' definition of play-by-play talk. This expert, yet a-theoretical definition of play-by-play talk, is then carefully considered from the point of view of 1) how it can best serve to exclude other talk which does not fit the parameters of its definition, and 2) what kind of linguistic feature(s) could be used to highlight text which satisfies this definition and which at the same time excludes any talk which does not satisfy the definition. Once a means of detecting play-by-play talk is established, the play-by-play talk is analysed at the lexicogrammatical level. The detailed analysis of play-by-play talk utilises the grammatical model advanced by M.A.K. Halliday (1994c). Halliday claims that this model of grammar provides a means for the analyst to 'interpret the wording by reference to what it means' (Halliday 1994c: xvii). He argues that 'the general kinds of grammatical patterns that have evolved in language, and the specific manifestation of each kind, bear a natural relation to the meanings they have evolved to express' (1994c: xviii). If we accept this view of grammar then an analysis of the grammatical choices made during play-by-play moments in the commentary should indicate something about the meanings that the speaker is expressing. That is, an examination of the linguistic features of play-by-play talk should elucidate the kinds of contextual pressures which motivate this type of language use.

The focus of the analyses is on the grammatical systems which play a key role in the construal of interpersonal, experiential and textual meanings. As probability is a central concern of register studies, linguistic features found to be chosen during play-by-play talk are quantified so as to make some observations about the patterns of linguistic choices in the register of play-by-play talk. These choices are then summarised in terms of a

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'profile' of choices. Once a profile of the register is constructed, a description of the contextual features construed by the choices characterising this register is presented. A summary of the central aims is presented below.

Summary of the Central Aims of this Study

1) To describe

> a) some features of the overall linguistic context in which play-by-play talk is situated (the SASB), in particular the linguistic frames which set this programme apart from others on the radio.

> b) the material situational setting of play-by-play talk.

2) To describe

> a) some of the distinguishing features of the immediate linguistic context in which play-by-play talk is situated (the commentary).

3) To develop an operational definition of play-by-play talk, i.e. one which can be used to identify play-by-play talk within the linguistic context of the commentary.

4) To analyse key linguistic features of play-by-play in terms of interpersonal, experiential and textual meanings.

5) To develop a 'profile' of the linguistic features of the register of play-by-play talk.

6) To describe some of the contextual features construed by the language of play-by-play talk.

The overall aim is thus to develop a definition and description of a specific register of English showing its specific pattern of linguistic choices and the relevant contextual configuration which these patterns construe.

1.3 Data and Transcription Conventions Used in this Study

1.3.1 The Data

The data used in this study derives from two different radio broadcasts of the same professional Rugby League match which takes place on Sunday July 14th 1996: one from the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the national government-funded or public

radio station), and one from 2GB, a Sydney-based commercial radio station. The transcriptions from these broadcasts (see Appendices I and II) include some pre-game talk and some post-game talk as well as the entire talk which takes place at the same time as the game. Each transcription represents approximately 100 minutes of talk. The recordings were made by taping the radio programme from home. The broadcasts used in this study are produced by top rated stations and are assumed to be representative of professional Australian Rugby League radio commentaries.

1.3.2 Segmentation of the Data and Transcription Line Numbers

It could be argued that the most representative presentation of spoken data would be through the system of intonation. However, the transcription conventions used in an intonation analysis make it quite difficult for anyone unfamiliar with the conventions to read and follow the text as it unfolds as discourse. For this reason, the data is presented without intonation analyses, and is instead presented as text separated clause by clause. That is, each line in the transcription represents a clause, including ellipsed clauses, or contracted clauses. Text lines that begin with the letter A are from the ABC transcript, while those with the letters GB are from the 2GB transcript. I have taken as a working model the 'clause' as defined by M.A.K. Halliday (1994c) which attempts to account for both spoken and written language in contrast to the 'sentence' which is considered a unit of written language alone (see also Halliday & Plum 1985). Where a speaker's turn is entirely expressed through paralinguistic means or through laughter it is also presented on a separate line, but it is not counted as a 'turn' in any of the analyses (see section 4.5) because it does not constitute any linguistically coded information. Projecting clauses[1] and clauses related through hypotactic expansion[2] are not given a separate line and the reasons for this are discussed below.

While this approach appears fairly straightforward, there are certain difficulties which have to be accounted for. For instance, at times the speakers do not use full clauses but state merely an element of clause structure such as a circumstance or a nominal group. Furthermore, sometimes it is difficult to ascertain whether the clause elements 'belong'

with a previous or following clause, and obviously there is a cline from those which are clearly not connected, to those which could be. The final decision as to whether to include a clause element in a previous or following clause is based on a number of factors. A pause preceding and/or following the clause element suggests that the action has changed and that the clause element is referring to a different 'event' or 'location' on the field of play from that preceding or following it. A clause element such as a nominal group or a circumstance which is uttered within a separate information unit and which bears no connection with the content and/or the structure of the previous and following clause is treated as a separate and independent unit.

The problem of ascertaining the status of elements of clause structure has been noted by Pawley (1991). In presenting his cricket commentary data he arranges the transcript according to 'event-types'. In deciding what is an 'event-type' he first explains that 'in most languages the minimal grammatical apparatus needed to say something is that of the simple sentence or clause. This correlation between clause grammar and the semantic structure of events and situations seems to be a basic feature of human language design' (Pawley 1991: 341). Later, however, Pawley comments that 'the speaker gives names and grammatical status to certain details, characterising these as objects or processes, and so on, and specifies particular semantic/grammatical relationships as holding between these named entities' (Pawley 1991: 342). With reference to the data in this study, clauses and groups or phrases deemed independent are given a separate line. Where it is unclear as to whether the clause elements belong to the previous or subsequent clause they are presented as independent pieces of information. The independent elements of clause structure are interpreted as the smallest significant semiotic acts performed by the speakers in the context of radio sports commentary.

Portions of the data are also analysed according to intonation features and transcriptions of these portions are presented in Appendix III. Analyses and interpretations of the data based on patterns of intonation are included in Chapters Six and Seven.

1.3.3 Transcription Conventions Used in this Study

- **Speakers' Initials**

Whenever a new speaker speaks, his initials are placed at the left of his first utterance. PW, for example, stands for Peter Wilkins, LM stands for Lex Marinos and so forth.

> A86.PW: *the drop-out is with Larson*
> A87.*he's on the thirty*

A list of all the speakers and their corresponding initials is presented at the beginning of the transcriptions in Appendix I and Appendix II.

- **Included Clauses**

The location of included clauses (Martin, et. al. 1997) is indicated by two sets of double angled brackets placed within the clause complex but shown as empty. The included clause is then placed on the next line indicating that it begins after elements in the clause complex and therefore takes the next number in sequence. It is presented with the double angled brackets around it. Such clauses constitute only a small proportion of clauses in the commentary, and are even rarer in play-by-play talk. An example of an included clause is at line 120 from the ABC transcript.

> A120.*and the Roosters <<   >> work the ball back to their ten metre line*
> A121.*<<after being under enormous pressure>>*

- **Rank-shifted Clauses**

As their name implies, rankshifted clauses are clauses operating as constituents within clauses — that is their rank as clause has been down-graded to that of qualifier or nominal group. These are represented in the transcripts by using double square brackets as shown in the following example from the ABC transcript.

> A162.*despite the fact [[that it is just to the right of the upright]]*

Where there is a clause complex that is rank-shifted, each clause within the rank-shifted clause complex is separated by a double straight line as in the following example from the ABC transcript.

> A1201.*it was a dreadful er... sin of omission by er Weston* [[*not to either see F...Florimo on his inside* || *or even think of Dallas screaming down the right wing on his outside*]]

On the whole there are very few complex clauses, or clauses with a lot of included clauses or rank-shifted clauses, particularly during play-by-play talk. This appears to be one of the distinctive features of this type of talk.

- **Overlapping Speech**

Occasionally speakers talk over one another. This is represented by a single square bracket around the interjecting speaker's speech. The overlapping speech is placed under the utterance that it is overlapping at the approximate place where it overlaps. The following is an example from the 2GB commentary.

> GB356.*now it's a nice er pass or a not pass that time*
> GB357.RM: [*a bit high too*]
> GB358.*yeah it was a bit of a high shot that time*

- **Paralinguistic Sounds and Other Aural Phenomena**

There are occasionally some non-linguistic sounds that the speakers make, such as laughter. These are represented by a gloss placed inside single square brackets as in the following example. They are placed on a separate line when they do not overlap the flow of speaking and are the only thing that the speaker does at that time, as in the following.

> A1089.*it's hit the middle of the crossbar*
> PW: [laughs]
> A1090.CH: *and gone over*

They are placed next to the spoken language when they are a continuation of what the speaker has just said as in the following, again from the ABC transcript.

> A1243.*half time here Wilko sixteen all Wests and the Cowboys*
> A1244.PW: *sixteen all* [laughing]

There are other kinds of aural phenomena which take place in the commentary. For example, in the ABC commentary the same musical cue is used to indicate that the commentator is about to go 'around-the-grounds'. This is presented using the single square brackets, but these sounds are not given a transcription line number. An example from the ABC transcript is provided below.

A1232.*they might've put the killer blow on the Bears at Bear Park*
[musical cue for around the grounds]
A1233.PW: *we'll check all the other scores*
A1234.*Kogarah Lex Marinos*

- **Projecting Clauses**

Projecting clauses are not assigned a separate line. Rather a clause complex consisting of a projecting and a projected clause is placed on the same line. I follow Hasan and Cloran's reasoning here that such clause complexes are 'considered to be a single message' in the text (Cloran 1994: 150, see also Hasan 1996b: 118). In fact there are very few such clauses in play-by-play talk.

- **Hypotactic Enhancement**

Clauses that are related through hypotactic enhancement as in the following example are not assigned separate lines. The alpha (α) clause and the beta (β) clause[3] are kept on the same line. The reasons for this have to do with the construal of simultaneous activity and purpose. A more detailed discussion of hypotactic enhancement is contained in Chapter Four. Double vertical lines are used to indicate the clause boundary in these cases.

GB1129.*can't get his arms free ‖ to off-load that football*

- **Intonation Analysis**

As already noted, the intonation transcription of the commentary is provided in Appendix III. The intonation analysis was conducted wholly by natural auditory methods and

received some intersubjective agreement (Tench 1997, Greaves 1995, 1996). The conventions used follow those outlined in Halliday (1967a, 1970a). They are:

//   - Tone group boundary
/   - foot boundary
<u>tone</u>   - underlining denotes Tonic Prominence
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 53   - numbers denote tone groups according to Halliday 1967a, 1970a
∧   - denotes a silent beat, or silent ictus

1.4 Design of the Study

The second chapter of this work outlines and reviews Systemic Functional linguistic theory (SF theory), which is the theoretical approach taken in this study. Key concepts in this theory, such as 'language as social semiotic', 'context', 'text' and 'register', are explained along with their specific relevance to the analyses. Two significant and recent variations of SF theory are discussed. These are Martin's connotative semiotic model and Leckie-Tarry's model of register. Elements from these theoretical variations which bear particular relevance to this study are outlined. Other relevant theories that are occasionally drawn on in this study are also described in Chapter Two.

The remainder of this work is organised according to a three-step narrowing of focus. The first step begins in Chapter Three where, in order to situate the definition and description of play-by-play talk within the environment of the sports commentary, some of the salient characteristics of the Sunday Afternoon Broadcast are outlined. Further, because play-by-play talk is found only during the commentary, it is assumed that the commentary presents the most immediate linguistic and situational environment for play-by-play talk. Chapter Three therefore, also provides a brief description of the commentary. In Chapter Four some of the salient linguistic features of the commentary are then presented. The major focus of this chapter though, is to address the question of how to define play-by-play talk. An operational definition of play-by-play talk is developed, and a means of determining which sections in the commentary can be classified as play-by-play talk is made. Through an application of the operational definition and criteria for determining what constitutes play-by-play talk to two extracts of commentary

from different broadcasts and from different sources, Chapter Four yields two lengthy extracts of play-by-play talk.

In Chapters Five, Six and Seven these extracts are analysed in terms of the grammar of interpersonal, experiential and textual meaning. Rather than present a separate chapter reviewing previous research into sports commentating, salient points and results from previous studies are included in the discussion of the analyses contained in this study.

The dissertation therefore aims to facilitate an overview of what takes place in a Rugby League radio sports broadcast, and to deliver an in-depth description of play-by-play talk highlighting the specific linguistic properties of this type of talk, as well as making statements about the kind of contextual information this talk construes.

Notes to Chapter One

1. The term 'projecting clauses' comes from Halliday's (1994c) model of the logico-semantic relations between clauses. Projecting clauses are those where an 'idea', or 'saying' is projected through the use of a verbal process or cognitive process such as in the clause, *He said, 'Don't come around here again'*. In this example the projecting clause is *He said* and the projected clause is *Don't come around here again.*

2. The term 'hypotactic enhancing clause' comes from Halliday's model of the logico-semantic relations between clauses. Clauses are said to be 'equal' in status (paratactic) or unequal in status (hypotactic). When they are unequal in status one clause is subordinate to or dependent on the other clause. The semantic relationship in either paratactic or hypotactic clauses is either that of extension, elaboration, or enhancement. These notions are discussed more fully in Chapter Two and Chapter Seven.

3. The terms alpha (α) and beta (β) clauses come from Halliday's (1994c) description of the logico-semantic relations between clauses. When clauses are hypotactically related, the main clause is the alpha clause, while the dependent clause is the beta clause.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Background

2.0 Introduction

The theory which informs this study is Systemic Functional linguistic theory (SF theory). In developing a description of the register of play-by-play talk and of the relations between language and context in Rugby League radio sports commentating, this study primarily utilises the functional grammar model outlined by Halliday (1994c) in *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. This model of grammar focuses on 'grammatical patterns in terms of configurations of functions' (Halliday 1994c: x), and being a functional grammar, the concern is with the organisation of meaning. Halliday and Martin (1993a: 12) explain that grammar is the 'powerhouse of a language' because it is in the grammar that meanings are organised prior to their realisation as sounds or graphemes, and it is at the grammatical level that we can see how meanings evolve and change as language is used to meet the demands which are placed on it. In order to understand the role of grammar as conceived in SF theory and to facilitate an explanation of the aims of this study, it is necessary to explain some key perspectives and components of SF theory. Those relevant to this understanding are 'language as social semiotic', 'register', 'context', 'text', 'metaredundancy', and the 'CMH (context-metafunction hook-up) hypothesis'. These key components are outlined and reviewed in the following sections. Reference to other linguistic theories that propose similar concepts is made in order to provide greater depth to the discussion and to develop the rationale for using SF theory.

2.1 Language and Society

The connection between language and social life is the concern of a number of linguistic and sociological theories. Hymes (1986: 39) for instance, in the tradition of ethnomethodology, called for 'a general theory of the interaction of language and social life' which 'encompass[es] the multiple relations between linguistic means and social meanings'. The sociologist, Goffman, questioned why it is that individuals engaged in a social activity conduct that activity with both an understanding of how to proceed and an

understanding of their relations vis-à-vis other participants. In Goffman's study of language and its relationship to human experience, he focuses on the 'situational, ... [or] a concern for what one individual can be alive to at a particular moment' (Goffman 1986: 8).

The number of theoretical perspectives on the relations between language and social life is far too numerous to adequately account for here, and this is an indication of the wide-ranging theories of and explorations into understanding the relationship between language and social life. Some of the most significant, however, include Crystal and Davy (1969), Goffman (1981, 1986), Longacre (1976), Labov (1966, 1972), Gumperz (1972), Hymes (1986), Sacks (1992), Schegloff (e.g. 1986), Drew and Heritage (1992), Levinson (1992), and Biber (1989, 1994), and reference is made to some of these in this chapter.

SF theory, as developed by M.A.K. Halliday (see especially 1976a-f, 1978, 1985a), views language as primary in the process of socialisation. This theory contends that it is through language that the process of socialisation is conducted — a view echoing that held by contemporary sociologists such as Berger and Luckmann who remark, 'everyday life is, above all, life with and by means of the language [we] share with [our] fellowmen' (1966: 37). As a primary means of the socialisation process, language in SF theory is considered a 'social semiotic'. To understand the SF notion of language as social semiotic we need to view socialisation not as a one way operation but as a multi-faceted process of one's initiation into the social world and of one's participation in it. In other words, language and social life are in a dialectic relation. According to Halliday (1997: 4) 'Language construes experience by transforming it into the experience of meaning; it enacts interpersonal relations by performing them as acts of meaning; in this way the world of semiosis unfolds alongside the material world, interpenetratingly'. Initiation into social life involves learning how to manipulate appropriately and effectively the meaning resources that are available in the situations in which we engage throughout our lives. Participation in social situations involves bringing to these situations our own interpretations based on the experiences in which we have previously engaged. Thus, each time we engage in a

situation of language use we are at the same time sharing the common social conventions associated with those situations, and we are also contributing to their evolution.

The view that situations and the language used in these situations are in a dialectic relation is crucial to the understanding of the SF notion of language as social semiotic. As Hasan explains, '[l]anguage is able to cope with our demands because it is in meeting these demands that its origin is rooted; it is able to give satisfaction in all situations because it is largely by and with language that these situations were created in the first place' (Hasan 1996d: 24). This dialectic is evident in the ontological process of language development. Halliday (1978: 1-2) explains that:

> Language arises in the life of the individual through an ongoing exchange of meanings with significant others. A child learning language is at the same time learning other things through language — building up a picture of the reality that is around him and inside him. In this process... the construal of reality is inseparable from the construal of the semantic system in which the reality is encoded. In this sense, language is a shared meaning potential, at once both a part of experience and an intersubjective interpretation of experience.

What distinguishes SF theory from other theories of language is that the synoptic means of representing language is paradigmatic rather than syntagmatic, such that 'the organising concept is not structure, but system' (Halliday 1985c: 8). With this view in mind, when articulating the connection between language and social life, SF theory typically represents these connections in terms of system networks. Complementary to this view is the notion of probability, which places choices of phenomena along clines of most likely/least likely according to the context, or what is 'at risk' in a given situation. System networks reflect the SF theoretical concern with paradigmatic relations between social phenomena, and the preference for categorising theoretical concepts according to clines of probability acknowledges that social phenomena relative to other social phenomena are not always readily demarcated or dichotomous in nature, and can be considered in terms of what is least/most likely in a situation.

As has been explained, SF theory prioritises paradigmatic relations between linguistic phenomena. Choices made at any one time represent selections from system networks of choices: either 'this' or 'that'. The motivation behind these choices, as is explained more fully in this chapter, is the specific social context in which language is being used. The principle that language is a system of choices sets the backdrop against which we can investigate which specific choices are actually made in any given situation, and consequently, which sets of choices can be characterised as least or most likely to be deployed in those situations. Ideally, the study of individual situations of language use contributes to an understanding of which features in the system of language itself can be categorised as inherently 'more likely' or 'less likely'. SF theory thus forms the basis for investigating how languaging (using language in a given situation) effects a pass 'through the system as instantiation in process [such that] different patterns of 'more likely/less likely' emerge and [how] these quantitative variations accrue and amount to changes of qualitative import' (Nesbitt & Plum 1988: 10).

The use of 'clines' does not just apply to the notion of least likely/most likely in terms of probability, but is applied to other areas of SF theory. One theoretical principle utilised in SF theory concerns the cline of 'potential and instance'. This cline is utilised to demonstrate the complexity in theorising the notion of language as social semiotic. From one point of view each situation of language use can be seen as new and unique in and of itself. However, if we step back from the individual situation and look at the myriad situations in which humans engage, we begin to see clusters of similar situations, and even clusters of clusters of situations. These together make up the intricate social context of our existence. They can be interpreted as comprising the context of culture: a 'slowly changing macrosocial envelope of innumerable microsocial events' (Lemke 1992: 83). This macrosocial envelope of microsocial events represents a resource, or potential, from which selections are made in response to the demands of the moment. The individual situation of language use is an instance of that potential, where the participants are involved in taking up particular options, and it is hence an instance of a specific category of situation within

that potential. The move from potential to instance thus represents a move from one perspective to another within the same social phenomena.

This study is concerned with a recognisable situation of language use — a radio sports commentary. This category of language in use has arisen in response to a number of social factors and conditions: those to do with sports, entertainment, mass media, technology and the like. The sports commentary, as a situation of language use located in a cultural context, can be seen as an example of the kind of linguistic activities made possible in the latter half of the 20th century. It reflects the technological capabilities that have emerged partly in response to a demand for information and entertainment specific to a material event, in this case the sports event. While the sports event, which is the major concern of the commentary, is itself a socially constructed semiotic event, a primary focus of the sports commentary is the construal of this semiotic event through the meaning-making resources of language via the medium of radio. This act of construal facilitates the possibility for the sharing of the material event of the game with a much wider audience than was possible before the advent of radio technology.

The sports commentary is a language event that has become established within Australian culture (as well as many other cultures). As an established event, it comprises a set of recognisable linguistic properties which can be viewed as the 'potential' from which participants can make particular choices, or take up options. To gain an insight into the nature of this potential, we need to view its instances. Analysing, describing and interpreting the properties manifest in specific instances of sports commentating can contribute to a description of the category of language event to which the sports commentary can be said to belong. The next section further explicates what this means through a consideration of the concept of register in SF theory.

2.2 Register

2.2.0 Introduction

The study of the properties of specific language events is a central feature of what is known as register studies. The term 'register' was originally borrowed from Reid who noted that 'the linguistic behavior of a given individual is by no means uniform ... he will on different occasions speak (or write) differently according to what may roughly be described as different social situations; he will use a number of distinct "registers"' (1956: 32).

Register can be regarded as 'a restriction of the total meaning potential of a language' (Lemke 1985: 277) in that those meanings 'at risk' in a given situation represent the portion of meaning potential restricted within the register. Lemke (1985: 277) argues that 'in any particular register only a portion of that meaning potential, and in each text of the register, the same restricted portion, is being actualised ... texts in the same register not just ... share certain formal linguistic features, but ... make only certain kinds of meaning with language'. Lemke's suggestion that each text represents the 'same' set of meanings is perhaps too restrictive in itself. Texts belonging to the same register will not be 'exactly' alike, but they will share a similar constellation of meanings, the probabilities of certain choices selected from the linguistic system being within a significantly close range and type.

As in the case of language and its relation to social life, register is also a key concept of several linguistic theories. Biber, for instance, uses the term register to refer to 'all language varieties associated with different situations and purposes' (1994: 32). He proposes a 'multidimensional analytical framework' for studying registers, which aims to characterise different registers in terms of 'the level of generality' of their features as well as in terms of 'the particular values for their relevant situational parameters' (1994: 41). Biber explains generality as the number of situational parameters which are expressed in relation to the text type. For instance, the descriptor 'monologue' has a higher degree of generality than that of 'sermon'. This is because a 'sermon' is a type of monologue, and

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this is evident if we consider the situational parameters relevant for each of these types of language activities (Biber 1994: 32).

In categorising types of language use, Crystal and Davy (1969) prefer the term 'style' to register, but their approach can be interpreted as one of register analysis and description in that they base their theory of style and their approach to the study of language on the hypothesis that any adult speaker of a language can identify certain linguistic features which correspond to a specific situation (Crystal & Davy 1969: 11). In analysing different styles of language, Crystal and Davy first look for the frequency and distribution of specific linguistic features within the overall configuration of a text. They argue that a stylistically significant feature is one 'which occurs more frequently within the variety in question, and ... which is shared less by other varieties' (Crystal & Davy 1969: 21). Their approach involves an initial intuitive investigation of what appear to be stylistic features, supported by a quantitative analysis of these features, followed by a description and explanation of these features in terms of an 'overall stylistic "picture" of a text' and its relationship to the situational context in which it takes place (Crystal & Davy 1969).

Within SF theory there are currently two principal models of register — the 'traditional' model as outlined by Halliday (see especially 1976a-f, 1978, 1985a, 1992) and the 'connotative semiotic' model outlined by Martin (see especially 1992). This study utilises the traditional model of register as outlined by Halliday. The next section briefly introduces Halliday's conception of register, but because register is so closely tied to several aspects of SF theory the subsequent section on 'context of situation' provides a more detailed account of register and its relationship to context.

2.2.1 A Brief Introduction to Halliday's Conception of Register

Halliday views register as language variation 'according to use', or 'what you are speaking at the time, depending on what you are doing and the nature of the activity in which the language is functioning' (Halliday 1985a: 41). In Section 2.1 the concepts of potential and

instance were introduced. In SF theory the continuum of potential-instance is also applied to the notion of register. Register is viewed as a category of language use and is thus considered a potential. As a potential, register represents variation within the system of language, and is a 'generalization about the recurrent patterns across instances' of language in use (Matthiessen 1993: 271). The language associated with the registers in which speakers engage represents a potential of linguistic choices ranging from those choices most likely to occur in a specific situation to those least likely to occur. The situations with which registers correlate are also considered potentials in that they represent sets of situational variables which are activated if the occasion calls for it. In SF theory the set of situational variables corresponding with a register is known as 'context of situation', a term coined by the anthropologist Malinowski (1923: 306), and explained more fully in the next section of this chapter. Registers and their corresponding contexts of situation are social constructions arising from the dialectic between language and socialisation as explained in Section 2.1 above.

In adopting this view of register, we could say that a sports commentary represents a register or a category of linguistic variation. As a 'potential' the sports commentary register is a potential set of linguistic patterns which may be activated when the appropriate context of use is called into play. Any specific instance of a sports commentary is thus an instance of that register category. The linguistic choices deployed during any instance of a specific register will resemble those patterns that serve to identify the potential, but the text itself will also exhibit features specific to that particular instance of the register. By developing a profile of the linguistic features of two instances of sports commentating, and of the play-by-play portions of these commentaries in particular, this study aims to make generalisations about the linguistic patterns which characterise the register of play-by-play talk.

As already noted, register corresponds with a category of 'context of situation'. If register is a category of language use, we should be able to ask: 'What are the functions that this set of linguistic choices are serving in that situation?' and, 'What are the situational features

which motivate these linguistic choices?' In order to understand the theoretical relation between situation and register the concept of context of situation is explained in the next section. Some other approaches to context are first described in order to set a background against which the SF concept of context of situation can be better understood.

2.3 Context of Situation

2.3.1 Other Theoretical Approaches to Context and Language

As noted in the previous section, a register is a category of language in use. Most theories of language and context agree that when we use language we use it in relation to a specific situation, or context. This means that we can speak of contexts as corresponding to certain registers. The most important factor in developing a description of context is to arrive at a means of determining those features of the context which are 'relevant' to the language being used. 'What are the 'relevant' features of context to the language being used?' is a question that has occupied a number of different theoretical pursuits. The features that are posited as 'relevant', and the means for determining their relevancy, differ according to the interests of the particular theoretical viewpoint taken. Some of these views are outlined in the next paragraphs.

Pragmatic theory has a long history of interest in the features of the 'speech situation' of utterances. In pragmatic theory the speech situation includes such features as: addressers/addressees, the background knowledge of the interactants (considered the 'context'), the goals of the utterance, the utterance as form of act or activity, and the illocutionary force of an utterance (Leech 1983: 13-14). Cook (1990) offers a description of the relevant contextual parameters that he sees as applying to analyses of language by the discourse pragmatist. They include: the text, the physical characteristics of the text, paralinguistic features, the physical setting, the co-text, the intertext, the intentions, interpretations, knowledge and beliefs of the interactants, the selection and interpretation of the text by the analyst. Cook, however, describes the 'infinite (and thus untranscribable) amount of context' of 'any actually occurring conversations' (Cook 1990: 18). His view of context is theoretically unmotivated with respect to the

relationship between the language choices being made and the context in which they occur. Therefore, although he provides some guidelines, the decision as to what to include in a description of context is largely left up to the researcher.

Another view of context has been postulated by Hymes (1972). In Hymes' view language can best be investigated through an analysis of language in use, as it is in 'actual contexts of use' that we see the 'alternative ways of categorising the same experience' and specific 'patterns of selection among such alternatives' (Hymes 1972: 33). He suggests a set of components that can be used to develop a description of the various speech acts performed by speakers in a community within specific contexts of language use. His description comprises sixteen situational components of speech acts. These are outlined in Figure 2:1 below.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│            Hymes' Situational Components                     │
│                                                             │
│   1. Message Form                                           │
│   2. Message Content                                        │
│   3. Setting                                                │
│   4. Scene                                                  │
│   5. Speaker/Sender          ⎫                              │
│   6. Addressor               ⎬  TYPES of PARTICIPANTS       │
│   7. Hearer/Receiver/Audience⎪                              │
│   8. Addressee               ⎭                              │
│   9. Purposes—outcomes                                      │
│   10. Purposes—goals                                        │
│   11. Key                                                   │
│   12. Channels                                              │
│   13. Forms of Speech                                       │
│   14. Norms of Interaction                                  │
│   15. Norms of Interpretation:                              │
│   16. Genres                                                │
│                                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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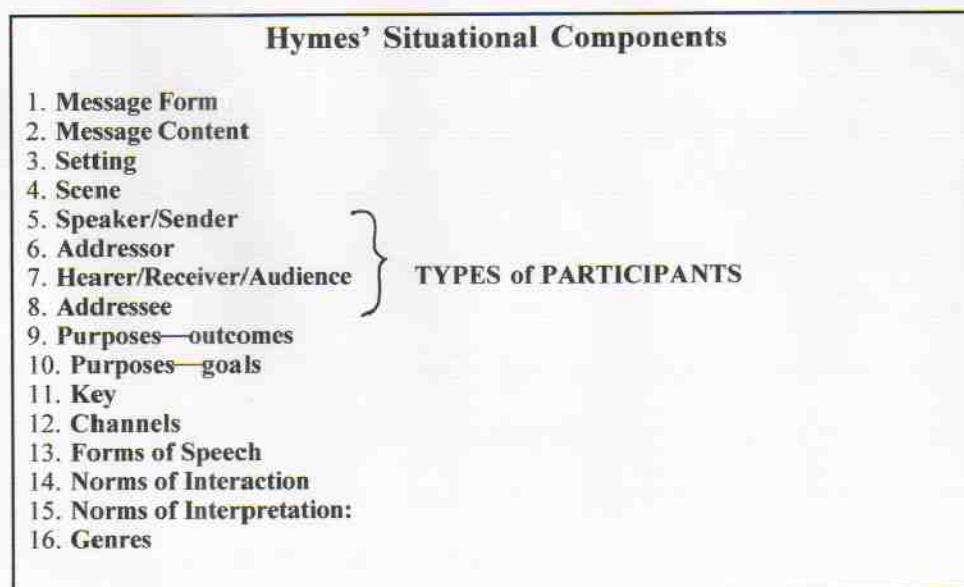
Figure 2:1. Hymes' Situational Components of Speech Acts
(See Hymes 1986: 59-65)

Hymes' set of situational criteria has greatly influenced later research, including that of language use in educational contexts and cross-cultural comparative analyses. Again, however, the relationship between specific linguistic choices and specific contextual features is left theoretically unmotivated in Hymes' view of context.

Crystal and Davy's (1969) work on style provides another perspective on the relation between situational criteria and language in use. Crystal and Davy focus on the features of context and the linguistic properties of language varieties. They propose a model of situation that consists of 'dimensions' of situational constraint. Each dimension correlates with a set of linguistic features. Along with these are 'common core features' of the language which 'have no situational correlates at all, apart from the stylistically trivial one of 'occurring in an English-speaking situation' (Crystal & Davy 1969: 64-64). Crystal and Davy's (1969: 66) eight situational dimensions are reproduced in Figure 2:2 below.

A
INDIVIDUALITY
DIALECT
TIME

B
DISCOURSE
      (*a*) [SIMPLE/COMPLEX] MEDIUM (Speech, Writing)
      (*b*) [SIMPLE/COMPLEX] PARTICIPATION (Monologue, Dialogue)

C
PROVINCE
STATUS
MODALITY
SINGULARITY
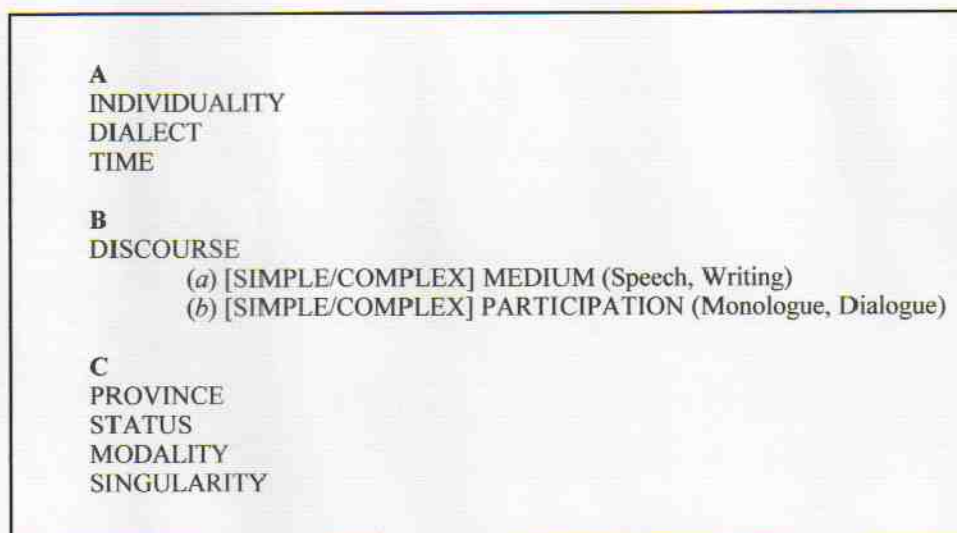
Figure 2:2. Crystal and Davy's Situational Dimensions

In their framework, Crystal and Davy propose several questions to ask about a text. Those questions aim to develop a description of the situational features that correlate with the linguistic features that are found. However, in their actual analyses, the situational features are not consistently dealt with, so that with conversation, for example, Crystal and Davy suggest a preference for categorising it overall as 'informal' rather than as a stylistic variety known as 'conversation'. Additionally, in their framework the category 'informal' is proposed as a situational category within the broader category of 'status' and under the overall category of 'variety'. It would seem that 'informal status' would enter many different types of registers and not just be a

descriptor of conversational styles. This treatment of the situational categories leaves their analytical and potential comparative status as rather ambiguous.

To address the issue of 'comparative capability of stylistic description', Crystal (1991) proposes a model for stylistic 'profiling' in which the frequencies of structural features of a specific variety are calculated and interpreted in relation to situational features. These can then be compared across styles of discourse. The selection criteria for which structural features to investigate in terms of frequency and what these features mean with regard to the context in which the style is used, however, is not theoretically motivated, in the sense that structure and its relationship to meaning has not been theoretically systematised in Crystal's model: in Crystal's model of stylistic profiling there is no theoretical basis for answering the question of why certain features emerge in one style and not another.

In his framework for register analysis, Biber (1994) also proposes a set of situational dimensions which interrelate with linguistic features. He argues that his framework offers a means of comparing and contrasting registers at the situational level and the linguistic level. Biber places texts along clines according to five situational dimensions, thus making it possible to compare and contrast texts at a very specific level. Biber's framework offers a means of investigating registers through the use of several types of parameters and analytical tools such as the situational parameters, the five situational dimensions, and the use of numerical values assigned to points along continua of the dimensions. Lee (2000) however, has recently demonstrated that these situational dimensions are on the whole unstable and unsound with respect to making any comparative statements about the relevant situational features of particular registers.

A theory which has not yet been mentioned in the discussion so far, but which also holds the notion of 'context' as important in text analysis is Conversational Analysis (CA). The significance of context to the study of language in CA is evident in Schegloff's (1992: 112) question:

'how shall we find formulations of context or setting that will allow us (a) to connect to the theme that many want to connect to - the social structure in the traditional sense, but (b) that will do so in a way that takes into account not only the demonstrable orientation of the participants, but, further, (c) that will allow us to make a direct "procedural" connection between the context-so-formulated and what actually happens in the talk, instead of having a characterisation that "hovers around" the interaction, so to speak, but is not shown actually to inform the production and grasp the details of its conduct'.

Research in CA theory claims that talk is both 'context shaped' and 'context renewing'. From the perspective of being 'context shaped' utterances are examined in terms of 'the immediately local configuration of preceding activity in which an utterance occurs, and also ... the "larger" environment of activity within which that configuration is recognized to occur' (Drew & Heritage 1992: 18). The notion of 'context-shaped' points to an important relationship between the speaker, listener and the utterance in that 'speakers routinely draw upon [preceding activity] ... as a resource in designing their utterances and ... correspondingly, hearers must also draw upon what is said' (Drew & Heritage 1992: 18).

The term 'context renewing' refers largely to the textual environment of utterances and the effect this has on the talk. Drew and Heritage (1992: 18) point out that as the interaction proceeds 'each current action function[s] to renew (i.e. maintain, adjust, or alter) any broader or more generally prevailing sense of context which is the object of the participants' orientation and actions'.

The CA conception of context bears similarities to linguistic approaches in that it takes into account the broader context in which the talk takes place as well as the textual context in which each utterance occurs. Although CA is considered to fall within the field of sociology, CA theoretical approaches attempt not to use the terminology proposed by sociological theories concerning the social context, but attempt to explain the context in which the talk takes place from the language itself. There is, however, an inherent paradox in their approach in that, in order to explain what takes place in language,

recourse must be made to the underlying situation whether or not one uses the terminology already set up by sociological theories. And the situations in which talk arises are generally socially established in the sense that no social context is entirely new: talk takes place within the shared world of the participants who bring to the situation their own experience in situations both similar and different to that in which they are currently engaged.

Another criticism of the CA approach is that while CA attempts to produce a description of the context of the talk and the type of 'work' that is being accomplished through the talk, there are no principles for deciding which features of the context are relevant to the language taking place nor any theoretically motivated means for determining the relationship between the language being used and the work being accomplished through its use. It is these kinds of issues — issues concerning the relationship between features of the context and features of language— that SF theory attempts to address, and which are explained in the next sections.

2.3.2 Context in SF Theory

2.3.2.1 Halliday

As has already been noted, in SF theory the context of language in use is known as 'context of situation'. A single instance of a context of situation represents a specific configuration of contextual variables, and thus represents a specific situation type. SF theory contends that like register, context can also be viewed in relation to the potential-instance continuum. Each situation type corresponds to a text type, such that situation type is to context of situation as text type is to register. The system from which the context of situation derives is the context of culture, while the system from which register derives is the language system. Thus, contexts of situation are configurations of specific cultural criteria and together comprise the context of culture in which society evolves. Registers represent specific variations of language use.

In the SF model (specifically that proposed by Halliday), the situation is said to comprise three abstract components: field, tenor and mode. From the outset, Halliday's notion of

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the context of situation has referred to what is 'relevant' in the situation of language use. He contends that

> The "context of situation" does not refer to all the bits and pieces of the material environment such as might appear if we had an audio and video recording of a speech event with all the sights and sounds surrounding the utterances. It refers to those features which are relevant to the speech that is taking place. Such features may be concrete and immediate ... But they may be quite abstract and remote ... Even where the speech does relate to the immediate environment, it is likely that only certain features of it will be relevant (Halliday 1978: 29)

The notion of 'relevancy' in terms of the relation between context and language is crucial to an understanding of the construct of context of situation in SF theory and to an understanding of the major difference between SF theory and other theories which take context into consideration. Before discussing the notion of relevancy, however, the next paragraphs describe the contextual components, field, tenor and mode.

In Halliday's terminology, field refers to the subject matter and the nature of the social action that is taking place. Tenor refers to the kinds of social relations which pertain between the participants in the text, including their status and roles in the situation. Mode refers to the role that language is playing in the situation. It includes the 'symbolic organization of the text, ... the channel (whether it is spoken or written or some combination of the two) and also the rhetorical mode' (Halliday 1985a: 12).

An important aspect of Halliday's interpretation of the context of situation is that field, tenor and mode are not kinds of language use but together constitute the 'conceptual framework for representing the social context as the semiotic environment in which people exchange meanings' (Halliday 1978: 110). A register corresponds to a specific configuration of the values of field, tenor and mode, or a text's 'contextual configuration' (CC) (Hasan 1985b).

Theoretically, the context of situation can be viewed abstractly as a system of options. That is, each of the contextual variables of field, tenor and mode can be viewed as an entry point to a set of options comprised of situational features. Selections from these sets of options represent the contextual character of a register. So far in SF theory the development of system networks for features of the context of situation remains in a nascent stage. Nevertheless, there are some proposed representations of possible contextual options corresponding to Halliday's suggested descriptions of the components of the context of situation. Some important descriptions are presented by Leckie-Tarry (1995), Hasan (cited in Cloran 1987 and Hasan 1999) and Martin (1992), with the latter two descriptions presenting system networks of choices. These are discussed in turn in the next sections.

2.3.2.2 Leckie-Tarry

Leckie-Tarry proposes a cline of register along degrees of orality and literacy which is related to context of situation, co-text and context of culture. Although she is working within the framework of SF theory, she argues that the term "register" has primarily referred to the 'linguistic characterisations rather than ... the contexts which generate them ... [and that] register ...tends to be seen as too limiting an analytic category' (1995: 16). In order to address this problem Leckie-Tarry attempts to incorporate into her theory a 'cline of register ... paralleled by a cline of contextualization' (1995: 3). Contextualisation includes 'reference to the ongoing situation from which the text is constructed, the wider culture [which includes] the social institutions and ideologies which constitute ... [it] ... the immediate situation ..., and the context of the text itself' (Leckie-Tarry 1995: 17). In her description, the cline of contextualisation has a different bearing on the text according to whether the text is spoken or written, and hence falls under the contextual category of 'mode'. Leckie-Tarry argues that '[t]he spoken medium evinces a strong relationship between the text and the context of situation, while the written medium depends more strongly on the context of the text and the context of culture' (1995: 3).

Along with her discussion of context of situation, Leckie-Tarry presents several diagrams which represent her model of the relationship between language, context and register. What is unclear from her diagrammatic representation of her model of register however, is the status of the term 'context of situation' and its relationship to other features of context. One of her diagrammatic representations is reproduced below in Figure 2:3.

Figure 5 Conceptual model of context
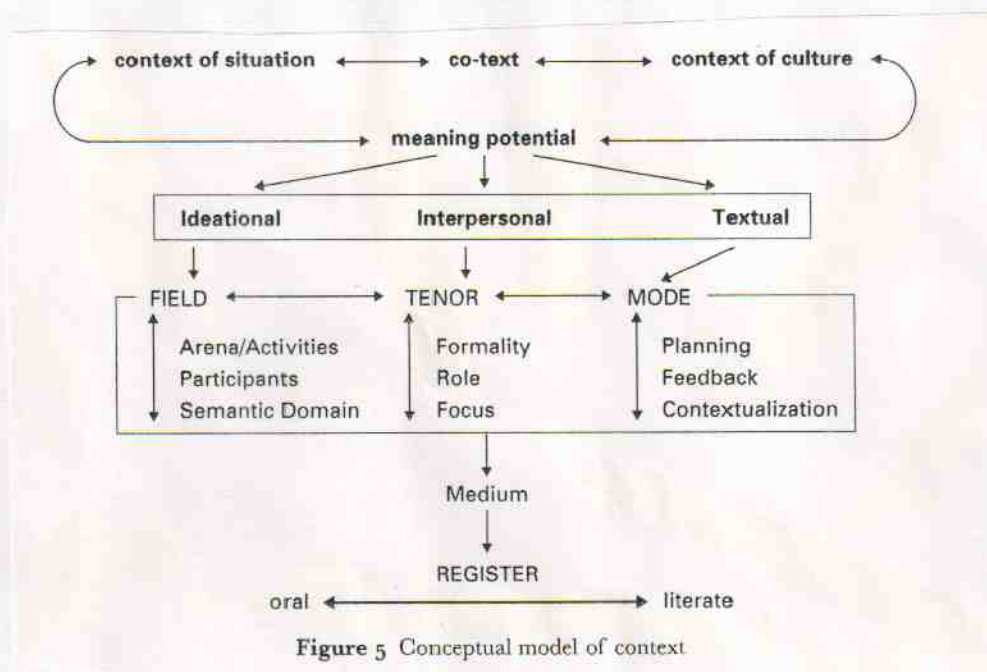
Figure 2:3. Context of Situation and its Relation to Other Features of Context in Leckie-Tarry's Model (1995: 32)

From Figure 2:3 we can see that in Leckie-Tarry's model the components of field, tenor and mode are linked with what she calls ideational, interpersonal and textual knowledge. These 'knowledges' in her discussion appear to be situated at some higher level within context of situation. At a 'basic' level of context of situation are situated the components, field, tenor and mode. From Figure 2.3 however, field, tenor and mode appear to fall under the overall category, 'meaning potential', which is in turn motivated by or influenced by, context of situation and context of culture, and ultimately context. What then is the context of situation? Leckie-Tarry clearly states in her discussion that context of situation is comprised of field, tenor and mode, but in her diagrammatic representation of it, it

appears to be a separate category altogether. This results in an ambiguity in her representation of the construct of context.

2.3.2.3 Hasan

Although Hasan's research has traditionally fallen within the model proposed by Halliday, she has recently challenged the traditional SF description of the contextual variables presented by Halliday and has proposed a reformulation of the features of his contextual categories: in particular, those pertaining to field and mode (see Hasan 1999). Her reformulation maintains the overall model which Halliday proposes, but involves a reshuffling of some of the features of the context of situation. For instance, Hasan argues that the 'role of language in the situation', which concerns the cline of ancillary-constitutive language activity, should come under the contextual component of field rather than mode as in Halliday's original formulation. Hasan's reasoning is that the 'role of language' is inherently linked to a description of the 'nature of the activity', a feature of the field. She explains that in activities such as a lecture the role of language is constitutive of the activity. Material actions, on the other hand, such as the exchange of goods, involve language which is facilitative or ancillary to the activity. In each of these activities, the role of language is specifying what the interactants are doing. That is, 'in the verbal action of explaining, one of the interactants explains just as in the material action of buying, one of the interactants buys' (Hasan 1999: 281-282). Furthermore, activities which are constituted by language are 'un-do-able any other way except verbally' (1999: 281). In reinterpreting field as a system in which the notion of role of language — ancillary or constitutive — is now encompassed, Hasan (1999: 282) argues that considerations now pertinent to mode are those of channel (phonic or graphic) and contact between the speaker and the addressee (virtual or real; if real, co-present or distanced).

As has already been explained in the discussion of SF theory, system networks are a primary means of representing certain concepts and Hasan chooses a system network to represent the contextual construct of field. Her primary systems in the network for field are represented in Figure 2:4, and an explanation of some of the choices in this system is

given in the next few paragraphs with particular reference to the situation of sports commentating.
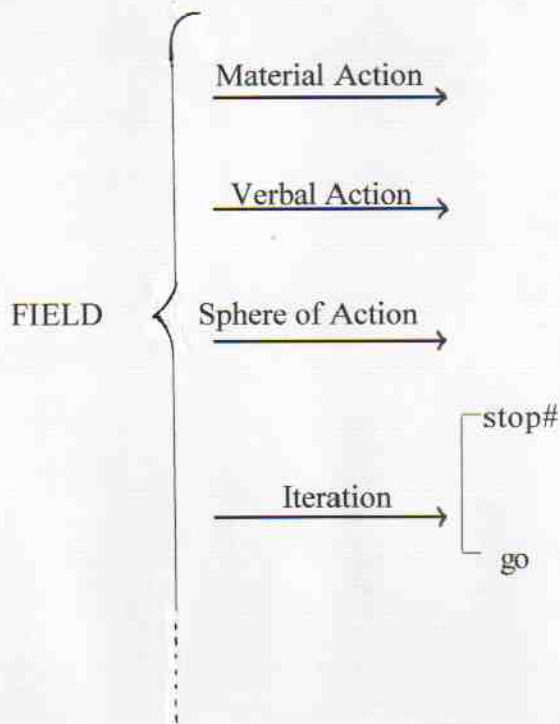
Figure 2:4. Hasan's Network of the Primary Systems in Field
(Adapted from Hasan 1999: 307)

From Figure 2:4 we can see that Hasan's reformulation of field has four primary systems of choice: 'verbal action', 'material action, 'sphere of action' and 'iteration'. Hasan explains that where material action is present verbal action will be ancillary, whereas if material action is absent then the verbal action will be constitutive. The 'sphere of action' includes such choices as 'specialised' or 'quotidian'. Specialised activities are those which are institutionalised in nature and which have evolved along with a network of intertextually related resources. An example offered by Hasan of a specialised activity is 'trying a case in court'. In such an activity she argues that there is a 'body of discourse which cumulatively support' it, such as legislation and precedence (Hasan 1999: 299). Quotidian activities tend to be those 'everyday' activities in which we engage. However, Hasan points out that even those activities 'differ in how far they are, as it were, shared by communal conventions and institutions' (Hasan 1999: 299). Therefore, in Hasan's field

network the choices of institutionalised and non-institutionalised are relevant for both specialised and quotidian activities.

In arguing for the feature 'iteration', Hasan introduces the concept of alpha (α) and beta (β) fields. What Hasan is attempting to capture through the use of this notion is the movement in and out of a range of different contexts in any one particular interaction. Using a mother-child interaction as an example, she shows how the talk begins with one particular field (the alpha field) but moves in and out of different fields as different types of things are negotiated by the mother and child. For instance, a plan to go shopping (the beta field) enters the talk surrounding organising lunch (the alpha field). Hasan explains that beta fields may be of different types: they may be 'integrated', 'independent' or 'aligned' to the alpha (α) field. Of interest to this study is Hasan's notion of 'aligned' beta fields as she specifically refers to sports commentating in explaining this. A brief explanation of this term in relation to sports commentating and the concerns of this study seems apropos at this point.

Hasan's choice of 'aligned' has been developed specifically with the situation of sports commentating in mind. She explains that in the situation of a sports commentary such as a cricket commentary, the game of cricket represents the alpha field and the commentary the beta field. Hasan argues that the first movement through the system network for field would constitute the field relevant to the game or sporting event around which the commentary revolves. Hasan does not supply a set of choices for the game, but from her discussion it can be inferred that when one enters the system of field with the context of 'commentating' in mind, the first entry would make selections appropriate to the field of the game, and the choice in the network of options for 'iteration' would be 'go'. In the system relevant to 'go' there are two simultaneous systems of choices. The first choice has a further three choices: 'independent', 'aligned', and 'integrated'. The second choice is a re-entry into the field system. For a sports commentary, the two simultaneous choices would be 'aligned' and re-entry into the field network. Hasan argues that the re-entry factor arises because the existence of the commentary 'unilaterally presupposes the

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existence of ... the game' (1999: 307). However, this argument only stands to reason IF we are speaking of commentary, and only if we are interpreting commentary in a specific way. Although Hasan presents the primary system of choice for playing cricket as material action [present]; verbal action [ancillary]; sphere [specialised], she does not present any choice for iteration, we must presume the choice is iteration [stop] if we do not have commentary in mind. However, from Hasan's discussion, entry into the field network for the game seems to presuppose an entry into the iteration system and the choice of 'go' if we have in mind that we are going to enter it again in terms of the choices applicable for a commentary. But, if we are only interested in the game taking place, and we have no interest in the commentary then presumably we would choose [iteration: stop]. If choosing 'stop' is not the case, it would seem that whenever the field system were entered for a game of sport, for example, we would be compelled to consider all of the activities which are 'aligned' to the game taking place, or as Hasan states, those activities which presuppose the existence of the game. There could be a multitude of such situations, such as spectator talk, live television coverage, stadium score announcements. However, I do not think that Hasan has in mind this kind of consideration in her development of the 'iterative' set of options. While in theory there are probably many situations that presuppose others, we do not always take those 'others' into account in our description of specific situations. Therefore, the choice of [go: aligned] only appears to be an option for beta fields, which as Hasan suggests in the case of a sports commentary is because you must first enter the field systems relevant to the game taking place because the commentary presupposes the game.

While it is true that a commentary does not exist without a game, the commentary, as this study will explain, is not merely a consequence of the game which is taking place. The environment of the commentary is very much concerned with the cultural domain of the mass media. The sports broadcast is a media event which presupposes a range of ideological factors connected with sport, including commercialisation, entertainment, competition, and masculinity; and the commentary is part of this media event. It would seem that if we were to enter the field network relevant to the commentary of a sporting

event such as a game of cricket or Rugby League (as is the focus of this study), we would be entering more than just a field network relevant to the game. The game takes place midway in the broadcast, and is, as Hasan suggests, a primary reason for the commentary, but it is not the only reason. The commentary also presupposes the Sunday Afternoon Broadcast. The events and objects of the game are almost exclusively linked to the talk which this study identifies as 'play-by-play talk'. Other elements in the context are tangential to the game taking place, but are picked up in the talk during the commentary. These other elements include scores and reports from other games taking place at the same time but in different locations.

The above criticisms of Hasan's field network are specific to her argument concerning sports commentating. There are, however, other problems that arise from the use of system networks in SF theory. One problem with the SF representation of phenomena through the use of networks is the problem of representing phenomena in terms of the continuum of 'more—less'. As noted earlier in this chapter, SF theory prefers to represent choices in terms of paradigmatic relations between phenomena through the use of system networks. However, at the same time the theory aims to show how sets of choices of phenomena occur in terms of 'more or less' likely. But a problem with representing phenomena on a system network is that the network tends to offer only two extremes of the cline. In the case of the feature 'quotidian', for instance, Hasan's system network offers two choices: either 'institutionalised' or 'individuated'. Her discussion, on the other hand (see also Hasan 1981), suggests that activities can be ranged along a cline of institutionalised—individuated. It would seem that the paradox of how to represent phenomena from the point of view of system choices, and from the point of view of clines of 'more—less' has not yet been fully tackled.

In my own work on institutionalisation in context (Bowcher 1999[1] - see Appendix XV), I attempted to incorporate the notion of 'clines', or continua, by proposing sets of questions which could be used as probes for determining how institutionalised the context of an activity may be. Answering these questions in relation to a specific context resulted in the possibility of setting up a cline of 'most institutionalised—least institutionalised' for the context in question. But I did not include in my description any system networks based on these sets of questions. It would seem that contextual phenomena, or at least some contextual phenomena, do not lend themselves to dichotomous interpretation ('either this or that') as represented in the choices in a system network. Rather, they are construed by a constellation of linguistic choices, a position which has been argued and exemplified convincingly in Hasan's work (see especially Hasan 1995).

Hasan's reformulation of the internal features of the context of situation does not involve a shift in the fundamental tenets of Halliday's model of the relation between language and context whereas Martin's connotative semiotic model of context and language does. Martin's model is briefly described in the next section with specific emphasis on notions relevant to this study.

2.3.2.4 Martin

Martin's connotative semiotic model of register and context represents a departure from that of Halliday. In Martin's model, register is equated with context of situation and hence is 'constituted by the contextual variables field, tenor and mode' (Martin 1992: 502). This means that Martin does not view register as a potential category of language use. Rather it is a 'communication plane' which can only make meaning 'by borrowing the words and structures of ... language' (Martin 1984: 24).

A further departure from Halliday's conception of register and context is Martin's introduction of the term 'genre' as a technical term. In Martin's model genre is explicitly connected to the context of culture, in that he proposes that the context of culture is a set of social processes (genres) which are realised through the context of situation (registers), which are themselves configurations of field, mode and tenor, realised through linguistic choices. Genre, register and language are therefore three different communication 'planes' forming an hierarchy of realisation (Martin 1992). Martin argues that both genre and register are connotative semiotics. That is, they are dependent on language for their expression. Language in this sense is interpreted as a denotative semiotic. Martin's formulation is illustrated in Figure 2:5 below.

Content Plane (Connotative Semiotic)   Expression Plane (Denotative Semiotic)

Genre

Register

Language

↘ - 'is realised by'
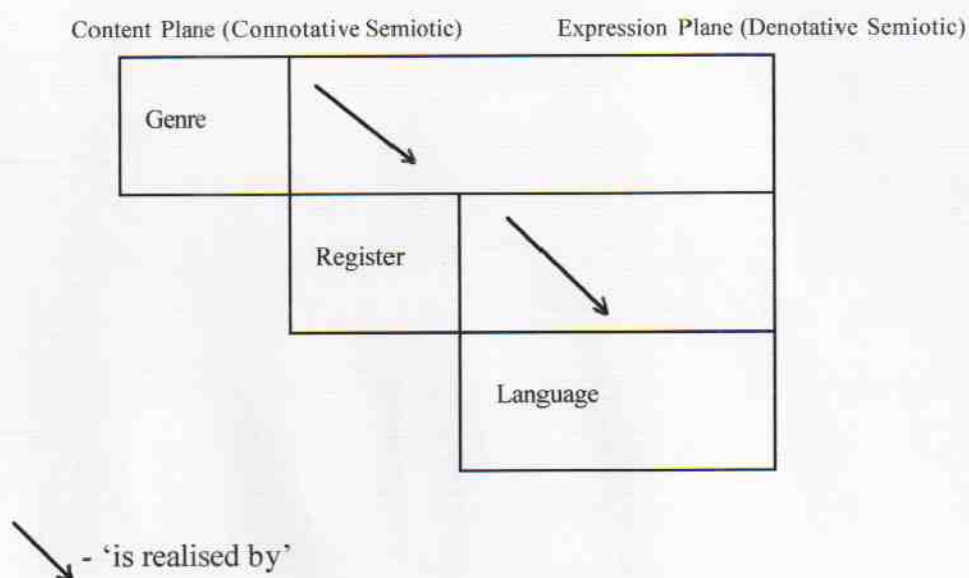
Figure 2:5. The Communication Planes of Martin's Model
(Adapted from Martin 1992: 495).

As Figure 2:5 illustrates, Martin (1992) sees register as a connotative semiotic system lying between language and genre. Table 2:1 outlines the differences between Halliday's and Martin's conceptions of register and context of situation.

Martin's reinterpretation of 'register' as meaning 'context of situation' is an interesting departure from Halliday's model because register in sociolinguistic theory has invariably been equated with 'language variety' not 'context' *per se*. He argues that his

reinterpretation of context as comprising 'two communication planes, genre (context of culture) and register (context of situation) ... leav[es] genre to concentrate on the integration of meanings engendered by field, tenor and mode as systematically related social processes' (1992: 495).

Table 2:1. The Different Approaches to Register of Halliday and Martin (Martin 1992: 502)

Halliday	Martin
Context of situation:	Register:
	[as connotative semiotic]:
field	field
tenor	tenor
mode	mode (excluding rhetorical mode)
redounding[2] with (symbolizing, construing and construed by)	
Language:	Language:
semantics (register as meanings at risk)	discourse semantics
lexicogrammar	lexicogrammar
phonology/graphology	phonology/graphology

The relationship between genre and the register variables of field, tenor and mode in Martin's model can be seen as one of 'organisation'. That is, the values of field, tenor and mode are being 'organised' through the motivating forces of genre. One reason behind Martin's introduction of the 'organising' principle of genre is his dissatisfaction with how the notion of 'purpose' has been dealt with in SF theory. Martin complains that 'purpose' does not tend to correlate with any particular 'metafunctional component of the lexicogrammar or discourse semantics' and for this reason, is more usefully treated as a separate level. Another reason for the introduction of the level of genre is so that the notion of rhetorical purpose can be associated with Bakhtin's 'more global notion of speech genres' (Martin 1992: 501). The notion of purpose in Martin's model is manifest as text structure, or 'schematic structure'. Martin also claims that by extracting social purpose from the context of situation genre takes on a 'principal descriptive responsibility': that of 'constrain[ing] the possible combinations of field, mode and tenor

variables used by a given culture', and thereby exposing 'the holes in a culture's register paradigms' (Martin 1985b: 250).

In response to this variation Hasan, who largely utilises the 'traditional' model of SF theory, has argued that purpose is a much more complex feature of context than it first appears, particularly if we take into account the interdependency between the contextual variables of field, tenor and mode. Using a text from her mother-child corpus, Hasan (1995) argues that during any one time, a mother may be accomplishing several things at once, such as cajoling, bathing and teaching her child. In her analysis of service encounters (1985b) and of nursery rhymes (1984), Hasan shows how the structure of a text (generated in Martin's model at the level of 'genre') can be derived by examining the text in relation to its context of situation within the framework proposed by Halliday.

Martin's model has a socio-political motivation in that according to Martin (1985b: 251), to effect any kind of semiotic revolution would entail challenging existing genres which would pave the way for change. In his closing remarks in *English Text* (1992: 588) Martin suggests that SF theory 'has to be developed to the point where it informs interventions in political processes' and 'fill[s] in disjunctions (i.e. ideologically motivated gaps in the ways in which field, mode and tenor combine)'. Martin thus attempts to isolate 'purpose' or 'social process' in the description of the context of a text, and in doing so place it in a superordinate position to other features of the context, such as field, tenor and mode. In addition to this, Martin invokes the notion of ideology and suggests that it be placed at a superordinate level to genre in an attempt to bring issues of an ideological nature into the description of the context of language events. However, Hasan also shows that ideological issues can be accounted for within the parameters of the SF model as outlined by Halliday without invoking any extra 'levels' (see Hasan 1992, 1996a, 1996d).

Martin's description of the register variables, field, tenor and mode, thus involves a reformulation of Halliday's traditional terminology and of Halliday's conception of context. Purpose is now placed above field, tenor and mode and positioned at the level of

genre, and ideology is placed at a superordinate level to genre. A consequence of placing genre at a superordinate level to register, and register as an organising force is that throughout a text, the register variables can apparently be seen to shift according to the stages through which the text is moving. Following Martin's context-register set up, this would suggest that features of the relevant context of situation shift through the text. However, this is not always articulated in descriptions of the context of a text as expounded by those who use Martin's model. Rather, the context of situation is generally described as reflecting one set of field, tenor and mode variables (see Eggins 1994: 325), not several according to the number of stages in the genre. Thus, there appears to be an inherent contradiction in Martin's framework, or at least in the application of his framework to text analysis.

Martin's departure from the traditional SF model appears to have been thrust upon him by default: in a curious remark in a note in *English Text* he comments that his interpretation of 'register as a semiotic system in its own right, involving notions both of system and process' (1992: 502) 'was originally simply a misunderstanding on Martin's part of Halliday's model ...[but] since it has now appeared in so many publications, it seemed more appropriate to extend Halliday's notion than undo the misinterpretation here' (note 7, 1992: 589). Whatever the reasons behind Martin's pursuing an alternative framework, his reinterpretation of the relationship between context, register and genre has spawned an enormous amount of applied educational work. It has also provoked much criticism and debate from both within the field of SF theory and outside it (see especially Hasan 1995, 1999; Reid (ed.) 1987). On the other hand, Matthiessen (1993: 232) takes a more moderate view of Martin's reformulations, claiming that systemic functional linguistics is 'a "flexi-model", where it is possible to play off different dimensions against one another'. Matthiessen (1993: 232) states that even though Halliday's and Martin's models of register are genuinely alternative ways of modelling register, they are not intended to be combined but instead can be interpreted as complementarities. Hasan, on the other hand, does not hold this view. She argues that Martin's model of register is inconsistent with the

theory of systemic functional linguistics and 'is neither necessary nor viable' (Hasan 1995: 184).

As a concluding comment to this section and as a response to Martin's proposed changes to Halliday's framework, it can be argued that rather than viewing the elements of field, tenor and mode as fairly one-dimensional, as I interpret the connotative semiotic model as doing, they can perhaps be viewed as relating both to the immediate context in which the text is produced and as relating to the deeper ideological corners of the context of culture. The inherent and practical confusion which arises from equating register with context of situation is also an issue which makes the 'connotative semiotic' model undesirable as a basis for this study. Furthermore, I would agree with Hasan that the notion of 'purpose' is more complex than is suggested in Martin's model and that a text may be realising several 'purposes' which may be identified through choices in different lexico-grammatical systems (see Hasan's discussion 1995). The concepts of genre and of text structure appear to be manageable within the traditional SF rubric, as does the concept of ideology. Hasan's work (especially 1984, 1996a, 1996d) as well as others (e.g. Cloran 1987, 1994), demonstrate how ideological phenomena can be accounted for within the traditional framework, and therefore that Martin's planes of genre and ideology (see Martin 1992) and Leckie-Tarry's reformulations of the SF framework are not necessary for doing this.

2.3.2.5 The Perspective of Context Adopted in this Study

For the purposes of this study the SF traditional model of context and its relationship to language is adopted. It can be argued that maintaining the view that context of situation is the motivating set of relevancies for registers provides a means of articulating the complexity and interdependency of the elements which comprise any specific context of situation. Rather than viewing context as made up of levels, or planes, such as ideology and genre, I would prefer to view context of situation as a more fluid concept which encompasses both the textual context and the cultural context in which the text is placed. A useful analogy for describing context of situation may be a graphic equaliser. On a graphic equaliser each frequency is located on a continuum and the dial for each frequency

is set at a different point, but all the frequencies configure to produce a particular type and quality of sound. If we interpret the frequencies as cultural or contextual elements, then the settings can be seen to be reaching further into some aspects of the social context than others. Some features may be of the more immediate concrete kind, while others may be of the more abstract or ideological type. For instance, a Rugby League commentary conveys much about what is believed to be virtuous in an Australian man: character traits such as mateship, perseverance, strength, endurance — even anti-authoritarianism. While some might say this is part of the underlying ideology of the radio commentary, it can be argued that it is also part of the context of situation of the commentary. Ideology is but a culturally constructed artefact, so if context of situation is an instantiation of culture and language-in-use construes this, then descriptions of ideological-like features should be considered as part of the context of situation if they are illuminated in the text itself. This position makes the construction of a separate plane of genre and ideology (such as in Martin's connotative semiotic model) unnecessary. Rather, it facilitates a means whereby the analyst can consider continua of features within the context of situation, which are motivating the language used in any situation.

This study primarily utilises Halliday's original formulation of context of situation. How much information is included in the description of the context of situation of any instance of language in use, and the kind of contextual features construed in the text are determined in the end by the text itself, and the aim of the analysis in the first place. This study aims to show a clear relationship between the language and context of play-by-play talk.

Some of the points raised so far in the discussion of the theoretical approach taken in this study include the notions of language as social semiotic, context of situation, and register. The previous sections have also included some discussion of other theories that take into account the notions of context and register. There are differing opinions about the conception of context and its relationship to language and to registers of language, and in particular, there are different points of view regarding which features of the context are 'relevant' to the language being used. Before moving onto a discussion of the conception

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of 'relevancy' in relation to context and language, however, one more theoretical concept requires explanation. That is the notion of 'text'. The next section explores this concept.

2.4 Text

So far in the discussion the term 'text' has been used without any theoretical description of what this actually means. Text, however, is a technical term the meaning of which is dependent upon the theory in which it is being used. As with the concept of 'context', there are numerous descriptions regarding the term 'text', and this section outlines some of these descriptions.

One view from pragmatic theory (Leech 1983) sees a distinction among the terms 'text', 'message' and 'discourse'. In this view these terms refer to 'planes' in a linguistic transaction. Discourse is the 'interpersonal transaction' which is transmitted by means of message which is the 'ideational transaction', which is transmitted by means of text which is the 'textual transaction'. Text is thus defined as the plane of 'linguistic transaction in actual physical form' (either auditory or visual) (Leech 1983: 59-60). Halliday uses the terms 'interpersonal', 'ideational' and 'textual' as we shall see (see Section 2.6) in his description of the grammar of English. These are described as functions of language that are reflected in specific grammatical systems. In Leech's framework, however, although they are borrowed from Halliday, they are used in a somewhat different sense. Leech criticises what he calls Halliday's 'overgrammaticization' of the functions, and sets out a different framework in which the functions of language are situated. For Leech, the ideational function 'belongs to grammar', but the interpersonal and textual are pragmatic in nature. Leech's framework for incorporating the three functions of language is explained in the following way.

> The ideational function belongs to grammar (which conveys ideas to the hearer through a sense-sound mapping), and ... the interpersonal function and the textual "function" belong to pragmatics. From the speaker's point of view the Interpersonal Rhetoric and the Textual Rhetoric may be characterised respectively as "input constraints" and "output constraints" on the grammar. From the hearer's point of view,

these constraints are reversed, so that the Textual Rhetoric constrains
the input, and the Interpersonal Rhetoric constrains the output of the
decoding process (Leech 1983:57).

What Leech does not do in his framework is show specifically how these constraints are manifest in the language being used by the speaker, which elements of the context of the speech event constrain specific linguistic choices, and what principles lie behind the relationship between certain elements of the context and the structures of the text. It is these kinds of questions that Halliday attempts to explicitly answer in his framework, and why Halliday contends that the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions are manifest in specific grammatical structures. A more detailed explanation of Halliday's framework in terms of the 'hook-up' between grammar and context is contained in section 2.6.

Crystal and Davy (1969: 15-19) see text as referring to 'a particular piece of language' and in their description of the analysis of text, it becomes clear that this 'particular piece of language' is one which is 'longer than the single lexical item' and which is produced in some kind of 'situation'. This view of text seems to echo that proposed by Firth (1968: 206) who said that 'whatever bits and pieces if language we choose to study are, or should be, functionally engaged in situational contexts'. This view of text is similar to that which was held early in SF theory, but which has since been developed and articulated in a more technical sense in later SF writings.

In sociological theory it is held that 'text' refers to 'any written representation (e.g. books), or by extension other recorded symbolic representation (films, television programmes, art forms)' (Jary & Jary 1995: 684). It is distinguished from 'speech' in that a text has 'an independent existence beyond the writer and the context of its production' (ibid.: 684). In CA analyses however, the term 'text' is rarely used at all. Rather, CA researchers refer to 'talk', and in their analyses 'everyday conversation is taken to be a kind of "bedrock" of all interaction' (Boden 1994: 67).

In Longacre's description of language notions, he explains that a text is constituted by both deep, or notional structure, and surface level structures. At the notional structure level there is deep grammar, deep phonology and deep lexicon; and at the surface level there are surface grammar and surface meaning, phonemes and gesture-like intonation, and elaborated vocabulary. These are, according to Longacre, the fundamental elements of the structure 'not just of some text, but of language in its fullness and variety' (Longacre 1976: 15).

In SF theory text is referred to as a 'semantic unit' (see for example Halliday and Hasan 1976) or any instance of language that is functioning in context (see for example Halliday 1978). Hasan (1993: 86) describes it as 'an act of meaning'. Each text that is functioning in some context can be interpreted as an instantiation of a register, and as such it exhibits a specific constellation of choices from the system of language. This set of choices makes it possible to compare one text with others of the same register, or with texts from different registers.

From the description so far it might seem that text is a fairly concrete entity. However, texts can also be viewed as processes. Leech (1983) for instance, argues that the planes in linguistic transaction — 'discourse', 'message transaction' and 'text' — can each 'undergo temporal progression' which reflect the text as 'a phenomenon which unfolds in time'. The cycle of discourse (interpersonal transaction), transmitted by message (ideational transaction) transmitted by text (textual transaction) continues in real time and works to achieve 'the service of goal-directed behaviour' (Leech 1983: 61).

In SF theory the text can be viewed as a process or instantiation of a register. As the text unfolds it both responds to and shapes the contextual pressures of the situation in which it takes place, including the textual environment itself. As with the concepts 'context of situation' and 'register', 'text' can also be described in relation to the instance-system cline mentioned previously in this chapter. Each text is simultaneously an instantiation of the language system and an instantiation of a specific register. The process of instantiation of a text acts to recalibrate the linguistic settings of that register, so that over time changes in

the register can be detected no matter how small those changes may be. Instances of registers which show least dramatic change over time are those which take place in highly institutional settings, while those which show most change take place in settings where the linguistic and contextual properties are more open to negotiation (Hasan 1981; Bowcher 1999). Texts belonging to highly institutionalised registers proceed with a preconceived set of ideas about how they will proceed, and about who will speak to whom etc.

In SF theory the relationship between text, register and the language system is interpreted along the system-instance cline in the following way: language constitutes the potentiality — it is the system or resource from which linguistic choices are made in response to a context of situation. Register represents a specific category of variation in this system, and it represents a potential set of choices. Text is the instantiation of the language system and represents an instance of registral variation, and an instance of language itself. Figure 2:6 illustrates the potential, instantiation and instance aspects of register and text in relation to context and the system of language.

This study works within the potential and instance notions of the SF theoretical framework. That is, two texts representing separate instances of the register of sports commentating are analysed. By quantifying the linguistic choices in these texts and bringing them together in a profile of choices specific to the texts under study, statements can be made about the features which are the 'likely' choices in the register of Rugby League radio play-by-play talk, and those which are the 'unlikely' choices. Those features which emerge from the analyses as 'more likely' can then be interpreted as representing the registral properties of play-by-play talk. They are the 'potential' set of choices characterising the register of play-by-play talk. The texts thus represent instances of the language system, but they represent a specific constellation of choices from this system. The reasons why the specific set of choices is made can be explained through invoking the notion of context of situation.
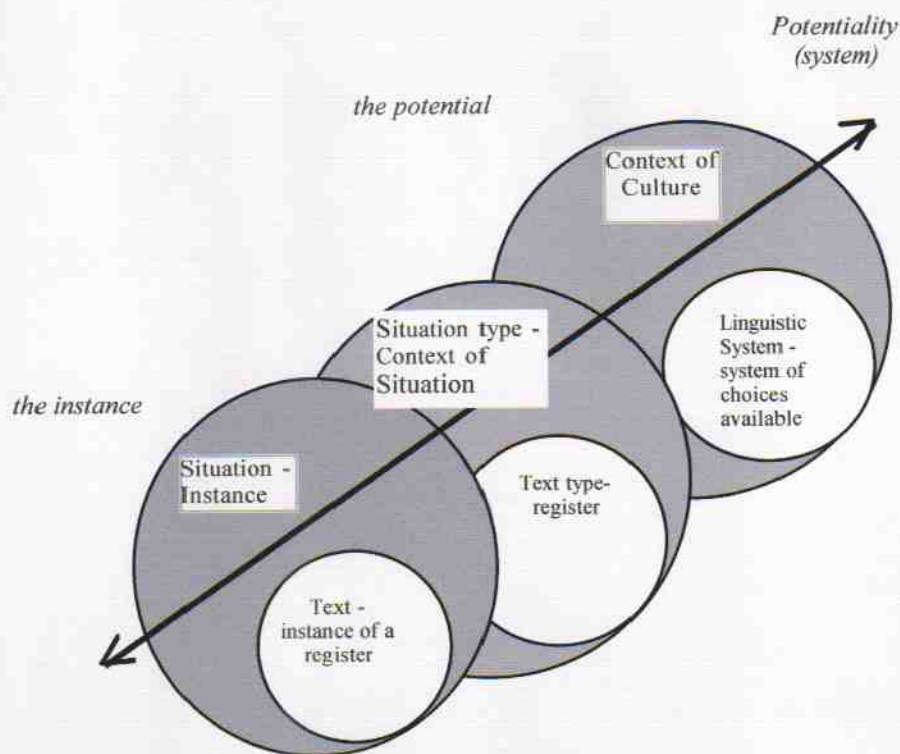
Figure 2:6 The Relationship Between Register, Text and Situation Along the System-Instance Continuum (Adapted from Matthiessen 1993: 272)

An analysis in which features are quantified suggests that 'frequency' of occurrence of features is the measure by which a register can be described. However, whether a feature frequently occurs in and of itself is not the only criterion for determining whether that feature is a registral property. This point is raised in Crystal's (1991) discussion of stylistic profiling where he observes that headlines occur only once in a newspaper article and yet they are a property of this 'style' of text. In SF theory, the frequency of a variable is measured against the other choices which are possible within the context, and the contextual motivation for the distribution of choices is also considered. For example, if we are measuring the kinds of processes selected in a given text, we may find that there is a high number of material processes, but an equally high number of relational processes. Against these two choices there may be no mental processes, only a few behavioural

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processes and fewer verbal processes present in the text. Thus, the co-occurrence of linguistic features plays an important role in describing the linguistic character of a register.

What we are exploring in this study is the common choices between two texts. The context of situation may be appealed to to explain aspects of each individual text, particularly where the texts show marked differences in their sets of choices, but it is also used to explain the overall registral properties of the texts: each text will exhibit its own unique qualities, but together the commonalities between these texts point to a potential set of properties. Thus from either perspective — the instance or the potential — the notion of context of situation is useful to an explanation of each of these sets of textual properties.

2.5 Some Criticisms of the SF Model of Context, Register and Language by Non-SF Theorists

2.5.0 Introduction

This section focuses on some of the criticisms of the SF conception of the relationship between context and language by those working outside the SF framework. These criticisms can be categorised under the following headings: 1) the use of the term 'register'; 2) the contextual categories of 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode'; 3) the seemingly 'deterministic' relationship between context and language; and 4) the comparison of registers. This section comments and reviews some of the alternative views proposed.

2.5.1 The Use of the Term 'Register' in SF theory

Although the term 'register' is widely used in sociolinguistic theory, there are some criticisms of its use. Crystal and Davy for instance, are critical of the term 'register' and in particular of the way this term has been used by Neo-Firthians (SF theorists) because it 'has been applied to varieties of language in an almost indiscriminate manner, as if it could be usefully applied to situationally distinctive pieces of language of any kind' (Crystal & Davy 1969: 61). As has already been noted, Crystal and Davy prefer to use the term 'style' to refer to types of texts used in specific situations. Their criticism

concerning the use of the term 'register' is in one sense valid. In Halliday's early description of the concept register (see Halliday 1985a: 39-40) he suggested that registers could be placed on a cline from 'closed registers' to 'more open registers' to 'most open registers'. Closed registers were described as those in which the 'number of meanings was small', such as 'the set of messages that one was allowed to send home from active service by cable' during the Second World War. Other less closed registers included 'the language of menus'. More open registers included 'verses on greeting cards' or 'the language used between teacher and pupils in primary and secondary schools'. Registers of the 'most open' kind included 'the registers of informal narrative and spontaneous conversation'. These descriptions of the types of language situations are in fact representative of different levels of abstraction in terms of language t ypes. Therefore, in Halliday's description, 'register' seems to include both 'discourse types' (the language of the school) and very specific situational types of language use (language used in cable messages) leading to what de Beaugrande states is the inherent fuzziness of the phenomenon of register (de Beaugrande 1993: 18).

There has also been also an inherent fuzziness in the point of departure for what constitutes a description of a register. In an early paper in which she compares and contrasts code, register and social dialect, Hasan describes registers from the point of view of the contextual factors which at that time in SF theory included 'subject matter of discourse', 'situation-type for discourse', 'participant roles within discourse', 'mode of discourse' and 'medium of discourse' (Hasan 1973). In terms of the linguistic features of a register, Hasan notes that rather than looking just at the frequency of linguistic items in a given text, it is more advantageous to describe the features of registers with reference to 'some high-level semantic components' as 'the realization of these high-level semantic components is not "localized" but ... is likely to be dispersed over the text as a whole' (Hasan 1973: 274). De Beaugrande points out that the move away from a lexicogrammatical starting point to starting with situational features in determining a specific register produces 'unknowns on both sides of the equation, i.e., both for the situation and for the language' (de Beaugrande 1993:10). However, de Beaugrande's

criticism is not upheld in SF literature. For instance, although Halliday's analysis of an interaction between a father and his child (1985a) begins with a discussion of the context of situation and follows with an analysis of the linguistic features of the text, his work on the language of physical science (Halliday 1993b) begins with an analysis of text and then moves to a discussion of the context which is construed in the text. De Beaugrande's criticism more likely derives from the fact that in SF theory linguistic and contextual phenomena are viewed as two ends of the spectrum of a register. That is, register variation can be viewed from the point of view of an instance, or text type, or it can be viewed from the semantic system as systemic variation, or 'a kind of subsystem which redounds with the properties of the context in term of field, tenor and mode' (Halliday 1997: 15).

Halliday's functional grammar claims to provide a means of interpret[ing] ... texts of a broad variety of registers in modern English' (1994c: xx) or to be able to 'compar[e] .. different registers, or functional varieties, of English' (1994c: xv). Because the grammar is functionally oriented and grammatical structures stand in a realisational relationship with meaning, grammatical analyses can provide an explicit means of exploring the relationship between contextual, semantic and lexicogrammatical phenomena. Therefore, in an analysis of register, as Halliday and Martin (1993b: 26) contend, 'it is only by shunting between language and social context ... that we can begin to map out a meaningful interpretation of the discourse'. This is because each is contingent upon the other, or as Hasan observes, 'context ... is a semiotic construct whose value and identity is known by the meanings that are meant: context and text are really two sides of the same coin—two functives of the same function of semiosis' (Hasan 1993: 86).

2.5.2 The Contextual Categories of Field, Tenor and Mode

Another criticism that is directed at the SF model of context concerns the conceptual construct of 'context of situation' and the components, field, tenor and mode. Crystal and Davy (1969) are critical of the terminology field, mode and tenor, which they argue cannot account for many aspects of the way in which English is used. Biber argues that

register analysis cannot be done by using 'open-ended parameters' such as purpose, field, tenor and mode because these 'have an undetermined set of possible values, [which] do not allow a precise characterisation of individual registers' (Biber 1994: 34).

First, these criticisms seem to ignore the purpose of setting up superordinate categories under which sets of criteria are located. The categories of field, tenor and mode are entry points to a range of features associated with certain aspects of the context. Perhaps the criticism concerning the 'inadequacy' of the contextual concepts field, tenor, and mode, stems from the fact that their exact specification is still being debated and developed. This has been a theoretical concern through much of the history of SF theory where several calls for a more detailed account of the features of the context of situation have been made (e.g. Bailey 1985; Halliday 1996). Section 2.5 pointed out some of the current specifications of the possible features associated with the constructs of field by Hasan, Leckie-Tarry and Martin, but because the internal features of field, tenor and mode are not fully explicated in SF theory, there are perhaps grounds for suggesting that at this stage they are 'undetermined'.

However, Biber's criticism that the contextual features of field, tenor and mode cannot provide 'a precise characterisation of registers' is, I believe, unfounded. Firstly, as has already been stated, the register of a text is determined through both linguistic and contextual description, such that any description of the context of a text in terms of field, tenor and mode is derivable only from the linguistic character of that text. The parameters of field, tenor and mode while seemingly separate to the text, are in fact derived from the text itself. Halliday's early descriptions of texts based on situational descriptions, as well as his linguistic analysis of the father-child text (see Halliday 1985a) provide a demonstration of what is involved in characterising the features of the registers involved. A later paper also by Hasan (1995) shows how if elements of a text are changed the text's contextual construct also changes. This change results in a fruitful comparison between the two resulting texts, again providing an opportunity to clearly characterise the resulting registers of each of the texts.

More importantly, the contextual categories of field, tenor and mode are functionally organised with respect to the language system. The functional relationship between context and language is discussed more fully in Section 2.6 under the heading of the CMH hypothesis. In Section 2.6 it will be seen that there are important theoretical grounds for constructing context in the way that Halliday has done, and which allows for useful statements to be made about the characteristics of registers.

2.5.3 The 'Deterministic' and One-to-One Relationship Between Context and Language

Crystal and Davy (1969) question the assumption that there is 'a one-to-one correlation between linguistic features and situation, or that the language can be predicted from the situation and the situation from the language with the same degree of certainty' (Crystal and Davy 1969: 62) and state that these assumptions are not valid. With reference to the 'one-to-one (language feature to situation) correlation' notion, Crystal and Davy contend that 'the majority of linguistic features in English ... are ambiguous indications of the situational variables in the extra-linguistic contexts in which they are used ... and ... it is impossible to make reliable predictions [from the situation] about any but a small number of [linguistic] features' (Crystal and Davy 1969: 62).

At the time that Crystal and Davy made their criticisms, the relationship between contextual features and language was being articulated in SF theory as one of a 'causal' or 'deterministic' nature (Hasan 1973; Halliday 1977, 1978). However, although SF theory has since moved markedly from that position by more explicitly clarifying the relationship between context and language as a dialectic (see for instance Halliday 1992a) the notion of a 'deterministic' relationship between language and context was not intended even in Halliday's early descriptions. For instance, in Halliday's very early work he contends that 'the particular form taken by the grammatical system is closely related to the social personal needs that language is required to serve. But in order to bring this out it is necessary to look both at the system of language and its functions at the same time'

(Halliday 1970b: 142). This clearly suggests that language and context are in a dialectic relationship. The issues of the dialectic relation between context and language and the functional motivation behind the choice of linguistic features that correlate with situational parameters are addressed in Section 2.6 of this chapter.

Crystal and Davy's criticism regarding the one-to-one relationship between field, tenor and mode, although unfounded, can certainly be considered a valid interpretation in the light of Halliday's early descriptions regarding the relationship between context and language. While Halliday has consistently spoken of systematic tendencies, and correlation 'in general terms' (see for example 1985a: 29), he has also made categorical statements such as 'the field is expressed through the experiential function in the semantics' (1985a: 25) and his diagrammatic representation of the realisation of context through language suggests a one-to-one relationship (see Halliday 1985a: 26). However, these explanations of the relationship between features of the language and features of the context are not the only ways in which Halliday has articulated the relationship. In fact, even in the nascent stages of SF theory, Halliday clearly states 'there is no one-to-one correspondence between the categories of language and the categories of external events and objects' (1964: 39). Unfortunately, at the time these comments were made, the theory of systemic functional linguistics had not been fully articulated for these comments to be interpreted for what has now become clear they mean. Other early descriptions (although appearing after Crystal and Davy's criticism) of the relationship between context and language were perhaps more explicit in their insistence on the interdependency of the contextual constructs. Gregory and Carroll (1978) are careful to point out that the contextual constructs of field, mode and tenors (Gregory and Carroll identify two different tenors: personal tenor and functional tenor) are interdependent. They note that '[a]lthough it is convenient to separate field, mode and tenor it must be remembered that the selection of options in one category may influence the selection of options in another. Contextual features do not merely coincide, they determine one another' (1978: 67). This insistence on the interdependency of the contextual constructs is something which the Halliday model has been criticised as lacking

(Hasan 1995), particularly in the earlier SFL literature. It is a theme which is emphasised, however, in later writings, particularly those by Hasan (1995, 1996a-d, 1999).

Biber criticises Halliday's formulation of the correlation between field tenor and mode as being too 'deterministic' and cites Halliday (1978) as his reference. However, there is ample literature explaining the relationship between context and language as non-deterministic and as a dialectic before that time, and particularly since. Plum and Cowling (1987) for instance, explicitly discuss the reasons why the relationship between contextual and linguistic phenomena cannot be thought of as a one-to-one relationship. They argue that 'choices in contextual meanings cannot stand in a one-to-one relationship to choices at the different strata of the linguistic system, because of the different nature, size and total number of the categories at both contextual and linguistic level' (Plum & Cowling 1987: 284). It is probably worth noting here, however, that Plum and Cowling's argument against a one-to-one relationship between contextual and linguistic phenomena is not just bound up with the relative sizes of linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomena. It has also to do with the nature and processes of semiosis, or the 'act of meaning' itself. The act of meaning is at once a process of realisation and of construal whereby phenomena from one level are 'transduced' or resemioticised into another form, through the principle of metaredundancy. The processes of realisation and construal, along with the notion of metaredundancy are explained in more detail in section 2.6 below. SF theory has articulated the relationship between language and situation more explicitly in recent years, and considering his criticisms are produced in the '90's when the dialectic relationship between contextual and linguistic phenomena is well established in SF literature, it seems rather curious that Biber criticises what he sees in SF theory as the 'deterministic' relationship between contextual phenomena and linguistic phenomena.

2.5.4 The Comparison of Registers

The ability to compare registers is a major component of Biber's framework for register analysis. He states that 'the primary goal of [his] framework is to specify the situational characteristics of registers in such a way that the similarities and differences between any

pair of registers will be explicit' (Biber 1994: 41). In his criticism of SF theory and the contextual categories of field, tenor and mode, he claims that SF formulation of context is unable 'to specify the extent of similarities and differences across registers', because registers can range from extremely high-level varieties, to varieties at several intermediate levels, to extremely low-level varieties (Biber 1994: 34). He argues that SF theory cannot 'specify the extent to which two registers are truly comparable' (Biber 1994: 39).

The evidence in SF literature does not support Biber's claim. Hasan's (1985b, see also Hasan 1984) description of the Generic Structure Potential (GSP) of a text is one case in point in which it is demonstrated that the features of a text provide a basis for making statements about the obligatory and optional elements of a text structure and that this in turn provides a means of comparing and contrasting texts in order to bring out both variation and consistency. Furthermore, Hasan's experiment with changing the elements of a text and how this affects the contextual description of the texts (see discussion in point 2 above), provides another illustration of the application of the theoretical concepts in SF theory and how they can be used to make useful comparisons and contrasts between different registers. Eggins' (1994) comparisons of the 'crying babies texts' also provides an exemplification of how different texts can be compared at varying levels, as well as in terms of lexicogrammatical features and generic structure.

2.6 The Non-Arbitrary Relation Between Language and Context
2.6.0 Introduction
So far we have described what is meant by language as social semiotic, register, and text, and have examined the supportive and critical discussions of the contextual constructs field, tenor and mode. The description of these key components and the perspectives on SF theory, however, needs to be complemented by a discussion of the non-arbitrary relationship between context and text in SF theory. It is this aspect of SF theory which sets it apart from other theories which take into consideration context, register and the social aspects of language and communication in general. For instance, although Biber's framework offers a set of linguistic features that purportedly correlate with the situational

dimensions that he identifies, he does not offer any explanation of why these particular features are correlates. Rather, it would appear that the five dimensions that Biber identifies have arbitrarily chosen linguistic features, as there are no theoretical principles for explaining the correlations themselves. It could be argued that the selected linguistic features could correlate with other situational dimensions, as much as it could be argued that the linguistic features chosen to correlate with the said dimensions may not in fact, necessarily do so. Lee (2000) in fact, shows that this is the case, particularly where the number of features changes or if different data are analysed, or if stricter criteria for statistical inclusion are used. Lee (2000) demonstrates that only one of Biber's situational dimensions has any validity.

Furthermore, Biber's five dimensions represent only a limited selection of situational criteria. In Biber's analyses there appears to be more attention paid to the style of production involved in registers, such as involved vs. informational, production, overt expression of persuasion, and abstract vs. nonabstract style, than other situational aspects which the language may reflect.

In order to explain what is meant by the non-arbitrary relationship between language and context in SF theory, we need to introduce the following components of the theory: functions of language, metaredundancy, and the Context-metafunction Hook-up (CMH) hypothesis. The functions of language will be addressed initially because they are relevant to a discussion of the other two components.

2.6.1 The Functions of Language as Outlined in SF Theory

In SF theory language is viewed in terms of three strata: semantics, lexicogrammar[3] and phonology. Phonology is the expression of the semantic and lexicogrammatical levels. The lexicogrammatical level is the organising mechanism of language, and the semantic level is the level of meaning. The level of meaning in language is said to comprise a set of 'metafunctions'. In SF theory, the three metafunctions are known as ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational metafunction can be broken down into the

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experiential component, or those meanings to do with what the text is about, its expression of participants, processes, events, states of being and the like. The other component is the logical component, which refers to the abstract relationships between the processes and participants in the internal structure of elements of the text. The interpersonal metafunction refers to the role language plays as social interaction. It is the function of language to enact social relations. The textual metafunction is the role language plays as a conveyer of a message and is considered the enabling function of language. It is the means through which language 'makes sense in some context'. SF theory claims that each utterance or sentence that is produced is simultaneously realising these three fundamental meanings. That is, language is capable of 'mean[ing] more than one thing at once, and ... constru[ing] meanings into texts' (Halliday 1992a: 30).

These functions of language are systematically realised through certain grammatical systems in the language. This is the crucial difference between the SF model of the relationship between meaning and wording and other linguistic models. The relationship is non-arbitrary in that the lexicogrammatical form of language is said to have evolved according to the functions it has been called upon to serve. Thus, 'the relation between the meaning and the wording is not ... an arbitrary one; the form of the grammar relates naturally to the meanings that are being encoded' (Halliday 1994c: xvii). The only arbitrary relationship between the strata of language that is recognised in SF theory is that between the lexicogrammar and the phonology.

With this non-arbitrary relationship between the strata of lexicogrammar and meaning we can see systematic tendencies for meanings to be realised in structures of the language. The experiential metafunction is realised through grammatical systems such as TRANSITIVITY; the interpersonal metafunction is realised through systems such as MOOD; and the textual metafunction is realised through systems such as THEME and INFORMATION. As with all notions of 'correlation' in the SF model, a caveat must be applied. That is, these correlations are tendencies and they are interdependent in the realisation of the meanings of a text.

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Important in the SF view of grammar is the notion of 'probability'. According to Halliday (1985c: 8-9) the lexicogrammatical system of language is 'inherently probabilistic'. He argues that while it has been readily accepted that the vocabulary of a given language can be described in terms of the relative frequency of certain words over others, the principle of 'relative frequency' has not been widely accepted in linguistic theory. However, Halliday contends that at least in some lexicogrammatical systems, 'the options are not equiprobable'. With regard to the relationship between grammar and register, he further contends that 'one of the significant differences between one register and another is a difference of probabilities in the grammar'.

In SF theory, the central component of the grammatical system is the clause, since it is in the clause that the metafunctions of the language are said to be simultaneously realised and where there is the potential for a realisation of the full structural components of each of the lexicogrammatical systems. By examining clauses from the perspective of each of the metafunctions, we can begin to see how the speakers arrange their experience and their interpersonal relations through the textual resources available in the grammar. A description of this 'arrangement' of experience and interpersonal relations is essentially a matter of describing the patterns of choices made in any given situation, and this is an exercise in developing a description of the probability of certain choices made over others within that situation. Thus for example, the choices in the interpersonal grammar which are taken up in a text can be used for making statements about what is more or less likely for texts of this type.

2.6.2 The Notion of Metaredundancy

The relationship between the strata of language and the level of context is one of realisation-construal. The functions of language are realised in the lexicogrammatical level through systematic choices in certain grammatical systems. At the same time, the functions that are realised in language are construing those meanings that configure in the context of situation. This realisation-construal relationship between the strata of language

and between language and context is one in which a process of 'resemioticising' or 'transducing' takes place, and this produces a metaredundant relation. The metaredundancy relation between the strata of language is therefore a relation where each level of language is realised by the realisation of the other. That is, meanings are realised by the realisation of wording in sound (Halliday 1992a: 24). Halliday has argued that whereas in the early stages of language development there is a one-to-one relationship between meaning and sound, adult language is characterised by the metaredundant relation in which meaning is transduced into wording and is then transduced into sound (or grapheme). We can refer to this as a process of 'redounding'. That is, 'the context of situation ... redounds with the redundancy of the discourse semantics ...with the redundancy of the lexicogrammar ... with the phonology' (Halliday 1992a: 24). The relationship between the strata of language thus creates a semiotic space that makes it possible to mean more than one thing at the same time (e.g. the simultaneous mapping on to clauses of the three metafunctions) in response to a specific context of language use.

As already mentioned, this study focuses in large part on the lexicogrammatical resources deployed during play-by-play talk. In applying the notion of metaredundancy here, we can argue that a study of the specific lexicogrammatical choices made during play-by-play talk can highlight which meanings are construed in the language, and how these meanings are organised at both the clause level and within the text as a whole. However, before proceeding with a discussion of this, we can, along with Hasan, ask the question: 'What part, if any, does the form of language play in the production of linguistic meanings?' (Hasan 1993: 88). The next section attempts to address this question.

2.6.3 The CMH Hypothesis

The CMH hypothesis, or the context-metafunction hook-up hypothesis, is proposed as a means of explaining the non-arbitrary relationship between the functional organisation of language and the kind of contextual features that are attended to in any occasion of language use. SF theory proposes that there is a tendency for certain features of the situation to correlate with features of the semantic system, (although contrary to criticism about this

correlation (e.g. Crystal & Davy 1969: 61), there is not a one-to-one correlation between contextual features and language features). Rather 'the correlation between context and meaning-wording is viewed probabilistically' (Hasan 1995: 222). This correlation has been referred to as the context-metafunction-hook-up (CMH) hypothesis (Hasan 1995). This hook-up is possible because of the functional nature of the language system. That is, the functions of language are organised with respect to context.

The CMH hypothesis hinges on the theory that context and text are in dialectic relation. The 'abstract structure of the context of situation is as it is because meaning-by-wording is so organized as to constitute precisely these elements of the situation' Hasan (1995: 223). The features of the context of situation, however, should not be thought of as neatly compartmentalised units. Rather, they are interdependent. This interdependence is also realised in the meaning-as-wording. That is, changes in certain structures of the language used in a situation will have an effect on the kinds of meanings which are being construed, and hence in the values of the context of situation. Hasan (1995) has shown through experimentation and argumentation that the values of the context of situation are permeable, just as are the meanings of language. Nevertheless, there are typical lexicogrammatical systems through which the contextual meanings and the functions of language are realised.

As noted above, field refers to what is happening in the context of situation, or the subject matter in which the participants are engaged and to the nature of the social action that is taking place. The linguistic features which typically realise these aspects of the context include the types of participants and processes and the ways in which they are grammatically structured. These are aspects of the TRANSITIVITY system of language. The subject matter is realised to a large extent through choices in the lexicon. All of these systems form part of the experiential grammar of English. Tenor has to do with the kinds of social relations that exist between the participants in the situation. Tenor is typically realised through the interpersonal metafunction realised through such systems as MOOD. Finally, mode refers to the part that language is playing in the situation i.e. whether the

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language is of spoken or written form and whether it is ancillary or constitutive of the actions taking place in the situation. There is also the factor of how much and what type of feedback is possible in the context of situation. The linguistic features and systems through which mode is typically realised include, ellipsis, the pragmatic use of pronouns, REFERENCE, THEME, GIVEN-NEW, and patterns of lexis. This schema is illustrated in Table 2:2 below.

Table 2:2. The Realisation-Construal Relationship Between Context and Language
        (From Hasan 1993: 91)

Metafunction	Contextual Variable	Meaning System	Wording System
interpersonal	social relation (= TENOR)	role exchange; assessment of probability, obligation	mood system (e.g. declarative v. Interrogative...); systems of modality, modulation
experiential	social action (= FIELD)	states of affairs classification of phenomena	transitivity system (e.g. material v. Verbal...); lexical systems ...
logical		relations of states of affairs relations of phenomena	expansion, projection systems modification ...
textual	semiotic organisation (= MODE)	point of departure; news focus points of identity, similarity	thematic, information systems phoricity, lexical field

In SF theory a description of the context of situation is obtainable through a study of the linguistic meanings realised through the lexicogrammatical choices made in text. That is, 'it is the text that identifies the nature of its context' (Hasan 1993: 86). In order to elucidate the meaning resources deployed in any situation, we need to analyse those linguistic choices made in the text. It is the lexicogrammatical choices that 'produce meaning, and this is tantamount to producing semiotic constructs of reality, and it is through the realizational relation between meaning and wording that the world of human experience enters into discourse' (Hasan 1993: 88).

Therefore, a considerable portion of this study is devoted to an analysis of the lexicogrammatical choices made in play-by-play text in order to elucidate the nature of the context that is construed in play-by-play talk. It can be assumed that the register of play-by-play text will exhibit certain combinations of meaning-wordings with certain

frequencies, because these meaning-wordings are responding to a specific configuration of contextual constraints.

2.7 Material Situational Setting

One final concept that requires consideration in this chapter is the concept of Material Situational Setting (MSS). The previous sections have described how the relationship between language and context is theorised as non-arbitrary in SF theory. But the material environment in which a situation of language occurs is not 'discounted' in SF theory. A major difference between SF theory and other theories of context and language is the differentiation between the conceptual construct of context and the material environment in which the text takes place. As we can see from Cook's (1990) ruminations on the problem of transcribing context relevant to discourse (see section 2.3.1 above), without a theoretically motivated framework for the symbiotic relationship between context and discourse, the problem becomes one of 'transcribing infinity'.

In SF theory the material environment of a text is known as the 'Material Situational Setting' (MSS) and is defined as 'the actual physical setting in which a text might unfold' (Hasan 1981: 108). Elements of the MSS only enter into a description of the context of situation if they are realised somewhere in the text itself, and thus construing some component of the context of situation. In SF theory a distinction between the conceptual construct of context of situation and the MSS is possible because according to this theory the text provides the evidence for its own contextual motivation. As Hasan states: 'if context is a semiotic construct realized by meanings as construed by wording, then in texts as its realization there will exist evidence of what the abstract form of context is like: a hypothesis about the abstract nature of context would be seen as viable ONLY IF the meanings of the text will bear testimony to it' (Hasan 1993: 89 emphasis in the original). There is a number of ways in which the MSS can have an impact on the language which is taking place, particularly in institutionalised settings such as weddings, funerals, courtrooms and the like. In these situations the MSS is multi-semiotically coded. That is, elements such as dress codes, time frames for interaction, location of participants in the

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interaction and the general layout of the interactional setting are often predetermined and their meanings converge with the meanings associated with the assigned social roles of the participants in the situation, the mode of discourse, and the subject matter, and together these work to constrain the degree to which participants can negotiate the context (see Hasan 1981; Cloran 1999; Bowcher 1999).

With regard to the relationship between the MSS and the context of situation, Cloran's (1999) analysis of an interaction between a mother and son in a single MSS demonstrates how speakers effortlessly move in and out of a number of different contexts of situation and only in a few of these does the MSS become relevant to the interaction. In chapter three of this study the environment of play-by-play talk is described and included is a description of the MSS of the Sunday Afternoon Broadcast. It is shown that the material situational setting of this broadcast is highly institutionalised, and while the institutional nature of the MSS affects the type of language taking place, it rarely, if ever, enters the various contexts of situation which are construed in the language of the SASB.

2.8 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to describe and review some theories of register, context and language as well as to outline the key components of SF theory. SF theory forms the theoretical basis of this study largely because it provides a theoretically motivated framework for the relationship between language and context and an exploration of this relationship is a central concern of this study. The SF theoretical framework suggests that by analysing the lexicogrammatical patterns of a specific instance of language use it is possible to elucidate the contextual pressures that motivate those choices. This theoretical possibility is described in terms of metaredundancy and the CMH hypothesis.

Although SF theory forms the most significant theoretical basis for this study, it will be seen in Chapter Four that Crystal and Davy's (1969) suggestion that the initial step in determining the characteristics of a style of language can be based on intuition, is taken up in determining which portions of the commentary can be classified as play-by-play talk.

The next chapter represents the first two steps of the three-step narrowing of focus approach described in Chapter One and describes the environment of play-by-play talk by examining some general features of the Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast (SASB), including its MSS, and the frames which set it apart from other programmes on the radio. The second part of the chapter turns to a description of some of the features of the commentary, such as its frames and the type and degree of participation which takes place within it.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. The concept of institutionalisation was the major focus of this study in its early stages. The discussion in Chapter Three concerning the institutionalised features of the Material Situational Setting and the predetermined features of the context of situation has resulted from this early research. The research into the notion of institutionalisation in context was published in 1999 and is appended to this dissertation as Appendix XV. The concept of institutionalisation as the basis of this study was abandoned in favour of the lexicogrammatical approach taken. A longitudinal study of the commentaries was felt to be the most useful method of exploring the impact of institutionalisation; however, the resources of time and the availability of a corpus of data suitable for a longitudinal study were not available.

2. The term 'redounding' implies a two-way relationship between phenomena: language realises context, while at the same time context is construed by language. The relationship between context and the levels of language is a complex one in which context is realised by the realisation of meaning which is realised by the realisation of wording by sound. It is in this sense that the term 'redounding' is used.

3. In SF theory lexis (vocabulary) and grammar are viewed as a single level of language. This notion of the bringing together of lexis and grammar within the same level of linguistic analysis was first expressed by Halliday as 'the grammarian's dream' (Halliday 1961: 267). Halliday (1992b: 63) argues that

> There is in every language a level of organisation — a single level — which is referred to in everyday speech as "wording"; technically it is lexicogrammar, the combination of grammar and vocabulary ... The point is that grammar and vocabulary are not two different things; they are the same thing seen by different observers. There is only one phenomenon here, not two. But it is spread along a continuum. At one end are small, closed, often binary systems, of very general application, ... At the other end are much more specific, looser, more shifting sets of features.

See Halliday (1966) for a discussion of 'lexis as most delicate grammar', and Hasan (1987b) for an example of the development of this notion through text-based analyses.

CHAPTERTHREE

The Environment of Play-by-Play Talk

3.0 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to develop a profile of the register of play-by-play talk. This study acknowledges, however, that play-by-play talk is not suspended in a void. It is located within a larger linguistic activity. The activity in which it is immediately found is the commentary, which is itself embedded in the Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast (SASB). These two larger textual activities along with the material setting in which all of these activities take place are interpreted as constituting the 'environment' of play-by-play talk. This chapter describes some of the features of the SASB and the commentary, as well as some of the features of the material environment in order to present a broad view of the environment in which play-by-play talk takes place, and to serve as a background against which play-by-play talk can then be studied.

The description of the environment of play-by-play talk is approached as though looking through a zoom lens of a camera. First, the material situational setting of the SASB and the commentary is described, with particular focus on the more institutionalised or established features of this setting. The material situational setting is considered first because it is the physical setting in which the talk takes place and elements of this physical setting are referred to throughout this study. The SASB is then briefly described in terms of its general structure and organisation, as well as the type of activities which comprise it. Next the features which serve to frame the SASB and separate it from other programmes on the radio station are described. It will become apparent that these framing devices are institutionalised in character. The description of the SASB sets the broad textual environment in which play-by-play talk can be seen to take place

Once some of the general characteristics of the SASB are described, the focus shifts to the commentary. A definition of commentary is first established and then the linguistic framing devices used to begin and end this activity are described. Other features of the

commentary that this chapter investigates are the type of participants in the commentary and their roles in the commentary, as well as the proportion of each speaker's participation in the commentary. This chapter thus attempts to explicate some of the general features which characterise the SASB and the commentary, and to set a background against which play-by-play talk can be more effectively described, understood and interpreted.

3.1 The Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast (SASB)

3.1.0 Introduction

The sports commentary, or sports broadcast, that this study focuses on is a category of radio programming known as 'outside broadcast' or OB (Marks circa 1992[1]). As already noted in Chapter One, this study uses data primarily from two professional Sunday afternoon Ruby League radio sports broadcasts. These SASBs take place during the winter season of 1996. As with most Rugby League SASBs they include coverage of a weekly professional Rugby League match. Details about the match which the two radio commentaries centre on are provided in Appendix IV. A glossary of Rugby League terms is provided in Appendix V.

The next section describes the Material Situational Setting (MSS) of the SASB. This description is relevant to all three language activities identified in this study — the SASB, the commentary, and play-by-play talk — as all three take place within the same physical location.

3.1.1 Material Situational Setting of the SASB

3.1.1.0 Introduction: The Concept of Material Situational Setting in SF theory

As noted in Chapter Two, in SF theory a distinction is made between the semiotic construct, 'context of situation', and the actual physical environment in which a social process takes place. The context of situation is an abstract concept whose features can be determined through an analysis of the language taking place. On the other hand, the MSS refers to the actual physical setting of the language. The elements of the MSS may or may
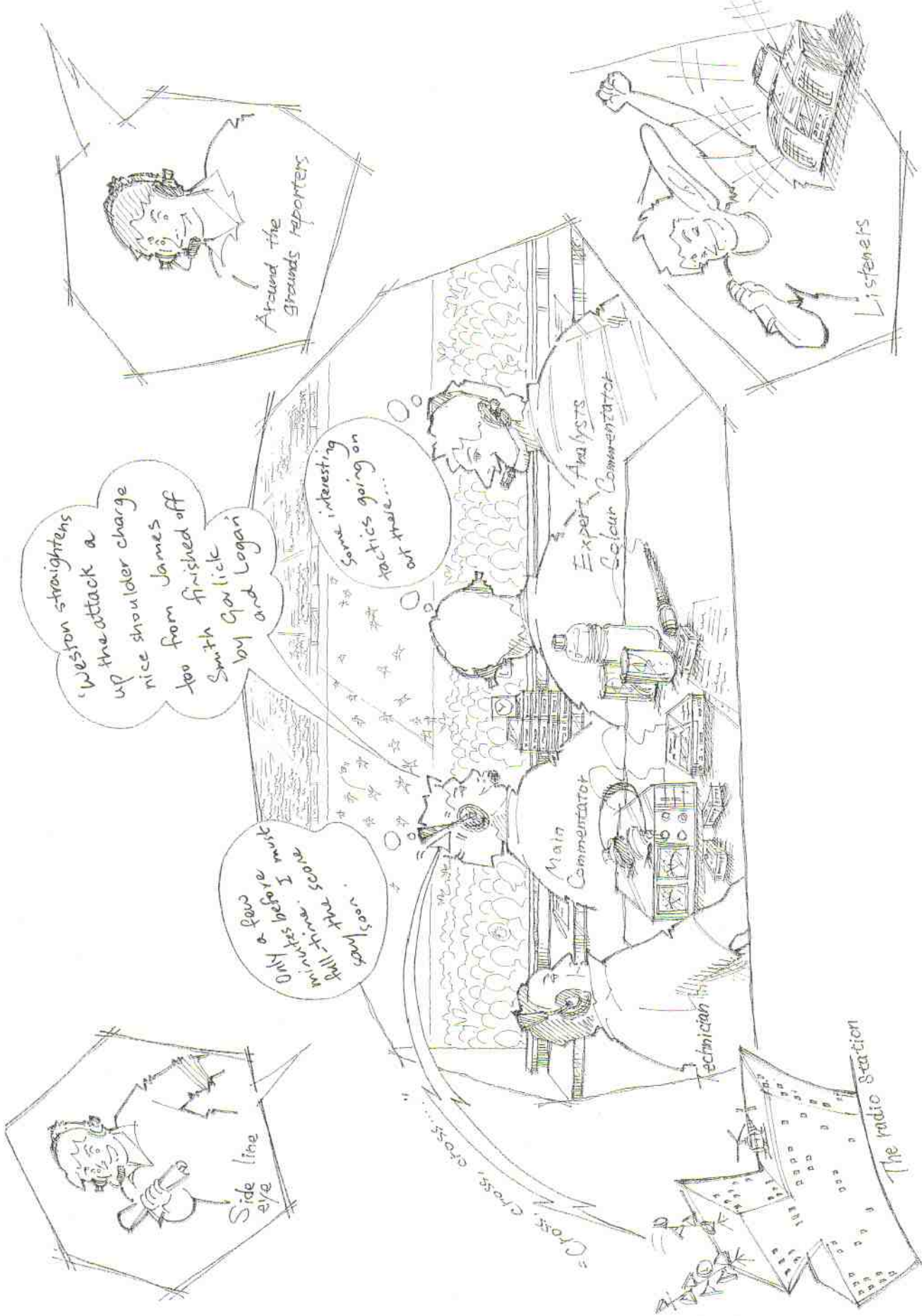
Illustration 3:1 Caricature of the Commentary Box Showing the Personnel Involved and the Overall Material Situational Setting

not be picked up in the language and hence may or may not become salient to the description of the context of situation. What is important is that while theoretically a description of the context of situation may be obtained by consulting the language used, it may not be possible to gain any idea of the MSS from the language. This is because context of situation is realised in the language being spoken whereas the MSS may not be so realised.

3.1.1.1 Material Situational Setting of the Sunday Afternoon Radio Sports Broadcast

In order to orientate the reader to the type of situation which is the focus of the present study, Illustration 3:1 presents a caricatured representation of the commentary box and the overall MSS in which the SASB takes place. It also indicates the kinds of participants and situations of talk which come together within the SASB. We can see from the illustration a number of different features which comprise the MSS as well as some of the predetermined features of the context of situation of the SASB. Features of the MSS include the radio station and the contact it has with the speakers in the commentary box via their headphones, the location of the commentary box in the spectator stands set at some distance from the action taking place, the commentary box itself, the placement of people in the commentary and so forth. Features of the MSS are described more fully in the next section with particular focus on those features that can be interpreted as 'institutionalised'.

3.1.1.2 Institutionalised Features of the Material Situational Setting

In Chapter Two it was noted that some situations can be interpreted as being highly institutionalised in the sense that in these situations several semiotic codes converge such that 'the boundaries set for a process by one mode [of meaning are] ... commensurate with those set by another mode of meaning' (Hasan 1981: 116). For instance, during a wedding ceremony the presence of the rings, the church setting, the location of participants and the dress codes adhered to in the situation indicate what type of social process is being enacted, and what role the participants in the social process are expected to engage in.

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This is because in such situations there is a great deal of established and 'redundant information' which has the consequence that the weight of social convention diminishes the probability of individual negotiation of the context through either verbal or non-verbal means.

On examining the SASB we can see that it, too, can be interpreted as an institutionalised social process in which a number of semiotic codes converge to diminish individual negotiation of the context. For instance, the physical location and the time set for a Rugby League radio commentary to occur are both predetermined features of the MSS which offer very little possibility for variation. Commentators from each participating radio station are assigned a specific commentary box or location in the spectator stands from which to broadcast their commentary, and this clearly demarcates them from the regular spectators in the other parts of the spectator stands. Spectators passing by the commentary box can presume that the talk inside the commentary box is 'on the whole' broadcast talk.

The fact that the commentators are situated in the commentary box, in front of a microphone and 'on-the-air' inhibits the kinds of talk they can engage in. For instance, although the technology allows for a few seconds in which producers can choose to edit out any inappropriate talk, speakers in the commentary box would be ill-advised to carry on any sustained talk which was not intended to be heard by the public. In fact, throughout the commentary, the commentators must be sensitive to the fact that the talk they produce is 'acceptable' to a wide audience (Hartley 1993).

Furthermore, from my own on-site observations it would appear that the location of personnel in the commentary box is to a large extent predetermined. The main commentator generally sits in the position furthest from the door, and this provides him with the fewest possibilities of distractions from technical and other authorised personnel entering and leaving the commentary box. The other speakers are seated next to the commentator, but in positions that can be easily vacated if another guest is invited into the commentary box.

Plate 3:1

The 2GB Commentary Box

In addition to these features, other institutionalised features include the length of time allocated to a rugby league radio commentary and the time for beginning and ending the entire broadcast. Both of these features are prespecified and non-negotiable. Entry into the commentary box area is also a constraining feature of the MSS. Entry into the commentary box is only open to authorised personnel. Such personnel are identified by a press pass, or identification tag issued by the particular media authority for which they are employed or with which they have some association.

There are also sets of institutionalised visual coding orientations which indicate the social process which is in progress. These visual coding orientations include the equipment typically used in a radio broadcast along with signs on the commentary box doors to indicate the designated radio station and logos or radio station names attached to equipment and other items in the commentary box.

Plates 3:1 and 3:2 show two different professional commentaries in action. Plate 3:1 is of the 2GB commentators during a night game. Photograph 3:2 is of the ABC commentators during a Sunday afternoon broadcast. In Plate 3:1 it is possible to just make out in the background the main commentator (Greg Hartley) seated and using binoculars as he calls the game. Behind him is the technician. In the foreground we can see the colour commentator (Peter Peters). Both of these speakers are wearing headphones, primarily so that they can hear any instructions from the main radio station. On the bench in front of the colour commentator is a booklet entitled *Big League* which is available at the stadium and contains information about the game taking place. This booklet, amongst other things, gives details of the teams and team members that are scheduled to take part in the day's events, as well as which teams are due to compete in the following weeks. This is information that the commentators use during their commentary as support material. While observing the commentators at work, it became apparent that this booklet was also important if team members had withdrawn from the game and had been replaced by other

Plate 3:2
In the ABC Commentary Box

team members. The commentator would make changes to his copy of the booklet and convey these changes to the listeners.

In Plate 3:2 we can see the main commentator (Peter Wilkins) standing as he calls the game. Seated next to him is a colour commentator or analyst (Warren Ryan). I observed that the main commentator in each radio station would often stand during very exciting moments of play. We can also see that the commentators, while having a 'bird's eye' view of the game taking place, are in fact located at quite a distance from the action. It is partly for this reason that they rely on the 'side-line eye' (see Illustration 3:1) to give any specific details about injuries, penalties, or what they consider to be dubious decisions by the referees.

Plate 3:2 also shows several tapes resting on the bench in front of the main commentator. This is indicative of the multi-role of the ABC commentator. Unlike the commentary in the commercial radio station, the ABC commentary is essentially a one-man-show. The ABC commentator co-ordinates the complete activities in the SASB, such as introducing and closing the SASB, largely co-ordinating pre- and post-game talk. The ABC commentator chooses his own music to play in the musical interludes and presses the 'musical cue' for 'around the grounds' crosses. In the 2GB commentary on the other hand, another speaker takes over the co-ordination of the SASB at times other than during the commentary. There is also a small clock (more obvious in Illustration 3:1). This is an important piece of equipment for the commentator and reflects the MSS feature of 'time constraint'. During the commentary it is used to keep track of how long the game has been going and how much time is left. Hyde, a retired Rugby League radio commentator, relates a story regarding the importance of having a reliable time-piece.

> [C]lose to fulltime in a tight game, my watch went on the blink. No doubt I blustered just a little—and certainly let listeners know that I was in trouble as I called the exciting last few minutes. Next day at 2SM there was a call for me—from someone at Seiko volunteering a stopwatch to prevent a repeat of my problems (Hyde 1995a: 73).

This incident remembered by Hyde is also indicative of the interest that commercial companies show in any possibility to promote their products through sporting events. Subsequent to the situation in which Hyde suffered the problem with his watch, Seiko offered a watch not just to Hyde, but also to the weekly 'man of the match'[2], thus gaining an opportunity to promote their products.

Another time constraint in the environment of the commentary that the clock reflects is the importance of monitoring the frequency at which the commentator states the score. Stating the score is a key activity in the commentary. According to Greg Hartley (1993), he 'give[s] the score about thirty times a game, because people are coming in and out ... [and] we've got to tell them the score as soon as they tune in'.

In summary, the predetermined time frames, start-finish times, frequency of score up-dates, the physical location, arrangement of personnel, admittance of authorised personnel, means of identifying authorised personnel, equipment and other paraphernalia in and around the commentary box are all part of the MSS in which the social process of radio sports commentating occurs. Together they play an important role both in indicating the type of social process which is being enacted and in constraining individual negotiation of context.

The next sections focus on the textual environment of play-by-play talk. As has already been noted, play-by-play talk is located within the SASB and more specifically within the commentary. The SASB is a six-hour long broadcast with a well-established structure similar to the structure of other types of sports broadcasts. Previous descriptions of the structure of a sports commentary are examined in the next section.

3.1.2 The Overall Structure of the SASB

In a study of radio commentaries of American football and baseball games and Japanese baseball games, Ferguson (1983) observes that the structure of a sports broadcast is identifiable by the kinds of language activities which constitute it. For instance, it begins

with some kind of background information about the game, the occasion, and the teams involved, and concludes with interviews of players and coaches. There are also segments of direct reportage, comments about the events taking place, and advertising segments in the commentary. According to Ferguson (1983: 154), these activities take place in 'relatively fixed proportions and relatively fixed sequence'.

Kuiper and Austin's (1990) study of radio horse-racing commentaries suggests that racecalls are also structured in a specific way. The structure they propose can be summarised in the following way (the symbol ^ means 'is followed by'):

colour commentary ^ play-by-play commentary ^ colour commentary

In Kuiper and Austin's account of commentating, play-by-play commentary is considered to be oral formulaic speech while colour commentary is not. Oral formulaic speech is defined by Kuiper (1996: 21) as 'discourse ... governed closely by sequencing rules, consisting largely of formulae... [and] spoken with abnormal fluency, and droned or chanted intonation'. Kuiper and Austin's study of horse racing commentaries also outlines the basic discourse structure of the commentary. They find that the play-by-play commentary is characterised as a series of cycles beginning with mention of the leading horse and ending with mention of the last horse. The beginning of each cycle is almost always indicated by the use of routinised formulae. Routinised formulae is defined as 'lexical item[s] consisting of a sequence of words' which 'are stored in a speaker's memory', and possessing 'a specific syntactic structure', and 'specific conditions of use ... in a given situation' (Kuiper 1996: 16). Kuiper and Austin call these 'loop formulae' and claim that the loop formulae 'often indicate the relative and absolute location of the field in the race' (Kuiper & Austin 1990: 207).

In a comparison of a commentary and a newspaper report of the same game of Rugby League, Bowcher (1988) finds that while a commentary largely mirrors the organisation of the events which take place in the game, a newspaper report provides newsworthy information first. This means that the global structure of each of these differs in that the

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newspaper report presents the final score first, while the commentary presents it last. An interesting similarity between the two is that the order of information in reconstruction stages in the commentary is similar to the order of stages in the newspaper report. Both begin with events that came last and then account for how these actions came about (Bowcher 1988: 29).

Martin (1992: 506) also observes that 'the commentary starts at the beginning of the match, the news story with its result'. He concludes that 'the commentary and news story differ in staging, and therefore in genre' (Martin 1992: 506). When compared, however, these genres can be said to be 'alike in terms of field — they both reflect the sequence of activities which comprised the game' (Martin 1992: 506). With specific reference to spoken commentary, Martin (1992: 506) notes that 'sports commentators shift rhythmically from play by play description to critique and evaluation'.

While the above descriptions[3] of features associated with the structure of sports commentating have been proposed by researchers examining sports broadcasts and/or commentating from a linguistic point of view, the structure of a sports broadcast has also been described from the sports commentators' view points. Two examples of commentators' descriptions of the structure of a sports broadcast are outlined in the following paragraphs. The first of these is a description of a television broadcast, whereas the second is a description of a radio broadcast by a previous sports commentator at the ABC in Sydney.

Gary Bender (1996), a well-known American sports broadcaster, describes a typical television broadcast as having the following basic structure: the Opening, Call of the Game, Commercial Break and Half-time Breaks during the Call of the Game, Closing the Game, and Post-mortem. According to Bender these stages in the structure of the broadcast have their own distinct functions. For instance, the Opening should 'set the scene, introduce the participants, establish the keys that will make watching the game interesting and exciting' (1996: 80). The Call of the Game is framed primarily by two features: a change in

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technical equipment — a 'switch from hand mikes to headsets', and the kick-off of the game. The first of these features can be interpreted as a change in the Material Situational Setting which couples with a change in the language used. The second feature, the kick-off, can be said to constitute a significant event in the perceptual sphere of the speakers and is brought into the language of the commentary, thus at the same time constituting an element of the context of situation of the commentary. These multiple codings of the beginning of the commentary support Hasan's (1981) claim that institutionalised situations are 'convergently coded' through several semiotic systems. According to Bender (1996: 84) during the Call of the Game the speakers must describe the action on the field and must capture the emotion of the event. Bender explains that the Half-time is used to prepare for a recap of the first half and an opening of the second half. Closing the Game involves 'the wrap-up and the sign-off'. The wrap-up involves 'a summary of what has just happened' while the sign-off is 'a formal way of saying good-bye to the viewers and notifying stations down the line that the broadcast is ending' (Bender 1996: 100).

The structure of the radio commentary bears some similarities with the TV commentary in terms of its global structure. Marks' training notes on outside broadcasts (circa 1992: 2.13, 5.9-5.13) include some detailed suggestions as to the general structure of the radio broadcast. According to Marks the broadcast moves through the following three stages: the Start (Pre-event); the Description (Live), The End of the Description, Summaries and Reviews (Post-event). Marks advises that these stages involve specific elements and functions. For instance, at the Start of the broadcast, the commentator should cover such things as introductions (of himself & his colleagues), orientation of the listeners to the ground conditions, the weather conditions, the event (teams, players) and his own location vis-à-vis the field and the event. During the Description, some of the things that Marks advises include: staying as close to the action as possible and not lagging behind, clearly identifying players, keeping in mind the listeners' needs, mentioning the score and time remaining in the game, building interest and suspense, positioning the action on the field of play, developing 'the art of the pause', and avoiding repeating the same phrases and expressions. At the end of the Description, Marks suggests that the commentator should

state the result and salient details and the effects of the results, give an evaluation of the play, and make a final wrap-up. Following the Description there are Summaries and Reviews, and the kinds of things that should be covered in these are the commentator's impressions, including his impressions of the opening of the game, the trends in first half, the score at half time, a likely prediction for the second-half action, any turning point in the second half, the key players throughout the game and the 'ramifications of the result'. Although Marks does not specifically mention it, we will see from the analysis in Section 3.2 that the radio SASB, like the TV Sports broadcast includes a 'sign-off' where the speakers indicate that the broadcast has come to a close.

We can see that there are many similarities between the television sports broadcast and the radio sports broadcast in terms of the kind of general activities that take place. However, Marks notes some fundamental differences in purpose between them arising from their different modes. He observes (circa 1992: 2.13) that

> A Television audience can see the event. The Television commentator must talk less and qualify rather than state the obvious.

> A Radio audience cannot see the event and is entirely reliant on the imagery created by the broadcast. A Radio commentator, therefore, must be more fluent, descriptive, colourful and entertaining without sacrificing clarity and accuracy.

The Rugby League SASBs observed in the present study appear to follow Marks' suggested structure. The SASB includes a lead-up to the main event, the First Grade[4] football match. This lead-up, which can be referred to as pre-game talk, includes a continuous up-date of scores of preliminary matches, such as Reserve Grade[5] and President's Cup matches[6], interviews with coaches, or other officials connected with the teams which will be playing, predictions by the broadcast team members about the outcome of the match, information about team members and changes to team line-ups, and background information about each team's current status in the competition. The post-game talk includes interviews with players, coaches and other officials, talk-back with

listeners, and information about the next matches which will be taking place including their location and scheduled dates.

3.1.3 Predetermined Features of the Context of Situation of the SASB and the Commentary

The features of the MSS described in Section 3.1.1 do not on the whole enter the talk of the SASB and this is largely because the SASB is a verbal action rather than a material one. That is if one were to 'watch' a commentary taking place without being able to hear it, the material environment would provide only a few clues as to what may be happening. However, one could not be certain of the specific content of the talk. The institutionalised features of the MSS would primarily indicate that the talk was in progress or 'on air'. There are, however, features of the SASB that can be interpreted as being predetermined features of the context of situation of the talk, because they are clearly evident in the talk which takes place, and have been established over time. One of these features is the kind of participants taking part in creating the SASB. Illustration 3:1 indicates that the kinds of participants include the main commentator, the expert analyst or colour commentators, the side-line reporter, and the around-the-grounds reporters. The types of participants involved in the SASB are predetermined and largely non-negotiable in the context. The language these participants produce is thus of a certain type and nature, and reflects the roles and statuses of the speakers in the situation.

The location of all of the participants is related to their roles in the situation, but it is only the location of certain participants in the MSS which is brought into the language of the commentary and thus relevant to a description of the context of situation of the SASB. The side-line reporter for instance is located down at the side of the playing field and this fact is frequently mentioned during the commentary through reference to his title 'side-line' or his location. Furthermore, the main function of the side-line reporter is clearly connected to his location. He adds his insights about events taking place on the field of play from his vantage point, and because he is located close to the action, he is able to

conduct interviews with players immediately after the game has finished or during the half time break.

The around-the-grounds reporters are located at other games and their location is stated throughout the commentary. Like the side-line reporter, the function of the around-the-grounds reporters is clearly connected to their location. They are contacted at regular intervals to report on the progress of the score at the games where they are located. Their location can also be interpreted as an institutionalised feature of the context of situation of the SASB.

The location of the commentators in the commentary box is occasionally mentioned, but this is not institutionalised as it is with the other speakers, and hence is not a feature of the context of situation. However, the commentator's location is implicitly brought into the context of situation in that the relating of the events taking place is from the speaker's 'privileged position' in the spectator stands (Marks circa 1992: 5.6).

3.2 The Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast as a Framed Social Activity

3.2.0 Introduction

So far we have described the general structure of the SASB, the material situational setting of the SASB, and some of the predetermined features of the situation of the SASB. This section describes some of the (predominantly) linguistic features of the SASB which play a role in distinguishing it as a separate programme within the stream of talk on radio. Focus is placed on those signals which mark its beginning and those which mark its ending. The features outlined in this section are necessarily selective, as the purpose is primarily to point to the most obvious and established features that begin and end the SASB.

3.2.1 Framing Devices

In order to describe the beginning and ending of the SASB the term 'frame' is used. This term comes from the work of Goffman, but its use in this study is slightly different from Goffman's use of the term. Goffman (1986: 10) defines 'frame' as the set of 'principles of organisation which govern events'. The concept of frame refers to the idea that 'on the

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basis of one's experience of the world in a given culture (or combination of cultures), one organises knowledge about the world and uses this knowledge to predict interpretations and relationships regarding new information, events, and experiences' (Tannen 1993: 16). Goffman's use of the term frame therefore, largely concerns the interpretation about what is expected in discourse. Tannen's application of Goffman's ideas, for instance, demonstrates that certain linguistic choices can reveal how participants in a situation are interpreting that situation in terms of what they expect about the situation from a number of different perspectives.

In this study the term 'frame' is used in a more concrete sense, perhaps closer to the notion of the linguistic manifestation of situational boundaries or to Goffman's own term, 'footing'. Goffman (1981: 128) defines footing as 'a change in the alignment we take up for ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance'. While this definition could be usefully applied to the situation which takes place when a commentator shifts from *evaluating* events taking place on the field of play to *relating* events on the field of play, it could also be applied to a nearly complete[7] change in situation as happens at the time when a different programme begins on the radio and another ends. However, Goffman (1981: 128) states that 'a change in our footing is another way of talking about a change in our frame for events', and as the term frame seems to suggest the idea of 'outer borders', it is used in this study in preference to the term 'footing'. That is, in this study the term frame is employed in its more literal sense, i.e. the linguistic borders of a language activity, or signals indicating the transition into and out of a language activity, but it still carries some of the notions proposed by Goffman, in that it is implying that there is a change in event taking place.

In this section therefore, 'frame' refers to the linguistic manifestation of the boundary between different activities taking place on radio and/or within the radio programme itself. Using this definition we can interpret the SASB as possessing the outermost frames of all the activities which take place within the SASB programme. Other activities that take place within its frame may contain smaller activities within their own frame. The result is

something like a Chinese carving in which each piece is contained in the next and together they constitute the whole.

The SASB is framed at both the beginning and the end. The function of these frames is to indicate that the context has changed from the previous programmes to the SASB, and in turn, from the SASB to the next programme. The beginning frame of the SASB always contains some kind of 'lead' which involves some pre-recorded segment. This can be interpreted as an 'Attract' segment. It is upbeat and promotional in its tone. In contrast to the beginning frame, the ending frame is less 'energetic' in tone and does not tend to involve a pre-recorded segment. This appears to lend support Goffman's observation that "closing brackets seem to perform less work, perhaps reflecting the fact that it is probably easier on the whole to terminate the influence of a frame than to establish it" (Goffman 1974: 256). However, this observation may not hold true for other situations, such as those times when one tries to end a conversation with a friend about a delicate matter because of other pressing matters that one is obliged to attend to. In the SASB, however, such a situation does not arise. Rather, the speakers are obligated to finish by a certain time according to the policy of the radio station.

Extract 1 contains those elements which are situated in the beginning frame of the SASB of a commercial radio station (2UE)[8] along with an indication of the kinds of activities which immediately precede it. Extract 2 contains segments in the frames of the beginning and the end of a 2GB SASB. Extract 3 contains the segments in the ending frame of an ABC SASB. Some of the salient features of the beginning and ending frames are discussed below.

Extract 1

Previous Programme, Introduction to and Beginning of the 2UE SASB

(14th July 1996)

- *12 Midday News*

- *Lead-in/Introduction to the Sports Broadcast*

[sound of telephone ringing] *A man answers the phone...*

1. Speaker A: hello
2. Speaker B: Rugby League (*music begins*)
3. Speaker C: we'll give you the world
4. Speaker B: the two-you-ee (2UE) continuous call team
5. (*The following names spoken by at least two different people*): Ray Hadley, John Gibbs, Peter Frilingos, David Middleton, Peter Jackson, Phil Gould, Bob Fulton, Darryl Brohman, Tony Megahey Art [... ? ...]
6. Speaker D (*male speaker sounds like he is a listener who has called in to the radio station*): What people should do they should go to these games and take their radio with them and tune to 2UE
7. Speaker E (*female speaker, again sounds as though she is a listener who has called in to the radio station*): I just love you guys
8. I just think you're all doing a marvellous job
9. Speaker B: Number One for League
10. the 2UE Continuous Call

(music continues for 3 seconds)

- *Beginning of the Sports Broadcast*

1. **Ray Hadley**: and good afternoon and welcome ladies and gentlemen
2. I'm Ray Hadley
3. it's good to have your company on the continuous call from North Sydney Oval
4. of course a beautiful day in Sydney
5. absolutely magnificent weather
6. albeit rather windy
7. a very strong Southerly coming into the ground at the moment
8. now the Roosters and the North Sydney Side the two teams that er are doing battle today
9. it should be a great one as well
10. one change to the North Sydney starting line up and that's Chris Caruana
11. he's off ... or on to the bench
12. I should say
13. and replaced by Josh Stuart

Sports Broadcast continues until 6pm

Extract 2

> **Previous Programme, Introduction to and the Beginning of the 2GB SASB and the Ending to the SASB**
>
> **(27th August, 1995)**

- *2GB Macquarie National News at 12 midday*
- *Announcement of Current time:* "it's six past twelve"
- *Commercial for Rosehill Gardens and Race Course*
- *Commercial for alcohol*
- *Commercial for 'Weather Watch' and 'Permanent Trustee Company'*
- *Weather report*

- *Lead-in/Introduction to the Sports Broadcast*

music yelling (like commentary) overlapping with song about the Rugby League commentary

1. **Male Voice:** the best of the best are right here
2. Greg 'Hollywood' Hartley and Peter 'Zorba' Peters
3. the decibel duo
4. so stick with us on the 'Samsung 2GB Big League' right through to the match of the day at two-thirty
5. right now the League Extra thanks to Rosehill Gardens
6. take it away boys

- *Beginning of Sports Broadcast*

1. **Peter Peters**: a very good afternoon and welcome to the Samsung 2GB Big League coming to you today from a sun-drenched stadium in Brisbane
2. where the Brisbane Broncos take on the Auckland Warriors round twenty-two of the Winfield Cup
3. we're into finals mode come Friday evening
4. this is the most important match of the final round
5. what happens here today will decide the make-up of the final eight for 1995
6. Brisbane will finish third
7. if they win today
8. fourth
9. if they lose
10. if Brisbane do win
11. and Norths beat the Gold Coast
12. the North Sydney Bears will grab eighth spot over Auckland

- *End of the Broadcast*

1. **Andrew Moore:** good on ya [Taffy?]
2. three two, and one two there
3. three to Freeman
4. two to Buettner
5. one to McNamara
6. Footy Tab... no information until tomorrow morning
7. the semis start next weekend
8. you'll catch every game
9. you won't miss a minute here on 2GB
10. Friday night sudden death at Parramatta Stadium Newcastle and Norths
11. Saturday afternoon at the Football Stadium St. George and the Bulldogs sudden death
12. Saturday night in Brisbane we'll be calling that game Brisbane and Canberra
13. and on Sunday at the Football Stadium Manly against Cronulla
14. Hope you've enjoyed our coverage
15. I'm Andrew Moore
16. we'll be back on deck next week with Hollywood and Zorba
17. Terry Lamb, you are simply the best.

[Music: song - "Simply the Best" (the Rugby League Theme song)]

Announcement of the News, 6 beeps to indicate the hour (six o'clock)

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Extract 3

<div style="border:1px solid">

ABC Grandstand Rugby League: Ending of the SASB
14th July 1996

- *End of the Broadcast*
1. PW: Thanks very much Warren
2. and more letters next week er on Grandstand in the letter segment
3. Box triple nine four, GPO (gee-pee-oh) Sydney, Grandstand Rugby League

[Music...4 secs...then continues in the background of the next utterances]

4. well thanks very much to all of you for your company this afternoon
5. we're going to return next week with more Grandstand Rugby League
6. of course mingled with Olympic coverage from Atlanta
7. and all the best to Jim Maxwell and Tim Gable, Jerry Collins, our regular members of the League Panel
8. who'll be going over there to call the action
9. Tracy Holmes will be journeying there
10. and er Peter Longman producing in the studio will be producing in Atlanta
11. but we'll be keeping the League going through all of that
12. and er we hope you can join us next week two to five on Saturday eastern time and two to six Sunday
13. the League will be coming in the middle of all the Olympics
14. we er look forward to your company then
15. on behalf of Warren Ryan and all the team, Peter Wilkins wishing you a very good evening
16. coming up we've got the News at six o'clock
17. then a full wrap of the day in sport will follow
[music is a little louder and continues for a few more seconds and then finishes]
six beeps indicate the hour (six o'clock)
announcement of the six o'clock news.

</div>

3.2.2 The SASB 'Beginning' Frame

As we can see from Extracts 1 and 2 the midday news precedes the SASB. In the 2UE broadcast (Extract 1) the midday news is immediately followed by the 'lead-in' to the SASB, whereas in the 2GB broadcast (Extract 2) the midday news is followed by some commercials. This difference may just lie in the stations' policy on the placement of commercials. The midday news also precedes the ABC broadcast, although an example is not provided here. There are no commercial slots in the ABC SASB because it is the national publicly-funded radio station. Aside from its many other functions, the midday news acts as an established time-framing device. Listeners aware of the typical format of the SASB would know that the midday news takes place just before the SASB begins.

The beginning of the SASB in both Extracts 1 and 2 is indicated by what can be termed an 'Attract' segment. As its name implies, the function of this segment is to attract listeners to the next programme by conveying a sense of excitement. It is probably also a means of

enticing listeners already tuned in to the radio station to stay tuned in for the sports broadcast.

The Attract segments in each of the beginning frames of each of the commercial SASBs include the following features:

> i) names of the SASB speakers
>
> ii) some kind of evaluation/promotion of the afternoon call
>
> iii) 'exciting' music or pre-recorded promotional material

Not only do these combined features function to attract listeners to the SASB and to signal the beginning of the SASB, they also indicate something fundamental about the function of radio. For instance, the SASB speakers are named in the Attract segment because they are 'personalities' who have an established authority and presence within this context. The more prestigious the personalities involved in the SASB (i.e. prestigious in terms of experience and/or knowledge of the game of Rugby League, or an achieved prestige which has been gained by experience in successfully broadcasting games of Rugby League), the more likely it is that the broadcast will be seen as a bona-fide authority on the game of Rugby league. Furthermore, listeners will want to hear what 'so-and-so' says about the game because they, the listeners, will have some knowledge of the speaker's experience, authority and background in the game of Rugby League.

The second feature in the beginning frame is the evaluation. This is in effect a form of self-promotion. For instance, if we look at the 2GB extract (Extract 2) we can see that 2GB promotes its speakers as the 'decibel duo', and as 'the best of the best'. The two main stars of the 2GB SASB are Peter Peters and Greg Hartley who are referred to by the nick-names they acquired during their years as professional Rugby League player and referee respectively[9]. Use of their nick-names plays a key role in the marketing strategy of the radio station. Greg 'Hollywood' Hartley is so-named because he was a flamboyant referee who 'was a real showman on the field, with dramatic gestures part and parcel of his style'

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(Andrews 1992: 218-219). Peter 'Zorba' Peters, is so-named because of his Greek heritage. He was a top professional first-grade player before he became a Rugby League radio star.

The radio station refers to them as the decibel duo, a description they have become identified with because of their boisterous style as commentators and their professional and colourful background in Rugby League. The description of the speakers through reference to their personalities and style is thus considered a promotional advantage for the radio station and is used as part of the Attract segment of the SASB.

In Extract 1 we can see that the radio station 2UE promotes the SASB by providing a list of several authorities on the game who will feature during the SASB. Ray Hadley, while not an ex-player or referee, has built a reputation as an authority on the game of rugby league and as a skilful commentator, and has surrounded himself with well-known rugby league figures (Hyde 1995b; Peters 1995). The evaluation stage in the Attract frame of the 2UE SASB thus focuses on the features 'continuous call' and the names of personalities and speakers who will support the call.

The exciting up-beat music in each of the Attract segments is designed to create an exciting atmosphere and this, too, serves to attract the listeners to the SASB.

Once the Attract segment of the SASB is completed, the actual SASB speakers begin to talk. The Attract thus leads into the SASB. From the extracts we can see that the talk of the SASB begins with a greeting, reference to the radio program, reference to the location of the game, a brief description of the weather conditions, the names of the two teams competing and some kind of evaluation of the impending match. These are means of welcoming the listeners and of orienting them to the basic details of the day's competition. From the data that I examined, these features appear to be obligatory features of the beginning of the SASB and are categorised and presented in Table 3:1 below.

Table 3:1 Components of the Beginning Frame of the SASB

Type of Talk	2GB	2UE
Attract Segment	Names of the SASB speakers, some kind of evaluation or promotion of the afternoon call, exciting music or pre-recorded promotional material.	
Greeting	*a very good afternoon and welcome*	*a good afternoon and welcome ladies and gentlemen*
Reference to the radio programme	*the Samsung 2GB Big League*	*I'm Ray Hadley the continuous call*
Location of the game	*stadium in Brisbane*	*North Sydney Oval*
Weather conditions	*sun-drenched*	*a beautiful day in Sydney, absolutely magnificent weather albeit rather windy...*
Competitors	*the Brisbane Broncos, the Auckland Warriors*	*Roosters, North Sydney side*
Evaluative comment on the impending match	*this is the most important match of the final round*	*it should be a great one*

3.2.3 The SASB 'Ending' Frame

An examination of the end of the SASB (see Extracts 2 and 3) reveals the following stages.

- Details about the next week's coverage .
- Speaker reference to himself and to other key speakers who were involved in the broadcast.
- Valediction and/or invitation to listeners to tune in to the next week's broadcast.
- Reference to the radio station or name of the programme.
- Music.
------------------ SASB OVER ----------------
- Beeps to indicate the hour (6 o'clock).
- Announcement of the 6 o'clock news.

These 'ending' components are informative and phatic in character and involve promotion of the speaker and promotion of the radio station. Once the beeps indicating the hour have finished and the news has started, the commentary is categorically over. We cannot expect any more SASB talk to occur. The contents of the SASB, or more precisely, the contents and results of the match of the day and any other news related to it are then summarised as news items and presented in the sports segment of the 6 o'clock news. Samples of components of the ending frame of the SASB are presented in Table 3:2 below.

Table 3:2 Components of the Ending Frame of the SASB

Type of Talk	ABC	2GB
Expression of appreciation to other speaker	*Thanks very much Warren*	*good on ya [Taffy?]*
Reference to the next week's coverage	*we're going to return next week with more Grandstand Rugby League …*	*you'll catch every game you won't miss a minute here on 2GB*
Closing Remarks with self reference or Valediction	*on behalf of Warren Ryan and all the team, Peter Wilkins wishing you a very good evening*	*hope you've enjoyed our coverage I'm Andrew Moore we'll be back on deck next week with Hollywood and Zorba*
Music	Music	Music
Announcement of the News and the 6 o'clock beeps	Announcement of the News and the 6 o'clock beeps	Announcement of the News and the 6 o'clock beeps

One difference between the 2GB beginning and ending frames is the presence or absence of commercials. Commercials take place just prior to the beginning of the SASB but do not take place just at the end, or between the end of the SASB and the six o'clock news. One reason for this may be that the absence of commercials at the end of the SASB may allow for some flexibility in case any segment of the SASB has run over time. It may also be that there are fewer listeners at the end of the SASB and so it is less financially advantageous to include them there. These suggestions are not supported by any confirmation from the radio station.

Three common features of the beginning and ending frames of the SASB are the presence of music, the beeps to indicate the hour, and the news programme. Music plays a key role in the framing of the SASB. It occurs in combination with other elements at both the beginning and the end of the SASB and thus plays a part in the transition between the SASB and the previous or following programme. The use of beeps to indicate the hour is an established feature of radio programming. So is the News. Most news programmes on most radio stations occur on the hour, so the news is used as both a time marker and, along with the music, a bridge between the beginning and ending of programmes.

What is apparent from this very brief look at the beginning and ending frames of the SASB is that there are common components in the outer frames of each radio station's SASB.

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This suggests that the features of the frames of the SASB are established features across each radio station and therefore can be interpreted as institutionalised in this context.

3.2.4 Summary of the SASB Frames and Conclusion

So far we have seen some of the established ways in which the SASB is framed so as to signal to the listeners that it is beginning and ending. These frames indicate that the SASB is a separate programme in the stream of activities taking place on radio. The SASB, however, also comprises a collection of different types of talk which are also framed. To describe all of the different kinds of talk which make up the SASB is not within the scope of this study. Rather, the next section describes one of the most significant and focal activities located in the SASB — the commentary. This activity is also a framed activity and its frames exhibit specific established features. In the next sections the frames of the commentary are described. After this, the kinds of participation in the commentary as a whole and the proportion of participation that different speakers make to the commentary are examined. The description of the participation in the commentary provides evidence for the role of speakers in the commentary and complements the description of the MSS and the institutionalised features of the context of situation concerning participants of the SASB.

3.3 The Commentary as a Framed Activity

3.3.0 Introduction

While transition into and out of the SASB represents the outermost frame of the environment of talk in which play-by-play talk is located, the commentary is a framed activity inside the SASB and represents the more immediate environment of play-by-play talk. Essentially, the commentary begins when the game begins and ends when the game ends (an institutionalised feature of the MSS of the commentary), and there are linguistic signals which serve to frame the beginning and end of the commentary. These are discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1 The Beginning Frame of the Commentary

One of the key events in the game of Rugby League is the first 'kick off'. The team that performs the kick off is decided by a toss of a coin[10] close to the starting time. The rules of Rugby League note the following regarding the kick off.

> The kick off is a place kick from the centre of the halfway line. The team which loses the toss for choice of ends kicks off to start the first half of the game and their opponents kick off to start the second half (*ARL Laws* 1998: 18).

The beginning of the commentary is framed by reference to the kick off and this can be considered an established feature of the commentary. Reference to the kick-off in the radio commentaries is a similarity with what happens at the beginning of the TV commentary. Bender notes (see Section 3.1.1 above) that the Call of the Game is signalled by reference to the kick-off. The actual words chosen to refer to the kick off vary as the following examples in Table 3:3 show, but in the commentaries examined in this study, there were no instances in which the commentator or some other speaker did not make some kind of reference to the initial kick off of the game.

Table 3:3 References to the Kick off Signalling the Beginning of the Game and the Beginning of the Commentary

Name of Radio Station and Date of Game Taking Place	Reference to the kick off
2GB July 14, 1996	*okay there's the kick..e kick-off now off the boot of Walker downfield*
ABC July 14, 1996	*there's the kick-off and er Walker puts the ball into motion*
2UE July 14, 1996	*here's the ball being placed now by Andrew Walker he sends it back to that northern end of or southern end of the ground*
ABC September 17, 1995	*there is the kick off*
2GB March 20, 1988	*the zip zip man Steve Ella gets the game underway*
ABC September 15, 1991	*and the kick off now*
ABC September, 22 1991	*and Alexander puts the ball in motion*

While reference to the kick off seems to be the predominant marker of the beginning of the commentary, there are other pieces of information which appear regularly and within close proximity to the reference to the kick off. These pieces of information include reference to the player who performs the kick off, the names of the teams involved in the game, and the end of the field that each team will be defending. Table 3:4 lists examples of these references.

Table 3:4 Other Elements Signalling the Beginning of the Commentary

Reference to the Player who performs the kick off	Reference to the Team(s) involved in the competition & the direction of the field that the team(s) will be defending
ABC September 15, 1991 and **Alexander** *puts the ball in motion*	2GB March 20 1988 **Parramatta** *defending* **the northern end of the ground**
2GB March 20, 1988 *the* **zip zip man Steve Ella** *gets the game underway*	ABC July 14 1996 *and* **the North Sydney side** *defending* **the scoreboard end** *in the first half*
ABC September 17, 1995 *the kick off's about to be taken by* **Andrew Johns** *the number seven*	

The reference to the player who effects the kick-off appears to be an obligatory feature of the relating of the initial kick-off. In the data for this study this player was always mentioned. The direction of the play (right-hand column of the Table 3:4) was not always mentioned in the commentaries examined in this study. This would therefore appear to be an optional feature of the beginning of the commentary. Another important feature of the language marking the beginning of the commentary is the change from pre-game talk to 'play-by-play' talk. A change into play-by-play talk is an obligatory element of the beginning of the commentary. Clarification of what constitutes play-by-play talk is given in the next chapter.

3.3.2 The Ending Frame of the Commentary

The end of the actual game is signalled by the sound of a siren that can be heard across the stadium. Although this sound can sometimes also be heard through the commentators' microphones, the commentators signal the end of the commentary by either explicitly referring to the sound of the siren or by just stating that the game has finished. The other

important piece of information that is stated at the end of the game is the final score for the game. These pieces of information may be repeated in order to reinforce that the game has come to a close, and to ensure that listeners are adequately informed of the outcome of the game. The excerpts in Table 3:5 illustrate these features.

Table 3:5 Ways of Framing the End of the Commentary

Commentary Excerpt	Type of framing Device
2GB March 20 1988	
1. and they've now got this game wrapped up	
2. and it's almost full-time now	**REFERENCE TO THE IMMINENT END OF**
3. seconds remaining	**THE GAME**
4. and it's 64 to 12	**SCORE STATEMENT**
5. G.H. Cunningham's in possession just short of the halfway	
6. P.P. There it goes	**REFERENCE TO THE SIREN**
7. G.H. There it goes	**REFERENCE TO THE SIREN**
8. P.P. He's called it off	**REFERENCE TO THE END OF THE GAME**
9. he's called it off	
10. a merciful ending	
11. G.H. Well you've got to call it off when the siren goes	**REFERENCE TO THE SIREN**
12. P.P. Oh!	
13. G.H. What are you going to let him do!!?	
14. P.P. Oh thank God for that!	
15. 64 points to 12	**SCORE STATEMENT**
16. and Noel Cleal our 2GB man of the match this afternoon	
2GB July 14 1996	
1. Cleary won't get his pass away	
2. as he's knocked down	
3. will get up	
4. to play it very very slowly I might add	
5. RM: [there it is]	**REFERENCE TO THE SIREN**
6. GH that's the end of the game	**REFERENCE TO THE END OF THE GAME**
7. so Eastern Suburbs defeated North Sydney Bears by thirty to twenty-five on the Global Self Storage Scoreboard	**SCORE STATEMENT**
ABC July 14 1996	
1. and it's dived on by Lam	
2. Lam for the Roosters saves the play	
3. the Bears threw everything at them	
4. but time is going to beat them after a grandstand finish	**REFERENCE TO THE END OF THE GAME**
5. thirty twenty-five	**SCORE STATEMENT**
6. the Roosters have won	
7. the game is over at Bear Park	**REFERENCE TO THE END OF THE GAME**
8. and the Roosters have scored a memorable victory here	
9. memorable for the quality of the ... some of the try scoring today and also for the comeback to the Bears	**SCORE STATEMENT**
10. thirty twenty-five	

The first of these excerpts illustrates the kind of bantering and mock arguing that accompanied the commentary produced by Peter Peters and Greg Hartley[9]. The second excerpt, also by Greg Hartley shows none of the same kind of bantering. The style used in this later excerpt where he has a different co-commentator is a much 'straighter' style. The third excerpt is by the ABC commentator and again has a 'straighter' style of delivery than the first excerpt in Table 3.5. Whatever the style used, however, the important facts regarding the end of the game and signalling the end of the commentary are present in each of the above excerpts — announcing that the match has ended and stating the score.

3.3.3 First and Second Half Frames

While the commentary is framed as single activity within the SASB, it is in fact an activity divided into two halves that coincide with the two halves of the game taking place. The end of the first half and the beginning of the half-time break in the material event of the game are signalled by the sound of the siren and the time allotted to the half-time interval is approximately ten minutes. In the commentary box the talk also changes in accordance with these changes taking place in the material environment. In the commentary box of the commercial radio station the participants change. The SASB co-ordinator and other speakers re-enter the talk. During the half-time break in both the ABC and the 2GB commentaries the talk focuses mostly on analysing and evaluating what's happened in the game so far as well as speculating about how the rest of the game is likely to go. This speculation may include the expert analysts' views on how each of the teams should approach the second half. Thus, the commentary is interrupted by the half-time break, just as the game itself is interrupted by the half time break.

There are specific linguistic signals which indicate that the end of the first half of the commentary has arrived, and that the beginning of the second half of the commentary has begun, thus framing the first and second halves. These linguistic signals are listed in Table 3:6. An asterisk indicates obligatory frame markers:

Table 3:6 Framing the End of the First Half and the Beginning of the Second Half of the Commentary

References signalling the end of the First Half		References signalling the beginning of the Second Half	
*explicit references to 'half-time' or end of the first half	1. *so there's **half time** Peter* (ABC 14/7/'96) 2. *an absolutely er terrific game in **the first half*** (2GB 14/7/'96)	*explicit references to the second half	1. *North Sydney attacking the Ken Irvine Scoreboard end of Bear Park the Southern end in **the second-half*** (ABC 14/7/'96) 2. *now Walker immediately in **this er second-half** gets a kick downfield to Mattie Seers* (2GB 14/7/'96)
*references to the score at half-time	1. *it is the Roosters **eighteen leading the Bears thirteen** right on the stroke of half time* (ABC 14/7/'96) 2. ***eighteen points now to thirteen** in favour of the Sydney City Roosters over the North Sydney Bears* (2GB 14/7/'96)	references to the restart kick-off *return to play-by-play talk	*there is **the restart*** (ABC 14/7/'96) *(play-by-play talk)*

It is somewhat surprising that even though there is a kick off to begin the second half of the game, and the rules specifically state that the team who lost the toss[10] at the beginning of the game should kick off the second half of the game, the second-half kick off is not necessarily mentioned in the commentary. Therefore, the most obvious signal that the second half has begun is the change from the half time talk to play-by-play talk. Within the first few moments of play-by-play talk the commentator refers explicitly to the second half, as exemplified in Table 3:6 above.

3.3.4 Framing: The Domain of the Main Commentator

One final comment regarding the framing of the commentary is the relationship between the type of speaker and the frames of the beginning of the second half or the ending of the first half. In the data that I examined, linguistic signals serving to frame the commentary were most often spoken by the main commentator. However, where he misses this moment, as for instance, when the colour commentator's talk overlaps the moment that the kick off takes place, or the siren sounds, it is the colour commentator who may point out that these events have occurred. This happens in Extracts 4 and 5 below from the ABC

data for the beginning and ending of the first half of the game, (although it is not a common occurrence in ABC commentary, nor is it specific to ABC commentary). (In these examples PW refers to Peter Wilkins, the main commentator, and WR refers to Warren Ryan, the colour commentator.):

Extract 4.   ABC Beginning of the Commentary (Beginning of the Game - July 14 1996)

> ABC153.WR: just in case um I get lucky Peter, as a lucky tipster
> ABC154.**there's the kick-off**
> ABC155.PW: and er Walker puts the ball into motion
> ABC156.and the North Sydney side defending the scoreboard end in the first half

Extract 5.   ABC Ending of the First Half of the Commentary (Ending of the First Half of the Game - July 14 1996)

> ABC1387.WR: and er that of course was the pass [[when it was about to break [[Andrew Walker turning it inside to Matt Sing from a scrum win]]]]
> ABC1388.(Half-time hooter can be heard in the background)
> ABC1389.**so there's half time Peter**
> ABC1390.and the conversion a formality from in front by Ivan Cleary
> ABC1391.PW: and they lead by eighteen points to thirteen the Roosters
> ABC1392.a handy lead
> ABC1393.they've got the breeze in the second half
> ABC1394.it is the Roosters eighteen leading the Bears thirteen right on the stroke of half time
> ABC1395.they might've put the killer blow on the Bears at Bear Park

Even though these signals (i.e. highlighted text in the extracts above) are enough to let the listeners know that the game has begun or that the first half has ended, the main commentator makes other remarks which serve to doubly signal these time points. For instance, at the beginning of the ABC commentary PW says *and Walker puts the ball into motion* which is restating the fact that the kickoff is taking place and including the obligatory information of 'who' effects the kick off. At the end of the first half of the ABC commentary PW says *it is the Roosters eighteen leading the Bears thirteen right on the stroke of half time*. Both these statements reinforce that it is typically the role of the commentator to frame the beginning and the ending of the commentary.

3.3.5 Summary of Beginning and Ending Frames for the Commentary

From this very brief look at the ways in which the speakers indicate the beginning and ending of the commentary and the beginning and the ending of each half of the

commentary, we can see that the framing devices reflect the close association between the commentary with the material action taking place. Reference to the kick off is the verbal rendition of the actual event taking place in real time. It is this event which is used to indicate the beginning of the game and it is the verbal rendition of this event which indicates the beginning of the commentary. The statement of the final score of the game is a statement reflecting the outcome of the game. Unlike a newspaper report which begins with the outcome of the game, the score, the commentary must follow the events in real time and the linguistic framing markers reflect this component of the context of the commentary. The connection between the material event of the game and the talk during the commentary is taken up again in Chapter Seven in discussing the organisation of play-by-play talk.

The next section focuses on the type of participation in the commentary and how participation is apportioned in the commentary.

3.4 Speaker Contributions to the Commentary

3.4.0 Introduction

As noted earlier in this chapter there are specific categories of speakers who contribute to the talk during the Rugby League radio commentary. There is a main commentator, or play-by-play commentator, one or two colour commentators or expert analysts, a side-line reporter and several around-the-grounds reporters. In the ABC commentary there is an extra around-the-grounds reporter because the ABC also reports the scores from Australian Football League (AFL) matches which are different to the Rugby League matches. This section focuses on the proportion of talk that each of these speakers contributes to the commentary.

3.4.1 The Proportion of Speaker Contributions in the Commentary

To arrive at a description of the proportion of talk by each speaker several methods of measurement could be applied. For instance, the proportion of contribution could be

measured by calculating the amount of time that each speaker talks. However, because people speak at different speeds and some speakers pause for longer than others when they speak, calculating the length of time that each speaker talks may not be particularly useful as an indication of the speaker's contribution to the commentary. Another method may be to calculate the proportion of talk minus the proportion of pauses but again, there is the problem of differing tempos at which people speak. The end result in both of these methods would be a 'time' related measurement and the usefulness of this is difficult to justify. Speaker contribution to the commentary could also be measured by counting the number of words that each speaker contributes. This too, may be valid in its own right, but what does it mean to say that one speaker contributes 150 words, while another 580 words? What does this tell us about the nature of the contribution of the speaker?

In this study, the proportion of each speaker's contribution to the commentary is calculated according to the number of clauses that each person contributes. The reason for this relates to the status of the clause in functional grammar. In SF grammar, the clause is considered the central unit of analysis. At the clause level it is possible to see how language is organised as a message, as an interactive event, and as a representation of experience. Therefore, it could be argued that calculating the number of clauses that each speaker contributes would provide a snapshot of the proportion of messages, or interactive elements, or pieces of experience (depending on the functional perspective of the analysis) that the speakers contribute, and this would seem to be a more specific and functionally useful means of ascertaining speaker contribution to the commentary.

When calculating the number of clauses that each speaker contributes there are two factors that need to be taken into consideration. First is the problem of how to account for clauses in which there is complex embedding. The argument here is whether in clauses in which there is complex embedding, the speaker is contributing more to the talk than where there is no embedding. In SF grammar, embedding refers to grammatical units such as clauses which are rankshifted, or which function as constituents within other constituents of a lower rank than a clause. For example, a clause may function as a qualifier in a nominal

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group, as in the case of a defining relative clause. Because rankshifted units are functioning at a lower rank than ranking constituents, their relationship to the main clause is not one of dependency or equality, but one where they are affecting a specific element of the clause. Consider, the following example,

ABC88.*that the the quality [[we're getting over the last few weeks]] is certainly better [[than it was at the start of the season]]*

In this example, the clause *we're getting over the last few weeks* is functioning as a qualifier in the nominal group which has *quality* as Head. The clause *than it was at the start of the season* is functioning as a comparative Postmodifier in the Adjectival group with *better* as the Head. These modifiers are linked to elements within the clause and do not play a role in the logical structure of clause complexes. There may be a case for arguing that elements such as a postmodifier in an adjectival group could be viewed as an independent element, particularly when they are positioned at the end of the clause because, as in the above example, the postmodifier contains much experiential information. However, in keeping with the SF view that embedded clauses are rankshifted, in this study it was decided not to count such elements separately in the analysis of speaker contributions to the talk in the commentary. Therefore, in calculating the amount of contribution by each speaker only ranking clauses are counted so that each clause, whether it contains a high degree of embedded information or not, is said to reflect one component of an individual speaker's total contribution.

The second problem concerns the time when the speaker uses 'incomplete' clauses but apparently independent pieces of information. These include phrases such as *on to X* which were briefly described in Section 1.3.2 and are more fully described in Chapters 5-7. At this point in the discussion, it is sufficient to say that these are interpreted as 'clauses', such that the transcript has been arranged according to the following convention: each line equals a simple clause, minor clause, or an independently presented piece of information. For ease of reference, lines are referred to as 'clauses', even though some lines may not appear to be so if taken out of their context. In order to measure each speaker's

contribution to the commentary each line spoken by each speaker is counted and the total number of lines are calculated. The analysis of speaker contributions is viewed from the perspective of the proportion of turns that each speaker takes in the commentary and the proportion of clauses per turn. This gives a measure of the overall contribution in terms of clause contribution, as well as the number of times each speaker enters into the talk. It also enables a means of looking at the pattern of turn taking in the commentary, in particular who dominates the talk in terms of turns and degree of contribution throughout the commentary.

Table 3:7 presents the results of the analysis for the first half of the 2GB commentary. The left-hand column indicates the type of speaker and his initials used in the transcript. The next column indicates the number of turns that each speaker takes. That is, each time a speaker enters the discourse he is said to take a separate 'turn'. While speakers may enter the discourse a number of times they may only utter a few phrases or clauses, or they may take much more extended turns, so that the last column calculates the average number of clauses (or lines) that each speaker contributes in each turn. Column three indicates the proportion that each speaker contributes to the commentary in relation to all the other speakers. Column four indicates the total number of clauses that each speaker contributes, and column five indicates the percentage of clauses each speaker contributes out of the total number of clauses contributed.

Table 3:7   2GB Speaker Contributions to the First Half Commentary

Speaker (2GB)	No. of turns	% of total no. of turns	No. of clauses	% of total no. of clauses	Average number of clauses per turn
GH (main commentator)	88	50.0%	910	71.0 %	10.3
RM (colour commentator)	36	20.5%	233	18.2 %	6.5
TP (sideline reporter)	11	6.3%	77	6.0%	7.0
GD (around-the-grounds reporter)	5	2.8%	10	0.8 %	2.0
SM (around-the-grounds reporter)	9	5.1%	9	0.7 %	1.0
DW (around-the-grounds reporter)	9	5.1%	10	0.8 %	1.1
PN (around-the-grounds reporter)	9	5.1%	14	1.1 %	1.5
MR (around-the-grounds reporter)	9	5.1%	18	1.4 %	2.0
Totals:	176	100%	1281	100%	7.3 overall average

We can see from Table 3:7 that the main commentator makes the greatest contribution to the commentary with half of all turns taken by him (column three) and 71% of all clauses (column five). This averages out as 10.3 clauses each time he speaks (last column). The colour commentator contributes about 20% of all the turns and about 18% of all clauses in the commentary, averaging 6.5 lines per turn. The sideline reporter contributes less than the colour commentator in terms of number of turns with 6.3% of all the turns taken, but slightly higher than the colour commentator in terms of the average number of clauses per turn, at 7. The side-line reporter contributes 6% of all the clauses contributed in the commentary. Each around-the-grounds reporter makes a similar proportion of contribution to the commentary with almost always 5.1% of the turns, the only exception being a reporter (GD) who was at a game which started later than the others, and who was not brought into the commentary until his game had started. Therefore his contribution was accordingly slightly less. It is clear that when the around-the-grounds commentators do take their turn, they contribute minimally to the commentary, as the average number of clauses per turn is between 1 and 2 (last column).

So far we have only calculated the results for one half of one commentary. Whether these results reflect what goes on in commentary in general is not possible to determine without verification from analyses of more commentary talk. For this reason, speaker contributions in the second half of the same commentary were measured along with speaker contributions in the first half of the ABC commentary. Exactly the same method of analysing the data was conducted for the talk taking place in these extracts of commentary. Table 3:8 and Table 3:9 present the results of the analysis of the second half of the 2GB commentary and the first half of the ABC commentary respectively.

Table 3:8 Speaker Contributions in the Second Half of the 2GB Commentary

Speaker 2GB	No. of turns	% of total no. of turns	No. of clauses	% of total number of clauses	Average number of clauses per turn
GH (main commentator)	89	50.3%	971	77.1%	10.9
RM (colour commentator)	24	13.6%	152	12.1%	6.3
TP (side-line reporter)	7	4.0%	52	4.1%	7.4
GD (around-the-grounds reporter)	12	6.8%	17	1.4%	1.4
SM (around-the-grounds reporter)	11	6.2%	13	1.0%	1.2
DW (around-the-grounds reporter)	12	6.8%	23	1.8%	1.9
PN (around-the-grounds reporter)	11	6.2%	13	1.0%	1.2
MR (around-the-grounds reporter)	11	6.2%	19	1.5%	1.7
Total:	177	100.1%	1260	100%	7.1

The pattern of speaker contribution which emerges in the second half of the 2GB commentary appears to mirror that of the first half of the commentary. From Table 3:8 we can see that the main commentator again contributes the largest proportion of turns at about 50% with the proportion of lines at approximately 77%. The proportion of other speaker contributions also appears to be close to those in the first half of the commentary, although there do appear to be some slight shifts. For instance, each around-the-grounds commentator contributes more turns while the side-line eye contributes fewer than in the first half of the commentary. There is a slightly higher number of turns for GD and DW than for the other speakers in the second half of the commentary because the main commentator on different occasions seeks clarification from each of these speakers about something they have each said. The greater the frequency of turns by the around-the-grounds reporters in the second half of the commentary as compared to the first half of the commentary is possibly because the progressive outcome of the other games, i.e. the score from these games, becomes a more newsworthy piece of information as all of the games draw to a close. On the other hand, the fewer number of turns contributed by the side-line reporter in the second half appears to counterbalance this. This may be because details given by the side-line reporter may become slightly less important in comparison to the outcomes of the other games in the second half of the commentary. This suggestion, however, would need to be verified with more data than that used in this study.

Unlike the 2GB commentary, the ABC commentary is not a commercially sponsored event, so it is interesting to see whether there are perhaps any differences amongst the

contribution of speakers which may be influenced by this fact. Table 3:9 presents the results of the analysis of speaker contributions in the first half of the ABC commentary.

Table 3:9 Speaker Contributions in the First Half of the ABC Commentary

Speaker (ABC)	No. of turns	% of total no. of turns	Number of clauses	% of total no. of clauses	Average no. of clauses per turn
PW (main commentator)	73	48.7%	898	73.7	12.3
WR (colour commentator)	17	11.3%	162	13.3	9.5
CH (side-line reporter)	15	10.0%	91	7.5	6.1
LM (around-the-grounds reporter)	8	5.3%	8	0.7	1.0
ME (around-the-grounds reporter)	8	5.3%	9	0.7	1.1
JM (around-the-grounds reporter)	4	2.7%	8	0.7	2.0
JW (around-the-grounds reporter)	8	5.3%	9	0.7	1.1
BC (around-the-grounds reporter)	13	8.7%	20	1.6	1.5
TH (around-the-grounds reporter)	4	2.7%	14	1.1	3.5
Totals	150	100%	1219	100	8.1

By comparing the results in Table 3:9 with those in Tables 3:7 and 3:8 we can see that while the total number of clauses in the commentary is slightly lower in the first half of the ABC commentary than in each half of the 2GB commentary, the proportion of speaker contributions follows a similar pattern, although with some slight variations. The figures for the main commentator's contribution in the ABC commentary is very close to those for the main commentator's contribution in each half of the 2GB commentary. In the ABC commentary the main commentator takes 48.7% of the turns, which is only slightly less than the 50% figure for the 2GB commentator. Furthermore, in the ABC commentary the main commentator contributes approximately 73% of the clauses, a figure falling between those for each half of the 2GB commentary (71% and 77.1% respectively).

One of the differences between the 2GB and the ABC commentaries seems to be in the contribution by the colour commentator and the side-line reporter. The colour commentator in the ABC contributes 11% of the turns which is slightly less than the second half of the 2GB commentary (13.6%) and almost half that of the first half of the 2GB commentary (20.5%). The side-line reporter in the ABC commentary, on the other hand contributes 10% of the turns which is more turns than his counterpart in the 2GB first half commentary (6.3%), and more than double that of the side-line reporter in the second half of the 2GB commentary (4%). If we compare the number of turns by the

sideline reporter with that of the colour commentator in each half, we find that in the ABC commentary the sideline reporter and the colour commentator's contribution of turns are very close: 10% and 11.3% respectively. On the other hand, in each half of the 2GB commentary the proportion of turns of the sideline reporter is well below that of the colour commentator: 6.3% and 20.5% respectively in the first half, and 4% and 13.6% respectively in the second half. The reason for these differences may lie in the status of the colour commentator and the side-line reporter vis-à-vis the main commentator in the ABC. While in both commentaries the colour commentator/expert analyst supports the main commentator, there is a sense in the ABC commentary that the main commentator's status is considerably higher than that of the other speakers and that it is 'his show'. This impression would seem to arise from the fact that in the ABC commentary the main commentator does not just dominate the commentary, he co-ordinates the whole afternoon broadcast. In the commercial radio station's format (2GB), the responsibility for co-ordinating the afternoon broadcast is taken over by a speaker other than the main commentator once the commentary has finished and before it has begun. Unlike the ABC commentary, the afternoon's broadcast on the 2GB radio station is not considered to be the main commentator's show and this may explain why the colour commentator plays a greater role by contributing more during the 2GB commentary than his counterpart in the ABC commentary.

Another difference between the ABC and the 2GB commentaries is in the contribution by the side-line reporter. The contribution of turns by the side-line reporter is higher in the ABC than the figures for the 2GB commentary. That the side-line reporter contributes more turns in the ABC commentary than in the 2GB commentary and in a range close to the colour commentator in the ABC may suggest that the side-line reporter's status is close to that of the colour commentator's in the ABC, whereas in the 2GB commentary it may be considerably lower as evidenced by the lower proportion of turns that the sideline reporter contributes in relation to the colour commentator.

The proportion of turns taken by the around-the-grounds reporters in both commentaries is very close. The speaker indicated by the initials JM in the ABC commentary is the counterpart of GD in the 2GB commentary. Both of these speakers were located at a game which began later than the game relayed in the commentary and hence their contribution is less than that of the other speakers. In the case of speaker BC, clarification was sought for some comments that he made regarding a player being sent off, and so the proportion of turns that he contributed to the commentary was higher than that for the other around-the-grounds speakers. In the case of the speaker TH the proportion of contribution is lower because she was reporting scores from AFL (Australian Football League) matches, which are different from Rugby League matches, and her report is a service provided by the ABC. She is not called on to report as frequently as the Rugby League around-the-grounds reporters, and when she is called on, it is not always at the same time as the other around-the-grounds reporters. Overall, the proportion of contribution by the around-the-grounds reporters is slightly less in the ABC commentary than in the 2GB commentary, but it does not appear to be a significant variation in the general picture of contribution by speakers to the commentary.

While acknowledging that there are some variations between the contributions of speakers to the commentary both between the first half and second half of the 2GB commentary and between the ABC commentary and the 2GB commentary, the overall pattern of contribution seems fairly consistent. Furthermore, the data on which the speaker contributions in the commentary are based consist of approximately 120 minutes of transcription. It would seem that this is fairly representative of commentary of this type and so the results for the data are averaged to form a general picture of speaker contribution in Rugby League radio commentary. This picture is represented as a pie graph in Figure 3:1 below. Each piece of the pie graph represents the proportion of clauses contributed by each category of speaker. The talk contributed by all the around-the-grounds reporters has been averaged and is represented as a single percentage proportion.

Side-line
Reporter
6.1%

Colour
Commentator
15.3%

Average Around
the Grounds
Reporter
1.1%

Principal
Commentator
77.5%
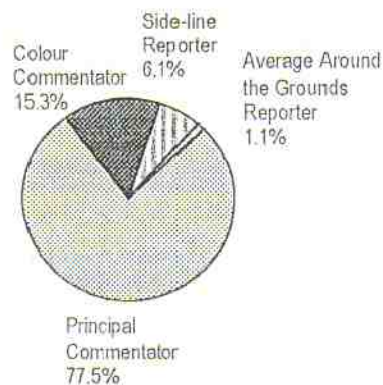
Figure 3:1 Speaker Contributions in Rugby League Radio Commentary

This snapshot of the contribution by each speaker to the commentary is a snapshot of the proportion of 'process-sharing' (Hasan 1985b: 58) in the commentary. Certain participants in any situation share in the process of creating the text as the situation unfolds. The type and proportion of process-sharing is a reflection of the contextual construct of mode. In the commentary, for instance, the listeners or addressees do not share in the creation of the text and the commentary is hence interpreted as a type of monologue intended for the listeners to overhear but not directly respond to.

Another important aspect of the situation relevant to commentary talk and which is clear from Tables 3:7, 3:8 and 3:9 is that the degree and proportion of process sharing by each participant is unequal. There is a wide margin of difference between the proportion of the main commentator's contribution to the commentary and that of any of the other speakers. The proportion of process-sharing appears to be reflective of the roles and tasks that each speaker performs in the talk. During the commentary, the main commentator, for instance, engages in a variety of tasks (as we will see in the next sections, and in the next chapter). He not only relays the game, but co-ordinates the input of the other speakers, evaluates, commentates, and seeks clarification on certain points. Although the average number of clauses per turn which he contributes during the commentary does not appear to be much

greater than that of the other speakers, this figure is distorted because of the number of turns which he takes and the range in length of contribution each turn. The main commentator's turns ranged from lengths of a single clause to 90 clauses in one turn in the data examined for this study.

The proportion of contribution to the commentary by the around-the-grounds reporters also appears to be directly related to their role in the commentary. Peters (1993) explains that 'the around the grounds guys are trained never to say anything more than the score, for example, *Parramatta 6, Manly 6*. That's all they say'. Because of the minimum amount of information required of them during the commentary, the average range of contribution by an around-the-grounds reporter is 1.1% of all the clauses in the commentary. The longest contribution by any around-the-grounds reporter in the data observed in this study was 8 lines, and this was because the speaker was relating some unusual and exciting information about the game at which he was located. This length of contribution for an around-the-grounds reporter however appears to be unusual.

3.4.2 Type of Contribution

So far we have found that the proportion of contribution by each speaker in the commentary is fairly consistent, albeit with some variation in the contribution of the colour commentator and the side-line reporters between the commercial radio station and the national radio station. Within the commentary, we can also see different functions or roles in which the speakers engage. Two functions most commonly associated with the commentary are evaluating or colour commentating, and the relaying of action or play-by-play talk. The relaying of the action appears to be primarily the domain of the main commentator. This is the *raison dêtre* of the commentary, and the main commentator is specifically employed to fulfil this role. This specialisation of tasks is reinforced in the commercial radio station where the main commentator is a different person from the SASB co-ordinator.

The next chapter focuses on determining which portions of the commentary can be specifically categorised as play-by-play talk. As this talk is the domain of the main

commentary and is described in detail in this study, the remainder of this chapter reports on some interesting characteristics of other types of talk in the commentary.

One characteristic of the around-the-grounds reporters has already been noted. That is, these speakers usually contribute only the barest facts concerning the scores of the game that they are reporting on. Their turns are limited and generally short. Another interesting observation from the 2UE, 2GB and the ABC extracts concerns the talk by the side-line reporter. The following three extracts represent the first spoken contribution to the commentary made by the sideline reporter in three different commentaries of the same game.

Extract 6.

> ### First Comment from the Sideline Reporter on 2GB
> ### July 14, 1996
>
> GB390.as we go now to Tony Peters on the side-line for the Family Car Centre
> GB391.TP: it's going to be very interesting Greg
> GB392.but a strong southerly behind
> GB393.and a very small in-goal area
> GB394.the kicking game's gunna have to be target top
> GB395.it's gotta be spot on
> GB396.it's gunna have to be perfect because the small in-goal area and the strong southerly

Extract 7.

> ### First Comment from the Sideline Reporter on 2UE
> ### July 14, 1996
>
> UE53.down on the touchline Tony Megahey's there for Hardware House
> UE54.TM: Oh I think toss to win
> UE55.enormous pressure on the Roosters
> UE56.they can't give away penalties
> UE57.they've got to be awfully careful anywhere within the half
> UE58.there's an enormous breeze backing the Bears

Extract 8.

> ### First Comment from the Sideline Reporter on the ABC
> ### July 14, 1996
>
> A163.CH: Oh no most definitely in favour of North Sydney in the first half Peter
> A164.it's blowing nicely behind them
> A165.er it's a good eight, ten point breeze

We can see from these extracts that a common thread in the content of each sideline reporter's talk is the weather conditions and the advantage or the disadvantage the breeze will have on the teams involved in the game. Although the 'manner' in which each reporter refers to the weather conditions differs, the extracts highlight something about the role of the side-line reporters in the situation. That is, unlike the main commentator and the colour commentator, the sideline reporter is located <u>outside</u> the commentary box and close to where the game is taking place. This is one of the institutionalised features of his participation which was mentioned in Section 3.1.2.2 and 3.1.2.3. He is enduring the 'elements' and he is relating his first hand experience of what the weather conditions are like on the field of play. His insights about how the weather may affect the players and the teams are newsworthy and hence important to the information value of the commentary.

Another observation that can be made from the extracts for the commercial radio commentaries (2GB and 2UE — Extracts 6 and 7), is reference to the commercial sponsors. In each extract the main commentator introduces the commercial sponsor in a circumstance with the features [Manner: purpose] connected with the sideline reporter: 2UE *Tony Peters on the side-line for the Family Car Centre* 2GB *Tony Megahey's there for Hardware House*. In the commercial commentaries, specific sponsors are always mentioned when the main commentator introduces or cues in the sideline reporter. Different sponsors are mentioned when the commentator cues in the 'around-the-grounds' segment, or at other key moments in the commentary, such as the score up-dates for the match. This indicates the importance of sponsors to the financial viability of certain participants in the commentary, and the close connection between the existence of the commentary and the commercial means of its existence. Furthermore, mentioning sponsors at these key moments of the commentary has become an institutionalised phenomenon in the sports commentaries on the commercial radio stations.

3.4.3 The Pattern of Turn-Taking in Commentary

One final observation regarding the contribution of speakers in the commentary as a whole concerns the pattern of turn-taking. By combining the results in Tables 3:7-3:9 we find that the average number of turns taken by the main commentator constitutes approximately half of all of the turns taken by the speakers in the commentary. This proportion of turns taken by the main commentator patterns in a specific way. In each commentary, the most regular pattern of turn-taking is for the main commentator to take every other turn to speak. Woven between his turns are those of each other speaker, with clusters of turn taking centring on the around-the-grounds reporters.

This pattern of turn taking is a manifestation of the roles that the main commentator engages in in the commentary. He not only relates what is happening on the field of play, but also to a very large extent co-ordinates the contribution of other speakers, bringing them in to the commentary, and occasionally acknowledging their contribution. I say that he co-ordinates the contribution of other speakers 'to a very large extent' because there are a few occasions during the commentary where the main commentator is interrupted by the colour commentator, and at these times he is clearly not co-ordinating when another speaker enters the commentary. On the whole, however, it appears that the main commentator is in 'control' of which speakers are brought into the commentary and which are not. His talk precedes the talk of the other speakers such that the main commentator remains the principal turn-taker and the bridge between the talk of the other contributors to the commentary, whether the main commentator explicitly brings in other speakers or not.

The idea of 'explicitly' bringing in other speakers raises some interesting questions, such as 'What are the strategies for cueing in speakers?', 'How does the commentator know when it is a 'good time' to bring in a speaker?'. When I consulted the commentators about how they co-ordinate the speakers in the commentary, Hartley (1993) reported that it is done through 'tone of voice', while Wilkins (1993) gave several options such as 'a mere look or

inflection ... or a verbal cue'. Wilkins (1993) also suggested that the turn-taking during commentary is a matter of 'timing'. He explains this in the following way:

> Commentary is a whole business of timing. You find that if there are three or four people working on a coverage and they know each other, then their timing improves.

The times when the main commentator gives over his turn to another speaker as well as the strategies for effecting turn-taking during the commentary appear to be rather complex and varied in nature. In particular, how speakers are brought into the commentary would seem to be difficult to measure or ascertain without actually being in the presence of the speakers. Unfortunately, investigating methods and times of turn-taking in the commentary is not within the scope of this study.

3.5 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter began by describing some of the general structure of a Rugby League SASB. It then outlined some of the features of the material situational setting of the SASB and the commentary highlighting those features that are institutionalised in this setting. Institutionalised features of the material situation setting have the effect of limiting the degree of negotiability of the activities which can be engaged in in those situations. It was also argued that the types of participants in the situation of a Rugby League SASB are predetermined and hence these can be interpreted as institutionalised features of the context of situation.

The next sections in this chapter described the way in which the SASB and the commentary are framed, and the features of these frames. Using Goffman's term 'frame', although in a slightly different sense, to refer to the linguistic devices which serve to indicate the boundaries of a linguistic activity, beginning and ending frames for the SASB and the commentary were identified and their specific linguistic properties were described.

After a description of the commentary's beginning and ending frames, this chapter described the kind of contributions that each speaker makes to the commentary. In particular, this section of the chapter focused on the proportion of each speaker's contribution and the type of contribution that each speaker makes. The chapter concluded with a description of the typical turn-taking pattern in commentary. It was found that the main commentator makes the greatest contribution to the commentary talk, and takes approximately half of the turns in the talk. With reference to the pattern of turn-taking in the commentary, the main commentator was found to take every other turn in the exchanges between participants in the commentary.

The next chapter focuses more closely on the commentary by analysing the choices in polarity and primary tense in order to gain a profile of the pattern of these choices in the register of 'commentating'. After this analysis and description is made, focus is placed on the language which is to be the focus of the remainder of this study; play-by-play talk. First a definition of play-by-play talk is developed. After that two large excerpts each from different commentaries of the same game are examined with the purpose of eliminating talk which does not fit the definition of play-by-play talk. The next chapter thus sets up a means of identifying the corpus for the analyses in the remaining chapters.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. This manuscript is a set of training notes which Alan Marks, a radio commentator at the ABC used when conducting a training course for radio commentators in Papua New Guinea. He was unsure of the exact date of the manuscript, but said that it was about 1992. Therefore I have used the terminology 'circa 1992' to indicate this uncertainty.
2. The 'Man of the Match' award is awarded by the commentators from commercial radio stations. They decide which player has contributed most during the game, and award him a prize at the end of the match during a post-match interview. This used to be called the "best and fairest" award, but now is more than likely to be associated with a sponsor's name along with a cheque or prize of some sort (Royce 1999 personal correspondence).
3. There are other descriptions of specific moments in commentating which, while interesting in and of themselves, bear only a tangential relation to the aims of this chapter and are therefore not discussed in the body of the chapter. These other descriptions include Kuiper and Haggo's (1985) description of the structure of face-offs in television ice hockey commentaries, Crystal and Davy's (1969) description of recurrent events in radio

cricket commentaries, and Pawley's (1991) description of 'event types' in radio cricket commentaries.

4. First Grade Football refers to the top professional Premiership football, and in Australia most of the teams which make up First Grade Football are located in Sydney.

5. Reserve Grade Football refers to the second grade. The teams that make up the Reserve Grade Football form a feeder-pool of players for the First Grade.

6. A President's Cup Match is the match that takes place before the Reserve Grade and First Grade Premiership matches. The President's Cup matches provide a chance for younger up-and-coming players to gain experience at the top level and to mix with players who may have First and Reserve grade competition experience. It is a competition for players under the age of 21 years.

7. I refer to this change in situation as 'a nearly complete change' because there are still some elements which remain constant across all radio programmes, such as the medium of radio itself. At this gross level, we could say that the situational description for all language on radio is the 'same'. Biber makes this point when he argues that text types can be described at varying degrees of 'generality'. For instance, he notes that the descriptor 'monologue' has a higher degree of generality than that of 'sermon'. This is because 'sermon' is a type of 'monologue'. In the case of talk on radio, the descriptor 'broadcast talk' would have perhaps the highest degree of generality. With reference to sports commentating, the 'SASB' would be a descriptor of a higher degree of generality than 'commentary', and 'commentary' would be a descriptor of a higher degree of generality than 'play-by-play talk' (see Biber (1994) especially pages 32 and 41 for a discussion of the notion of 'generality').

8. Radio Station 2UE is another Sydney-based commercial radio station which airs a top rating Rugby League radio broadcast. Only a few segments from the transcript of this station's commentary were used in this study.

9. Greg Hartley and Peter Peters no longer work as a team broadcasting the Rugby League.

10. At the beginning of each match each team captain takes part in a 'toss of the coin' in order to determine which end of the field they will defend in the first half and the second half of the match. The team that wins the toss of the coin kicks off the game while the team which loses kicks off the second half of the game.

CHAPTER FOUR

Determining Play-by-Play Talk: Establishing a Corpus for Analysis

4.0 Introduction

Chapter One introduced the three different categories of talk associated with the sports broadcast: the SASB, the commentary, and play-by-play talk. Chapter Three outlined some of the general characteristics of the SASB and the commentary, observing that each of these activities is framed in specific ways. It also described the material situational setting of the SASB and the commentary noting that many features are institutionalised and hence limit the degree of individual freedom that participants have to negotiate the context. With specific reference to the commentary, Chapter Three described the different types of speakers contributing to the talk in the commentary, and the proportion that each of these speakers contributes to the talk. It was found that these features of the commentary are fairly consistent across the first and second half of the same commentary and across different commentaries.

This chapter mainly focuses on play-by-play talk by developing an operational definition of play-by-play talk, and using this to assist in determining which portions of talk in the commentary can be classified as 'play-by-play' talk. However, before narrowing the focus down to play-by-play talk, this chapter begins with an analysis of two specific grammatical features of the commentary as a whole; tense and polarity. This analysis attempts to highlight choices in these features in order to show that the commentary, which was identified as a separately framed activity in the previous chapter, exhibits a specific pattern of choices in polarity and primary tense which can be compared with the pattern of choices for English as a whole.

4.1 Polarity and Primary Tense in the Commentary

4.1.0 Introduction

Whereas Chapter Three described features which frame the commentary, this section considers some features which are characteristic of the language bound by these frames. In

particular, this section focuses on choices in polarity and primary tense in the commentary. While there is a variety of language activities taking place within the frame of the commentary, this section aims to arrive at a general view of the proportion of choices in the systems of polarity and primary tense within the commentary so that an overall picture of choices in these systems in the commentary can be compared to patterns of the same systems in English as a whole. The study that this section uses as a guide is Halliday and James (1993). Before conducting the analysis the next sections briefly outline Halliday and James' (1993) study.

4.1.1 Polarity and Primary Tense in English

As already noted the commentary can be considered a language variety, or register, at a less delicate degree of generality than play-by-play talk, but at a great degree of delicacy than the SASB. In this study the commentary is defined as talk which takes place at the same time as the match of the day. Part of a description of any register involves assessing the degree of frequency or probability of occurrence of certain linguistic features. This seems to be standard practice across register studies. Crystal and Davy (1969: 21) for instance, contend that a 'stylistically' important feature is one 'which occurs more frequently within the variety in question' and one 'which is shared less by other varieties'.

Halliday explains that register is a statement about a specific range of meanings. This range of meanings correlates with a specific set of lexicogrammatical choices which are 'at risk', or most likely to occur in the situation. In a discussion of 'register variation as a dimension of the linguistic system', Matthiessen observes that one linguistic system which has shown to vary according to register is the system of primary tense. He notes that, 'the options of PRIMARY TENSE have different probabilities depending on whether the register setting is narrative, expository or forecasting' (Matthiessen 1993: 244). The past tense is the most likely choice in narrative, the present tense is the most likely choice in expositions and forecasting shows a greater degree of future tenses than either past or present tense. While comparisons in the probability of choices in certain linguistic systems can be made across registers, a comparison can also be made between the probability settings of a register and the probability settings of systems within the

language as a whole. That is, 'a given register can ... be characterised as a skewing of probabilities relative to the generalized systemic probabilities' (Matthiessen 1993: 244).

This section compares the probability settings of polarity and primary tense in the English language as a whole with the register of commentating. With reference to English, Halliday and James (1993) have assessed the overall systematic probabilities of choices in the systems of polarity and primary tense of a large corpus of naturally occurring written English from the 'COBUILD Corpus'. Halliday and James explain that where language use is viewed in terms of probable frequencies of certain meanings, and certain grammatical choices made, there is an inherent 'redundancy'. They explain redundancy and its relationship to probability by reference to Shannon and Weaver's (1949) formula "for calculating the information of a system" (Halliday 1991c: 42)[1]. The notion of redundancy will not be further explored in this study.

Language is an open dynamic system in which there is incessant perturbation of the system through its constant and varied use. Within the language system there are some grammatical systems which are skewed to a greater extent than others, no matter which register is activated (within reason). Furthermore, there are systems which are skewed to a greater degree than others only when a specific environment occurs.

In preliminary studies of choices in the grammatical system of English (cited in Halliday 1991c), Halliday observed that the probability of simple present and simple past was close to equiprobable over a wide range of uses of language, whereas that of positive/negative remained skew. Skew systems tend to exhibit the phenomenon of 'marked/unmarked', the 'marked' choice being that which is probabilistically less likely, while the unmarked term is the 'default' choice. Therefore, we can say that in English the choice of negative is the marked choice and that of positive is the default choice in most situations. The value of viewing systems in the language in terms of probability is that it is possible to explore those extralinguistic factors that activate a resetting of the probabilities of the language system. Furthermore, it is possible to quantitatively study how certain grammatical choices (as well as choices at other linguistic levels, such as

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semantic or phonological) made in various registers both differ and/or align with each other. For instance, Plum and Cowling's (1987) investigation of portions of interview texts from those used in the Sydney Social Dialect Survey[2] revealed that social class plays a role in choice of tense. Within the same context of situation, they found that lower working class speakers tend to choose present tense more often than middle class speakers. Their study points to a need for investigating grammatical variation along external variables such as social class, age and sex.

Halliday and James (1993) set out to test Halliday's early hypothesis formulated during the 1960's that 'grammatical systems f[a]ll largely into two types: those where the options [are] equally probable — there being no 'unmarked term', in the quantitative sense; and those where the options [are] skew, one term being marked' (1993: 35). Halliday's early findings based on a study of 2,000 clauses indicated that 'the difference in frequency of the options in a skew system tended to be approximately one order of magnitude' (1993: 35). The hypothesis for the ratios of skew and equi systems in his early study was proposed as:

equi systems: 0.5 : 0.5
skew systems: 0.9 : 0.1

In testing this hypothesis, Halliday and James restrict their investigation to two grammatical systems: polarity and primary tense. In order to investigate the ratio of one choice to another a binary system is needed. While the system of polarity is already a binary system, the system of primary tense in Halliday's grammatical model of English is not. As explained more fully below, in Halliday's model finite clauses may select for present, past or future tense, and may also select a modal element. His description thus differs from what is called the 'reductionist model of tense'. The reductionist model 'is analyzed at word rank, which means that the three-term system past/present/future is reduced to the two term system past/present because there is a past suffix but no future suffix' (Matthiessen 1996: 435). Other descriptions of tense such as Quirk et al's. (1972) subscribe to this view. Quirk et al. (1972: 87) claim that English has two tenses, past and present, and that 'there is no obvious future tense in English'; rather, 'futurity, modality,

and aspect are closely related, and future time is rendered by means of modal auxiliaries or semi-auxiliaries, or by simple present or progressive forms'.

Halliday's description of tense in English, which represents the SF model, is considered to be an expansion of traditional views of tense and is based on the group rather than the word. This means that rather than alternatives such as *does/did*, in the SF description of tense sequences of verbal group choices such as *will do*, *is doing*, *have done*, *will have done, etc.* can be accounted for. The choices that speakers make are then interpreted in terms of the construal of temporal meanings associated with 'the interpersonal "now" of speaking and the time of the occurrence of the process as a temporal event' (Matthiessen 1996: 437). There are two principles upon which this interpretation is based: that the tense system concerns past, present, and future time; and that choices within the tense system are recursive in that 'repeated selections can be made from the same system' (Matthiessen 1996: 437). That is, a speaker makes a first choice in tense, known as the primary tense, and then may expand on this choice by making secondary or tertiary tense choices. These secondary and tertiary tense choices are realised by auxiliaries such as *-en* (past), *-ing* (present) or *be going to* (future) (Matthiessen 1996: 438).

Halliday (1976c: 139) has described the English verbal group in the following way.

> The verbal group may consist of either of one word (e.g. *took*) or of more than one word....Now with the exception of a small set of verbs which perform an entirely grammatical function in the verbal group (the 'modals'...), English verbs display a 'scatter' of from three to five variants...these variants need to be grouped into four distinct forms (one of which is then subdivided) which can be specified as follows, where x stands for any verb:
>
> (1) x^o — base form ('zero'-form, 'infinitive', 'dictionary form')
> (2) x^f — finite form, subdivided into:
> x^s ('present tense')
> d^d ('past tense')
> (3) x^{ng} — non-finite, present/active form ('present or active participle')
> (4) x^n — non-finite, past/passive form ('past or passive participle')

Future tense is indicated by the selection of 'will', 'shall', 'would', or 'should' with the finite form of the lexical verb, and 'going to' or 'about to' with the present or active participle. Along with these are the verbal operators which are either modal or non-modal. The modal operators consist of the following: can/could/would/should/may/might, am/are/is/was/were+to, ought+to, used+to, need/dare (Halliday 1976c: 140-141). The non-modal verbal operators indicate such features as tense and aspect. Hoey (personal communication, November 1999) suggests that if modal/non-modal is substituted for future/non-future in Halliday's system of primary tense, the same or virtually the same choices become available. This substitution would result in a present-past tense system rather than present, past, future tense system.

In order to account for patterns in the choices of primary tense within a binary system Halliday and James (1993: 36) simplify the system of primary tense by proposing 'a two-step system of primary tense' exemplified in the network in Figure 4:1 below:

PRIMARY TENSE ⟶ ┌future
                └non-future ⟶ ┌ past
                                └ present
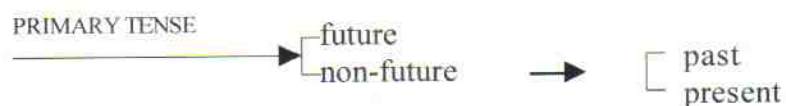
Figure 4:1 Halliday's and James' (1993) Primary Tense Network

The systems of future or non-future and past or present can now be interpreted as binary systems. In this study the future tense is not considered an option.

4.1.2 Halliday and James' Analysis of Polarity and Primary Tense in English

The steps which Halliday and James take in their study of polarity and primary tense in English are reproduced below.

- *Strategies for investigating polarity* (from Halliday and James 1993: 37):

    1. Identify and count all finite clauses.
    2. Within this set, identify and count all those that are negative.
    3. Subtract the negative from the finite and label the remaining set positive.
    4. Calculate the percentage of negative and positive within the total set of finite clauses.

- *Strategies for investigating primary tense* (from Halliday and James 1993: 37):

    1. Identify and count all finite clauses having modal deixis.
    2. Within the set of finite clauses remaining (which therefore have temporal deixis, that is, primary tense) identify and count those whose primary tense is future.
    3. Subtract future from temporal deixis and label the remaining set non-future.
    4. Within non-future, identify and count those whose primary tense is past.
    5. Subtract past from non-future and label the remaining set present.
    6. Calculate the percentage of present and past, within the total set of non-future primary tense clauses.

Halliday and James' study reveals that the percentage of clauses selecting negative and positive polarity is 87.6 : 12.4 percent (a ratio of approximately 7 : 1) which is close to the original hypothesis that polarity is a skew system which will demonstrate a 9 : 1 ratio of choice. The results for choices in the system of present and past primary tense, are (past) 50.41 : (present) 49.59. These results are compatible with both Halliday's early predictions concerning equiprobable and skew systems.

In summary, then, Halliday and James (1993) found that the probability of positive clauses far outweighs that of negative clauses in English as a whole. On the other hand, there is very little difference between the probability of past or present primary tense, suggesting that present and past tense are equiprobable in the system of English.

Halliday and James (1993: 63) make the following closing statement with regard to these proportions.

Intuitively, it seems likely that the proportion of positive : negative does not vary greatly from one genre, or functional variety of the language, to another. Whether spoken or written, formal or informal, monologue or dialogue, on whatever topic, it might remain roughly the same. This could be proved wrong, of course... But for past : present there seems more room for variation, and it might well be that the figures here are affected by the relatively high proportion of narrative fiction in the present corpus. It would be desirable to investigate a different corpus, perhaps one consisting entirely of spoken text, to match the figures against those we have presented here.

The next section applies Halliday and James' approach to an analysis of negative and positive polarity and present and non-present tense choices in radio sports commentary with a view to investigating what kind of patterns and ratios occur for these systems in this variety of spoken English.

4.1.3 Applying Halliday & James' (1993) Approach to Commentary

The commentary has already been defined as talk that takes place concurrently with the game. As explained in Chapter Three, the beginning of the first half of the commentary is generally indicated by reference to 'the kick off' while the beginning of the second half is indicated through the speaker explicitly referring to 'the second half' and by launching into simultaneously relating the events on the field of play, or play-by-play talk. The end of each half of the game is generally indicated by the speaker's reference to 'half-time' and his reference to the sound of the siren. While the talk throughout the commentary shifts and changes in response to the kinds of contextual demands being placed on the speakers, for example, to announce the score, to cross to other games for scores, to include analysis, to simultaneously relay activities, or to speculate about outcomes, there is a general sense that the talk centres on the here and now — on events happening in the present time. For this reason, it is hypothesised that the primary tense of finite clauses in the commentary will show a skew ratio of probability and that past tense will be the 'marked' choice. Furthermore, it is also hypothesised that the polarity choices in commentary will be in keeping with Halliday and James' findings—that the negative choice will be the marked choice. This is based on the assumption that the talk during the commentary focuses on

what is happening rather than on what is NOT happening in the concurrent activity—the motivation is for a positive rendition of events rather than a negative one.

Using the lexical verb *take*, the typical forms of the present and past tenses are as follows:

x^o - *take* (dictionary form, infinitive)
x^f - *takes/took*
$x^f + x^{ng}$ - *is taking* (present progressive)   *was taking* (past progressive)
x^f (have operator) $+ x^n$ - *has taken* (present perfective)   *had taken* (past perfective)
x^f (be operator) $+ x^n$ - *is taken* (present passive)   *was taken* (past passive)
x^f (have operator) $+ x^n$ (be operator) $+ x^n$ - *has been taken/had been taken*
x^f (be operator) $+ x^{ng}$ (be/get operator) $+ x^n$ - *is being taken/was being taken*
x^f (have operator) $+ x^n$ (be operator) $+ x^{ng}$ (be/get operator) x^n - *has been being taken*
had been being taken

(Adapted from Halliday 1976c: 140)

The steps outlined by Halliday and James to identify positive and negative and to count present and past primary tense are followed in this study but with some alterations to the implementation. For instance, this study is based on a smaller data base than Halliday and James' (1993), so it is possible to scrutinise more of the clauses and to include every instance of finite verbal group in the count. However, as with Halliday and James' study, clauses with Mood ellipsis (i.e. Subject and verbal operator ellipsis) are not counted. This probably distorts the number of clauses that could be counted as present tense. An example of Mood ellipsis can be seen in the following example.

We were watching the game and hoping our team would win.

This example is a case of phoric ellipsis. The second clause maintains the primary tense of the first clause. In commentary, however, ellipsis appears to be part of the way in which commentators linguistically 'economise', a point raised later in this study. Furthermore, ellipsis may be employed because the temporal deixis is either 'understood' as 'present' and simultaneous in the context of the commentary, or is indicated through some other means. For instance in the following utterances there is either verbal operator ellipsis or Subject + operator ellipsis.

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GB409. *nicely taken by Mattie Seers*

GB415. *quickly now back to Soden*

GB419. *but the penalty now going to the North Sydney Bears Roy*

If we were to 'fill in' the verbal operator or the verbal group, it would require tampering with the natural choices of the speaker. In both GB415 and GB419 the anchor to the present is seemingly fulfilled by the adverb 'now' and so the mood element is not required. Furthermore, in all of the clauses the speaker is understood as speaking in the present because of the context in which the text is taking place. The phenomenon of ellipsis in commentary is complex and is discussed more fully in the next chapter. For my analysis in this chapter only clauses which explicitly select a finite operator or a lexical verb functioning as the complete verbal group are included in the count, with the understanding that a count for 'presentness' would more likely be much higher were all cases of 'presentness' included. In any case, for this part of the analysis, the selection of clauses is largely in keeping with Halliday and James' study.

One problem faced by Halliday and James' study concerned only being able to view verbal groups and polarity markers within a context of a few words either side, which is typical of corpus studies. This problem obviously did not arise in this study. This meant that all cases of finite clauses and clauses in which polarity was explicitly marked could be included in the analysis and no extrapolation from the corpus was necessary.

One of the features of commentary which came to light in Chapter Three was that the first and second half of the 2GB commentary showed a parallel pattern of participant contribution. This pattern was repeated in the first half of the ABC commentary. Although participant contribution is a different kind of feature of the commentary from polarity or primary tense, the results of Chapter Three suggest that the talk is fairly standardised across commentary halves and across different commentaries. Therefore, the analysis of primary tense and polarity in this section focuses only on the first half of each commentary and assumes that the results will be typical of commentary in general. Thus,

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finite clauses in the first half of each commentary were counted and analysed in terms of tense, modal deixis and polarity choice. The results are presented in Tables 4:1 and 4:2 below.

Table 4:1 Totals for the ABC Commentary First Half

Polarity			Primary Tense/Modal Deixis		
Positive clauses	836	= 97.1%	Present	571	= 66.3%
Negative clauses	25	= 2.9%	Past	209	= 24.3%
			Future	36	= 4.2%
			Modal Deixis	45	= 5.2%
Total clauses	861		Total	861	= 100%

Table 4:2 Totals for the 2GB Commentary First Half

Polarity			Primary Tense/Modal Deixis		
Positive clauses	860	= 94.6%	Present	574	= 63.1%
Negative clauses	49	= 5.4%	Past	227	= 25.0%
			Future	40	= 4.4%
			Modal Deixis	68	= 7.5
Total clauses	909		Total	909	= 100%

The combined results from Tables 4:1 and 4:2 are presented in Table 4:3.

Table 4:3 Averaged Totals for Polarity and Primary Tense in the First Half of the ABC
& 2GB Commentaries

Polarity			Primary Tense/Modal Deixis		
Positive clauses	1696	= 95.8%	Present	1145	= 64.7%
Negative clauses	74	= 4.2%	Past	436	= 24.6%
			Future	76	= 4.3%
			Modal Deixis	113	= 6.4%
Total clauses	1770		Total	1770	

From Tables 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3 it can be seen that the proportion of negative and positive clauses in the first half of each commentary is very similar, with an averaged ratio of approximately 23 : 1 showing a skewed system for polarity in radio commentary. In

comparison with Halliday and James' (1993) findings, it would appear that negative clauses in Rugby League radio commentary are three times less likely to occur than they are in English as a whole. This suggests that while negative polarity is already a marked choice in English, it is marked to a greater degree in Rugby League radio commentary, perhaps suggesting that there is little occasion for stating what is *not* taking place. Rather, the speakers favour a context in which experience is related in the positive.

The most common primary tense choice selected in finite clauses in each of the commentaries is present tense. The results suggest that out of a total of 1770 clauses, the percentage of present tense choice is 64.7% and the percentage of past tense choice is 24.6%. This has a ratio of almost 3 : 1, and suggests that in Rugby League radio commentating, the system of present and past tense choice is also skewed in favour of present tense. This agrees with the initial hypothesis that present tense is the most likely tense choice in commentary. It should also be remembered that many of the clauses in which presentness was indicated through some other means were not included in the count, and neither were clauses in which verbal operator ellipsis had occurred. These omissions from the calculation would have caused the resulting ratio to be somewhat in favour of the past tense, which suggests that 'presentness' in all its forms is probably skewed to an even greater degree in commentary.

4.2 Defining Play-by-Play Talk

4.2.0 Introduction

It has already been noted that the MSS of the commentary is institutionalised and that there are institutionalised features of the context of situation of commentary, in particular the role and proportion of speakers contributing to the commentary. These features suggest that the commentary is an institutionalised language event. An advantage to investigating institutionalised language events is that interactants in these events generally have some idea of what they are attempting to achieve through their language, who their interactive partners are and what strategies they will employ to achieve their goals (Hasan 1995: 266-267, 1981: 115). Because the commentators are the primary interactants in the

radio sports commentary and their job is to produce the talk of the commentary, it did not seem unreasonable to assume that the speakers themselves could be consulted about the activity of play-by-play talk[3]. Therefore, in order to develop a definition of play-by-play talk that could be used as a basis for investigating which portions of the commentary are specifically 'play-by-play' I worked on the assumption that the commentators would have well-formed views about what they do and that these views would be helpful in forming a definition of play-by-play talk which could be used in this study. To this end, four professional commentators were consulted through personal interviews[4] and several books about commentating by commentators were used for developing a definition of 'play-by-play' talk. At the time of the interviews, which took place very early on in this study, the general aims of the research had not been fully formulated, so speakers were asked several questions about commentary in general, rather than 'play-by-play' talk in particular. However, it is possible to glean information specific to play-by-play talk from the commentators' responses during these interviews. Furthermore, much has been written about the nature of commentating, and about play-by-play talk in particular, and some of these written sources have been consulted for developing an operational definition. It should be noted, though, that not all of the written sources used for information here are specific to Rugby League in Australia. Nevertheless, as they are written by professional sports commentators who have engaged in 'play-by-play' talk, they were consulted for support and detail.

From the commentators' responses during the interviews and from the written description of commentary by sports commentators, it was found that sports commentators do indeed have well-formed views about what they do, and that the activity of commentating is a skill which is specifically learned, developed and improved as the commentator continues throughout his career[5]. What is of particular interest to the linguist is that the commentators' definition of commentary includes a variety of different types of talk including descriptions, recounts, and score statements. Even so, there appear to be some fundamental features which the commentators agree define play-by-play talk. This section presents some of the common ingredients of play-by-play talk as proposed by the

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commentators themselves, and discusses these ingredients with a view to formulating a definition of play-by-play talk that can be used in linguistically determining what constitutes play-by-play talk.

4.2.1 Some Common Views of Play-by-Play Talk

Some of the common views expressed by commentators about play-by-play talk are presented in Table 4:4 below. The commentators represented here are either Australian or American, and their comments include TV and radio play-by-play commentary. The sport to which they refer is indicated in the second column of the table. Where the source of the reference is a book or written source it is indicated by an asterisk next to the author's name. These descriptions are useful in forming a preliminary description of the context of situation of play-by-play talk.

Based on the commentators' descriptions of play-by-play talk, there appear to be four common features. They are:

- simultaneity of the talk with the activity taking place;
- descriptions of discrete movements, players, locations directly involved in the progress of the game;
- accuracy; and
- succinctness.

It could be argued that these four features of play-by-play talk— succinctness, accuracy, simultaneity, and description — are a response to the context in which the speakers find themselves, and that they can be loosely correlated with features of the context to which they respond:

- Simultaneity & succinctness — Mode and Field;
- Description of actions, participants, locations — Field;
- Accuracy — Tenor.

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Table 4:4 Commentators' Views of Play-by-Play Talk

Commentator and Reference	Sporting Code	Mode	What the Commentators Say About Play-by-Play Talk
*Barber (1970: 241)	American Football	Radio	*The play-by-play man should ... paint the picture in a series of headlines.*
*Hyde (1995a: 72-73)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*The increasing trend of people to stick a radio in their bag when they went to the football [resulted in] the accusation that Frank Hyde's call was 'behind the play'...[but] it was all to do with the commercial breaks....by the time the studio came back to me the play would be 50 or 60 yards downfield...[so] I used to take them [the listeners] back to where the game had been before the break. [So] absolute accuracy in the call increasingly became of paramount importance.*
Hyde (interview 8th Sept. 1995)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*Isn't the idea to give the maximum amount of information in the minimum amount of words?*
Wilkins (interview 2nd Mar. 1993)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*Accuracy is important...identify the players correctly. Most would agree with that.*
Wilkins (interview 2nd Mar. 1993)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*You constantly have to be aware of where a player is on the field.*
*Marks (ms circa 1992)	Various Sports in Australia	Radio	*Build a reputation for accuracy and fairness and strive to maintain it.*
*Marks (ms circa 1992)	Various Sports in Australia	Radio	*Stay with it, don't get behind. Don't judge actions while action is in process. Wait for a break.*
*Marks (ms circa 1992)	Various Sports in Australia	Radio	*Cross-reference players in your descriptions so that the commentary does not comprise simply a succession of names. What position do they play? What number? Which team? Their stature, speed and status.*
*Marks (ms circa 1992)	Various Sports in Australia	Radio	*Appreciate the value of the adjective, adverb, and simile*
Peters (interview 5th Mar. 1993)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*Greg called the game - whoever plays the ball, passing the ball, scoring a try.*
*Bender (1994: 89)	American Football	TV	*The play-by-play announcer comments on the action by describing the play, describing a player, or making a general observation on what has transpired.*
*Bender (1994: 89)	American Football	TV	*Once action commences, the announcer's call is composed of brief statements, almost sounds like shorthand. There isn't time for wordiness. After the play ends, you can summarize in more detail.*
*Bender (1994: 145)	American Football	Radio	*If you make a habit of taking a shortcut in your description, you will be flirting with danger ...there will always be someone listening who is also watching and will know the difference.*
*Bender (1994: 143)	American Football, Basketball, and Baseball	Radio	*One of the ways to make your call of the game on radio more descriptive is to constantly provide the location of the action so listeners can add dimension to their mental imagery*
*Mossop (1991: 162)	Australian Rugby League	TV & Radio	*You need a good eye and accuracy.*
*Mossop (1991: 203)	Australian Rugby League	Radio	*Paint the full picture, tell who made the run, how far he ran, who tackled him, where on the field the movement came to a halt.*

Simultaneity correlates with mode and field in that the activity of commentating takes place in the same time frame as the ongoing game. The 'nature of the activity' (field) of play-by-play commentating is that it must be simultaneous to the action which is taking place. However, the nature of the technology in place (mode) makes it possible to relay messages produced in one place to a multitude of listeners in a multitude of places at the same time that the game is taking place. Simultaneity is an essential feature of play-by-play commentary and it is said to be one of the reasons why radio has remained an important mass medium. Wilkins (1995), for instance, comments that

> Radio is still that immediate medium. The bottom line is that you know you can always hear it driving in the car, out at the beach, [you can] take the radio with you.

Although technology these days has made it possible for television to have 'live' elements, and sports event are telecast live, it is generally agreed that radio is still the more immediate medium, especially as sound is still more easily transmitted than pictures particularly from remote places.

Succinctness is a feature of play-by-play talk that is also motivated by the interaction of the contextual variables of field and mode. One of the aims of a radio commentary is to 'paint the picture' of what is taking place on the field of play. But a Rugby League game is a fast-paced game in which keeping up with the progression of key activities requires fluency and linguistic economy. Long-winded descriptions of individual events would be at the expense of descriptions of other events, and may even prohibit the speaker from relaying key moments, such as try-scoring moments, brutal tackles, or penalties. As Hyde advises, a commentator needs to 'give the maximum amount of information in the minimum amount of words' (Hyde 1995b). Bender (1994: 89) also observes that for the commentator 'there isn't time for wordiness' once the game commences. Succinctness suggests that the text is altered in accordance with the nature of the activity and the nature of the role of language in that activity and therefore this would correlate with the features of field and mode.

The descriptions of events, participants, locations etc. in play-by-play talk are a response to the happenings in the context and the contextual requirement of the commentators to relay a specific subject matter (field: subject matter). That is, the speakers are not at liberty to talk about subjects other than the game, a constraint partially imposed on them by the Material Situational Setting (MSS) as noted in Chapter Three. Furthermore, the elements of the game which they convey must be relevant to the progress of the game, to the potential of points being scored, and to the specific characters, locations and peculiarities of the game taking place. The feature of 'description' however, is interdependent on the other features. That is, the nature of simultaneously commentating a specific and fast-paced material action using only the spoken language motivates linguistic economising, or succinctness. Barber interprets this interrelation of description with succinctness in play-by-play talk as 'a series of headlines' or a type of 'shorthand'. Of course in the contexts in which they are found, 'headlines' and 'shorthand', which are both forms of written language, function differently from succinctness in commentary talk, so we can assume that what Barber is suggesting when he says that the play-by-play talk is 'a series of headlines' is that speakers tend to economise when they relay the action of the game by grammatically abbreviating their talk in a similar way to what is done in headlines.

A feature that the commentators often mention is the feature of 'accuracy'. This feature of play-by-play is closely associated with the contextual component 'tenor'. It has to do with the relationship between the speakers and the listeners in terms of authority and dependence upon authority. The speakers know that current technology is such that listeners can take their radios to the game and listen to the commentary while they are watching the game. Listeners, too, are generally versed in the game tactics, the names of members on each team, and the style of play which specific team members employ during a game. The commentators report that the listeners will often tell them when they are being inaccurate in some way (see for example Hyde 1995a: 70). It is imperative therefore, that the speaker's rendition of the events taking place are accurate, otherwise their listening audience will not view them as authorities or as credible witnesses of the game. Accuracy is thus a feature motivated by the kinds of relationships that have to be

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established and maintained between speakers and listeners in the situation of a radio sports commentary.

4.2.2 Defining Play-by-Play Talk Using the Four Common Features as a Guide

The question underlying this section is: How useful are the four features identified in the previous section (succinctness, accuracy, description, simultaneity) in developing a definition of play-by-play talk that can be used as a basis for investigating those portions of the commentary which could be classified as play-by-play? Each of the four features will be considered in turn in relation to this question before an operational definition of play-by-play talk is formulated

4.2.2.1 Accuracy

The aim to be accurate is important in terms of getting the content of the action correct and in establishing the speaker's credibility, and as was mentioned in the previous section, accuracy in play-by-play commentary has become increasingly important as technology has advanced. Hyde, for instance, recalls that in his early days of broadcasting boxing matches he would 'dress it up' if there was very little action taking place. He remembers that

> ...some nights we'd have contests that were real duds. Blokes would be circling each other doing nothing—and I'd have them belting the tripe out of each other....one night...Vic Patrick was refereeing the fight and at the end of one particularly inactive round he came over the ropes above me ...and asked: 'Hey Frank! Are we at the same fight?' (Hyde 1995a: 64-65).

As technology has advanced, however, this kind of 'dressing up' of the commentary is not advisable. One of the reasons is that radios are now portable and listeners can both be at the game taking place and listening to the commentary. Hyde praises the current commentators for the degree of accuracy of their commentaries implying that accuracy is a valued characteristic of the commentary. He says, 'I don't know of anyone of my era who could pick up the fine detail of the game as well as any of the current crop can. They are truly eagle-eyed' (Hyde 1995a: 80). However, whether or not a speaker is accurate in the

information that he is conveying does not necessarily affect the speaker's choice of linguistic form. A lie, for instance, can be said in as many words as the truth; and the wrong directions to a restaurant can be said in the same kind of language as the right ones. Furthermore, accuracy is difficult to measure without access to the game itself. To test for accuracy would require analyses of the content construed in the language and comparisons of this content with the events taking place in the game. This kind of analysis is not the purpose of this study, and is thus not within the scope of this study. Even with this kind of access and analysis, it is arguable as to whether one speaker's interpretation of the events are 'more accurate' than another speaker's. This is borne out in the problems of obtaining consistent witness reports of a crime or traffic accident.

In addition to these factors, accuracy is not solely a feature of play-by-play talk. It is just as important during other moments of the commentary for the speakers to be accurate. For instance, it is extremely important when around-the-grounds reporters are relaying the scores from other games. A definition of play-by-play talk that can be used for the needs of the analyses in this study should be one which can point to some basic characteristic which isolates play-by-play talk from other talk during the commentary. So although accuracy is what the commentators feel is a common feature of play-by-play talk, it is not a necessary feature of a definition which aims to find text which can be identified as play-by-play.

4.2.2.2 Succinctness

Succinctness, or conciseness, was also noted as a common feature of play-by-play talk. Although Hyde (1995a:79, 1995b) bemoans the current trend for changes in terminology resulting in what he considers to be more 'complicated' language, commentators appear on the whole to agree that play-by-play talk should be succinct. As noted already, Barber (1970: 241) even goes so far as to label play-by-play talk as 'a series of headlines'. Like accuracy, however, succinctness is also a feature of other types of talk which take place during the commentary. For instance, during the 'around-the-grounds' moments speakers have very limited time to speak, and are required to give only the barest of details

concerning the progress of the games at other locations. As noted in Chapter Three, Peters (1993) relates that the around-the-grounds reporters are trained to state only the score, such as *Parramatta 8 Manly 6*.

Furthermore, as in the case of the feature of accuracy, succinctness is difficult to measure. Judgements about whether a speaker is giving 'the maximum amount of information in the minimum amount of words' can only be subjective because questions concerning how much information is the 'maximum', and what are the 'minimum' number of words that could be used, would depend on a number of factors, such as listener's background knowledge, speaker's familiarity with the content, and speaker style. If speakers truly were only using 'headlines' as Barber suggests, they would presumably always be succinct. The point is that whether a speaker is judged as being succinct or not may not play a part in whether he is perceived to be producing play-by-play talk. In addition to these problems there is also the possibility that action which is taking a longer time to complete may result in more elaborated forms of play-by-play talk in order for speakers to fill in time. In the end, a speaker may aspire to be 'succinct' in his commentary, but in comparison to another speaker he may end up describing action in relatively 'elaborated' terms. Nevertheless, both speakers may still be considered to be producing play-by-play talk. Because the inclusion of succinctness as a criteria for developing a definition of play-by-play talk is fraught with these problems of measurability, and because in the end, talk may be considered to be play-by-play whether or not it is succinct (within reason!), succinctness does not form part of the definition of play-by-play talk presented in this study.

4.2.2.3 Description

Unlike succinctness and accuracy which relate to the style of talk (in the traditional sense of 'style') and to the establishment of credibility with listeners, the 'description' feature concerns the content of the talk. If a speaker is not talking 'about' Rugby League it is very quickly evident. However, the feature of 'describing actions, participants and locations associated with the game' is also a relevant feature of other types of talk during the

commentary. For instance, when a speaker recounts events which have just taken place, or evaluates the progress of the game, he will present some kind of description of actions, participants and locations. The difference is that play-by-play talk implies that the talk is about actions, participants and locations specific to the unfolding of the game 'play-by-play' at the time of speaking. So the description feature needs to be defined fairly specifically. If it is a feature of play-by-play it must relate to discrete ongoing or unfolding actions, not general activities or states of affairs. The participants involved in these discrete actions should be specific, and the locations need to be well-defined locations relevant to the discrete actions unfolding in front of the speaker. Thus it would seem that the definition of play-by-play talk needs to include some element regarding 'description' of events in the game taking place.

4.2.2.4 Simultaneity

The aspect of actions 'unfolding' in front of the speaker relates very specifically to the fourth common feature of play-by-play talk—'simultaneity'. This is perhaps the only feature of the talk during the commentary that is almost exclusively peculiar to play-by-play talk. However, a definition which states that the speakers must speak simultaneously to the action taking place doesn't necessarily imply that their talk will be relevant to the action. The definition of play-by-play talk needs to include more than the feature of simultaneity if it is to be used to determine which portions of commentary talk are play-by-play and which portions are not. Thus we can see that the feature of simultaneity interacts with other features of the context. It is motivated by both the field and mode. In defining play-by-play talk as 'simultaneous talk' we need to also consider that it is 'simultaneous description of a specific set of events'.

For purposes of this research therefore, a very narrow definition of play-by-play talk is adopted. This definition combines the feature of simultaneity and the feature of description. These features are relatively more concrete than 'succinctness' or 'accuracy', and it will be seen that together, they require little subjective judgement in order to identify them linguistically. The definition used for purposes of this research is presented below:

> Play-by-play talk in Rugby League radio commentary is talk which encodes concurrent discrete movements, events, or locations associated with individuals or players directly connected with the ball and/or involved in the ongoing progress of the game.

This definition is 'field focused' and 'mode focused' in that it centres around the material activity that is being relayed to the speakers, and the requirement that the relaying of this action takes place simultaneously to the action itself. It excludes talk about the general progress of the teams, or the game as a whole, conditions on the field including weather conditions, score up-dates, and evaluative comments unless these are 'fused' with simultaneous action, such as when a speaker says, *and again a strong tackle by Logan* (evaluative portion is underlined).

4.3 Determining Play-by-Play Talk

4.3.0 Introduction to the Approach

Now that a definition of play-by-play talk has been formulated we need to find a way of excluding language in the commentary which does not satisfy this definition. To find this language the text could be approached from at least two different angles. First, an analysis could begin with an inductive approach in which all language in the commentary is linguistically analysed with the hypothesis that amongst the talk there will be identifiable 'play-by-play' portion(s) and once clusters of specific linguistic choices were identified, these would be probed for the kind of contextual information they construe. Once contextual descriptions for each cluster were formulated, the language-context clusters could be labelled according to 'type' of activity. One of these activities would be 'play-by-play'. While this would be a valid approach to take, it was not undertaken in this study. The main reason is that the amount of data that would be required to establish a reliable database upon which a 'general' description of play-by-play data could be arrived at is potentially enormous. Already, in this study two commentaries have been transcribed and these transcriptions account for a total of approximately two-hundred minutes of talk. An analysis of all of this data using the language-context approach would require a much greater amount of time than this study could have afforded.

A second method, and the one adopted in this chapter, is largely a deductive approach, but combines some elements of inductive methodology. The first step is to use the definition of play-by-play talk established in the previous section and to then analyse the data according to the general linguistic features most likely to expose language which satisfies that definition. This approach has been influenced by Crystal and Davy's (1969: 12) suggestion that 'the first step in any stylistic analysis must be an intuitive one' where the analyst 'notices a linguistic feature which he feels to be stylistically significant'. The question relevant for determining which portions of talk in the commentary are play-by-play is therefore: 'What are the most significant linguistic features which could be used to identify text as 'play-by-play' talk and which would exclude other forms of talk?' The next section addresses this question by focusing on a fairly lengthy extract taken from the commentary of the 2GB Sunday Afternoon Sports Broadcast on 14 July 1996. The extract is presented below with a brief informal summary and explanation directly following it.

4.3.1 Extract for Analytical Exploration

As noted in Chapter One the transcript is presented with each line representing a clause, minor clause or independent piece of information. The speakers in the extract in this section are:

GH (Greg Hartley - main commentator)
RM (Roy Masters - colour commentator/expert analyst)
TP (Tony Peters - side-line reporter)
GD (Geoff Dunn), PN (Peter Newlands), MR (Michael Ritchie), SM (Steve Mascord) and DW (Danny Wildler) - around-the-grounds reporters.

The initials of each speaker's name are placed immediately after the line number where each person enters the talk. For purposes of this analysis and discussion hypotactic dependent clauses are each assigned a separate line. This differs from the format of the transcripts in Appendices I and II because the transcripts in the Appendices represent the adjusted transcripts which result from the analyses and discussion in this chapter.

Extract 1. Extract from the 2GB Commentary (Sunday 14th July, 1996)

GB469.GH: back now it **goes** to David Fairleigh
GB470.Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own goalline
GB471.and **put down** in strong defence from Eastern Suburbs
GB472.now it**'s gone** to Soden
GB473.good pass across to Josh Stuart
GB474.he **aims** we.. **up** well
GB475.and again a strong tackle by Logan over the top
GB476.**giving** it across now
GB477.it **goes** to Steve Trindall
GB478.he **steps** back inside
GB479.**beat** the first line
GB480.eventually they **catch up** with him
GB481.and **drag** him to the ground thirty out from the North Sydney line
GB482.now it **goes** back this time to Larson
GB483.the pass back inside to Florimo
GB484.but he**'s cut down** by Sean Garlick
GB485.it**'s gone** to Soden
GB486.and he **gives** it once again to David Fairleigh
GB487.beautiful hands that time
GB488.it **goes** to Billy Moore
GB489.out to Ben Ikin
GB490.Ikin **puts** a little kick in downfield too
GB491.nearly **hit** the referee
GB492.but a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs
GB493.**heads** to the far side of the ground
GB494.**links up** beautifully this time with Peter Clark
GB495.RM: [oh what a] tackle!
GB496.RM: that **was** an absolutely superb tackle then by er   Greg Florimo of North Sydney
GB497. GH: [Florimo]
GB498.RM: he just **threw** his body at the at him
GB499.and **drove** him the er the winger Jorgensen right into the er er Jorgensen right into the dirt
GB500.GH: yeah it **was** a great tackle no risk in the world about that
GB501.one of the Claudio's big hits thus far in this game
GB502.but now Lowrie **getting up** very slowly
GB503.**might've hurt** his knee
GB504.but it**'s gone** across to Fittler
GB505.he **gives** it straight out to Tony Iro
GB506.Billy Moore**'s come** into contact with that ball
GB507.two knock-ons
GB508.first one from Billy Moore
GB509.the second one this time it **went** to Ben Ikin
GB510.and the referee**'ll blow** that up
GB511.as we **go** now to Tony Peters on the sideline for the Family Car Centre
GB512.TP: well Greg Sydney City's tactics **are** pretty clear
GB513.they**'ve got to try and milk** the crop down right from the start
GB514.**playing** into this wind
GB515.they**'ve got to try and slow** the game down
GB516.and **try to reduce** North Sydney's ne.. North Sydney's options and chances
GB517.because this breeze **is going to be** very crucial in the second half
GB518.GH: nil-all on the Global Self Storage
GB519.er sorry two nil er in favour of North Sydney over Sydney City on the Global Self Storage Scoreboard
GB520.as we **see** now [[North Sydney **take up** their defensive role]]
GB521.and Eastern Suburbs **will play** it via Cleary
GB522.straight back now to Fittler
GB523.he **tries to put** the bust on
GB524.very few people **get** past Gary Larson in that situation
GB525.and in particular when Billy Moore **comes** in
GB526.**to assist**
GB527.but it**'s gone** once again to Garlick

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GB528.out to Dunn
GB529.**tried to slide** under the tackle of Florimo very wide
GB530.but **pulled down** once again thirty out now from the Bears' line
GB531.Adrian Lam **shows** it out wide
GB532.he **gives** it to Iro
GB533.Iro **standing** out in the centres
GB534.he **flicked** it back to Walker
GB535.Walker**'s gone** without it
GB536.Lam's there
GB537.**to pick up** the dregs
GB538.he **does** that now
GB539.**tries to step** back inside Jason Taylor
GB540.but Taylor**'s** there
GB541.**to nail** him
GB542.still forty out from the Bears' line
GB543.it**'s** back with Garlick
GB544.he **sends** it across now to Ivan Cleary
GB545.**saw** the gap
GB546.oh it **closed up** with a punishing hit
GB547.one left to go now to the Sydney City Roosters
GB548.and David Fairleigh **put** him **away** like an undertaker
GB549.RM: [?]
GB550.GH: **gone** straight back once again now to Walker
GB551.who's **put** a high kick **up**
GB552.Mattie Seers **hasn't taken** his eyes off the ball
GB553.he**'s come** through
GB554.but it**'s gone** back to Cleary
GB555.then on to Iro
GB556.he**'s knocked** it back towards his own line
GB557.he **gets** a kick in
GB558.Nigel Roy **came up** [... ? ...]
GB559.he **scurries** back
GB560.**to get** the football
GB561.and he **is nailed** about two metres out from the Bears' line
GB562.RM: well North Sydney << as Tony **has said** >> **have got** a strong wind at their back
GB563.they **won** the toss
GB564.and they **chose to** obviously **run** with the wind in the first half
GB565.but there **is** a lot er there's an old coaching theory [[that **says** || that when two structured sides **meet** [[such as these two are]] || that you're better off **taking** the wind in the second half || because so much of the game time in the first half **is spent** [[just **sorting** yourselves out [[as you run through your patterns]]]]]]
GB566.if Eastern Suburbs or the Sydney City Roosters <<   >> **go** into this break at half time ah even
GB567.<<as they **prefer to be called** >>
GB568.then I **would have to say** || that Peter Louis **may well have er made** a fundamental error [[in **not taking** the wind in the second half]]
GB569.GH: one tackle left to go
GB570.it**'s gone** back to Buettner
GB571.Buettner **puts** a high ball **up**
GB572.a swirling wind **prevailing** here
GB573.but er Cleary very cautiously **taking** that football
GB574.and Dallas right on his hammer with a good chase
GB575.**hung** on him just a little bit too long
GB576.Ward **didn't like** it
GB577.the crowd **hate** it
GB578.but the arm of Ward **has gone up** towards Eastern Suburbs
GB579.and that **was** a good penalty too
GB580.because he **was interfered** with
GB581.and we**'ll go** around the grounds for Strathfield Car Radios to Geoffrey Dunn
GB582.GD: er still no start in First Grade
GB583.full-time in Reserve Grade Manly thirty-two Parramatta twenty-four
GB584.full-time in President's Cup Manly eighteen Parramatta sixteen
GB585.GH: Steve Mascord
GB586.SM: no score St. George and Penrith

GB587.GH: Danny Wildler
GB588.DW: Illawarra four the Western Reds nil
GB589.GH: Peter Newlands
GB590.PN: four-all Wests and North Queensland
GB591.kick **to come**
GB592.the kick's **missed**
GB593.four-all Wests and North Queensland
GB594.GH: Michael Ritchie
GB595.MR: yeah **just repeating** the Reserve Grade score here
GB596.Crushers twenty-eight Souths twelve
GB597.in the First Grade ten minutes in it's [[the South Sydney er Rabbitohs **leading** six points to two]]
GB598.GH: back it **goes** now to Garlick
GB599.he **sends** it across to Iro
GB600.in possession the Sydney City Roosters
GB601.**gone** back to Peter Clark now
GB602.he's **wrapped up** beautifully too thirty-two metres out from the Bears' line
GB603.Garlick very quickly at the dummy-half
GB604.he **gives** it across to Dunn
GB605.Dunn looked back
GB606.to off-load
GB607.couldn't get his pass away

The type of activities that each speaker engages in in this extract are summarised and presented in Table 4:5 below:

Table 4:5   Summary of the Type of Activity by Each Speaker

Segment of Transcript and Speaker's Initials	Type of Activity Engaged in by Each Speaker
GB469-GB494. GH:	Relaying simultaneous events taking place within view of the speaker but with which the speaker is not materially involved.
GB495-GB499. RM:	Evaluative comment on events which have just taken place.
GB500-GB501. GH:	Acknowledging RM's comment and concurring with his point of view.
GB502-GB506. GH:	Relaying simultaneous events taking place within view of the speaker but with which the speaker is not materially involved.
GB507-GB509. GH:	Recount of events that have just taken place.
GB510. GH:	Prediction of events.
GB511. GH:	Indicating the next speaker, his location, and a commercial sponsor.
GB512-GB517. TP:	Comments on weather conditions and recommendations about what should occur.
GB518-GB519. GH:	Score statement including mention of a commercial sponsor.
GB520-GB561. GH:	Relaying simultaneous events taking place... intermingled with some recounts and evaluations of the events taking place, e.g. at 529, 545-46.
GB562-GB568. RM:	Comments about the weather conditions, reporting coach's suggestions, and the possible consequences of this.
GB569-GB578. GH:	Comments on the general progress of the game, relaying simultaneous events.
GB579-GB580. GH:	Evaluation of events.
GB581. GH:	Introducing 'around-the-grounds' speakers.
GB582- GB597. GD:	Score reports from games in other locations.
GB598-GB604. GH:	Relaying simultaneous events taking place on the field of play.
GB605-GB607. GH:	Recount of events.

In this segment of talk we can see that there is a variety of activities or tasks being performed through the language. It is clear from the above summary of the kinds of activities taking place that there are some linguistic criteria which are being relied on as the basis for making decisions as to what is taking place in the extract. The question is: 'Which of these activities constitutes play-by-play talk, and how do we know?'. Using the definition of play-by-play talk, the extract will be re-examined and through applying some linguistic criteria I will attempt to highlight those segments of the extract which can be classified as play-by-play talk, and eliminate those which can not. The aim here is to expose segments of play-by-play talk so that they can form a data base of the register which can then be analysed in greater detail in the next chapters. The linguistic criteria used in the next sections are selected on the basis of what 'seems' to be the likely linguistic criteria which are being used to recognise the category of 'relaying simultaneous events' listed as one activity taking place in the extract. These linguistic criteria will be used as 'exclusion' criteria. That is, they will be used to exclude talk which does not meet the linguistic criteria, and which does not fit the definition of play-by-play talk.

4.3.2 Tense as a Criterion for Excluding Non-Play-by-Play Talk

In the first part of this chapter the language of the commentary was analysed according to the selection of primary tense. As already noted, a common feature of play-by-play talk is that it is simultaneous to the action it encodes. One of the linguistic resources for construing concurrent action, or actions taking place in the present time, is the use of the present tense (Quirk et al. 1972: 85). In the analysis it was found that the choice of tense is a skewed system in that present tense is the more likely choice in commentary than past tense. A question that seems relevant here is: 'Are the instances of present tense only those in which the talk is relaying action as it happens?' In the sections of the above extract spoken by GH and summarised in Table 4:5 as 'relaying simultaneous events' it appears that in these sections present tense is predominantly used. Therefore, the first criterion for excluding clauses which are potentially not play-by-play is to eliminate any clause in which any tense other than present tense is chosen.

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Before doing this, however, it is also apparent when looking at the sections spoken by GH that there are many lines in which there is no Finite element chosen at all, and thus no selection of primary tense in the verbal group. Therefore, the first step in applying this criterion is to identify all clauses in which there is a finite lexical verb or a finite operator. At this point in the analysis it needs to be stated that any lines in which there is no finite chosen shall be retained for further examination because these will obviously require some other criteria to determine whether they constitute play-by-play talk.

After applying the present tense exclusion criterion to all of the lines in the extract, we find that clauses such as lines GB479 *beat the first line* and GB491 *nearly hit the referee* where the speaker uses past tense are excluded. This is because the use of past tense conveys a sense that the action has taken place prior to the moment of speaking, and so clauses in which past tense is used cannot logically be classified as play-by-play talk according to the definition being used here. Intuitively these lines would probably have been categorised as recounts of events that have just taken place. Therefore, it is not surprising that these lines have been excluded from the talk by the application of the present tense criterion. The clauses eliminated by applying the present tense criterion are: GB479, GB491, GB496, GB498~GB499, GB509, GB529, GB534, GB545~GB546, GB548, GB558, GB563~GB564, GB575, GB576, GB579~GB580, GB605, GB607.

If the present tense criterion were sufficient to eliminate all non-play-by-play text, all the remaining clauses in the extract should be classifiable as play-by-play talk. However, after eliminating the clauses from the extract based on the tense criterion, it is evident that there are still many clauses which cannot reasonably be classified as play-by-play talk. For example,

> GB524.*very few people **get** past Gary Larson in that situation*
> GB525.*and in particular when Billy Moore **comes** in*

In these lines even though the tense choice is present, the speaker is expressing a general state of affairs. Such clauses are not likely candidates for play-by-play talk in which concurrent ongoing action is to be relayed. Lines GB524 and GB525 are in fact examples of where the present tense functions in a different way. While concurrent action would typically require present tense, the reverse is not true. That is, indicating 'concurrent' action is not the only function of the present tense. Present tense is used for a number of types of clauses functioning differently in the language, for instance, existential clauses such as *there are five men in the boat* or *there is a book*; clauses expressing 'eternal truths' such as *two and two make four*; or clauses expressing some kind of habitual action, such as *he rides the bus to work every morning*. Because of the variety of functions of the present tense we find that there are many clauses which cannot be classified as play-by-play according to the definition remain. Thus, some other kind of criterion is needed to eliminate these remaining clauses.

4.3.3 Medium-Process Nucleus as an Exclusion Criterion

The tense criterion was based on the belief that play-by-play talk would more likely select present tense than past tense, and so it was applied in an attempt to exclude lines which were not conveying 'concurrent' events. However, we found that present tense is also used in clauses which cannot be classified as play-by-play text. Therefore, we need to find some other way of excluding talk which cannot be classified as play-by-play talk. One way of doing this may be to concentrate on the experiential content of the lines of text. In order to establish some kind of linguistic criteria for determining which clauses relay this information relevant to our definition of play-by-play talk, we could ask the question: 'Which elements of the clause are most likely to represent experience involving discrete actions, locations and individual players?'. There are two perspectives on clause structure from which the answer to this question could be obtained: either we could examine the structure of the clause from the perspective of Transitivity, or we could examine the structure of the clause from the perspective of Ergativity[6]. Both of these perspectives represent ways of grammatically realising experience. The ergative structure is an account of which element is considered 'crucial' to the enactment of the process. In

this structure each clause is said to contain a Medium - Process nucleus, with the medium being the essential element for the process to take place. For instance, *the ball* is the medium in each of the following clauses:

> *He kicked <u>the ball</u>.*
> *<u>The ball</u> bounced awkwardly along the ground.*

On the other hand, the Transitivity analysis is a way of classifying the different 'types' of processes: such as mental, experiential, relational, and their attendant participants and circumstances. In the following clauses the type of process expressed in the first clause is material while in the second it is relational.

> *He kicked the ball* (Material process, Actor (*he*), Goal (*the ball*)
> *He is the big forward in the pack* (Relational process, Token (*he*), Value (*the big forward in the pack*)

In considering each of these perspectives as a means of excluding text which cannot be considered play-by-play text, the medium-process structure appears to be more flexible than the transitivity structure. This is because it is possible to identify a medium in many structures even those where there is no grammatically coded process such as in *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half*. In this line there is no verbal process, just the 'prepositional process', but there is a medium. In this case, *Garlick* can be identified as the medium[7]. By using an ergative analysis we do not need to concern ourselves with the type of process that is being realised, we only need to know which element is functioning as the medium in the process — the crucial element around which the activity in the clause hinges. The transitivity analysis would describe these structures as a participant and a circumstance, but we could not determine from the structure the type of participant. Thus, for the present purposes the second exclusion criterion involves examining the 'medium' of each line of the data. The question to ask here is: 'Does the Medium-Process nucleus construe a discrete event connected with the ongoing progress of the game?' If not, the clause in question can be eliminated.

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After an examination of the transcript and applying the medium-process exclusion criterion, we find that in addition to the clauses excluded after applying the tense criterion, the following clauses can be eliminated: GB512~GB517, GB520 GB524, GB562, GB565~GB568, GB572, GB577, GB581, GB595, GB597. A brief look at the group of clauses GB512~GB517 indicates why these are eliminated from the data. These clauses are reintroduced below with the medium underlined.

Extract 2.
GB512. TP: *Well Greg <u>Sydney City's tactics</u> are pretty clear*
GB513. *they've got to try and milk <u>the crop</u> down*
GB514. *<u>[they</u> are] playing into this wind*
GB515. *they've got to try and slow <u>the game</u> down*
GB516. *and try to reduce <u>North Sydney's options and chances</u>*
GB517. *because <u>this breeze</u> is going to be very crucial in the second half*

None of the medium-process nuclei in lines GB512-GB517 revolve around discrete actions or participants, although GB514 *[they are] playing into this wind* could be interpreted as such if we did not have the benefit of the co-text from which to interpret this line of the data. Almost all of the medium-process nuclei in lines GB512~GB516 refer to general actions, or the game as a whole. The medium-process nucleus in clause GB517 refers to weather conditions, and such conditions are not likely candidates to be classified as elements of play-by-play talk. Elements such as *the breeze* could feature in play-by-play talk, but only as part of a location, as in a clause such as *he kicks the ball into the breeze*. Furthermore, clauses GB513, GB515, GB516, are in fact worded as pieces of advice, and GB514 is a statement offering a reason for the advice. Advice is not concurrent action but implies some kind of suggested future action that one speaker recommends another carry out, and so cannot be considered play-by-play talk.

Through applying the medium-process criterion, more clauses were excluded from the extract and the combination of both the present tense criterion and the medium-process criterion eliminated almost all clauses which cannot be classified as play-by-play talk. However, there still remain some clauses which cannot be classified as play-by-play talk,

such as statements concerning scores from other matches: GB583 *full-time in Reserve Grade Manly thirty two Parramatta twenty-four*, or GB590 *four-all Wests and North Sydney*. Even though the meaning of these structures is clear, without a definite determination of which element in the structure functions as the medium, it is difficult to apply the second criterion.

Furthermore, the medium-process criterion when applied on its own could not eliminate all clauses which are not play-by-play, because clauses such as GB498 *he just threw his body at the at him* in which past tense is selected would remain.

4.3.4 Explicit Successive-Temporal Conjunction as an Exclusion Criterion

So far we have seen that while talk which is concurrent with the material action would typically be in present tense, applying the present tense criterion is not sufficient for excluding all talk which cannot be classified as play-by-play. Furthermore, it was found that the second criterion which aimed to identify the medium in the clause which realised a discrete movement or participant was also not sufficient for eliminating all non-play-by-play clauses.

It was observed in Section 4.2.2 that the feature of simultaneity without content is not very helpful in defining play-by-play talk. That is, talk can be simultaneous to the material action that is taking place, and yet it may have nothing to do with that material action. On the other hand, the content of the talk may centre on the material action, and yet may not be simultaneously relaying that material action. In order to develop a third criterion, the definition of play-by-play talk is presented again so that it can be reconsidered in the light of the exclusion criteria which have been applied so far.

> Play-by-play talk in Rugby League radio commentary is talk which encodes concurrent discrete movements, events, or locations associated with individuals or players directly connected with the ball, and/or involved in the ongoing progress of the game.

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The three main aspects of this definition of play-by-play talk are: the talk is concurrent to the material action of the game; it is about discrete movements, events, and locations; and it is about the process of relating a game 'in progress'. So far, the criteria for eliminating clauses in order to expose only play-by-play talk have focused either on simultaneity (or concurrentness) *or* on the content surrounding the process-medium nucleus (the discrete movements, events etc.). However, according to the definition of play-by-play talk, the commentator relays concurrently occurring actions of a specific type. Because the talk is taking place in real time and is concurrent with events unfolding in the same time it is not possible to relay these in any other way than as consecutive actions. This is because it is not possible to shift time, except in science fiction (although language itself allows us to speak of actions in the past, present or future). The actions related in play-by-play talk should therefore follow the sequence of those actions as they occur in 'real time'.

If the actions are occurring simultaneously to the moment of speaking, and if they are taking place in a specific sequence, then some kind of linguistic criterion which is used to make this aspect of the situation explicit may be able to exclude those actions which are not 'links' in a chain of actions occurring in real time. In examining the extract, particularly those sections where we recognised that the speaker was relaying concurrent events, we can see: 1) that the actions and events configure to form the game, 2) the actions appear in a congruently sequential manner because they are happening in real time, and 3) the actions are being related to the listeners in real time. Thus we can ask: 'What kind of linguistic resource can explicitly highlight these aspects of play-by-play talk?'. The most common resource in English used to explicitly convey linked actions taking place in a real time sequence is the conjunction *and* (although sequence of information is in itself meaningful; see Hoey 1983: 31-61 for a discussion of this). Thus, if we were to slot this conjunction between each clause we would have the clauses grammatically joined to each other, as in the following example:

(Lines GB472-GB474) *now it's gone to Soden **and** good pass across to Josh Stuart **and** he aims up well*

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The use of *and* appears to more explicitly bring out the real time sequence of these events. However the addition of the conjunction *and* makes just as much sense and suggests sequence when applied to a segment of the text where there is a mix of tense choices as in the following.

(Lines GB531-535)   *Adrian Lam shows it out wide **and** he gives it to Iro **and** Iro [is] standing out in the centres **and** he flicked it back to Walker **and** Walker's gone without it.*

This is because the conjunction *and* is frequently used to link ideas, whether those ideas be in a specific time sequence or not, and whether or not they have any other temporal or causal relationship to each other.

Therefore, we can assume that the addition of *and* alone between clauses in the text will not necessarily highlight those clauses which logically go together as successive play-by-play happenings. Instead, we need something which indicates both the sequence of events in the game in real time and the sense that these events are taking place at the time of speaking. As has already been noted, present tense cannot be used as a criterion for extracting only play-by-play talk. However, tense is not the only temporal indicator in English. For instance, on a number of occasions the commentators use the temporal marker *now* to indicate that an event is taking place in the 'here-and-now'. But the commentators also appear to use the word *now* as a textual linking device. It is 'reduced' in the sense that it is not usually spoken on a separate tone group and it is not generally given tonic prominence (see intonation analysis in Appendix III), and yet it is used at the beginning of a line. In this sense it can be compared to the continuative *now* which is used by speakers to open 'a new stage in the communication' (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 268). In the commentary, it appears to be used to indicate the next event in the sequence of events taking place in the present time.

The use of *now* in the commentary thus appears to have a dual textual function: it is used as an explicit means of indicating internal (textual) ordering of relations, and it is used as a

means of ordering external relations (those concerning the events in the material environment). Because simultaneously occurring events are being related *as they happen* and not *as they have just happened* the temporal conjunction *now* is the most appropriate. Other possibilities such as *next* or *then* can have a sense of 'pastness' about them. In order to bring out the explicit relations between sequences of concurrent events in the commentary it would seem that the most useful criterion would be the 'explicit successive temporal' conjunction *and now*. If each line in the text were prefaced with *and now* then it should be possible to eliminate those lines which do not logically accept this compound conjunction on the grounds that they are not expressing discrete concurrently occurring actions, locations or events linked to those preceding or subsequent to them. It can then act as an explicit means of bringing together what Martin (1992: 181) calls 'text time' (time in relation to what is being said) and 'field time' (time in relation to what is being done). This is a better choice than *and then* for instance because the conjunctive successive marker *then* can suggest contingency, as in the example: *He might have arrived on time. Then he would have won* (this example from Martin 1992: 201).

The successive conjunction criterion can now be applied to the complete extract in Section 4.3.1. The following discussion of this application focuses on three relatively large portions of the extract to demonstrate its effectiveness. Applying the successive temporal conjunction criterion to the whole extract is a means of determining whether it can be used as the sole criterion for determining play-by-play talk or whether it, too, (as was the case with the application of the first two criteria) is insufficient in eliminating all text that cannot be classified as play-by-play talk.

4.3.5 Applying the Successive Temporal Conjunction *and now* Criterion

Some important considerations regarding the application of the successive temporal conjunction criterion to the text need to be mentioned before continuing with the analysis. Where a conjunction (such as *and, or,* or *but*) already exists in the text, only the temporal marker, *now*, is added to the line and the existing conjunction is not printed in bold type but is underlined. Furthermore, where the temporal marker *now* already exists somewhere

in the clause (either as a conjunction or as a temporal adjunct) (such as in GB472 and GB476), it is assumed that this is already realising concurrentness and so only the conjunction *and* is added and the existing *now* is not printed in bold type but is underlined. One last point regarding the addition of *and now* is that where another temporal conjunction already exists (as in GB480 *eventually they catch up with him*) it should be possible to substitute this temporal conjunction with *now* without any odd consequences arising in terms of the internal/external temporal relations in the text. Therefore, where a temporal conjunction already exists it is placed in parentheses and *now* placed before it. The additional text (i.e. *now, and,* or *and now*) is indicated by bold type in the segments from the extract reproduced below. Once each line of the text is prefaced with *and now* we can test whether that line is a link in a sequence of specific events and happenings which are 'associated with individuals or players directly connected with the ball and/or involved in the ongoing progress of the game'.

4.3.5.1 Discussion of Segment GB469~GB495

Extract 3. Segment GB469~GB495
GB469.GH: back now it goes to David Fairleigh
GB470.**and now** Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own goalline
GB471.and **now** put down in strong defence from Eastern Suburbs
GB472.**and** now it's gone to Soden
GB473.**and now** good pass across to Josh Stuart
GB474.**and now** he aims we.. up well
GB475.and **now** again a strong tackle by Logan over the top
GB476.**and** giving it across now
GB477.**and now** it goes to Steve Trindall
GB478.**and now** he steps back inside
GB479.**and now** beat the first line
GB480.**and now** (eventually) they catch up with him
GB481.and **now** drag him to the ground thirty out from the North Sydney line
GB482.**and** now it goes back this time to Larson
GB483.**and now** the pass back inside to Florimo
GB484.but **now** he's cut down by Sean Garlick
GB485.**and now** it's gone to Soden
GB486.and **now** he gives it once again to David Fairleigh
GB487.**and now** beautiful hands that time
GB488.**and now** it goes to Billy Moore
GB489.**and now** out to Ben Ikin
GB490.**and now** Ikin puts a little kick in downfield too
GB491.**and now** nearly hit the referee
GB492.but **now** a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs
GB493.**and now** heads to the far side of the ground
GB494.**and now** links up beautifully this time with Peter Clark
GB495.RM: **and now** [oh what a] tackle

In most of this segment of talk the conjunction *and now* appears to explicitly highlight sequential ongoing activities. However, between lines GB478 and GB480 there lies a problem in the logical simultaneous progression of the events. For instance,

GB478 ***and now*** *he steps back inside*
GB479 ***and now*** *[he] beat the first line*
GB480 ***and now*** *(eventually) they catch up with him*

The same problem occurs between GB490 and GB492:

GB490 ***and now*** *Ikin puts a little kick in downfield too*
GB491 ***and now*** *it nearly hit the referee*
GB492 <u>*but*</u> ***now*** *a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs*

In both of these cases the *and now* does not work between clauses in which one is in past tense and the other is in present tense, because the linking of events involves a time shift. Although, in reality, the actions related in lines GB479 and GB491 probably do take place between the actions related in GB478 and GB480 and GB490 and GB492, the use of past tense in these creates a situation in which the events somehow are moved out of the 'here and now' and placed into the 'there and then'. They are realised as completed actions. Without visual access to the material action taking place it is impossible to ascertain whether the speaker is using past tense to refer to concurrent material actions or whether, indeed, the material events have been completed. It is also likely that the use of the past tense here is a result of the fact that the speaker is pressed to keep up with the action as it rapidly unfolds before him. In reality, all of the action that is related, whether it is relayed through clauses using present tense or past tense, is most probably at some temporal distance ahead of its construal in language. Therefore, although it may appear very limiting to exclude GB479 and GB491 from talk classified as play-by-play, at this point in the study a more limited definition and exclusion criterion seems preferable to a more inclusive one. This is because it would seem that a restricted view of play-by-play at this stage makes it possible to arrive at a basic set of clauses to which others could be added after consideration of issues such as those arising from instances such as GB479 and GB491 — past tense on (apparently) successive activities sandwiched between actions realised in the

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present tense. Thus, lines GB479 and GB491 are eliminated (as was the case when the tense criterion was applied).

In this segment conflict also arises at line GB487 *beautiful hands that time*. This is because there is a disjunction between *that time* and *now*. These form a mismatch in temporal reference (*that time* is referring back, while *now* is referring to the present), so this clause is deleted. Finally, a point needs to be made regarding GB495 RM *oh what a tackle*. Because this event is packaged in the form of an exclamation, we can move the exclamation *oh* to the left of *and now* and the clause remains an exclamation of a simultaneous event. The speaker does not use past tense and is not recounting an exciting moment. Rather, he is simply exclaiming about something which is taking place in front of him. Furthermore, because this event has not yet been mentioned by the main commentator it is not deleted. In fact, if we were to change this clause into a statement such as *and now what a tackle* then it would be perfectly acceptable to say that it constitutes an event in the sequence of the ongoing simultaneous activities.

4.3.5.2 Discussion of Segment GB496~GB526

Extract 4. Segment GB496~GB526

GB496.RM: **and now** that was an absolutely superb tackle then by er [   ] Greg Florimo of North Sydney
GB497.GH: **and now**   [Florimo]
GB498.RM: **and now** he just threw his body at the at him
GB499.<u>and</u> **now** drove him the er the winger Jorgensen right into the er er Jorgensen right into the dirt
GB500.GH: **and now** yeah it was a great tackle no risk in the world about that
GB501.**and now** one of the Claudio's big hits thus far in this game
GB502.<u>but now</u> Lowrie getting up very slowly
GB503.**and now** might've hurt his knee
GB504.<u>but</u> **now** it's gone across to Fittler
GB505.**and now** he gives it straight out to Tony Iro
GB506.**and now** Billy Moore's come into contact with that ball
GB507.**and now** two knock-ons
GB508.**and now** first one from Billy Moore
GB509.**and now** the second one this time it went to Ben Ikin
GB510.<u>and</u> **now** the referee'll blow that up
GB511.**and** (as) we go <u>now</u> to Tony Peters on the sideline for the *Family Car Centre*
GB512.TP: **and now** well Greg Sydney City's tactics are pretty clear
GB513.**and now** they've got to try and milk the crop down right from the start
GB514.**and now** playing into this wind
GB515.**and now** they've got to try and slow the game down
GB516.<u>and</u> **now** try to reduce North Sydney's ne.. North Sydney's options and chances
GB517.**and** (because) **now** this breeze is going to be very crucial in the second half
GB518.GH: **and now** nil-all on the *Global Self Storage*
GB519.**and now** er sorry two nil er in favour of North Sydney over Sydney City on the *Global Self Storage* Scoreboard

GB520.**and** (as) we see <u>now</u> [[North Sydney take up their defensive role]]
GB521.<u>and</u> **now** Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary
GB522.**and now** straight back now to Fittler
GB523.**and now** he tries to put the bust on
GB524.**and now** very few people get past Gary Larson in that situation
GB525.<u>and</u> **now** in particular when Billy Moore comes in
GB526.**and now** to assist

In this segment the first few lines, GB496~GB499, constitute a recount of events which have just expired and thus use the past tense. Prefacing these lines with the *and now* criterion is incongruent with the past tense choice. Prefacing these lines with *and now* sets up an incongruity between the 'text time' and the 'field time'. As noted earlier, commentary marries text time with field time. Where this does not occur, as in lines GB496-GB499, the text in this context is unlikely to be interpreted as play-by-play talk.

Lines GB500 *yeah it was a great tackle no risk in the world about that* and GB501 *one of the Claudio's big hits thus far in this game* constitute evaluative comments by the main commentator. In GB500 he is agreeing with the colour commentator about the quality of the tackle that has just taken place. Again, the speaker's use of past tense here is in conflict with the *and now* preface. Moreover, the use of past tense on GB500 dominates the sense of the second clause, *one of the Claudio's big hits thus far in this game*. In this clause the main commentator is elaborating his point and we can assume that this clause is a continuation of his evaluation of the *great tackle*. The use of *and now* does not highlight ongoing sequential activities which can be classified as play-by-play talk and so these lines are excluded.

Line GB503 *he might've hurt his knee* is another clause which bears some consideration. Prefacing this line with *and now* criterion does not entirely create an illogical step in the relaying of activities taking place because it is possible that the physical state of the player may be recognised by the way he is acting. However, there is no way of knowing for sure that the commentator is relaying some kind of physical action through his evaluative comment, and as the comment itself is not relaying an event associated with the ongoing

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progress of the game, it does not satisfy the definition of play-by-play talk and therefore is deleted.

The *and now* criterion highlights the fact that at line GB507 two *knock ons* are the next events to take place in the game. It is possible to argue that these 'knock ons' have taken place so quickly that the speaker is reporting them at the same time as the second *knock on* is occurring. However, there is no way of being certain about this without visual access to the events taking place. Therefore, the expression *two knock-ons* is interpreted as a recount of events which have just occurred, because it is not possible for each knock on to occur simultaneously (there is only one ball to be knocked-on!). Prefacing each of the next lines, GB508 *first one from Billy Moore* and GB509 *the second one this time it went to Ben Ikin*, with *and now*, creates an incongruity because these lines are an elaboration of the knock ons and do not report simultaneously occurring activities. Therefore, lines GB507, GB508 and GB509 are excluded.

It is not clear as to how to classify GB510 *and the referee'll blow that up*, but I would suggest that if it is prefaced with *and now* its status as a link in the chain of events taking place is highlighted, especially if we interpret *will* as an obligatory modal and not as future tense marker *will*. In a game of Rugby League it is the responsibility of the referee to attend to the knock ons by blowing the whistle. From the comment *and the referee'll blow that up*, it would appear that from the point of view of the commentator it is evident that the referee intends to blow his whistle, or may in fact be doing so. Furthermore, as the referee blowing the whistle is also a crucial event in the progress of the game, this clause remains in the play-by-play category of clauses.

Lines GB518 and GB519 (GB518 *nil-all on the Global Self Storage* GB519 *er sorry two-nil er in favour of North Sydney over Sydney City on the Global Self Storage Scoreboard*) are score statements so they do not fit the *and now* criterion for highlighting ongoing concurrent discrete events etc. The score is an abstract indication of the results of the events and does not represent the events themselves. These lines are therefore excluded.

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Line GB520 is discussed in section 4.3.8, so I will not discuss it here. Line GB521 *and Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary* fits the *and now* criterion, where 'will' is interpreted as a modal operator rather than as future tense. This clause is not deleted.

Lines GB524 *very few people get past Gary Larson in that situation*, GB525 *and in particular when Billy Moore comes in* and GB526 *to assist* are necessarily deleted if we apply the *and now* criterion. When *and now* is inserted between Line GB524 and the previous ongoing play-by-play event (GB523 *he tries to put the bust on*) a disjunction is created. This is because Lines GB524, GB525 and GB526 are referring to a general state of affairs. Interestingly, the speaker indicates a return to play-by-play by using *but* at the beginning of the next line (GB527).

4.3.5.3 Discussion of Segment GB581~GB597

Segment GB581-GB597 bears some consideration because few of the clauses in this segment were deleted by either the 'tense' criterion or the 'medium-process' criterion. This segment is reproduced below. Note that double square brackets indicate embedded clauses.

Extract 5. Segment GB581~GB597

GB581.GH <u>and</u> **now** we'll go around the grounds for Strathfield Car Radios to Geoffrey Dunn
GB582.GD: **and now** er still no start in First Grade
GB583.**and now** full-time in Reserve Grade Manly thirty-two Parramatta twenty-four
GB584.**and now** full-time in President's Cup Manly eighteen Parramatta sixteen
GB585.GH: **and now** Steve Mascord
GB586.SM: **and now** no score St. George and Penrith
GB587.GH: **and now** Danny Wildler
GB588.DW: **and now** Illawarra four the Western Reds nil
GB589.GH: **and now** Peter Newlands
GB590.PN: **and now** four-all Wests and North Queensland
GB591.**and now** kick to come
GB592.**and now** the kick's missed
GB593.**and now** four-all Wests and North Queensland
GB594.GH: **and now** Michael Ritchie
GB595.MR: **and now** yeah just repeating the Reserve Grade score here
GB596.**and now** Crushers twenty-eight Souths twelve
GB597. **and now** in the First Grade ten minutes in it's [[the South Sydney er Rabbitohs leading six points to two]]

This segment mostly constitutes a series of invitations and score reports and so when the *and now* criterion is applied it functions to indicate the internal structure of the text, rather than to indicate the flow of activities taking place externally to the text. That is, *and now* in this portion of the text acts as a textual Theme indicating that a different language activity is about to take place. The internal text structure does not marry with the external activities because for the most part, the information which is being relayed does not centre on ongoing concurrent material actions. Nevertheless, line GB592 bears some consideration. At this point in the text it appears that the *and now* criterion takes on the dual function of linking text elements and linking material events. This is explained by the fact that the previous line, GB591 *kick to come* refers to an imminent event. This line is spoken by an 'around-the-grounds' reporter, whose main function in the commentary (as has already been discussed) is to report the score from another game taking place at another location. However, the purpose of the statement, *kick to come* is to delay stating the score, because the result of the kick has the potential to change the score. Therefore, the around-the-grounds reporter states that the kick is about to happen, suggesting that if the principal commentator waits then he will receive the most up-to-date score from the other game. In fact the kick is unsuccessful (as stated in GB592 *the kick's missed*) and the up-dated score is then announced in GB593 *four-all Wests and North Queensland*. This completes this speaker's turn in the section of the commentary. Prefacing the line GB592 with *and now* highlights the fact that the speaker is relating events as they take place in front of him. This line can therefore be interpreted as 'play-by-play' talk. The difference between line GB592 and the play-by-play talk by the principal commentator is that the clause spoken by the around-the-grounds reporter centres on an event in a game occurring at another location. For practical reasons, any play-by-play talk referring to events in a different location to the main game that is being commented on will not be included and analysed in this study. Interestingly, the *and now* criterion has been able to identify this segment of play-by-play talk, confirming the usefulness of this criterion in identifying play-by-play talk.

So far we can see that the successive temporal conjunction *and now* has proved to be a useful criterion in testing for clauses which cannot be classified as play-by-play text. However, there are three issues which need to be addressed concerning the identification of play-by-play talk using the *and now* criterion before presenting the final corpus of play-by-play text. These issues are discussed in the next sections.

4.3.5.4 Hypotactic Enhancing (Cause: purpose) Clause Complexes

It was noted in Chapter One that clause complexes in which there is hypotactic expansion are not represented as separate clauses on different lines, but as one clause complex taking a single line in the transcript. The reasons for not separating the clauses in a hypotactic clause complex of the expansion type arose during the application of the *and now* criterion. Consider for example the following clauses.

Extract 6.
GB536. *Lam's there*
GB537. *to pick up the dregs*
GB538. *he does that now*

Here the first clause *Lam's there* would be classified as play-by-play talk because it satisfies the *and now* criterion (and in fact all three of the proposed exclusion criteria: tense, medium-process and successive temporal conjunction *and now*). The second clause, however, presents a problem. The second clause, *to pick up the dregs* constitutes the reason why Lam is there. This reason is fulfilled in the next clause GB538 *he does that now*. In this small three-clause extract, we could classify the first clause and the last clause as play-by-play, but the second clause is not necessarily play-by-play because it is an event which has not in fact occurred at the time of speaking as becomes evident in the subsequent line. If we apply the *and now* criterion, we find that the hypotactic clause *to pick up the dregs* is eliminated, especially if we take into account the clause *he does that now* which indicates the exact time that the action of *picking up the dregs* occurs. While clause GB537 can be comfortably eliminated because we find that the action of *picking up the dregs* is fulfilled in the next clause, there are other instances in the commentary where both the fulfilment of the action and the time of fulfilling the action are not so explicitly

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confirmed. For instance at GB559 and GB560 *he scurries back to get the football* the second clause *to get the football* is the reason why *he scurries back*, but the actual action of getting the football is not mentioned in the subsequent clause; instead, another event is mentioned GB561 *and he is nailed*. Three possibilities can be inferred from this: first, the action of *getting the football* happened so quickly that the commentator was unable to confirm it without sacrificing the relating of some other activities taking place; second, the action of *getting the football* took place simultaneously with the moment of speaking; third, the action of *getting the football* didn't occur at all. The moment during which the action of *getting the football* took place is therefore left ambiguous.

Let us consider for a moment the purpose of the hypotactic clause. The purpose of the hypotactic clause in each of the above cases is to enhance the information in the first clause. In the enhancing clause, which is called the beta (β) clause, there is some kind of 'extra' information about the events taking place. The semantic feature of the hypotactic clause is [Cause: purpose]. While it appears that hypotactic clause complexes are not very frequent in play-by-play talk, the hypotactic enhancing clause complex of the type [Cause: purpose] does appear to occur with relatively more frequency than other types of hypotactic enhancing clauses. Some other examples from the extract are at lines GB536 and GB537 as well as GB540 and GB541. It would seem that retaining these clauses could add more information to the play-by-play talk and/or supply a step in the activities being relayed which would be missing were the hypotactic enhancing clauses to be eliminated. However, applying the *and now* criterion to these clause sounds illogical because their meaning conveys a purpose for the action — which may be left ambiguous in terms of its location in time. Therefore, rather than separating clause complexes in which the α clause is play-by-play and the β clause (hypotactic [Cause: purpose]) may not be, it seems more reasonable to retain the full clause complex, but to represent it as a single line in the transcript. In this way, the action and the purpose for the action would take the same line in the data. Applying the *and now* criterion depends therefore on the nature of the α clause. If the α clause of a hypotactic clause complex with the semantic relation of [Cause: purpose] accepts the *and now* criterion, then the whole clause complex is

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classified as play-by-play talk. If it does not accept the *and now* criterion, then the whole clause complex is deleted. It should be emphasised here that this process only applies to hypotactic enhancing clauses of the type [Cause: purpose] in the whole transcript whether they be classified as play-by-play text or not. Other hypotactic enhancing clauses are separated and both the α and the β clause are given separate lines in the transcript.

4.3.5.5 Speaker's Presence in the Text

4.3.5.5.1 Mental Clauses of 'watching' and 'seeing'

Another issue in identifying play-by-play talk using the *and now* criterion arose when the *and now* prefaced clauses in which the speaker's presence was made explicit as the Senser in mental process clauses, and in which the Phenomenon could be identified as play-by-play talk. The following examples are from both the 2GB and the ABC commentaries.

Example 1.

GB520 *as we see now North Sydney take up their defensive role*

Example 2.

GB803. *we see Cleary picking up the football back there on the forty yard line North Sydney's end of the ground*

Example 3.

GB1412. *as we see now Walker getting a high ball up now*

Example 4.
A360. PW: *now we watch the North Sydney Bears just outside their own twenty metre line*

Example 5.

A363. *and watching er the North Sydney side roll forward through Steve Trindall*

In these examples the commentator first refers explicitly to what he is doing: 'watching' or 'seeing' certain events taking place. In these examples the commentator uses inclusive 'we'. One interpretation of the meaning conveyed by the use of 'we' is that of a 'joint

enterprise' (Quirk et al. 1972: 208) between the speaker and the listeners. It appears to be a way of suggesting that the listeners are indeed participants in the process of the afternoon's commentary. Another interpretation could be that *we* refers to the commentator and the crowd watching the events. Nevertheless, in each of the above examples, where the speaker uses the inclusive *we* in combination with a mental process such as *see* or *watch*, the Phenomenon the speaker is observing is an event which can be classified as a play-by-play event if we preface that event with *and now*. Two lines, one from the 2GB list and the other from the ABC list, are reproduced below with the lines immediately before and after it, and with *and now* added to the Phenomenon in the mental process clause.

Extract 7. (Mental process clause is at GB520)

GB519. ***and now*** *er sorry two nil er in favour of North Sydney over Sydney City on the Global Self Storage Scoreboard*
GB520. ***and****(as we see now) North Sydney take up their defensive role*
GB521. *and **now** Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary*

Extract 8. (Mental process clause is at A361)

A360. ***and now*** *a good crowd here at Bear Park*
A361. *and (watching) **now** er the North Sydney side roll forward through Steve Trindall*
A362. ***and now*** *he's caught*

In each of these examples we can see that the first clause does not satisfy the criteria for play-by-play talk, because, for instance, GB519 represents a score statement, and A360 is a description of the crowd. The next lines, which are those in which the commentator surfaces as Senser, can be classified as play-by-play text if we ignore the reference to the Senser and preface the Phenomenon with *and now*. By doing this, the Phenomenon satisfies the definition of play-by-play talk as proposed in this study. Therefore, when analysing the transcript, in clauses in which the speaker surfaces as a 'Senser' watching or seeing a 'Phenomenon' which can be classified as play-by-play talk, the Senser and Process are ignored and the Phenomenon is treated as an independent element. In order to test for the possibility of this Phenomenon being classified as play-by-play text, the *and*

now criterion is added in front of this part of the clause. In the analyses of play-by-play talk in the next chapters, only the Phenomenon is included where appropriate.

4.3.5.5.2 Other Instances in which the Speaker Surfaces

There are other instances in which the speaker's presence surfaces in the text. These include projecting clauses and clauses in which the speaker makes evaluative comments about what he may have just said. Some examples of these are listed below.

Extract 9.

GB1371. *Wilson gets a frustrated kick downfield*
GB1372. *I'm here //to tell ya*

Extract 10.

A1427. *times the pass away from Buettner or rather to Fairleigh or er er*
A1428. *I'll get it right in a moment*

In extracts 9 and 10 the commentator is referring to the nature of the activity he is engaged by explicitly saying that he is *here to tell ya* or by stating that he *will get it right.* The first clauses in these examples constitute instances of play-by-play talk and can take the criterion *and now,* whereas the second clauses, those in which the speaker refers to himself and to what he is doing, do not. In cases such as those in extracts 9 and 10, only the clauses classified as play-by-play talk are considered in the analysis of play-by-play talk.

A final comment regarding the presence of the speaker in the commentary is apropos at this point. In his discussion of the deep and surface structure of monologue, Longacre (1976) briefly describes how the role of the 'composer' may overtly surface in the discourse. As examples of this in the genre of narrative, Longacre refers to John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman,* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables.* In these narratives, Longacre describes how 'the hand of the narrator is very evident' (Longacre 1976: 211) in that in each of these narratives the narrator enters when he refers to the characters as third person and when he suggests how he may manipulate

the story. Longacre mentions other discourse types such as procedural discourses where although the 'composer' is most often covert he may surface if 'he wants to appeal to himself and his own prestige in order to give authority to the procedures' (Longacre 1976: 212). In other types of discourse such as hortatory discourse 'the composer is especially likely to get involved with his subject matter and his audience and to urge on them a certain course of conduct by virtue of the prestige invested in his person' (Longacre 1976: 212). Commentary is also a type of monologue, in that it is presented to a group of listeners who cannot take part in its creation. In commentary, as we have seen, the speaker may occasionally 'surface' as a participant in the discourse, bringing his role explicitly into the talk. He may do this by using the first person singular pronoun or by using the first person inclusive pronoun *we*. Through his use of inclusive *we*, the commentator is able to create the sense that he is including the listener and or the crowd in his observations of the activities taking place in front of him. Furthermore, through direct reference to what he is doing such as seeing, saying, 'getting it right', watching and so on, he is bringing his role, and the nature of the activity he is engaged in, to the surface of the discourse.

4.3.5.6 Posing Questions During the Commentary

One final issue which arose during the application of the *and now* criterion concerns the presence of 'questions' in the text. This is a feature which seems more common during the ABC commentator's talk, although it does occur in both commentaries. Some extracts from the ABC commentary in which questions occur are presented below. The questions are italicised and each line is prefaced with *and now*.

Extract 11.
A655. and **now** (then) to Buettner
A656. and **now** he kicks high with the breeze
A657. **and now** *will it find the right touch-line*
A658. **and now** it bounces
A659. and **now** bounces
A660. and **now** wobbles
A661. and **now** er sits in the in-goal area

Extract 12.
A904. **and now** he has a clean run to the line
A905. **and now** *will he have the pace*
A906. **and now** he's up to the twenty
A907. **and now** over the ten
A908. **and now** he's caught from behind
A909. **and now** not held
A910. <u>and</u> **now** scores

Extract 13. (Second-half of the ABC commentary)
A1483. **and now** gives it to Wood
A1484. **and now** *has he got the pace*
A1485. **and now** chasing is Buettner
A1486. **and now** no he doesn't

The use of questions interspersed with the play-by-play talk seems to contribute to what Wilkins (1993) calls the 'drama unfolding'. The questions seem to set up the possibility of something occurring, or some kind of suspense concerning the events of the game. The answer to the question is either explicit, as in Extract 13 (line A1486), or implicit as in Extracts 11 and 12. The questions do not satisfy the *and now* criterion because their content is speculative rather than current fact. Thus, in Extract 13, for instance, line A1484 (the question itself) and line A1486 are not considered play-by-play talk.

4.3.6 Play-by-Play Talk Exposed

After applying the *and now* criterion to the complete extract in 4.3.1 and eliminating those clauses discussed above and any others which do not logically allow the successive conjunction, the following lines of the extract from the transcript remain. Non-play-by-play lines are indicated with a short dash, and line numbers have been adjusted so as to correlate with line numbers in the full transcript in Appendix I.

The Play-by-Play Text Extracted from the Commentary Excerpt

GB469.GH: back now it goes to David Fairleigh
GB470.Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own goalline
GB471.and [he is] put down in strong defence from Eastern Suburbs
GB472.now it's gone to Soden
GB473.good pass across to Josh Stuart
GB474.he aims we.. up well

GB475.and again a strong tackle by Logan over the top

GB476.giving it across now

GB477.it goes to Steve Trindall

GB478.he steps back inside

GB479.-

GB480.eventually they catch up with him

GB481.and drag him to the ground thirty out from the North Sydney line

GB482.now it goes back this time to Larson

GB483.the pass back inside to Florimo

GB484.but he's cut down by Sean Garlick

GB485.it's gone to Soden

GB486.and he gives it once again to David Fairleigh

GB487.-

GB488.it goes to Billy Moore

GB489.out to Ben Ikin

GB490.Ikin puts a little kick in downfield too

GB491.-

GB492.but a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs

GB493.[he] heads to the far side of the ground

GB494.[he] links up beautifully this time with Peter Clark

GB495.RM: [oh what a] tackle

. . .

GB502.but now Lowrie [is] getting up very slowly

GB503.-

GB504.but it's gone across to Fittler

GB505.he gives it straight out to Tony Iro

GB506.Billy Moore's come into contact with that ball

GB510.and the referee'll blow that up

. . .

GB520.... North Sydney take up their defensive role

GB521.and Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary

GB522.straight back now to Fittler

GB523.he tries to put the bust on

GB526.but it's gone once again to Garlick

GB527.out to Dunn

GB528.-

GB529.but [he is] pulled down once again thirty out now from the Bears' line

GB530.Adrian Lam shows it out wide

GB531.he gives it to Iro

GB532.Iro [is] standing out in the centres

GB533.-

GB534.Walker's gone without it

GB535.Lam's there || to pick up the dregs

GB536.he does that now

GB537.[he] tries to step back inside Jason Taylor

GB538.but Taylor's there || to nail him

GB539.still forty out from the Bears' line

GB540.it's back with Garlick

GB541.he sends it across now to Ivan Cleary

GB547.GH: [it has] gone straight back once again now to Walker

GB548.who's put a high kick up

GB549.-

GB550.he's come through

GB551.but it's gone back to Cleary

GB552.then on to Iro

GB553.he's knocked it back towards his own line

GB554.he gets a kick in

GB555.-

GB556.he scurries back || to get the football

GB557.and he is nailed about two metres out from the Bears' line

GB566.it's gone back to Buettner

GB567.Buettner puts a high ball up

GB568.-

GB569.but er Cleary very cautiously taking that football

GB570.and Dallas right on his hammer with a good chase

GB574.but the arm of Ward has gone up towards Eastern Suburbs

GB594.GH: back it goes now to Garlick

GB595.he sends it across to Iro

GB596.in possession the Sydney City Roosters

GB597.[it has] gone back to Peter Clark now

GB598.he's wrapped up beautifully too thirty-two metres out from the Bears' line

GB599.Garlick very quickly at the dummy-half

GB600.he gives it across to Dunn

On reviewing the remaining portions of text it would appear that the *and now* criterion has been successful in excluding those lines which cannot be classified as play-by-play talk. We can therefore conclude that these remaining portions of the original extract represent play-by-play talk. This segment of play-by-play talk, along with a portion of comparable length from the ABC commentary (see Appendix VI) constitutes the core data used for the analyses of the register of play-by-play talk in the next chapters.

4.4 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter began by describing the choices in primary tense and polarity in the framed activity of commentary and comparing these choices with those found for English. It was found that in commentary the systems of polarity and primary tense are skewed systems, with present tense and positive polarity being the unmarked choices.

The next part of this chapter reviewed spoken and written sources by professional sports commentators in order to develop a definition of play-by-play talk. Based on the views of the commentators a narrow definition of play-by-play talk was then proposed. An examination of an extract from a Rugby League radio commentary revealed some linguistic features which appeared to distinguish those sections in which the speaker was relaying concurrent action. The proposed definition and the application of some likely linguistic criteria to the extract were used so as to exclude talk which did not fit the definition of play-by-play or satisfy the linguistic criteria. It was found that the most useful criterion for exposing play-by-play talk in the extract was the successive temporal conjunction *and now*. Various 'problem' clauses such as hypotactic enhancing clauses, clauses in which the speaker surfaces, and questions posed by the commentator, were considered in relation to the definition of play-by-play talk and the exclusion criteria.

For the purposes of this study both a limiting definition of play-by-play talk and a limited acceptance of lines fitting this description has been adopted. The resulting corpus of play-by-play talk from the lengthy extract introduced in Section 4.3 thus represents a base corpus, or what is 'typically' play-by-play within the parameters of the definition and the exclusion criteria applied. Clauses which could be interpreted as play-by-play talk but which would be considered 'atypical' such as clauses in past tense sandwiched between present tense clauses are not included in this study. We can see from the resulting corpus that play-by-play text is not a single-framed activity like the SASB or the commentary; rather, play-by-play talk enters the talk of the commentary at different points and for different periods of time.

The next chapters analyse the play-by-play extract presented in this chapter as well as a play-by-play extract of comparable length from the ABC commentary. The analyses in Chapter Five focus on the interpersonal grammatical features, beginning with the system of MOOD. Chapter Six analyses play-by-play talk from the perspective of the grammar of experiential meaning particularly focusing on the systems of TRANSITIVITY and ERGATIVITY. Chapter Seven focuses on the grammar of textual meaning. The analyses comprise a range of linguistic levels including analyses at the clause, group, phrase, and discourse level. At the end of each chapter a summary profile is produced and a description of the contextual features which are construed in the grammar is presented.

Notes to Chapter Four

1. Shannon and Weaver's (1949: 14) formula for calculating information value and redundancy is:

$$H = -\Sigma \ p_i \log p_i$$

This formula can be explained in the following way. First, p_i is the probability of each term in the system, H is information value, Σ is 'the sum of'. H (information value) varies from when the terms in the system are equiprobable, to when they are maximally skewed. That is, based on Shannon and Weaver's formula for information value, when terms in a system are equiprobable, i.e. the ratio of their probability is 0.5 : 0.5 their information value (H) is the highest. In such situations there is a greater 'freedom of choice' in the construction of the message. When terms in a system are maximally skew, or where the ratio of their probability is 99 : 1, their information value is lowest, but the value of their redundancy (R) is highest. In these situations freedom of choice is highly limited. Redundancy is thus calculated by subtracting information value from 1. So when terms are equiprobable there is zero redundancy. On the other hand, where terms are maximally skewed there will be a high redundancy value . These values represent two ends of a continuum and represent ideals in terms of probability ratios.
2. The Sydney Social Dialect Survey was directed by Barbara Horvath (see Horvath 1985). Plum and Cowling chose 24 interviews with native speakers of Australian English from Horvath's data of sociolinguistic interviews.
3. The practice of consulting the producers of specific texts to gain their views on certain aspects of the texts is not so unusual. In a study of Theme, Berry (1996) consulted producers of texts in order to 'elicit information on: (a) the methods and procedures of production; and (b) the main aims and purposes of the texts as viewed by the producers' (Berry 1996: 14). De Beaugrande advises that future work in register studies 'must include having everyday speakers describe the registers they know and the ways they use them' (de Beaugrande 1993: 18). and he incorporates this into his own work on registers.

He argues that producers of texts, or 'insiders' 'can describe how they in practice fit their own discourse to a register and vice versa' (de Beaugrande 1993: 23).

4. The transcripts of these interviews can be found in Appendix VII.

5. With reference to the 'development of a style of commentating', Kuiper and Austin (1990) observe that commentators (in their study they are race callers) follow a pattern of developing their own style. They first listen, then enter a period of 'apprenticeship' and eventually perform 'fluently as a native speaker of the variety with a full inventory of formulae and with a flexible response to situational variation. The last phase is that of the virtuoso or master when the performer is able to make a contribution to the variety by constructing his own formulae and having apprentices use him as a model' (Kuiper & Austin 1990: 200). During the interview with Greg Hartley (2GB Rugby League radio commentator) (1993), Hartley explained that his style just developed over the years and he developed his own expressions which became his trade mark. A similar remark is made by Frank Hyde (see Hyde 1995: 72).

6. These two grammatical perspectives (Ergativity and Transitivity) are discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

7. The interpretation of lines such as *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half* are discussed in more detail in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

CHAPTERFIVE

Developing a Linguistic Profile of Play-by-Play Talk
Part 1: The Grammar of Interpersonal Meaning

5.0 Introduction to the Grammatical Analyses

In the previous chapter a definition of play-by-play talk and a means of extracting play-by-play language from the language of the commentary were developed. It is now possible to examine this talk and, using the grammatical model outlined by Halliday (1994), to examine the specific properties of the register of play-by-play talk. The aim is to develop a linguistic profile of the register of play-by-play talk and to use this to elucidate the contextual features relevant to this register.

The analyses in this chapter and in the next two chapters are based on the SF model of grammar as explained in Halliday's *Introduction to Functional Grammar*. In SF grammar the clause is the central unit of analysis because 'the clause as a whole expresses all functions, through the total set of its structural and lexical resources' (Halliday 1976d: 24). That is, the clause simultaneously expresses 'experience of the processes of the external world' and a speaker's role in the speech situation, and it contains structures that work together to create texture in a text (Halliday 1976d: 20-24).

Halliday's description of functional grammar includes perspectives relevant to the three metafunctions of language — the ideational (experiential and logical), interpersonal and textual. He explains that the functions of the clause are manifest in different ways: the ideational function is manifest in the clause in 'part-whole structures', or through constituency, 'such that it can be specified where one clause element leaves off and the next one starts' (Halliday 1981: 35); the interpersonal function is manifest through 'prosodic patterns that run all the way through the clause: not only intonation contours ... but also reiterations of various kinds like those that are typical of modality in English' (Halliday 1981: 36); and the textual function is manifest in 'culminative patterns formed by peaks of prominence... [which] typically appear at the beginning or the end of the

clause ... result[ing] in a kind of periodicity, a movement from a clause-initial peak ... to a clause-final peak' (Halliday 1981: 36).

Chapter Two outlined the SF theoretical framework in which language is seen as tristratal: meaning, lexicogrammar and phonology. It also described how language in use is language responding to a specific context of situation, the features of which can be categorised under the following headings: field (the nature of the activity), tenor (the nature of the social relations held by interactants in the activity), and mode (the nature of the linguistic medium of exchange). The relationship between context and the system of language is one of realisation-construal, such that there are systematic tendencies for certain linguistic phenomena to correlate with features of the context of situation. This relationship is shown below in Table 5:1 which was also included in the discussion of SF theory in Chapter Two.

Table 5:1 The Realisation-Construal Relationship Between Context and Language
(From Hasan 1993: 91)

Metafunction	Contextual Variable	Meaning System	Wording System
interpersonal	social relation (= TENOR)	role exchange; assessment of probability, obligation	mood system (e.g. declarative v. Interrogative...); systems of modality, modulation
experiential	social action (= FIELD)	states of affairs, classification of phenomena	transitivity system (e.g. material v. Verbal...); lexical systems ...
logical		relations of states of affairs relations of phenomena	expansion, projection systems modification ...
textual	semiotic organisation (= MODE)	point of departure; news focus points of identity, similarity	thematic, information systems phoricity, lexical field

A problem that is consistently raised concerns the realisation-construal relation between the different levels of language and between language and context. Halliday has on numerous occasions referred to how features at one level 'map' onto one another, or he has used the analogy of a woven cloth to explain that 'meanings are woven together in a very dense fabric in such a way that to understand them we do not look separately at its different parts; rather we look at the whole thing simultaneously from a number of different angles, each perspective contributing towards the total interpretation' (Halliday 1985a: 23). The point is that there is no one-to-one relationship between linguistic

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phenomena and contextual phenomena (see Section 2.5.3 for a discussion of this). Unfortunately, it is impossible to deal simultaneously with the different linguistic and contextual phenomena in analysis, discussion and in diagrammatic representation. For this reason, this chapter and the next two chapters analyse the play-by-play talk from different perspectives, one at a time. At times, however, the discussion in one chapter will include reference to aspects of meaning and features of the context which overlap with those in another chapter, or in each of the other chapters. This is because the construal of meaning through the resources of language is not effected through a one-to-one relationship between phenomena at one level with those at another. As Hasan (1995: 231) has observed, meanings 'configure' in a context much like a 'chemical solution'. In this chapter the discussion of tense is but one example. While primary tense is a feature of the Mood, tense and the function of tense have repercussions in the construal of experiential meaning (as pointed out by Halliday 1985a: 32). Therefore, tense is discussed from the perspective of its contribution to interpersonal meaning in this chapter, but is also discussed in Chapter Seven in relation to verbal group structure and the construal of the nature of the activity of play-by-play talk.

This chapter concentrates on the system of MOOD and grammatical features such as polarity, primary tense, and modality, as well as on the notion of 'speaker'. These features are said to play a major role in realising interpersonal meanings and in construing the contextual category of tenor. Chapter Six concentrates on the systems of TRANSITIVITY, and ERGATIVITY and on ideational grammatical metaphor, nominal groups and nominal group structure and types of verbal groups. These are said to play a key role in the realisation of experiential meanings and in the construal of the contextual feature, field. Chapter Seven focuses on the system of THEME and GIVEN-NEW as well as other grammatical features which play a key role in the realisation of textual meanings, and in the construal of the mode category of the context of situation. Chapters Five, Six and Seven thus centre around analyses at the clause level, but include analyses of related grammatical features, such as those described by Halliday as being 'above', 'below', 'beside', 'around' and 'beyond' the clause[1].

The analyses in this chapter and the next two chapters focus on the 2GB segment of play-by-play talk extracted from the commentary excerpt in the previous chapter. For ease of reference, this extract is divided into six segments that are alphabetically labelled A through F. Each segment of talk represents a continuous or nearly continuous portion of play-by-play talk. In addition to the 2GB segment, a segment of ABC play-by-play talk is analysed for purposes of comparison, and to lend weight to the amount of data that forms the basis for developing a profile of the register of play-by-play talk and of the kinds of contextual meanings that this talk construes. The ABC segment is presented in Appendix VI. Extracts from other locations in each of the commentaries are also occasionally referred to, and some analyses involve the complete play-by-play portions from the first halves of each of the commentaries.

5.0.1 Capitalisation Conventions Used in SF Theory

The conventions for capitalising and presenting terms within the SF grammatical model has received considerable attention and often appears inconsistent in SF literature. This is apparently due partly to publisher's arbitrary decisions about general capitalisation conventions and policies (C. Matthiessen email correspondence 13 Feb. 1998; M. Bloor email correspondence, 13 Feb. 1998). A list of the conventions used for the presentation of technical terms in this study is outlined in Table 5:2 below.

Table 5:2 Capitalisation Conventions Used in this Study

Capitalisation Conventions in SF Theory Used in this Study
• Grammatical systems take all capitals, e.g. MOOD, TRANSITIVITY, THEME, AGENCY
• Features specific to Halliday's functional grammar take lower case, e.g. material. Therefore, types of processes are represented as Process: material, Process: relational.
• General grammatical features take lower case and are presented with single quotation marks, e.g. 'indicative'. In this study they are predominantly presented without the quotation marks, except when they are first introduced in the discussion.
• Structural functions take initial capital, e.g. Process, Actor, Location, Mood (note that Mood in this case is different to the system MOOD).
• Semantic types take lower case, e.g. participants, circumstances.
• Metafunctions take lower case, e.g. ideational, interpersonal etc.
• Class names take lower case, e.g. nominal group, adverbial group.

5.0.2 Introduction to the Analyses in this Chapter

The analysis of play-by-play talk begins in this chapter by focusing on the grammar of interpersonal meaning. Specifically, it focuses on the structure of the Mood and the kinds of choices which are made in the Mood, such as Subject, Finite, modality, polarity and ellipsis. The concept of grammatical metaphor is introduced in this chapter and choices made in the system of interpersonal grammatical metaphor are examined. Each type of grammatical system or feature is briefly described prior to each analysis. After each analysis, the results are discussed in the light of the kind of contextual information that is being construed by these choices. At the end of the chapter a profile of the choices made in the grammar of interpersonal meaning in play-by-play talk is presented in diagrammatic form and following that, a summary of the relation between features of this profile and the kind of contextual information construed in play-by-play talk is presented.

5.1 Clause as Exchange: MOOD

5.1.0 Introduction: The Structure and Function of Mood

The system of MOOD is perhaps the central grammatical system for construing interpersonal meaning in the clause. It is the grammatical system through which social relations are enacted in language. The clause from the perspective of MOOD is seen as a unit of 'exchange' and is structured into two parts. There is a Mood element and a Residue. The Mood element contains the Subject and the Finite. The Mood is where variation takes place in the expression of statements, questions, and responses; and it is in the Mood that the speech roles of the interactants are expressed. There are two basic speech roles that a speaker may engage in in any situation: that of 'giving' and that of 'demanding'. A speaker may be giving or demanding either information or goods and services. The speech function associated with giving information is a 'statement', whereas that associated with giving goods and services is an 'offer'. Where a speaker is demanding information, the speech function is a 'question', whereas a demand for goods and services is known as a 'command'. Speech functions associated with goods and services are categorised as proposals, while those associated with information are categorised as propositions. Because the nature of the Mood system concerns the speech roles of participants in the

situation, an analysis of the Mood is particularly useful for dialogic texts, or texts in which there is more than one speaker. However, as text is generally produced with some kind of recipient in mind, an analysis of Mood in monologic texts can also elucidate the speaker's presumed roles in the situation. Furthermore, analyses in the system of MOOD involve a consideration of systems of modality as the Finite element may be expressed through a modal element rather than a tense choice. An examination of the choices in modality can highlight the attitudes and judgements held by participants in the situation.

There is a relationship between the structure of the Mood and the speech function expressed by the clause. Where both Subject and Finite are present, the clause has the feature, 'indicative'. The grammatical category indicative is typically used in the exchange of information. Within this grammatical category, if the Subject is followed by the Finite the clause realises the feature 'declarative', whereas if the Finite precedes the Subject the clause realises the feature 'interrogative'. The Mood realises the proposition of the clause—that portion of the clause which is open for affirming or denying, accepting or rejecting. Declarative clauses are typically used for statements and interrogatives for questions, although these functions may be altered through the resources of the intonation system. The Residue is the remainder of the clause. It contains the Predicator, Complements and any non-modal Adjuncts.

The purpose of the Finite is to relate the proposition to the speech event, through either a reference to time (Tense) or via the speaker's judgement or attitude concerning the proposition (Modality). Another feature in the Finite is that of polarity. Polarity sets the proposition as either negative or positive, and thus provides another avenue for affirmation or denial. The other element of the Mood, the Subject, 'supplies the rest of what it takes to form a proposition' (Halliday 1994c: 76). Minor clauses are those clauses in which there is no Mood + Residue structure. Examples of these are exclamations, calls, greetings and alarms (Halliday 1994c: 95). Other clauses in which the Subject and/or Finite may not be present are those in which there is ellipsis, i.e. where one or more elements of a clause are presupposed from the preceding text. While ellipsis plays a role in the analysis of text

from the point of view of Mood, it is also an important cohesive device. The next section outlines ellipsis in the Mood.

5.1.1 Ellipsis in the Mood

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 143) explain that clauses in which there is ellipsis are those 'whose structure is such as to presuppose some preceding item, which then serves as the source of the missing information. An elliptical item is one which, as it were, leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere'. With specific reference to the Mood structure of the clause, there may be Mood ellipsis or Residue ellipsis. An example of each of these types of ellipsis is presented below.

Example 1. Residue Ellipsis

A: (Mood) *Peter is* (Residue) *coming tomorrow.*
B: *No, he's not.* (Residue ellipsis) (coming tomorrow)
A: *Yes, he is.* (Residue ellipsis) (coming tomorrow)

Example 2. Mood Ellipsis

A: (Residue) *What* (Mood) *are we* (Residue) *doing tomorrow?*
B: *going swimming.* (Mood ellipsis) (We are going swimming)

Typically, ellipsis occurs in dialogic exchanges, but there are instances in which ellipsis occurs in clause complexes in either written or spoken language, as in the following examples.

Example 3. Mood Ellipsis

We're going swimming and after that hiking.

Example 4. Finite and Predicator Ellipsis

Some boys were playing football and other boys hockey.

In each of these clause complexes part of, or the whole of, the Mood element in the second clause is ellipsed. In Example 3 both the Subject and the Finite operator are ellipsed, while in Example 4 the Finite operator is ellipsed along with the Predicator. Example 4 is

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referred to as a type of 'branched structure' (see Halliday & Hasan 1976: 143ff). All the above instances are examples of cohesive ellipsis in which the identity of the ellipsed element is presupposed or can be retrieved from the surrounding text. Ellipsis, as a cohesive device is 'a feature of texts, and the question whether a particular instance is a cohesive form or not can often be settled only by reference to its textual environment' (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 169). The type of ellipsis that is particularly relevant to an analysis of Mood in play-by-play text is verbal ellipsis. This is explained in the next section.

5.1.2 Ellipsis in the Verbal Group

As the verbal group is directly involved in the Mood element of the clause, it is important here to examine the different types of ellipsis associated with the verbal group. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 167) define verbal group ellipsis in the following way.

> An elliptical verbal group presupposes one or more words from a previous verbal group. Technically, it is defined as a verbal group whose structure does not fully express its systemic features — all the choices that are being made within the verbal group systems. [These features] ... have to be recovered by presupposition.

Halliday and Hasan distinguish between ellipsis 'from the right' and ellipsis 'from the left'. Ellipsis from the right refers to lexical verb ellipsis. In cases of lexical verb ellipsis the elliptical verbal group consists of either a modal operator only or a temporal operator as Finite only (although they point out that some temporal operators can also stand alone as lexical verbs as in the case of the copula or the possessive 'have'). With reference to lexical ellipsis, Halliday and Hasan explain that the ellipsed portion of the verbal group is presupposed from the surrounding text. Some examples of lexical verb ellipsis, or ellipsis 'from the right', are listed below. The elliptical verbal group in question is underlined.

Example 5. Lexical verb ellipsis where the Finite is a modal operator.

Speaker A: *Is he still working on that?*
Speaker B: *He may be. I'll just go and check.* (He may be still working on that)

Example 6. Lexical verb ellipsis where the Finite is a temporal Finite operator.

Speaker A: *Are you coming with us tomorrow?*
Speaker B: *Yes I am.* (Yes I am coming with you tomorrow)

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 173) explain that lexical verb ellipsis is ellipsis from the right because 'it always involves omission of the last word, which is the lexical verb, and may extend "leftward" to leave only the first word intact'.

Ellipsis 'from the left' refers to operator ellipsis in the verbal group. In sentences in which there is operator ellipsis only the lexical verb remains and all other elements in the verb including tense, voice and polarity are presupposed. One of the most common instances of operator ellipsis occurs in question-answer sequences where the question centres around the lexical verb (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 191). Halliday and Hasan note that as a rule, where there is cohesive operator ellipsis the Subject must also be omitted. The following is an example of cohesive operator ellipsis.

Example 7. Verbal Operator Ellipsis

Speaker A: *What are you doing?*
Speaker B: *Writing a letter to Aunt Annie. (I was writing a letter to Aunt Annie)*

The above explanation of verbal ellipsis describes the phenomenon of ellipsis as it 'typically' occurs in English. What we shall see in the following analysis and description of ellipsis in play-by-play talk is how the phenomenon of ellipsis is deployed within a specific register. We will see that in order to account for the kind of ellipsis in the register of play-by-play talk it is necessary to slightly expand the parameters of Halliday and Hasan's explanation and definition of ellipsis. The next section analyses the Mood choices in play-by-play text. After the analysis specific choices in the Mood such as Tense, polarity, modality and ellipsis are described and discussed.

5.1.3 Mood Analysis of the Play-by-Play Extract

The analysis of choices in the system of MOOD is presented in Table 5:3. The Subject and Finite are indicated by bold type. Although each line of the text is represented in full,

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structures in the Residue such as Adjuncts and Complements are not analysed because the focus is on those elements which are made 'modally responsible' in play-by-play talk, and which indicate something about how the speaker views his role in the situation. In the analysis presented in Table 5:3 and in Appendix VIII, instances which are later <u>not</u> interpreted as ellipsis (but which are interpreted as 'mood omission') are indicated by writing the word ellipsis in parentheses — (ellipsis). Square brackets indicate presupposed text. The Mood analysis of the ABC extract is presented in Appendix VIII. The speech function, choice of polarity, and choice of primary tense are indicated in the third and fourth columns respectively.

Conventions used in the analysis are:

- MC = minor clause
- Square brackets of emboldened text indicate presupposed text which has been ellipsed.
- Non-play-by-play talk is indicated by italics. These portions of the text are not analysed for Mood.

Table 5:3 Analysis of Mood in Play-by-Play Talk in the 2GB Extract

Text Segments	Mood	Speech Function	Polarity & Tense
Segment A			
GB469.GH: back now **it goes** to David Fairleigh	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB470.Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own goal-line	(Ellipsis)	-	pos/(ellipsis)
GB471.and **[he is]** put down in strong defence from Eastern Suburbs	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB472.now **it's** gone to Soden	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB473.**good pass [goes]** across to Josh Stuart	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB474.**he aims** we.. up well	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB475.and again a strong tackle by Logan over the top	(Ellipsis)	-	pos/(ellipsis)
GB476.**[Subject is]** giving it across now	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB477.**it goes** to Steve Trindall	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB478.**he steps** back inside	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB479.*beat the first line*	not play-by-play		
GB480.eventually **they catch up** with him	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB481.and **[they] drag** him to the ground thirty out from the North Sydney line	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB482.now **it goes** back this time to Larson	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB483.**the pass [goes]** back inside to Florimo	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB484.but **he's** cut down by Sean Garlick	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB485.**it's** gone to Soden	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB486.and **he gives** it once again to David Fairleigh	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB487.*beautiful hands that time*	not play-by-play		
GB488.**it goes** to Billy Moore	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB489.**[it goes]** out to Ben Ikin	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB490.**Ikin puts** a little kick in downfield too	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres

Table 5.3 (segment A) continued

GB491.*nearly hit the referee*	not play-by-play		
GB492.but a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs	(Ellipsis)	-	pos/(ellipsis)
GB493.**[he] heads** to the far side of the ground	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB494.**[he] links** up beautifully this time with Peter Clark	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB495.RM: oh what a tackle!	Exclamative	Statement	MC

Segment B

GB502.but now **Lowrie [is]** getting up very slowly	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB503.*might've hurt his knee*	not play-by-play		
GB504.but **it's** gone across to Fittler	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB505.**he gives** it straight out to Tony Iro	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB506.**Billy Moore's** come into contact with that ball	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB507.*two knock-ons*	not play-by-play		
GB508.*first one from Billy Moore*	not play-by-play		
GB509.*the second one this time it went to Ben Ikin*	not play-by-play		
GB510.and **the referee'll** blow that up	Declarative	Statement	pos/mod

Segment C

GB521.and **Eastern Suburbs will** play it via Cleary	Declarative	Statement	pos/mod
GB522.**[it goes]** straight back now to Fittler	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB523.**he tries** to put the bust on	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB524.*very few people get past Gary Larson in that situation*	not play-by-play		
GB525.*and in particular when Billy Moore comes in ‖ to assist*	not play-by-play		
GB526.but **it's** gone once again to Garlick	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB527.**[it goes]** out to Dunn	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB528.*tried to slide under the tackle of Florimo very wide*	not play-by-play		
GB529.but **[he is]** pulled down once again thirty out now from the Bears' line	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB530.**Adrian Lam shows** it out wide	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB531.**he gives** it to Iro	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB532.**Iro [is]** standing out in the centres	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB533.*he flicked it back to Walker*	not play-by-play		
GB534.**Walker's** gone without it	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB535.**Lam's** there ‖ to pick up the dregs	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB536.**he does** that now	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB537.**[he] tries** to step back inside Jason Taylor	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB538.but **Taylor's** there ‖ to nail him	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB539.still forty out from the Bears' line	(Ellipsis)	-	pos/(ellipsis)
GB540.**it's** back with Garlick	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB541.**he sends** it across now to Ivan Cleary	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres

Segment D

GB547.GH: **[it has]** gone straight back once again now to Walker	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB548.**who's** put a high kick up	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB549.*Mattie Seers hasn't taken his eyes off the ball*	not play-by-play		
GB550.**he's** come through	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB551.but **it's** gone back to Cleary	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB552.then **[it goes]** on to Iro	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB553.**he's** knocked it back towards his own line	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB554.**he gets** a kick in	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB555.*Nigel Roy came up [...?...]*	not play-by-play		
GB556.**he scurries** back ‖ to get the football	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB557.and **he is** nailed about two metres out from the Bears' line	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres

Table 5.3 continued

Segment E			
GB566.**it's gone** back to Buettner	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB567.**Buettner puts** a high ball up	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB568.*a swirling wind prevailing here*	not play-by-play		
GB569.but er **Cleary [is]** very cautiously taking that football	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB570.and **Dallas [is]** right on his hammer with a good chase	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB571.*hung on him just a little bit too long*	not play-by-play		
GB572.*Ward didn't like it*	not play-by-play		
GB573.*the crowd hate it*	not play-by-play		
GB574.but **the arm of Ward has** gone up towards Eastern Suburbs	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres

Segment F			
GB594.GH: back **it goes** now to Garlick	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB595.**he sends** it across to Iro	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB596.in possession **[are] the Sydney City Roosters**	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB597.**[it has]** gone back to Peter Clark now	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB598.**he's** wrapped up beautifully too thirty-two metres out from the Bears' line	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres
GB599.Garlick very quickly at the dummy-half	(Ellipsis)	-	pos/(ellipsis)
GB600.**he gives** it across to Dunn	Declarative	Statement	pos/pres

5.1.4 Mood and Speech Function in Play-by-Play Talk: Discussion of the Analysis in Table 5:3

As noted at the beginning of this section, the function of language that is currently being focused on is the interpersonal function — language as a means of realising interpersonal relations — and the clause-based grammatical system primarily realising this is the MOOD. From the analysis in Table 5:3 and Appendix VIII we can see that in each line of the text the Subject precedes the Finite (except where there is a postponed Subject as in line GB596). All clauses in which there is a Mood element present (or presupposed through ellipsis) are Declarative. The speech function of Statement is the only speech function the speaker takes on in the context of play-by-play talk. An analysis of the intonation patterns in play-by-play talk also confirms this as there are no tone units indicating that any statement is interrogative in function (see Appendix III for the intonation analysis of the play-by-play extracts).

This finding appears to complement Crystal and Davy's (1969) finding that unscripted commentary has a high frequency of statements and a low frequency of questions. They

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note that questions do arise when there is more than one commentator, or when there is a moment of tension and the commentator is unsure of the outcome. They observe that questions in the commentary tend to 'convey the commentator's anticipation and identify him, in his inability to give the answer, with the audience... and ... [are] an important ... variety-marker' (Crystal & Davy 1969: 138). In this study the speech functions of offering, commanding or questioning are not present during the play-by-play portions of the text. The reasons for the difference between this study's finding and that of Crystal and Davy's is most probably due to the very limited definition of play-by-play talk adopted in this study.

Although the commentary as a whole involves dialogic moments between the main commentator and the colour commentator, as well as the around-the-grounds reporters and the sideline reporter, it is a language event designed to be presented to listeners who cannot take part in its creation. Furthermore, and in particular, the play-by-play portions of the commentary do not involve any dialogue. Play-by-play is not produced with dynamic dialogic interaction in mind and there is primarily only one participant who creates the play-by-play portions of talk. From the Mood analysis we can conclude that play-by-play talk involves 'giving' information in the form of statements.

5.1.4.1 Nature of the Subject

The Mood analysis also shows that there is a complete lack of the use of first or second person pronouns as Subjects; rather, there is a consistent use of third person pronouns or of the 'naming' of third persons or objects involved in the activities being relaying through the talk. One aspect of the context which these choices indicate is that the speaker's role in the situation of play-by-play talk is that of 'information giver' or 'supplier of information', and that exchange concerning that information is not sought from any other interactant in the situation: the talk is monologic in nature. The use of third person pronouns or names of persons also indicate that the speaker is not talking about himself or overtly presenting his personal view on the events. These features of the grammar of play-by-play talk contribute to the construal of various contextual features: the tenor

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relations, specifically the role of the speaker; the nature of the activity; and the mode feature of monologic discourse.

5.1.5 Primary Tense, Polarity and Modality

The primary tense of a clause is expressed in the Finite (unless the Finite is expressing modality). The Finite is the means whereby the proposition is given 'a point of reference in the here and now... relat[ing] the proposition to its context in the speech event' (Halliday 1994c: 75). Tense does this 'by reference to the time of speaking' (Halliday 1994c: 75). The analysis indicates that in the play-by-play segments, the primary tense for all finite clauses is present tense. In comparison to the commentary as a whole in which choice of tense was shown to be a skewed system with the ratio of present tense choices to past tense choices being 3 : 1 (see Section 4.1.3), choice of tense in the play-by-play text appears to be maximally skewed. This finding complements findings from previous studies of other types of sports commentating where present tense is found to be the dominant tense choice (e.g. Pawley 1991; Ferguson 1983; Crystal and Davy 1969; and Hoyle's (1993) study of children mimicking sports commentators).

With reference to choices in polarity and modality, in the 2GB extract there are no instances of negative polarity, whereas in the ABC extract there are only two instances. The predominant choice in play-by-play text is thus positive polarity (98.6%), with the proportion of negative polarity choices at 1.4%. In the 2GB extract there are two instances of modal Finite choices, and in the ABC extract there is one instance of a modal Finite. The combined proportion of choices in which a modal Finite is chosen is thus 2.7%. Negative polarity and modality in the Finite are thus marked choices in play-by-play talk.

5.1.6 Mood Ellipsis and Mood Omission in Play-by-Play Talk

5.1.6.0 Introduction

Although Mood ellipsis has been explained in theoretical terms and some reference has been made to it in play-by-play talk in the preceding analyses and discussion, this section focuses more fully on ellipsis in the Mood in play-by-play talk.

One of the patterns which emerges in the text in Table 5:3 is that about 30% of the clauses in the extract select ellipsis of part or all of the Mood element in the clause. Some of these are cases that fit the description and definition of ellipsis as outlined by Halliday and Hasan (1976), whereas others do not. In this section, I wish to make a distinction between ellipsis of presupposed Mood elements, and ellipsis in which the identity of the Mood element is not presupposed but is in fact indeterminable. Furthermore, I wish to extend the notion of ellipsis in the verbal group in the context of play-by-play talk so as to include 'pattern matching' as a means of presupposition in the verbal group (see Section 5.1.6.2). Cases in which the Mood element is indeterminable through either textual presupposition as outlined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) or through pattern-matching presupposition, are called 'Mood omission' in this study. An explanation of each of these phenomena is presented in the next sections.

5.1.6.1 Mood Ellipsis: Presupposed Structural Elements

In play-by-play talk there appear to be two types of Mood ellipsis in which the identity of the elements ellipsed can be retrieved through presupposition. They are anaphoric ellipsis and structural ellipsis. Anaphoric ellipsis occurs in examples such as the following (ellipsed portion is indicated with square brackets):

Example 8.

GB470. *Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own
        goal line*
GB471. *and [he is] put down in strong defence from Eastern Suburbs*

Example 9.

A29. *and he releases the pass to Scott Logan*
A30. *[who is] tackled just inside North Sydney territory*

In these examples we can see that the identity of the ellipsed portion of the second clause is able to be retrieved from the previous clause. The next three examples are examples of structural ellipsis.

Example 10.

A89. *the ball [is] with Soden*

Example 11.

A276. *and a fine body-slamming tackle [is] coming in on Cleary from big David Fairleigh with Gary Larson*

Example 12.

GB502. *but now Lowrie [is] getting up very slowly*

In these examples the identity of the ellipsed element is able to be retrieved by reference to the structure of English in general and from the situation in particular. That is, a knowledge of the structure of the clause and the verbal group in English, along with an understanding of the context of relaying simultaneous events, makes it possible for any listener to interpret the ellipsed portions of the verbal groups in Examples 10,11, and 12 as present tense verbal operators. The English verbal group structure is such that the elements which have been ellipsed in the above examples require either a lexical verb (to be) or an auxiliary (be, has etc.). Therefore, in Examples 8-12 there is no ambiguity in deciding which element in the verbal group is presupposed.

What is particularly interesting in Examples 10, 11, and 12 is that the ellipsis in these examples does not fit the typical kind of ellipsis described by Halliday and Hasan (1976). In Halliday and Hasan's description they note that when there is verbal operator ellipsis typically there is also ellipsis of the Subject. Furthermore, operator ellipsis most typically

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occurs either during dialogic exchange in which case both the Subject and the Finite are presupposed, or in the context of co-ordination. In play-by-play text, however, such as in Examples 10-12, neither of these conditions is met and therefore operator ellipsis occurs outside of these types of environments. That is, in play-by-play text, the motivation behind operator ellipsis is neither dialogic exchange, where there is presupposition, nor co-ordination. In play-by-play text such as in the examples above, the Subject may be selected, and in cases of Finite ellipsis the lexical verb may also be selected; it is only the operator that is ellipsed. Operator ellipsis within the context of radio play-by-play talk appears to be a register-specific type of ellipsis. The reasons for this kind of ellipsis appear to lie in the interplay of the structure of English, and the context in which the ellipsis takes place. The primary tense, being present tense, can be interpreted as being 'understood' in the context of play-by-play talk. This part of the verbal group is deictic in nature in that it anchors the talk in a time frame in relation to the moment of speaking. And it is interpersonal in that it forms part of the propositional component of the clause — that part of the clause that is presented for affirming or denying. By choosing not to include this part of the clause, we can infer that the speaker feels that it is unnecessary to state a time reference, and that the proposition is not open for affirming or denying. Because the remainder of the verbal group contains the experiential meanings, it would appear that these experiential meanings appear to be prioritised in the verbal group choices in play-by-play talk.

5.1.6.2 Matching Patterns Providing the Basis for the Identity of Ellipsed Elements in Play-by-Play Talk

In the previous examples of operator ellipsis, the identity of the elliptical elements was able to be retrieved by reference to the structure of English and to the nature of the activity of commentating. This section argues that the identity of elliptical elements may also be retrieved by virtue of the existence of matching or parallel structures in the talk as a whole. That is, the retrieval of the identity of elliptical structures within the clause may be made possible by intra-textual factors. The structures that this seems most applicable to are those in which there is Finite and/or Predicator ellipsis, or Subject and Finite ellipsis but

where the ellipsis is not presupposed from the preceding text as it would be during dialogic exchange, or as it is in instances of structural ellipsis. It could be argued that the textual identity of the elliptical elements in the examples highlighted in this section can be retrieved through comparing them with clauses containing similar structures but where all the systemic features are represented

The possibility of using parallel or matching patterns as a basis for determining the identity of the ellipsed elements can be compared with Hoey's (1983) notion of 'matching cohesive relations'. The notion of 'matching relations' in text is taken up in Hoey's study of cohesive discourse patterns. Hoey describes the matching relation in discourse as 'what happens when two parts of a discourse are compared in respect of their detail' (Hoey 1983: 113). According to Hoey (1983: 107-113) there are various signals of a matching relation between discourse elements. The most significant of these is repetition, which involves lexical repetition, paraphrase, ellipsis and substitution. In this study, the notion of matching is somewhat different from that of Hoey's, as the purpose here is to find those elements in the text of play-by-play talk that provide the basis for deciding unambiguously the identity of ellipsed verbal group elements. Nevertheless, Hoey's notion of matching relation as a form of discourse organisation is relevant in this discussion, because it is due to the high degree of matching patterns, particularly repetition, in play-by-play talk that it seems feasible to suggest that the identity of certain elliptical elements can be retrieved by reference to their 'fully selected' counterparts in the discourse of play-by-play talk.

In order to explain the notion of matching patterns in play-by-play talk some lines from the text in which ellipsis occurs will be considered. Lines GB522 *straight back now to Fittler* and GB489 *out to Ben Ikin* for instance, can be compared with GB482 *now it goes back this time to Larson*, GB594 *back it goes now to Garlick*, GB477 *it goes to Steve Trindall*, or GB1787 *out it goes to Florimo*. The ellipsed lines could be expanded using the full lines as textual models. The complete version of GB522, for instance would be *[the*

ball/it goes] straight back now to Fittler and of GB489, would be *[the ball/it goes] out to Ben Ikin* or *out it goes to Ben Ikin.*

There are cases in which certain structures occur within close proximity of matching patterns that contain the full Mood selection, such as in the following example.

Example 13.
GB488. *it goes to Billy Moore*
GB489. *[it goes] out to Ben Ikin*

In these cases, the ellipsed elements are functioning in a similar way to structural ellipsis as explained by Halliday and Hasan. That is, the presupposed elements can be retrieved from the previous text, except that there is no dialogic exchange motivating the ellipsis. However, the ellipsed text is not always in close proximity to a fully selected pattern, and may follow a completely differently structured clause as in the following case.

Example 14.
GB521. *and Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary*
GB522. *[it goes] straight back now to Fittler*

It is with reference to these latter types of cases that intra-textual pattern matching and contextual cues (such as the nature of the activity) need to be called upon in order to retrieve the identity of the ellipsed elements in the clause.

It can be argued that the motivation behind the ellipsis of elements of the Mood in these clauses is most likely the interdependent relationship among the contextual components, field (elements can be retrieved from an understanding of the nature of the material event taking place and the relationship between the text and this event), tenor (the talk is taking place in the present time, the Subject of the proposition is contextually constrained, and the information is being supplied rather than sought), and mode (the presence of established patterns which provide strong clues as to the structure and identity of the elliptical portions of these clauses in the text). As already noted, given that ellipsis of the

Finite appears to be relatively frequent in both the 2GB and the ABC extracts, and that one of the functions of the Finite is to anchor the talk in the here and now, the degree of ellipsis of this element suggests that the continual reference to present time is considered redundant or unnecessary in the context of play-by-play talk. In cases where the identity of the ellipsed Subject is 'the ball', or some pronominal reference to the ball, we can conclude that this element, along with the Finite in patterns such as those mentioned in the preceding paragraph, does not need to be stated. This is because 'the ball' is the central component around which the action of the game revolves and the most likely object to take the place of the Subject in the proposition in these structures. The context itself constrains what are the most likely elements to fill the place of the prepositional element of the clause

One final comment regarding the function of the Mood and the ellipsis of the Mood in play-by-play text concerns the interpersonal function of the Mood as the proposition of the clause. By choosing ellipsis of the Mood block, or of the Finite in particular, it could be argued that the speaker is indicating that the validity and the identity of the proposition are 'uncontentious' and therefore unnecessary in the context of play-by-play talk. This indicates that the relationship between the speaker and the listeners is one where the speaker is the authority whose rendition of the events is not expected to be negotiated.

As stated at the beginning of this section, an analysis of Mood is both a means of investigating the kind of interpersonal meanings that the clause realises, and a means of elucidating the speaker's presumed role in the situation. From the perspective of the system of MOOD the clause is seen as a unit of exchange, and the discussion so far has focused on the means by which the identity of certain ellipsed elements can be retrieved. Moreover, the definition of ellipsis proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) has had to be extended in order to account for the kind of ellipsis that takes place in the context of play-by-play talk. There are, however, instances in play-by-play talk in which the Subject and/or Finite elements are omitted and where their exact identity is difficult to determine. These 'indeterminable' instances are discussed in the next section.

5.1.6.3 Indeterminable or Ambiguous Mood Ellipsis in Play-by-Play Talk

Unlike the clauses in which the identity of the ellipsed elements in the Mood can be retrieved from knowledge of the structure of English, and/or by observing similar yet completed patterns of text, or by understanding the context in which the ellipsis occurs, there are instances where it is difficult to determine the specific nature of the omitted elements in the text. Rather, what appears to be happening is that certain structures become a kind of 'short-hand' style of packaging information peculiar to play-by-play talk, somewhat similar to headlines in newspapers. Instances of these are discussed as different 'cases' in the next few sub-sections.

5.1.6.3.1 Case 1 - Omission of Complete Verbal Group

In each of the examples below, there is only one nominal group in the structure which could potentially be either the Subject or the Complement in the structure. The activity which is conveyed in the structure is either a nominal group, or functions as the modifier in the nominal group or lies within the Adjuncts of the structure. None of the structures contains a Finite element or a Predicate and yet it is possible to determine a good deal about the nature of the activity which is being related in these lines.

a) Human Participant as Possible Subject but Identity of the Process-type is Ambiguous

      i) GB599. *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half*
      ii) GB470. *Fairleigh down the centre of the ground twenty metres out from his own line*

b) Nominalised Process as Possible Subject but Identity of the Clause Process is Ambiguous

      i) GB492. *but a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs*
      ii) GB475. *and again a strong tackle by Logan over the top*

c) Nominalised Abstract Attribute as Possible Subject but Identity of Clause Process is Ambiguous

      i) A187. *and now that crouching leaning style towards the football*

The reason why it is possible to determine much about the nature of the activity taking place is probably because each of the above lines represents a form of 'economising' through the resources of ideational grammatical metaphor. This resource is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. In this section, the notion of economising is focused on from the point of view of why the Finite and the Predicate have possibly been ellipsed. To explain what this means, we could compare each of these lines with the type of economising used in newspaper headlines called 'block language' (Quirk et al. 1972: 414). In block language 'closed category words of low information value, such as the articles and the finite forms of the verb BE' are omitted in order to 'reduce the length of the message to the smallest number of words compatible with comprehensibility' (Quirk et al. 1972: 415). Each of the above lines does not economise to the same extent as newspaper headlines. That is, there are still articles present and there are other 'closed category words' such as prepositions and conjunctions.

The prepositions, however, are a useful means of conveying action. For instance, in GB599 *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half*, the preposition *at* is indicating that whatever Garlick is doing, the activity takes place in <u>one</u> location. On the other hand, in GB470 *Fairleigh down the centre of the ground* the preposition *down* conveys direction which we can assume also implies some kind of movement. In *a strong tackle by Logan* the phrase *by Logan* is typically used in passive constructions so we can assume that Logan is the Actor in the tackle, and in A187 *and now that crouching leaning style towards the football* the preposition *towards* is conveying movement with a destination explicitly stated. If listeners understand the kind of activities which take place in the game of Rugby League they will be able to infer from these structures what is happening. However, to explain the activities may require more than just filling in the Mood elements. The kind of economising found in the above lines, therefore, appears to be of a particular type where the action taking place is retrievable from the experiential information in the lines, but the exact nature of the Mood element in the clause remains ambiguous. While the kind of ellipsis in these examples could be considered a type of exophoric Mood ellipsis, each of the clauses requires a certain degree of 'unpacking' in order to understand the nature of the

activity taking place and the exact nature of the Mood element. I discuss this phenomenon in relation to previous studies of sports commentating in Section 5.1.7 below. These structures are classified as Mood Omission in this study.

5.1.7.3.2 Case 2 - Independent Location Statements

a) GB539. *still forty out from the Bears' line*

b) A139. *twelve or twenty-two metres from the half-way line*

c) A147. *and just inside Sydney City territory again*

Because each of these lines consists of a Circumstantial Adjunct of location, it could be argued that they belong to a previous line and hence are not independent pieces of information taking their own line. However, these lines are each spoken on a separate tone group[2] suggesting that they are being presented as independent pieces of information. It is likely that the kind of message that is being conveyed through a statement about 'location' is that the speaker is reporting the location of the action as whole, that is, the action which is of most relevance to the progress of the game. However, as these lines are presented as independent pieces of information, the question arises, are they examples of Mood ellipsis, or some other kind of phenomenon peculiar to play-by-play talk? Unlike the previous 'ambiguous' lines in which there was at least one nominal group which could have the potential to be the Subject of the clause, in each of these lines there are very few clues from the co-text as to the nature of the Subject. It is difficult to determine whether the Subject should be *they* as in 'the players', or *the play* as in 'the action taking place', or *it* as in 'the ball', or whether it should be something else entirely, such as a specific player. The co-text for each of these lines provides little clue as to the exact identity of the Subject. For instance,

> (GB537-540) *// 4 tries to step /back in/side /Jason /Taylor // 1 ∧ but /Taylor's /there to /nail him // 1 ∧ still /forty /out from the /Bears' /line // 3 ∧ it's /back with /Garlick //*

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We can see from this short extract in which line GB537 is found that it is indeed a separate line of information. The Subject of the line *still forty out from the Bears' line* cannot be *Taylor* because *Taylor* is on the opposing team and he would have to move back in line with his team-mates once a tackle has taken place, and it would be more likely that the location being referred to is that concerning the action surrounding the ball, and the opposing team is not in possession of the ball at this time. The Subject could be *him* because this would be the player with the ball, but then it could also be *it* the ball itself, or it could be just *the action.* I have laboured the point in discussing this example because such lines are numerous in play-by-play talk. In the end, because the nature of the Subject of these lines is difficult to determine and there is no Finite present they are added to the group of clauses in which the identity of the Mood is indeterminable and which are categorised as Mood Omission in this study.

5.1.7 Analysis of Mood Ellipsis in Play-by-Play

Indeterminable utterances as discussed in the previous paragraphs are not 'filled in' for this analysis of Subject-Finite. They are left as they are. Only instances of Mood ellipsis in which it is possible to identify the ellipsed elements through presupposition in the preceding text or through pattern matching are included in the statistical analysis below. Lines with Mood omission included in Table 5:4 are: GB470, GB475, GB492, GB539, GB599 in the 2GB extract, and A139, A147, A187, and A284 in the ABC extract. The Mood ellipsis analysis of the ABC extract is in Appendix IX.

Table 5:4 Analysis of Patterns of Subject & Finite and Ellipsis of Subject and/or Finite in the 2GB Segment

Line number	Subject	Finite
Segment A		
GB469	it	goes
GB470		(omission)
GB471	he (ellipsis)	is (ellipsis)
GB472	it	has
GB473	good pass	goes (ellipsis)
GB474	he	aims up
GB475		(omission)
GB476	[Subject]	is (ellipsed)
GB477	it	goes
GB478	he	steps
GB479	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*

GB480	they	catch up
GB481	they (ellipsis)	drag
GB482	it	goes
GB483	the pass	goes (ellipsis)
GB484	he	is
GB485	it	has
GB486	he	gives
GB487	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB488	it	goes
GB489	it (ellipsed)	goes (ellipsed)
GB490	Ikin	puts
GB491	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB492		(omission)
GB493	he (ellipsed)	heads
GB494	he (ellipsed)	links
GB495	Minor Clause	Minor Clause
Segment B		
GB502	Lowrie	is (ellipsed)
GB503	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB504	it	has
GB505	he	gives
GB506	Billy Moore	has
GB510	the referee	will
Segment C		
GB521	Eastern Suburbs	will
GB522	it (ellipsed)	goes (ellipsed)
GB523	he	tries
GB524	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB525	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB526	it	has
GB527	it (ellipsed)	goes (ellipsed)
GB528	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB529	he (ellipsed)	is (ellipsed)
GB530	Adrian Lam	shows
GB531	he	gives
GB532	Iro	is (ellipsed)
GB533	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB534	Walker	has
GB535	Lam	is
GB536	he	does
GB537	he (ellipsed)	tries
GB538	Taylor	is
GB539		(omission)
GB540	it	is
GB541	he	sends
Segment D		
GB547	it (ellipsed)	has (ellipsed)
GB548	who	has
GB549	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB550	he	has
GB551	it	has
GB552	it (ellipsed)	goes (ellipsed)
GB553	he	has
GB554	he	gets
GB556	he	scurries
GB557	he	is

Segment E		
GB566	it	has
GB567	Buettner	puts
GB568	*not play-by-play*	*not play-by-play*
GB569	Cleary	is (ellipsed)
GB570	Dallas	is (ellipsed)
GB574	the arm of Ward	has
Segment F		
GB594	it	goes
GB595	he	sends
GB596	the Sydney City Roosters	are (ellipsed)
GB597	it (ellipsed)	has (ellipsed)
GB598	he	is
GB599		(omission)
GB600	he	gives

Table 5:5 presents a comparison of the results for the Mood ellipsis analysis for the 2GB and the ABC data in terms of the proportion and type of ellipsis found in each set of data.

Table 5:5 Comparison of Ellipsis in the 2GB and ABC Play-by-Play Extracts

Type of Ellipsis	2GB		ABC	
	No.	%	No.	%
Subject & Finite	10	15.2%	8	9.8%
Subject Only	4	6.1%	10	12.2%
Finite Only	6	9.1%	8	9.8%
Total instances of ellipsis in the Mood element	20	30.4%	26	31.7%
Mood Omission	5	7.6%	4	4.7%
Full Clauses (no ellipsis)	41	62.1%	56	65.1%
Total number of clauses analysed in the segment	66		86	

From Table 5:5 we can see that the overall proportion of Mood ellipsis in both the ABC and the 2GB segments is almost the same. However, the ABC data shows a higher proportion of Subject-only ellipsis and a slightly lower proportion of Finite-only ellipsis than the 2GB data. Furthermore, the ABC data shows a lower proportion of Subject + Finite ellipsis than the 2GB data. These differences may reflect stylistic differences only. Therefore, assuming the overall results are representative of play-by-play talk in general, we could conclude that approximately 30% of all clauses in play-by-play talk will have

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some degree of Mood ellipsis which can be classified as presupposed ellipsis or pattern-matching ellipsis.

Ellipsis of only the Finite elements of the Mood constitutes 9.1% of Mood ellipsis in the 2GB extract and 9.8% in the ABC extract. It was noted in Section 5.1.2 that as a rule, where there is cohesive operator ellipsis the Subject must also be omitted. Therefore, considering that 'Finite-only' ellipsis is considered a somewhat rare choice in the language, the evidence for this as a choice in approximately 10% of clauses in play-by-play talk seems quite significant and suggests that Finite-only ellipsis is a register-specific phenomenon. Some examples of clauses in which there is Finite-only ellipsis are listed below.

GB502 *but now Lowrie getting up very slowly*
GB570 *and Dallas right on his hammer with a good chase*

Ellipsis of part or all of the Mood is a feature of about 30% of the lines in play-by-play talk and this would seem to be a very high proportion considering that play-by-play talk is a monologue. Ellipsis in play-by-play talk has been observed in the results of other studies of sports commentating. Pawley (1991), Crystal and Davy (1969), and Ferguson (1983) observe that one of the features of commentating is the use of utterances in which some key grammatical elements are ellipsed. Pawley calls this telegraphic grammar and suggests that the effect is 'as if we are seeing flashes of the action, each too quick to be handled by a full clause' (Pawley 1991: 358). According to Pawley, when using 'telegraphic grammar' the speaker may omit such elements as verb, Subject, pronominal antecedent, and/or clause conjunctions.

Crystal and Davy (1969) describe sentences in commentary in which key elements are ellipsed or where there is an omission of low information elements in sentences as 'minor sentences'. In these minor sentences essential information is spoken in the form of a nominal group where the verbal group is omitted, or there is only a verb with or without an

adverbial element. According to Crystal and Davy (1969: 138) 'long and elaborate structures of subordination are unlikely' in commentary.

Hoyle (1993) also found in her study of boys mimicking sports casters that the boys would produce utterances which lacked Subjects, auxiliaries and or lexical verbs. All these, she notes are reflective of professional sports announcers' talk.

Ferguson (1983) interprets ellipsis in commentating as grammatical 'simplification' and claims that it is 'one of the most striking features of SAT' (sports announcer talk) (Ferguson 1983: 158). He observes that commentators frequently use 'sentences lacking certain expected elements, most commonly (a) sentence-initial noun phrase or noun phrase plus copula, and (b) post-nominal copula' (Ferguson 1983: 158). Ferguson notes that there is deletion of certain elements of the clause, which 'in almost all cases ... can be reconstructed either as a personal pronoun, subject of the immediately following verb, or as a pronoun plus copula, before a noun Complement' (1983: 159). Some examples of simplifications from Ferguson's study are: *[he] hit 307* (pronoun Subject deletion), and *[it's] a breaking ball outside* (pronoun plus copula deletion).

According to Ferguson, the phenomenon of simplification is similar to the kind of constructions used in 'headlines, captions and note-taking' in English, and although its function is probably similar - i.e. emphatic, the SAT type does appear to be more of a special case than those other registers (1983: 160). He also suggests that simplification is 'possibly a way of sounding exciting [or of sounding] ... informal and non-literary' (1983: 168).

In cases where the identity of the Mood is indeterminable, in this study called Mood Omission, the remaining information seems to require that listeners project their own interpretation onto the utterance. Anchoring the talk in the here and now becomes of secondary importance to relaying experiential pieces of information. However, the omission of an identifiable Mood element, particularly the verbal operator, is most likely a

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type of economising which could be explained through what Pawley refers to as 'event sequences' in sports commentating (Pawley 1991). Pawley explains that the event sequences conveyed in sports commentary require the listener to understand a great deal about what is involved in these event sequences. He argues that

> the larger part of the vocabulary of discourse probably consists of phrases and clause-sized expressions that stand for complex conventional concepts. Call these the "phrasal lexicon". If you know the words used to talk about a particular subject matter but not the phrasal lexicon you will have a hard time following the discourse about that subject matter. If you also lack the backing knowledge needed to infer the missing standard concomitants of event-descriptions, you will be completely lost (Pawley 1991: 342).

In a situation such as a radio sports commentary the speaker streamlines his talk, economising on what is said in order to save time, but he also assumes that the listeners will be bringing to the situation a reservoir of knowledge from which they can interpret these shorthand phrases. In clause structures in which the nature of the Mood element is left ambiguous or indeterminable, the speaker is packaging events in a highly economical way such that almost everything included in the structures contains some kind of lexical information. Thus, the interpretation of the activities construed in lines such as GB599 *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half* from the 2GB text, depends upon the listener imposing onto this utterance what Pawley calls 'background knowledge', or 'backing knowledge' (Pawley 1991: 342).

5.1.8 Temporal Indicators Other Than the Finite

Although the Finite is an important element in the clause for conveying temporal information, the English language provides for other elements in the clause to indicate the relationship between the time of speaking and the time of the actions being spoken about. These other temporal indicators are generally found in the Adjuncts of the clause, and these are discussed in this section. The realisation of temporal meaning is also discussed in relation to circumstances of time within the TRANSITIVITY system in Chapter Six.

The criterion which proved most successful in determining which portions of the commentary are play-by-play talk, was the application of the successive temporal conjunction, *and now*. The property of this conjunction is such that it contains the temporal element, *now* which, when added to each line of the play-by-play text, suggests concurrent succession. The temporal item, *now*, can be found throughout the play-by-play extracts, both as a conjunction and as an Adjunct. When placed at the beginning of a clause it is appears to hold a dual function of both conjunction and temporal indicator. A list of the types of temporal Adjuncts and their frequency in the play-by-play extracts is presented in Table 5:6 below.

Table 5:6 Temporal Adjuncts in Play-by-Play Talk

Type of Temporal Adjunct	2GB Extract		ABC Extract	
	No. of instances	Percentage of lines selecting a Temporal Adjunct	No. of instances	Percentage of lines selecting a Temporal Adjunct
now	9		4	
this time	3		0	
once again	4		0	
again	0		2	
Total	16	24%	6	6.9%
(Total Lines in the Text)	(67)		(87)	

Adjuncts such as *now* or *once again* convey a sense of immediacy about the events taking place vis-à-vis the moment of speaking, as well as time relation of the events to other events relayed in the discourse. From Table 5:6 we can see that the choice of temporal Adjuncts is much more frequent in the 2GB extract than in the ABC extract. In the 2GB play-by-play extract there are 16 instances of temporal Adjuncts (excluding the conjunctive *now*) which indicate the relation between the time of speaking and/or the time of the actions being spoken about. This amounts to approximately 24% of all lines in the text containing a temporal Adjunct. On the other hand, in the ABC extract there are only 6 instances of temporal Adjuncts in the extract and this amounts to about 7% of the lines in the text containing a temporal Adjunct. The reasons for this discrepancy may reside in idiomatic differences between the two speakers. The use of temporal Adjuncts such as

now by the 2GB speaker actually creates a sense of tautology in that the context already demands that the listeners interpret the events being relayed as happening in the present, *now*. It may be used by this speaker to create a greater sense of excitement or spontaneity.

Adjuncts such as *this time* on the other hand, denote essentially three aspects of the action: 1) the time of the action in relation to the time of speaking, 2) the relationship between this action and some previous action in terms of sequence, and 3) the resulting location of the action in relation to some previous resulting location of a similar action. Clauses such as GB482 *now it goes back this time to Larson* are thus packed with present time references — the conjunctive *now*, the Adjunct *this time*, as well as the present Finite element in the Mood (along with the contextual understanding that the talk is simultaneous to the event it is encoding).

Another temporal Adjunct often used in the 2GB play-by-play extract is the Adjunct *once again* as in GB526 *but it's gone once again to Garlick*. This Adjunct denotes time frequency of the action, thus relating this action to some previous action, and suggesting a similarity between the location of the result of this action and the location of the result of a previous action. That is, at some time previously the ball went to Garlick.

5.1.9 Modal Operators and Modal Adjuncts

So far the aspects of the interpersonal function of the clause which have been discussed include Subject, Finite and Temporal Adjuncts. Other elements of the clause that play a part in realising interpersonal meanings are the Modal Operators and Modal Adjuncts. Through these choices speaker attitudes towards the proposition can be conveyed. For instance, Modal Operators express the speaker's judgement of the probability or obligation involved in what is being described, while Modal Adjuncts which include Mood Adjuncts and Comment Adjuncts can move around the clause (unlike the Modal Operators) and express meanings similar to those in the Mood system such as polarity, modality, temporality and mood.

In the play-by-play extracts under consideration here, there are very few Modal Operators and no instances of Modal Adjuncts. In the 2GB extract there are only two instances of Modal Operators, and in the ABC extract there is only one instance. In the 2GB extract the modal operator *will* is used at lines GB510 *and the referee'll blow that up* and GB521 *and Eastern Suburbs will play it via Cleary.* In both of these instances the speaker is conveying certainty about the actions which are taking place. In the first clause, it is the referee's responsibility to call a penalty, and in doing so he must blow the whistle, and so the reference by the speaker to *blow that up.* In the second instance the action is taking place *via Cleary* and there is great certainty by the speaker that Cleary is the participant who will perform the action, most probably because Cleary is involved in some movement or action which is indicating the role that he is taking in *playing the ball.* In the ABC extract the modal operator *can't* is used in line A271 *[He] can't get on the inside of Taylor.* This is one of the few cases of negative polarity in the play-by-play data (see Section 5.1.3). Here the speaker is relaying what a player is *not* doing rather than what he is *doing*, and at the same time expressing the speaker's judgement about the degree of ability attached to the action that is being relayed.

It can be argued that the general lack of Modal Operators or Modal Adjuncts is an indication of the way in which the language is realising both the authority of the speaker and the speaker's presumption that the information he is passing on is not open to negotiation, or contention. The speaker does not need to hedge or be polite as there is no exchange motivating him to do so. Modality (whether it be high or low) indicates a lack of certainty and in the context of play-by-play talk this is not likely to be an effective means of relating events in an authoritative way, or of gaining and maintaining the authority of the speaker. Through a lack of modality choices, the speaker is assigning himself the role of 'objective viewer' of the activities of the game, and he is constructing the listeners as 'believers' in his objective view of the activities of the game. The listeners are dependent on the speaker for information about what is taking place on the field of play, and must 'trust' the speaker, and trust would not be engendered if the commentator were to make modalised statements. To demonstrate this point we can 'rewrite' a segment of the play-by-play with possible modals included.

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GB476.*he **seems to be** *giving it across now*
GB477.*it **certainly** *goes to Steve Trindall*
GB478.*he **probably** *steps back inside*
GB479.*eventually they **might** *catch up with him*
GB480.*and **most probably** *drag him to the ground*

From this re-written version, we get a sense of the uncertainty of the speaker. Even if the modals were all of the high modality certainty type (e.g. GB477*), it would still appear strange. The impression would be of a speaker trying to convince the listeners of what he is saying, rather than simply relating in an objective way what he is seeing. His role is not to convince, but to inform. The use of the modal 'will' however, does not suggest uncertainty, and it is probably because of this that this modal is occasionally used in play-by-play talk.

Another reason for the lack of modality in the play-by-play portions of the commentary has to do with the function of play-by-play. During the interviews with the commentators it was noted that the job of the play-by-play commentator is to describe the action whereas it is the role of the colour commentator to 'go back and dissect the call ... give the reasons why the try was scored ... and lay the blame on a player if they did not play well' (Peters 1993). So the play-by-play commentator needs to hold an impartial view of the events taking place during play-by-play. This is echoed in the following advice from Marks to would-be radio commentators.

> [An] area of concern is the increasing subjectivity in broadcasting today
> ...We are the broadcasters whose job it is to cover the game with accuracy,
> impartiality and objectivity (Marks ms. p.5.15)

It is likely that because the commentator is intending to be impartial that there are few instances of modality in the play-by-play commentary.

Hargreaves (1986: 144) comments that historically, the function of the expert analysts on news programmes on the BBC were introduced in order to solve 'the problem of

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establishing objectivity and achieving "balance" over politically controversial matters'. This idea seems relevant to what happens in sports commentary. The lack of a variety of interpersonal strategies appears to be a characteristic of play-by-play talk which can be contrasted to other extempore forms of talk such as D-J talk in which according to Montgomery (1988: 96) 'the interpersonal dimension of the discourse is ...foregrounded in a variety of overlapping ways. The audience is presented with a range of participatory possibilities. It varies from being a direct address to being an overhearing recipient; and it is alternatively congratulated, deprecated and invited to respond.' Such variation is not a function of play-by-play talk, which aims to impart descriptions of events unfolding as objectively as possible.

5.1.10 Other Grammatical Resources for Construing Interpersonal Meanings

From the discussion so far it would seem that the play-by-play talk contains no speaker 'judgements' about the activities taking place. However, while this may be largely the case with respect to the Mood element in the clause, there are other grammatical resources for expressing judgement and attitudes towards events taking place. These grammatical resources include Circumstantial Adjuncts of manner, Epithets in the nominal group, and prepositional modifiers. In contrast to the analysis of modal operators and modal Adjuncts in the play-by-play talk, an analysis of the Circumstantial Adjuncts, nominal group Epithets and prepositional modifiers reveals that the play-by-play speakers convey much attitudinal meaning through these resources. The number of actual instances and their overall frequency per number of lines of text in each of the 2GB and ABC extracts are tabulated in Table 5:7 below.

Table 5:7 Other Grammatical Resources Used to Express Interpersonal Meaning

Grammatical Category	2GB		ABC	
	No. of Instances in the Extract	Proportion of Lines Selected	No. of Instances in the Extract	Proportion of Lines Selected
Epithet (quality/attitude)	7	10.5%	7	8.0%
Circumstantial Adjunct of Manner (quality)	6	9.0%	3	3.5%
Prepositional Modifier	4	6.0%	4	4.6%
Total	(17)	(25.4%)	(14)	(16.1%)
Total Lines in the Text	67	(100%)	87	(100%)

From Table 5:7 we can see that except for the prepositional modifiers the frequency of grammatical resources expressing interpersonal meanings is slightly higher in the 2GB play-by-play extract than in the ABC extract. Although this could represent an idiomatic difference between the two speakers, it may also reflect a difference in the contextual motivation of the kind of commentary that each produces. Unlike the 2GB commentator, the ABC commentator works in a situation in which 'commercialism' is not a factor driving the commentary to compete for higher ratings. However, in the 2GB the quest for higher ratings is very important and may influence the speakers to inject a greater degree of attitudinal force into the talk in order to raise the level of excitement. This difference between the two commentaries was noted by the commentators themselves during their interviews. However, Wilkins, of the ABC did state that he liked to project some excitement into his commentary, but that the general feeling at the ABC was that this was not a particularly necessary component of the commentary. During interviews with the 2GB commentator he remarked on how he makes the commentary exciting. Hartley (1993) said that along with natural ability and the tone of his voice, excitement could be created in the words that he chooses. He then gave a demonstration of this and produced the following pseudo-slice of commentating.

What a great five yard gain! He's up. He's played the ball. Oh he's only picked up three metres, but an important three metres.

In this demonstration we can see the same kind of phenomenon as in the actual play-by-play commentary. Here, rather than choosing the Finite as the place of modality, Hartley chooses two Epithets *great* and *important*. He also chooses a Mood Adjunct, *only*, which according to our analysis is uncommon in play-by-play talk, but this may be because of the 'artificial' nature of this segment of commentary.

Interestingly, the grammatical resources of Circumstantial Adjuncts of manner, prepositional modifiers and nominal group Epithets are used to a much greater extent overall to express interpersonal meanings of judgements, attitudes and qualities and the like than Modal Adjuncts or Modal Operators. One reason for this may be connected with the

function of the Mood element in context. The Mood element, as has already been explained in this chapter, is that part of the clause that is presented as the core of the proposition. It is the element which is available for affirming or denying. That this part of the clause in play-by-play is rarely modulated suggests that the speaker views this as the expression of 'objectivity' in the context. The Finite, which is invariably present tense, is presented as non-negotiable, and modulation of the proposition is likewise a non-negotiable feature of play-by-play talk, as was pointed out when clauses from the play-by-play extract were rewritten with Mood Adjuncts included. Another reason for the lack of modulation in the Mood element may lie in the notion of 'Person'. In play-by-play text the propositional content is third person, or person or object outside the actual speech situation. Relating this to the function of Mood, we can say that it is this third person which is held modally responsible. Because the commentator is the 'eyes' of the listener, the choice of third person throughout play-by-play text maintains a social distance between speaker and listener in terms of information content, and in doing so the possibility of affirming or denying what one cannot see is not likely. The listeners must trust that the third persons and objects presented to them by the speaker are the 'correct' ones. Thus, the speaker's 'self' is not part of the proposition and along with this, interpersonal meanings associated with judgement, attitude, and qualities as expressed through other resources do not enter that part of the clause which is presented for affirming or denying. This leaves the speaker and his attitudes out of the centre of the argument, and non-negotiable in this context.

A final comment which is relevant to this section concerns the nature of the speakers. It is not by accident that the commentators are male. The game of Rugby League, although it is played by women, is predominantly a male domain and is seen by some commentators as a vehicle for expelling physical frustration (Wilkins 1995; see also Mossop's (1991: 163) comments regarding the 'return of the man to man punch up in Rugby League'). For women to be relating and evaluating this kind of sport through play-by-play talk within the social context in which Rugby League is embedded would be unusual if not unacceptable. Wilkins (1995) remarks that he does not think women are suited to

commentating a game of Rugby League: in his words, 'I think women don't have a level of aggression that is suited to it. You've got to have a level of aggression in the commentary box as well'.

5.1.11 Interpersonal Grammatical Metaphor

One final resource in the interpersonal grammar which bears examination is the notion of grammatical metaphor. When most people think of 'metaphor' they are thinking of the kind of metaphor in which one word or group of words is used in place of another to create a kind of picture in the listener's or reader's mind in order to understand the meaning of the speaker or writer. In such cases, the literal meaning of the words is an inappropriate interpretation of the speaker's meaning. Grammatical metaphor, on the other hand, refers to 'variation in the expression of a given meaning' (Halliday 1994c: 342). Here the relevant interpretation is either congruent or incongruent. For instance, a congruent representation of a meaning is one where processes in the 'real world' are expressed as linguistic processes, or where objects in the real world are expressed as linguistic 'objects' or nominals. Incongruity arises where, for example, 'processes' are expressed as 'things' in the language. According to Halliday, this kind of metaphor is characteristic of adult language use. However, the degree to which grammatical metaphor exists in any adult discourse will depend on a number of factors, specifically the register that is being used at a given time.

There are primarily two types of grammatical metaphor in English. They are ideational and interpersonal grammatical metaphor. Interpersonal grammatical metaphor, which is the focus of this section, concerns the expression of a 'speaker's opinion regarding the probability that his observation is valid... not as a modal element within the clause, which would be its congruent realization, but as a separate projecting clause in a hypotactic clause complex' (Halliday 1994c: 354). An example of a constructed interpersonal grammatical metaphor within a commentary would be *I think Ben Ikin is heading for the goal line*. In this constructed clause the element *I think* is expressing probability, rather than projecting the clause *Ben Ikin is heading for the goal line*. The test for whether an

element such as *I think* is a metaphor of modality or a projecting clause, is to add a tag to the whole clause complex. In the clause *I think Ben Ikin is heading for the goal line* , the tag would be *isn't he?* And not *don't I?*, thus confirming that *I think* is an interpersonal grammatical metaphor rather than a mental projection.

In the play-by-play data used in this study, there are no instances of interpersonal metaphor. This is, in itself, a significant feature of play-by-play talk, particularly, considering that play-by-play talk is a form of spontaneous spoken language, and that interpersonal metaphors tend to be prevalent in spontaneous speech. As is the case with other interpersonal features such as modality and structures such as Modal Adjuncts, the inclusion of metaphors of modality in which the speaker is making judgements about the probability or usuality of a proposition would in fact have the effect of making the talk tentative and 'debatable'. This would lower the speaker's credibility with his audience. It is only during other moments in the commentary, such as colour commentating, that interpersonal metaphors appear to arise. In these moments so-called judgements and opinions about the actions which have taken place, the general performance of the teams, or the action which is about to take place, are made.

5.2 Profiling the Register of Play-by-Play Talk

This section brings together the results of the analyses of the grammar of interpersonal meaning and presents these in the form of a profile of interpersonal grammatical choices in play-by-play talk. In order to diagrammatically represent this profile, the choices made in play-by-play talk are arranged into horizontal bar graphs. Each bar in the graph represents a separate group of choices, and the proportion of selections within these groups of choices are represented as a percentage portion of the bar. The first group of choices are those to do with ellipsis in play-by-play talk. Next are the categories of major clauses, and underneath these is the speech function. The other bars in the graph represent person, deicticity and polarity respectively. The bar graph provides an accessible view of the kinds of choices made in interpersonal grammar in play-by-play talk.

In Section 5.3 the grammatical choices are written alongside the kind of contextual information they construe. Linguistic features which are not easily quantified, such as 'no dialogic exchange' and 'other interpersonal resources', are mentioned next to the relevant contextual feature. As this chapter has focused on the grammar of interpersonal meaning, the grammatical choices primarily construe tenor relations. However, as argued in Chapter Two, there is no one-to-one relationship between contextual phenomena and linguistic phenomena; therefore, other features of the context that are construed by the grammatical choices discussed in this chapter are also included in the contextual description. The choices in the interpersonal grammar in the register of play-by-play talk are shown below in Figure 5:1, and the description of the context is given in Table 5:8.
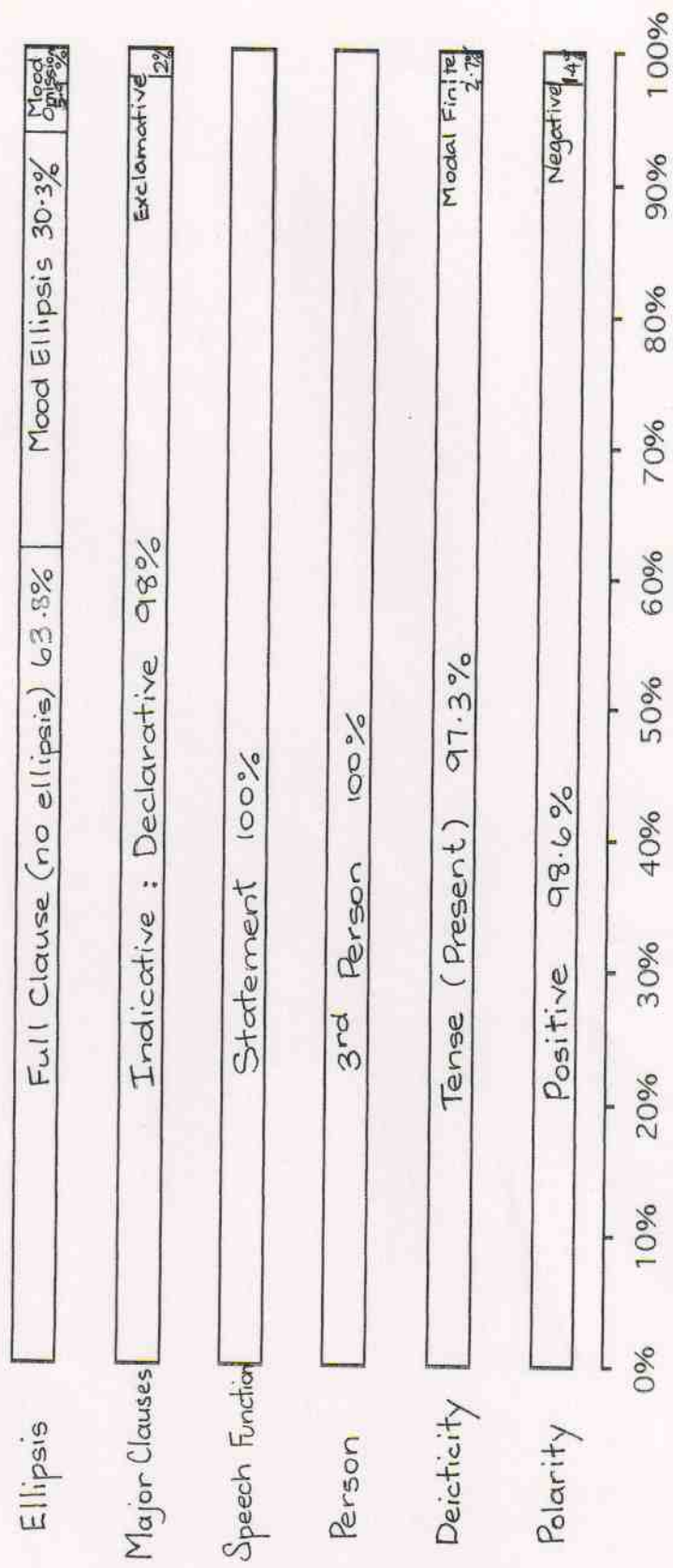
Figure 5:1 Profile of Choices in Interpersonal Grammar in Play-by-Play Talk

5.3 Summary of the Contextual Features Construed by the Grammatical Choices

This section uses the categories of context described at the beginning of this chapter, and in Chapter Two, in order to summarise the kind of contextual information construed by the grammatical choices made in play-by-play talk. In this chapter the analyses focused on interpersonal systems of the grammar, and so the contextual category most relevant to these is that of tenor. However, as argued at the beginning of this chapter and in Chapter Two, there is no one-to-one relationship between the grammatical categories and contextual features. Rather, at any one time, there is an overlap between the kinds of contextual information construed by choices in the grammar. Table 5:8 attempts to capture this kind of overlap.

Essentially, tenor concerns the social relations among participants in the discourse, including the roles and statuses that interactants hold in the situation. An examination of some descriptions of the contextual category of tenor in SF theory (Martin 1992; Poynton 1984; Halliday 1978, 1985a; Hasan 1981, 1985b, 1993, 1995) suggests that the major features associated with the contextual category of tenor are: nature of the participants, status, degree of contact, social distance, affect, and situational/social roles (permanent and temporary).

Table 5:8 is organised into two halves. The first half is arranged such that in the left-hand column the theoretical features associated with the contextual category of tenor are mentioned and below these are the specific tenor relations in the context of play-by-play talk. In the right-hand column the play-by-play grammatical choices as contained in the profile (Figure 5:1), and any other linguistic phenomena from the analyses and discussion in this chapter are listed. These grammatical choices and linguistic phenomena are placed next to the contextual information they primarily construe. In the left-hand column of the latter half of the table the other contextual categories of field and mode are briefly described in relation to the context of play-by-play talk, and in the right-hand column the interpersonal grammatical choices and linguistic phenomena which contribute to the construal of these features are placed. In both the first and second halves of the table,

some of the linguistic features are listed more than once as they contribute to different aspects of the context of play-by-play talk.

Table 5:8 Contextual Features Construed Through the Interpersonal Grammatical Resources Deployed in Play-by-Play Talk.

CONTEXTUAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES
TENOR	
General Contextual Features: Nature of the Participants, Number of Speakers and Involvement in the Situation **Play-by-Play Features:** • One speaker. • Non-material involvement in the activity. • Male Speakers relating and evaluating events that other males are involved in.	• No Dialogic Exchange • Person • Other Interpersonal Resources
General Contextual Feature: Status **Play-by-Play Features:** • The status between speaker and listeners is unequal. One speaker dominates the discourse and this speaker does not expect that the information he conveys will be contended. Listeners cannot negotiate meanings with the speaker and are not involved in the creation of the text.	• Speech function, Person, Major clauses, Mood ellipsis
General Contextual Feature: Speech Role/Temporary Relations **Play-by-Play Features:** • Speaker presents information. • Speaker conveys information which is current and spontaneous. • Speaker presents few personal judgements, attitudes and personal opinions.	• Speech Function • Ellipsis, Deicticity • Deicticity - low degree of modality, No Interpersonal Grammatical Metaphor, Polarity

Other Features of the Tenor of Play-by-Play Talk The speaker presents some evaluation of the activities, but these evaluations are rarely presented in the form of negotiable evaluations as they are not part of the propositional component of what he presents.	• Other Interpersonal Resources
Other Contextual Features which the Interpersonal Grammatical Resources Construe	
MODE	
Monologic nature of the discourse. Radio prevents the listeners participating in the discourse.	• Speech Function, Major Clauses, No Dialogic Exchange
FIELD	
Talk relating concurrent events in which the speakers are not physically involved. Spontaneous nature of the talk.	• Ellipsis, Deicticity

5.4 A Final Remark

A final remark that can be made regarding the grammar of interpersonal meaning as it is deployed in play-by-play commentating, concerns the notion of 'speaker'. Thibault (1995) introduces the notion of 'speaker' in order to argue that the MOOD system can be interpreted as cross-coupling with physical-material processes 'in the making and negotiating of interpersonal meaning'. According to Thibault, the 'speaker' is always recoverable from the situation, as it is the speaker who 'utters the clause'. Accordingly, the speaker does not feature in the actual structure of the lexicogrammar of the clause, rather 'it is a functional semantic value which can be ascribed to the Mood element in the interpersonal grammar of the clause' (Thibault 1995: 64). In Thibault's (1995: 65) reinterpretation of Mood in the SF grammatical model he argues that

> Mood comprises the following three functional semantic elements: (a) the Finite element which grounds the clause as an interact in the here-and-now of the speech event, relative to the SPEAKER. And by virtue of this, the speech event is rendered negotiable along the dimension of deictic space-time and modal responsibility; (b) the SPEAKER, or the Subject of the modality, which is the orientational 'centre' in relation to which a subjective speaking

presence, or person-place, is organised: and (c) the Subject of the clause, realising the proposition/proposal, which is the grammatical entity in which the SPEAKER invests the success or failure of his/her utterance. The Subject of the proposition/proposal corresponds to Halliday's definition of Subject, seen as an element of structure in the interpersonal grammar of the clause.

If we consider the notion of speaker in relation to the register of commentating, we can interpret the presentation of information in the commentary as the speaker bringing into being the material state of affairs as he sees them. The analyses in this chapter have shown that there is a fairly high proportion of ellipsis of the Finite, ellipsis of only the Subject, and ellipsis of Subject and Finite, even though there is no dialogic exchange taking place. The speaker as the 'orientational centre' around which the utterance is placed, is, in commentating, felt to be both distant and personal. The lack of modality suggests he 'keeps his distance', and instead becomes the mouthpiece of the semiotic construction of the game. But because it is the game as *he* sees it, it is in a sense his personal rendition of that game albeit within the institutionalised framework in which he operates. There is a number of situational variables in place which constrain a commentator's rendition of the game, but nonetheless, his is the voice of the game, and it is his construction of the activities through the semiotic resources of the language that reflect the role of 'speaker' in Rugby League radio commentating.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the grammar of interpersonal meaning, in particular the clause as a unit of exchange. The main system realising this function is the MOOD system. An analysis of the Mood has revealed that during play-by-play talk the speakers almost exclusively use declarative clauses with the speech function of statement, and with the features of positive polarity and present tense. Ellipsis of some part of the Mood occurs approximately a quarter of the time suggesting that the speakers assume that the listeners will be able to identify the ellipsed portion of the Mood, either from the co-text, including presupposed items and matching patterns, and/or from the context. Operator-only ellipsis appears to be a register feature of play-by-play talk. Where the identity of the Subject of the clause is ambiguous, it is still possible to understand the nature of the activity taking

place if one possesses the adequate 'backing knowledge'. Lines in which the exact identity of the omitted Mood elements is indeterminable appear to be a feature of the register of play-by-play talk, and a feature noted in studies of other sports commentaries. In this study examples of this phenomenon, which Ferguson (1983) calls 'simplification', are called Mood Omission. There are few instances of modality in play-by-play talk, suggesting that the speakers aim to present an objective picture of the events unfolding before them.

The next chapter turns to the grammar of experiential meaning and to the way in which some key features of this grammar are deployed in play-by-play talk.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. Those units 'below' the clause are groups and phrases, while those 'above' the clause are clause complexes. Choices in the system of intonation represent features 'beside' the clause. 'Around' the clause are features such as cohesion. What Halliday refers to as 'beyond' the clause is the notion of grammatical metaphor.
2. Unfortunately it was not within the scope of this study to include a detailed discussion of tone group choices in play-by-play talk. An analysis of tone group choices in each of the extracts, however, is presented in Appendix III.

CHAPTER SIX

Developing a Linguistic Profile of Play-by-Play Talk
Part II: The Grammar of Experiential Meaning

6.0 Introduction

The experiential metafunction is that relation which holds between the construal of meanings to do with the speaker's experience of the world and the cluster of lexicogrammatical systems that typically express such meanings. In contrast to the grammar of interpersonal meaning where relations between interactants and the speaker's attitudes and judgements of the happenings in a situation are expressed, experiential grammatical resources contribute in large part to the construal of the nature of the social action which interactants are engaged in and in which language is playing some role. The primary lexicogrammatical resources for construing social action are the system of TRANSITIVITY (types of processes and their attendant participants and circumstances), the system of ERGATIVITY (the agentive roles and causality structures in the grammar), the system of TENSE and verbal group structures (the system of expressing process and time in relation to the action in which the participants are involved), nominal group structures, nominalisation, and experiential grammatical metaphor (the expression of objects and the construal of events or objects in congruent or incongruent forms).

This chapter begins with a description of the systems of TRANSITIVITY and ERGATIVITY and analyses the play-by-play extracts in terms of selections from these systems. The latter part of this chapter focuses on verbal groups, nominal groups and experiential grammatical metaphor.

6.1 Representing Experience in Play-by-Play Talk: TRANSITIVITY and ERGATIVITY
6.1.0 Introduction

This section focuses on the choices made in the systems of TRANSITIVITY and ERGATIVITY, which each contribute to the realisation of experiential meanings. The notion of transitivity and ergativity are actually two ways of viewing experience. In viewing

experience from the transitive perspective events are seen as structures of 'extension', where one participant <u>acts</u> on another as in the following examples:

I	*can see*	*the mountains*	*from here.*
Senser ⟶	Process ⟶	Phenomenon	(Circumstance)

Peters	*tackles*	*Jones the number seven*
Actor ⟶	Process ⟶	Goal

Where there are one-participant clauses, the sense of the structure of the clause is still that of linearity, of moving towards the right, as in the following examples.

Ryu	*sighed*
Behaver ⟶	Process

The children	*played*
Actor ⟶	Process

From the ergative perspective events are viewed in terms of causality, or what brought them about. In the grammar these events are structured in terms of a nuclear semantic field in which there is a Medium and Process. The presence of other participants in the clause are dependent upon whether or not the process is brought about by an external Agent or force, or whether it is self-instigated. Thibault explains the ergative structure as one of 'self-corrective circular causation, as opposed to the linear and mechanical causation of the transitive model' (Thibault 1993: 134).

We can say that some processes structure ergatively while others structure transitively. For instance, the following processes configure ergatively: *open, close, roll, crack, cook, boil, freeze, melt, stop, turn.* This can be seen in the following set of examples.

a) *Sheila melted the ice.*
b) *The ice melted.*
c) *Sheila melted.* * (not in the metaphorical sense)

In these clauses the process of *melting* is done by the ice. In clause a) the melting of the ice is externally instigated (ice = Goal), whereas in clause b) it is self-instigated (ice = Actor).

In contrast to these types of processes are those which configure transitively, such as *push, kick, kill*. These are illustrated in the following set of clauses.

> d) *Robin kicked the ball.*
> e) *The ball kicked.* *
> f) *Robin kicked.*

In clauses d), e), f) the action extends to the right and there is no possibility of self-instigation. Agent (Actor) *Robin* is acting on the ball. The nature of the process-medium is not maintained when *the ball* is in Actor position. In these clauses the process remains the domain of the Actor and cannot be self-instigated.

There are several other factors involved in processes which configure ergatively in contrast to those which figure transitively. For instance, Langacker (1991) notes that certain semantic roles, such as 'patient', or 'mover' are more commonly associated with the Medium in intransitive/transitive pairs of clauses than in transitive clauses. Furthermore, when referring to Keenan's (1984 cited in Langacker 1991) discussion of 'semantic weight', Langacker suggests that intransitive verbs in ergative structures tend to attribute properties to the Medium, whereas the transitive verb does not do this to the same extent. For example, the verb *shatter* requires the participant to be 'brittle and crystalline' as in the pair of clauses: *It shattered; he shattered it* (Langacker 1991: 388). This is evident in examples a), b), c), above where the process *melt* requires the participant to have the properties capable of melting in order for it to be self-instigatable[1].

TRANSITIVITY and ERGATIVITY are two grammatical systems developed to represent these two perspectives on experience. An analysis of a text in terms of selections made in each of these systems can shed light on different aspects of the construal of experience. An analysis of a text from the point of view of selections in the TRANSITIVITY system focuses on the 'type' of processes chosen to represent experience. Table 6:1 presents the

categories of process types and the participants involved according to the lexicogrammatical system of TRANSITIVITY.

Table 6:1 Process Types and Participants in the System of TRANSITIVITY

Process Type	Participants (not all participants will occur every time)
material	Actor, Goal, Recipient, Client
behavioural	Behaver
mental	Senser, Phenomenon
verbal	Sayer, Target, Receiver
relational: attributive	Carrier, Attributor, Beneficiary
relational: identifying	Identified, Identifier, Assigner
existential	Existent

An example of the way in which choices in the system of TRANSITIVITY can be shown to construe a specific view of reality can be found for instance, in Halliday's and Martin's descriptions of scientific discourse. Halliday (1993b, see also Halliday & Martin 1993) explains that in scientific discourse experience tends to be encoded in terms of Relations. That is, objects, ideas and processes tend to be nominalised and then identified and classified. Another example can be found in Eggins' analysis of three different texts about 'crying babies'. In her analysis Eggins (1994: 266ff.) explains that the pattern of Transitivity choices in two of the texts show a high proportion of material process clauses, which suggests that these texts construct the field in terms of 'tangible, physical actions'.

Unlike the TRANSITIVITY system which is concerned with the type of process taking place, the concern of the ERGATIVITY system is with the Medium, and whether this element or some other is the 'cause' of the process. Thus, the Ergative model is a model of 'causality'. Potential elements in the clause viewed from the Ergative perspective are:

Process   Medium   Agent   Beneficiary

An analysis of text from the perspective of the system of ERGATIVITY can reveal those elements most often chosen as the Medium. The Medium is viewed as 'the one that is critically involved, in some way or other according to the particular nature of the process'

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(Halliday 1994c: 165). An ergative analysis can also reveal whether events are viewed as being self-instigated through the Medium or as brought about by some external Agency.

This brief overview of some of the features of the systems of ERGATIVITY and TRANSITIVITY points to two perspectives on the ways in which English grammar construes experience. These two perspectives can be utilised in the study of a specific text so that we can view the way in which grammatical choices configure to construe the reality represented in that text. On this matter, Thibault argues that 'the language user's act of construal of ... reality is not independent from either the material event or from the (linguistic) means of observing/construing it. The material event incorporates the means of its observation, which the language user brings to bear on it' (Thibault 1993: 132). With reference to this study, we can ask: 'How do speakers during play-by-play talk represent the experience associated with a game of football?' If we view the experience within the ergative paradigm we can ask: 'What choices are made regarding the Medium-Process of the clauses?', 'Which elements in the situation are predominantly construed as 'crucial' to the processes taking place?', and 'Are processes predominantly constructed as self-instigated or as externally instigated?' From a Transitive point of view we can ask: 'What kinds of processes and participants are chosen?', and 'What do these tell us about the way in which the speaker constructs the field of the situation?' The next sections attempt to address these questions through an analysis of the 2GB and ABC extracts in terms of choices in the TRANSITIVITY and the ERGATIVITY systems.

6.1.1 Transitivity and Ergativity Analysis of Play-by-Play Talk

This section presents an analysis of the Transitivity and Ergativity choices in the 2GB extract. The Transitivity and Ergativity analysis of the ABC extract is presented in Appendix X. In addition to these two sets of analyses, this section brings in an analysis of lexical processes in the complete play-by-play portions of the first half of the ABC commentary in order to build a more detailed picture of the field which is construed in play-by-play talk.

In the analysis below, process types, participants and circumstances are shown directly under each line. Medium and Process structures are shown in italicised type underneath the Transitivity analysis. Determinable elliptical elements in each line are placed in square brackets, and Processes are presented in bold type. A series of three dots between lines indicates where two or more lines of non-play-by-play text have been omitted. A line number without any text indicates that that line is non-play-by-play text.

Analysis 6:1 Transitivity and Ergativity Analysis of the 2GB Extract[2]

Segment A

GB469. back   now   it   **goes**   to David Fairleigh
        Location: place (spat)   Location: time (temp)   Actor   Pro: mat   Loc: place (spat)
        Location   *Location*   *Medium*   *Process*   *Location*

GB470. Fairleigh   down the centre of the ground   twenty metres out from his own goal-line
        participant   Location: place (spatial)   Location: place (spatial)
        Medium   *Location*   *Location*

GB471. and [he   **is] put down**   in strong defence   from Eastern Suburbs
           Goal   Proc: material   Manner: means   Location: place (spatial)
           Medium   *Process*   *Manner*   *Location*

GB472. now   it   '   **s gone**   to Soden
         Actor   Proc: mat   Location: place (spatial)
         Medium   *Process*   *Location*

GB473. good pass   [**goes**]   across   to Josh Stuart
         Actor   Process: material   Location: place   Location: place
        Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*

GB474. he   **aims** we..   **up**   well
        Actor   Proc: material   Location: place   Manner: quality
        Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Manner*

GB475. and   again   a strong tackle   by Logan   over the top
          Loc: time (temp)   Goal   Actor   Location: place (spatial)
           Location   *Medium*   *Agent*   *Location*

GB476. **giving**   it   across   now
         Process: mat   Goal   Location: place (spatial)   Location: time (temp)
        Process   *Medium Location*   *Location*

GB477. it   **goes**   to Steve Trindall
        Actor   Process: material   Location: place (spatial)
        Medium   *Process*   *Location*

GB478. he   **steps**   back   inside
   Actor   Proc: mat   Location: place   Location: place
   Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*

GB479. -

GB480. eventually   they   **catch up**   with him
   Actor   Process: material   Accompaniment: comitation
   Medium   *Process*   *Accompaniment*

GB481.and [they]   **drag**   him   to the ground   thirty out from the North Sydney line
   Actor   Proc: mat   Goal   Location: place (spat)   Location: place (spatial)
   Agent   *Process*   *Medium*   *Location*   *Location*

GB482.now   it   **goes**   back   this time   to Larson
   Actor   Proc: mat   Loc: place (spatial)   Loc: time (temp)   Loc: place (spat)
   Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*   *Location*

GB483.the pass **[goes]**   back   inside   to Florimo
   Actor   Process: mat   Location: place (spat)   Loc: place (spat)   Loc: place (spat)
   Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*   *Location*

GB484.but   he   **'s cut down**   by Sean Garlick
   Goal   Process: material   Actor
   Medium   *Process*   *Agent*

GB485.it   **'s gone**   to Soden
   Actor   Proc: mat   Location: place (spat)
   Medium   *Process*   *Location*

GB486.and   he   **gives**   it   once again   to David Fairleigh
   Actor   Proc: mat   Goal   Location: time (temp)   Beneficiary: recipient
   Agent   *Process*   *Medium*   *Location*   *Beneficiary*

GB487. -

GB488.it   **goes**   to Billy Moore
   Actor   Proc: material   Location: place (spatial)
   Medium   *Process*   *Location*

GB489.[it   **goes**]   out   to Ben Ikin
   Actor   Proc: material   Location: place   Location: place
   Med   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*

GB490. Ikin **puts**   a little kick   in downfield   too
   Actor   Proc: mat   Goal   Location: place (spatial)   Accomp: addition
   Agent   *Process*   *Medium*   *Location*   *Accompaniment*

GB491. -

GB492.but a nice pick up   this time   from Mattie Sing   for Eastern Suburbs
   participant   Location: time (temp)   Location: place (spatial)   Cause: behalf
   Medium   *Location*   *Location*   *Cause*

GB493.[he]   **heads**   to the far side of the ground
      Actor   Proc: material   Location: place (spatial)
      Medium   Process   *Location*

GB494.[he] **links up**   beautifully   this time   with Peter Clark
      Actor   Proc: material   Manner: quality Loc: time (temp) Accompaniment: comitation
      Medium Process   *Manner*   *Location*   *Accompaniment*

Segment B

GB502.but now Lowrie   **[is] getting up** very slowly
            Actor   Proc: material   Manner: quality
            Medium   *Process*   *Manner*

GB503.-
GB504.but   it   **'s gone**   across   to Fittler
            Actor   Proc: material   Location: place (spatial) Location: place
            Medium Process   *Location*   *Location*

GB505. he   **gives**   it   straight out   to Tony Iro
      Actor   Proc: material   Goal   Location: place   Beneficiary: recipient
      Agent Process   *Medium*   *Location*   *Beneficiary*

GB506.Billy Moore **'s come**   into contact   with that ball
            Actor   Proc: material   Location: place   Accompaniment: comit
            Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Accompaniment*

. . .

GB510.and   the referee   **'ll blow**   that   **up**
            Actor   Proc: material   Goal   (process cont.)
            Agent   *Process*   *Medium*

Segment C

GB521.and Eastern Suburbs **will play**   it   via Cleary
            Actor   Proc: material   Goal   Manner: means
            Agent   *Process*   *Medium*   *Manner*

GB522.[it   **goes]**   straight back   now   to Fittler
      Actor   Proc: mat   Loc: place (spatial) Loc: time (temp) Loc: place (spat)
      Medium Process   *Location*   *Location*   *Location*

GB523.he   **tries to put**   the bust   on
      Actor   Proc: material   Goal   Location: place (spatial)
      Agent Process   *Medium*   *Location*

. . .

GB526.but   it   **'s gone**   once again   to Garlick
            Actor   Proc: material   Location: time (temp)   Location: place (spatial)
            Medium Process   *Location*   *Location*

GB527.[it   **goes]**   out   to Dunn
      Actor   Proc: material   Location: place (spatial)   Location: place
      Medium   Process   *Location*   *Location*

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GB528. -
GB529.but [he **is**] **pulled down** once again   thirty out   <now>   from the Bears' line
       Goal Proc: mat   Loc: time   Location: place <Loc: time> (spat)
       Med Process   *Location*   *Location*   *<Location> (Loc. cont.)*

GB530.Adrian Lam **shows**   it   out   wide
    Actor   Proc: material Goal   Location: place (spatial) Manner: quality
    Agent   *Process*   *Medium Location*   *Manner*

GB531.he **gives**   it   to Iro
    Actor Proc: material Goal   Beneficiary: recipient
    Agent Process   *Medium* *Beneficiary*

GB532.Iro   **[is] standing**   out   in the centres
    Behaver   Proc: behavioural   Location: place (spatial) Location: place
    Medium   *Process*   *Location*   *Location*
GB533.-
GB534.Walker **'s gone**   without it
    Actor   Proc: material   Accompaniment: comitation
    Medium Process   *Accompaniment*

GB535.Lam   **'s**   there
    Carrier   Process: intensive   Attribute: circumstance: place
    Medium   *Process*   *Location*

    to pick up   the dregs
    Proc: material   Goal
    Process   *Medium*

GB536.he **does**   that   now
    Actor Process: material Goal   Location: time (temporal)
    Agent Process   *Medium*   *Location*

GB537.**[he]** **tries to step**   back   inside Jason Taylor
    Actor   Process: material Location: place (spatial) Location: place (spatial)
    Medium Process   *Location*   *Location*

GB538.but Taylor **'s**   there
      Carrier   Process: intensive   Attribute: circumstantial: place
      Medium   *Process*   *Location*

    to nail   him
    Process: material Goal
    Process   *Medium*

GB539.still   forty out from the Bears' line
    Extent: duration (temporal) Location: place (spatial)
    Extent   *Location*

GB540.it 's back with Garlick
Carrier Proc: intensive Attribute: circumstantial: place Accompaniment: comitation
Medium *Process* *Location* *Accompaniment*

GB541.he **sends** it across now to Ivan Cleary
Actor Proc: material Goal Loc: place Loc: time (temp) Beneficiary: recipient
Agent *Process* *Medium* *Location* *Location* *Beneficiary*

Segment D

GB547.[it **has] gone** straight back once again now to Walker
Act Proc: mat Location: place (spat) Loc: time Loc: time Location: place
Medium *Process* *Location* *Location* *Location* *Location*

GB548.who **'s put** a high kick up
Actor Process: material Goal Location: place
Agent *Process* *Medium* *Location*

GB549. -
GB550.he **'s come** through
Actor Proc: material Location: place (spatial)
Medium *Process* *Location*

GB551.but it **'s gone** back to Cleary
Actor Proc: material Location: place (spatial) Location: place
Medium *Process* *Location* *Location: place*

GB552.then [it **goes]** on to Iro
Actor Proc: material Location: place (spatial)
Medium *Process* *Location*

GB553. he **'s knocked** it back towards his own line
Actor Process: material Goal Location: place Location: place (spatial)
Agent *Process* *Medium* *Location* *Location*

GB554. he **gets** a kick **in**
Actor Process: material Goal Process (cont.)
Agent *Process* *Medium* *Process (cont.)*

GB555. -
GB556.he **scurries** back
Actor Process: material Location: place (spatial)
Medium *Process* *Location*

to get the football
Process: material Goal
Process *Medium*

GB557.and he **is nailed** about two metres out from the Bears' line
Goal Process: material Location: place (spatial)
Medium Process *Location*

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Segment E

GB566. it — 's gone — back — to Buettner
Actor — Process: material — Location: place (spatial) — Location: place (spatial)
Medium — *Process* — *Location* — *Location*

GB567. Buettner — puts — a high ball — up
Actor — Process: material — Goal — Location: place (spatial)
Agent — *Process* — *Medium* — *Location*

GB568. -

GB569. but er Cleary — very cautiously — [is] taking — that football
Actor — Manner: quality — Process: material — Goal
Agent — *Manner* — *Process* — *Medium*

GB570. and Dallas — is — right on his hammer — with a good chase
Carrier — Proc: intensive — Location: place (spatial) — Manner: quality
Medium — *Process* — *Location* — *Manner*

...

GB574. but the arm of Ward — has gone — up — towards Eastrn Suburbs
Actor — Process: material — Loc: place — Location: place (spat)
Medium — *Process* — *Location* — *Location*

Segment F

GB594. back — it — goes — now — to Garlick
Location: place (spat) — Actor — Process: material — Loc: time — Location: place
Location — *Medium* — *Process* — *Location* — *Location*

GB595. he — sends — it — across — to Iro
Actor — Process: material — Goal — Location: place (spat) — Beneficiary: recipient
Agent — *Process* — *Medium* — *Location* — *Beneficiary*

GB596. in possession — [are] — the Sydney City Roosters
Attribute — Process: relational — Carrier
Attribute — *Process* — *Medium*

GB597. [it — has] gone — back — to Peter Clark — now
Actor — Process: material — Loc: place (spat) — Loc: place (spat) — Loc: time (temp)
Medium — *Process* — *Location* — *Location* — *Location*

GB598. he — 's wrapped up — beautifully — too — thirty-two metres out from the Bears' line
Goal — Proc: material — Manner: qual — Acc: comit — Location: place (spatial)
Medium — *Process* — *Manner* — *Accomp* — *Location*

GB599. Garlick — very quickly — at the dummy-half
participant — Manner: quality — Location: place (spatial)
Medium — *Manner* — *Location*

GB600. he — gives — it — across — to Dunn
Actor — Process: material — Goal — Loc: place (spatial) — Beneficiary: recipient
Agent — *Process* — *Medium* — *Location* — *Beneficiary*

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6.1.2 Discussion of the Transitivity Analysis

The Transitivity analysis of the play-by-play talk extracts focuses only on clauses in which a process is contained or where the nature of the ellipsed process can be determined. There are 64 such clauses in the 2GB text and 86 in the ABC text. Excluded from the analysis of the process types are lines in which the type of the process is ambiguous or not present. These are lines GB470, GB475, GB492, GB539 and GB599 of the 2GB extract and lines A139 and A187 in the ABC extract. The other elements in these clauses such as type of Circumstance, are analysed in Transitivity terms. Potential participants in these lines are labelled with the general category, 'participant', because their grammatical role cannot be determined without reference to the process itself. Of the remaining 64 clauses in the 2GB extract, three clauses are dependent hypotactic clauses. In two of these, the alpha clause is a Relational clause, while the beta clause is a Material clause. In the third one, the alpha clause is a Material clause and the beta clause is also a Material clause. Of the 86 clauses in the ABC extract there are two dependent hypotactic clauses. In both of these the alpha clause is Relational while the beta clause is a Material clause. Only the Transitivity selection in the alpha clause is included in the analysis in this section. The reasons for this were explained in Chapter Four. This means that 61 clauses are analysed in terms of Transitivity process-types in the 2GB text and 84 clauses in the ABC extract. The results for both the 2GB and the ABC texts are presented in Table 6:2 below.

Table 6:2 Transitivity Choices in the 2GB Play-by-Play Segment

Transitivity Choice	2GB		ABC		2GB + ABC Average %
	No. of Occurrences	% of Total	No. of Occurrences	% of Total	% of Total
Material	55	90.2%	63	75.0%	82.6%
Relational	5	8.2%	14	16.7%	12.5%
Behavioural	1	1.6%	0	0%	0.8%
Existential	0	0%	7	8.3%	4.2%
Verbal	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Mental	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Total	61	100%	84	100%	100%

It is clear from the results in Table 6:2 that the most dominant process type in play-by-play talk is material. The next most common choice is the relational process, but the

difference between the proportion of each of these is very large. The choice of material process appears therefore to be the unmarked choice in play-by-play talk. This suggests that the commentators are relating material processes of the 'external world' congruently as material processes. Where they are not representing experience through the material process, they are choosing to classify or identify what they see, through the use of relational process clauses. On rare occasions the speakers may represent experience as that of 'existing' or 'behaving'. Thus, the speakers are not presenting any processes of inner feelings or consciousness, nor are they presenting any of the experience they are observing as processes of 'saying'.

The analysis of the patterns of transitivity structures in any text is a key to the nature of the linguistic activity taking place and the nature of the subject field (Halliday 1985a). We have found from this analysis that the speakers relate external material activities largely through the use of the material process clauses. However, material processes may be present in clauses in which the participants are construed as very abstract in nature, as is the case where grammatical metaphor is used. While the grammatical choice of participants in the material process clauses is either Actor, Goal, Recipient, Client or Range, it is of interest to examine the lexical content chosen to play these grammatical roles in the clause. The questions here are: 'Which elements are selected to play the role of Actor, Goal etc. in the material process clauses?' and 'Are those elements congruent or incongruent to what is happening in the situation?' An analysis of the actual participants in the material processes and the circumstances which are contingent on them indicates how the speakers construct the material event of the game. The next section analyses the participants in the material processes in play-by-play talk.

6.1.2.1 Participants in the Material Process Clauses in Play-by-Play Talk

Tables 6:3 and 6:4 show the distribution of the participants in the material clauses in each of the 2GB and the ABC play-by-play extracts.

Table 6:3 Distribution of Participants in Material Clauses in the 2GB Extract

Experiential Content of the Clause Participants	Grammatical Clause Participant			
	Actor		Goal	
	No.	%	No.	%
the ball (or synonym)	19	36.5	12	50
Player(s)	31	59.6	6	25
Referee/Arm of Referee	2	3.9	0	0
Kick (nominal)	0	0	3	12.5
Other	0	0	3	12.5
Total	52	100	24	100

Table 6:4 Distribution of Participants in Material Clauses in the ABC Extract

Experiential Content of the Clause Participants	Grammatical Clause Participant			
	Actor		Goal	
	No.	%	No.	%
the ball (or similar lexical item)	12	22.6	17	48.6
Player(s)	39	73.6	14	40
Referee/Arm of Referee	0	0	0	0
Kick (nominal)	1	1.9	0	0
Other	1	1.9	4	11.4
Total	53	100	35	100

Table 6:5 Average Total Proportions of the Distribution of Participants in Material Clauses in the 2GB and ABC Extracts

Experiential Content of the Clause Participants	Grammatical Clause Participant	
	Actor	Goal
the ball (or similar lexical item)	29.6%	49.3%
Player(s)	66.6%	32.5%
Referee/Arm of Referee	1.9%	0%
Kick (nominal)	0.9%	6.3%
Other	0.9%	11.9%
Total	99.9%	100%

Tables 6:3-6:5 show the selection of types of elements which take the role of either Actor or Goal in the material process clauses in play-by-play talk. We can see that in both the 2GB and the ABC extracts the most common element that is construed as Actor is a 'player'. The proportion of times a player is Actor, however, is greater in the ABC extract at 73.6% than in the 2GB extract at 59%. The next most common element chosen as Actor in the material clauses is 'the ball', but the proportions vary here too. In the 2GB extract the proportion of times the ball is chosen as Actor is 36.5%, whereas in the ABC it is 22.6%. In the grammatical category of Goal we find that the proportion of times the speaker chooses 'the ball' as Goal is very close (50% for the 2GB and 48.6% for the ABC). However, there is a difference between the proportion of times that the speakers choose 'a player' as Goal. In the 2GB extract the speaker chooses a player as Goal 25% of the time, whereas the ABC speaker chooses a player as Goal 40% of the time. As these extracts only represent a fraction of play-by-play talk, the results for the combined proportions in Table 6:5 may represent the overall proportions for play-by-play talk: players are Actors 66.6% of the time and Goal 32.5% of the time, and 'the ball' is Actor 29.6% of the time and Goal 49.3% of the time.

It does not seem surprising that the speakers are choosing to grammaticalise the players as Actors for about two thirds of the time and the ball as Goal for approximately 50% of the time, as this would seem to be a fairly congruent representation of the activities taking place on the field of play. That is, the players are the 'actors' in the game of Rugby League. They are the ones who pass the ball, kick the ball, tackle other players and so on. What is interesting from these results is that 'the ball' is grammaticalised as Actor for almost one third of the time (see Table 6:5). In these instances the ball is not construed as being dependent on an outside force in order to be involved in an activity. Rather, it is the instigator of the activity taking place. The game in fact hinges on the progress of the ball — on where it goes— and when the ball is construed as an Actor in play-by-play talk, the process is often one of 'going' as in the following clause: GB594 *back it goes now to Garlick*. That the activities in the game of Rugby League centre around the ball is reflected in the fact that play-by-play talk is often described as 'ball-by-ball' description (Hartley

1993). The transitive grammatical model makes it possible to follow the progress of the ball in a linear fashion. That is, the action in which the ball is involved is consistently extending to the right, which is effectively to the ball's next destination in the progress of events in the game. The transitive resource of material process clauses with the ball as Actor is perfectly suited to this kind of construal of experience. It is a means of congruently representing the sequential movement of activities on the field of play in a game of Rugby League.

Although the results in Tables 6:3-6:5 indicate that the players are selected as Actors more often than as Goals, the analysis also indicates an important difference between the grammatical roles played by 'the ball' and those played by 'the players'; the ball does not generally enter the clause in any other capacity than as either Actor or Goal, whereas a number of different grammatical participants may be selected to host 'the players'. Table 6:6 presents the results of an analysis of the 2GB and ABC play-by-play extracts in terms of the grammatical roles of 'players' other than as Actor or Goal in the Material process clauses.

Table 6:6 Location of 'Players' in the Material Process Clauses Other than Actor or Goal

Grammatical Location	Number of Instances	
	2GB	ABC
Location: place (spatial)	21	19
Beneficiary: recipient	6	3
Accompaniment: comitative	3	1
Manner: means	1	1
Cause: reason	0	1
Total	31	25

By far the greatest number of times a player is mentioned in a Material process clause, when he is not Actor or Goal, is within a nominal group in a Circumstance of location (place). This seems to suggest that 'players' represent a key experiential element entering the clause in several grammatical categories, and that they represent significant pieces of information that the speaker wishes to convey in play-by-play talk. However, the 'players' presence in these various grammatical locations is not just indicative of their 'informational significance'. The choices of 'player' as an element in a number of different grammatical locations in the clause and of 'the ball' as 'Actor' or 'Goal' reflect what

Thibault (cited earlier) means when he says that '[t]he material event which is observed incorporates the means of its observation, which the language user brings to bear on it' (1993: 132). In talking about the game of rugby league, the game itself leaves few options open for choices of participants, processes and circumstances. The set of possible participants in the context of play-by-play is very limited, as demonstrated in the few choices noted in Tables 6:3- 6:6 above.

From the transitivity perspective we can see how the participants involved in the processes are represented in terms of their linear arrangement, or in terms of whether the processes they are engaged in extend to the right to another participant. Where there are one-participant clauses, the verb tends to be intransitive. Furthermore, an examination of the two-participant clauses in both the ABC and the 2GB data reveals that they are almost always packaged in line with the transitive linear model. Whether the participant is *the ball*, or a *player* it is 'doing', 'doing to', or having things 'done to it'. Play-by-play talk tends to favour this grammatical interpretation of the material events taking place.

One final grammatical category which needs to be considered in the experiential grammar is that of circumstance. Table 6:7 presents the frequency of the types of circumstances in each of the play-by-play extracts and calculates the proportion of each type in terms of the total number of circumstances in each extract. An average proportion of each type of circumstance is indicated in the far right column of Table 6:7.

Table 6:7 Types of Circumstances in Play-by-Play Talk

Type of Circumstance	2GB		ABC		Average Proportions
	No. of instances	%	No. of instances	%	%
Location: place	71	66.4%	76	80.9%	73.1%
Location: time	17	15.9%	6	6.4%	11.5%
Extent: duration	1	0.9%	0	0%	0.5%
Manner: quality	8	7.5%	8	8.5%	7.9%
Manner: means	2	1.9%	1	1.1%	1.5%
Accompaniment: comitation	6	5.6%	1	1.1%	3.5%
Accompaniment: addition	1	0.9%	0	0%	0.5%
Cause: behalf	1	0.9%	0	0%	0.5%
Cause: reason	0	0%	2	2.1%	1.0%
Total	107	100%	94	100%	100%

We can see from Table 6:7 that the greatest proportion of circumstances in both the 2GB and the ABC extracts are Location: place circumstances. As with the choice of Actor and Goal, we can say that the high proportion of Location: place circumstances reflects something fundamental about the relationship between the experience being construed and the grammatical choices that are being selected to construe this experience: the location of events on the field of play are key to the material event being observed and hence directly relevant to an understanding of the progress of the game. How close one team is to the other's goalline or how far from the touch line the crucial events of the game are are important pieces of information to be relayed to the listeners so that the listeners can build a picture of the progress of the game and the events taking place in the game.

6.1.2.2 Construing the Field of Rugby League Play-by-Play Through Process Types

In the transitivity analysis we found that the most common process chosen by the speakers in play-by-play talk is the material process. In this section the lexical verbs chosen as exponents of the material processes in the play-by-play talk in the first half of the ABC commentary are examined in order to build a picture of the kind of activities which these material processes are construing. Table 6.8 lists those lexical items that are mentioned at least twice in the text.

Table 6:8 Common Lexical Processes in Play-by-Play Talk

Lexical Process (root form)	Number of Times Each Item Occurs	Percentage of Total Occurrences
give	25	10.3
go	24	9.9
take	21	8.7
tackle	20	8.3
made	9	3.7
come, move, hip	8	3.3
ground, send	6	2.5
gather/regather, hit, run	5	2.1
gallop, kick, loop	4	1.7
attack, bounce, catch, chase, chip, dummy, hold, get (away, up,) play, release, slice (try to slice), work	3	1.2
accelerate, angle, beat, grab, grass, grubber, knock (down), miss, pick up, pops, pull, pump, put, scoop up, score, scythe, seize, steam, stride, tap, throw, wait	2	0.8

From Table 6:8 we can see that the most common processes in play-by-play talk are *give*, *go*, *tackle*, and *take*. These, in fact, construe the primary activities which take place in a game of Rugby League: players 'give' the ball to other players, the ball 'goes' from one location to another, players are 'tackled', or players 'take' the ball from one location to another.

From Table 6:8 and from observation of the verbs used in both commentaries, we can also see that there are different lexical items which function as synonyms for construing the same activity. For instance, the action of *tackling* may also be related through such verbs as *hit, grass, ground, bash*, or *cut down*. Running or moving on the field are related through such verbs as *slice, steam, stride, scythe, advance, bullock, charge, chug, clap (on the pace), dance, power, probe, rattle, roll, saunter, snipe, speed*, and *wheel around*. According to Marks (n.d.), one of the signs of a good commentator is the use of a variety of words and phrases so that the commentary does not become boring or tedious. This variety in the use of lexical items for a limited activity would seem to suggest that this commentator is attempting to add variety to his description of the events during play-by-play.

However, it can be argued that the variety of lexical items used to construe the limited set of activities taking place conveys something else about the context than just a desire to add

variety. Many of the choices of lexical items denote active, aggressive, violent, powerful, movements (e.g. *charge, cut down, bash, monsters, busts*); others denote graceful movement (e.g. *dance*); and others conjure images of the battlefield (e.g. *snipe, attacks, fends off*). In addition, aggressive and violent images are conveyed through the verbs in idiomatic phrases such as *finishes him off, has got his legs chopped from under him, is dumped like a bag of spuds, has hit the deck*, etc. These choices of lexical items reflect a specific attitude towards the game of Rugby League and towards the activities in which its players engage. Peters (1995) and Wilkins (1995) perhaps sum up this attitude of aggression, grace, and violence most effectively in the following quotations.

> *Peters*: It's a gladiatorial thing on the field and it's a battle of skill, of courage, of toughness, of wits ... It's a battle of who's the toughest, who's the fittest, whose general has sent them out on the field with the best match plan.

> *Wilkins*: There's that pure quality there when you see some of these athletes run or tackle or pass that it looks like a piece of art almost... [and then] there's the pure aggression... They're just thundering into each other and it's body on the line. It's hurt. There's no padding. It's brutal. It's something that stirs you... It's ugly. It's horrible. And yet there's something pure about it, like a huge lion or a tiger attacking its prey. It's so powerful. It's gnawing at it, and you can't take your eyes off it. It's mesmeric. They're the two halves that I see. The pure athleticism, the ballet if you like, and then there's the animal, the pure aggression side.

The variety of lexical items used for a limited group of activities provides depth in terms of the manner in which these activities are construed. The choice within this variety of lexical items also reflects and perpetuates an underlying attitude towards the activities of the game and the game itself.

6.1.3 Discussion of the Ergative Analysis

As already noted, the system of ERGATIVITY is another way of conceptualising experience. In the ergative model the relationship between the Medium and the Process is viewed as non-linear and nuclear. It is concerned, 'not with one variable acting on another but with the "energetic dependencies" in the circuit as a whole' (Thibault 1993: 135).

With reference to some of the differences between the ergative and transitive systems, Halliday notes that some participant functions, such as Agent and Beneficiary, are viewed as circumstantial in the Transitivity system but are viewed as participants in the Process in an ergative analysis. These additional participants in the nucleus of the clause 'may enter in to the clause either directly as nominal groups (participant-like) or indirectly in prepositional phrases (circumstance-like)' (Halliday 1994: 167). Where there is no process, however, the status of a nominal item in a clause may be difficult to determine. For instance, in the transitivity analysis, it was difficult to determine the nature of the process type in clauses such as GB492 *but a nice pick up this time from Mattie Sing for Eastern Suburbs* or GB599 *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half.* Part of the reason for the difficulty lies in the use of grammatical metaphor in the first clause and the lack of explicit reference to any activity in the second. Nevertheless, in these lines it is possible to determine the Medium around which the activity revolves. In the first line we can see that the Medium is the abstract event of *a nice pick up,* while in the second example the Medium is *Garlick.* Therefore, because we are not concerned with 'type of process' in the ergative analysis, but with which element is the crucial element involved in the process and whether there are other participants involved in that process, it is possible to analyse all of the lines of the transcript. For instance, at line GB599 *Garlick very quickly at the dummy half,* we do not know what type of process is being enacted here, but we do know that Garlick is the main participant in the clause and hence the Medium and that *at the dummy half* is a circumstance attendant on whatever action Garlick is engaged in.

Table 6:9 presents the results of the ergative analysis of the 2GB and ABC transcripts in terms of the kind of lexical item chosen to take the role of Medium in the clause, and the number and proportion of times these lexical items occur in relation to each other. The number and proportion of times an Agency is included in the clause is also listed. The average proportions are indicated in the far right column.

Table 6:9 Medium and Agency in the Play-by-Play Extracts

Experiential Content of the Medium	2GB				ABC				Mediums in the 2GB and ABC Extracts
	No. of Times Medium Occurs	% of Total	No. of Times Agency Present	% of Total Number of Times Agency Present	No. of Times Medium Occurs	% of Total	No. of Times Agency Present	% of Total Number of Times Agency Present	
the ball	31	46.3%	12	44.4%	34	38.6%	15	45.5%	42%
player(s)	23	34.3%	7	25.9%	37	42.1%	14	42.4%	38.7%
action/event	8	11.9%	5	18.5%	10	11.4%	1	3.0%	11.6%
team name	1	1.5%	0	0%	4	4.5%	0	0%	3.2%
other	4	6%	3	11.1%	3	3.4%	3	9.1%	4.5%
Total	67	100	27	100	88	100	33	100	100

From Table 6:9 we can see that in the 2GB extract the Medium is most often 'the ball', whereas in the ABC extract it is most often 'the players' (although the margin between these results is very small). Table 6.9 also shows that the total average for the proportion of times 'the ball' or 'the players' are selected is very close. We can see from the table that there is a considerable gap between the number of times 'the ball' or 'the players' are selected as Medium and any other element is selected to take the role of Medium. With reference to the number of times an Agent is present in the process, we find that in the 2GB extract an Agent is present less often where the Medium is a 'player' than it is in the ABC extract, whereas the proportion of times there is an Agent in clauses in which the Medium is 'the ball' is close for both commentaries.

The results in Table 6:9 indicate that the medium-process nuclei in play-by-play talk revolve mostly around either 'the ball' or 'the players'. This seems to complement the findings in the transitivity analysis that the choices of elements in the material event are limited in scope.

With regard to the type of processes used by the speakers in play-by-play talk there are no processes in the extracts that configure 'ergatively'. Processes such as *kick, take, go* (in the sense that it is used in play-by-play talk), and *tackle* are processes in which the action

is extending to the right, and are non-self-instigatable. We can thus conclude that the interpretation of events in play-by-play talk favours the transitive model of 'extension' rather than the ergative model of 'causality'.

6.1.4 Summary of the Transitivity and Ergativity Analyses

This section analysed play-by-play talk from the point of view of transitivity and ergativity. The transitivity analysis revealed that the majority of processes chosen during play-by-play talk are material processes and that there are no verbal or mental processes chosen. These results indicate that during play-by-play talk the speakers are representing the material activity they are observing congruently through material processes. The participants in the processes were found to be most often 'the players' in the game of Rugby League that is being observed. The next most common type of participant in the processes is 'the ball'. This result highlights the prominence given to these participants, but also construes the restricted set of choices available in the field of play-by-play talk. There is also a restricted set of activities as revealed in the set of choices of lexical processes, but these are related through a variety of lexical items that interpret the game as aggressive, violent, battle-like or graceful.

The ergativity analysis confirmed that the set of choices in the field is limited, in that choices of Medium and Process nuclei were limited to 'players' or 'the ball'. The ergative analysis of the 2GB and ABC extracts also revealed that there are no instances of ergative-non-ergative processes chosen during play-by-play talk. Rather, processes are of the transitive-intransitive type, suggesting a linear process of action which is not self-instigating but where one participant acts on another. This seems to suggest that the speakers choose to congruently capture the movement of actions which take place in the activities which constitute a Rugby League game.

6.2 Verbal Groups

In the analyses so far we have examined the way in which the transitive and ergative structures chosen by the speakers construe the field of discourse in terms of process

types, lexical verb choices, types of participants and types of mediums. But the nature of the activity of play-by-play talk is very much tied to a specific time frame, and as the definition of play-by-play talk suggests (see Chapter Four), the talk must be simultaneous to the events taking place in the perceptual sphere of the speakers. We have found in the analysis of the Mood that the primary tense of the verbal groups chosen in play-by-play talk is present tense, and this finding was not surprising considering the definition of play-by-play talk which this study has adopted. However, relating the activity to the time frame of the speaker is not effected merely through the Finite tense choice. In fact, the system of TENSE in English is recursive with the Finite realising primary tense, and other elements of the verbal group (if the group is not a simple structure) realising secondary tenses. In order to examine the recursive nature of the verbal group we can view the verbal group in terms of its logical structure. At the Head of the verbal group is the Finite, which Halliday explains is the 'Deictic tense'. The tense choice in the Finite is interpreted as 'relative to the speech event' (Halliday 1994c: 198). We found in Chapter Five that the deictic choice in play-by-play talk is 'present': the time of the events being spoken about is concurrent with the time of the speech event. Secondary tense choices are those which follow the primary tense and these may also be past or present (or future in Halliday's model). In the SF model of grammar, the verbal group *has been playing* can be analysed as α β γ, where α refers to the Head of the verbal group, which in this case is the primary tense of the verbal group (present tense), β refers to the first secondary tense choice (past tense), and γ refers to the next secondary tense choice (present). In Halliday's terminology, the whole tense system here can be expressed as 'present in past in present'. The notation used to express this is: − for past, (+ for future) and ∅ (zero) for present. Thus, the example, *has been playing* can be expressed in notational form as

∅ − ∅
(present in past in present)

In 'traditional' terminology this verbal group would be expressed as 'present perfect progressive' where the action of playing began before the time of speaking but has not yet been completed.

Another type of verbal group that needs to be considered here is the phrasal verb. Phrasal verbs may consist of a verb plus an adverb, a verb plus a preposition, or a verb plus an adverb and a preposition.

The kinds of choices in the verbal group made during play-by-play are presented in the next section. It should be noted that although the notation devised by Halliday is used in the analysis here, the description of the verbal groups uses traditional terminology (e.g. present progressive), rather than the Hallidayan terminology of, for instance, 'present in present'. The traditional terminology has been chosen so as to include features such as aspect and voice in the analysis.

6.2.1 The Structure of Verbal Groups in Play-by-Play

The verbal groups selected in the 2GB extract are presented in Table 6:10, the analysis of the verbal groups in the ABC extract is presented in Appendix XI. Verbal groups are indicated in bold type and are analysed according to the logical structure, the presence of a phrasal verbal group, voice, and perfective/progressive aspect. Ellipsis in the verbal group is indicated by square brackets with the ellipsed element included. Elliptical verbal groups are indicated by an [E] on the far right of the table.

Table 6:10 The Structure of Verbal Group Choices in the 2GB Play-by-Play Extract

Segment A

GB469.GH: **goes**	Ø	(simple present)
GB470. (VG omission)		
GB471.[he **is**] **put**	Ø	(present passive) [E]
GB472.**it's gone**	Ø −	(present perfective)
GB473.**[goes]**	Ø	(simple present) [E]
GB474.**aims** we..	Ø	(simple present)
GB475.(VG omission)		
GB476.**[is] giving**	ØØ	(present progressive) [E]
GB477.**goes**	Ø	(simple present)
GB478.**steps**	Ø	(simple present)
GB479. not play-by-play		
GB480.**catch u p with**	Ø	(simple present, phrasal verb)
GB481.**drag**	Ø	(simple present)
GB482.**goes**	Ø	(simple present)
GB483.**[goes]**	Ø	(simple present) [E]
GB484.**he's cut down**	Ø	(present passive, phrasal verb)
GB485.**it's gone**	Ø −	(present perfective)
GB486.**gives**	Ø	(simple present)

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GB487.not play-by-play
GB488.**goes**   ∅   (simple present)
GB489.**[goes]**   ∅   (simple present)   [E]
GB490.**puts**   ∅   (simple present)
GB491.not play-by-play
GB492.(VG omission)
GB493.[he] **heads**   ∅   (simple present)
GB494.[he] **links u p**   ∅   (simple present, phrasal verb)

Segment B
GB502. [is] **getting u p**   ∅∅   (present progressive, phrasal verb) [E]
GB503.not play-by-play
GB504.**it's gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB505.**gives**   ∅   (simple present)
GB506.Moore's **come**   ∅   (present perfective)

GB510.referee**'ll blow** that **u p**   ∅   (modal + present, phrasal verb)

Segment C
GB521.**will play**   ∅   (modal + present)
GB522.**[goes]**   ∅   (simple present)   [E]
GB523.**tries to put** the bust **on**   ∅   (simple present, phased VG, phrasal verb)
...
GB526.**it's gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB527.**[goes]**   ∅   (simple present)   [E]
GB528. not play-by-play
GB529. [he **is**] **pulled down**   ∅   (present passive, phrasal verb) [E]
GB530.**shows**   ∅   (simple present)
GB531.**gives**   ∅   (simple present)
GB532.[is] **standing**   ∅∅   (present progressive) [E]
GB533.not play-by-play
GB534.Walker's **gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB535.Lam's there   ∅   (simple present)
    to **pick u p**   (nf, phrasal verb)
GB536.**does**   ∅   (simple present)
GB537.[he] **tries to step**   ∅   (simple present, phased VG,)
GB538.Taylor's there   ∅   (simple present)
    to **nail** him   (nf, non- finite)
GB539.(VG omission)
GB540.it's back   ∅   (simple present)
GB541.**sends**   ∅   (simple present)

Segment D
GB547.GH: [it **has**] **gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective) [E]
GB548.who's **put** a high kick **u p**   ∅ –   (present perfective, phrasal verb)
GB549.not play-by-play
GB550.**he's come**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB551.but **it's gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB552.then [it **goes**]   ∅   (simple present)   [E]
GB553.**he's knocked** it   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB554.**gets**   ∅   (simple present)
GB555.not play-by-play
GB556.**scurries** back   ∅   (simple present)
    to **get** the football   (nf, non-finite)
GB557.he **is nailed**   ∅   (present passive)

Segment E
GB566.**it's gone**   ∅ –   (present perfective)
GB567.**puts** a high ball **u p**   ∅   (simple present, phrasal verb)
GB568.not play-by-play
GB569.but er Cleary [is] very cautiously **taking** ∅ ∅ (pres. progressive)
GB570.**[is]**   ∅   (simple present)   [E]

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...
| GB574.**has gone** | ∅ – | (present perfective) |

Segment F
GB594.GH: **goes**	∅	(simple present)
GB595.**sends**	∅	(simple present)
GB596.[are]	∅	(simple present) [E]
GB597.[it **has**] gone	∅ –	(present perfective) [E]
GB598.he's **wrapped u p**	∅	(present passive)
GB599.(VG omission)		
GB600.**gives**	∅	(simple present)

The results of the analysis of the verbal groups in the 2GB play-by-play extract shown in Table 6:10 and those for the ABC extract (see Appendix XI) reveal that the verbal groups chosen in play-by-play talk are rarely of a complex type. The verb generally conflates with the Finite element (the simple present) or extends to include either perfective, or progressive aspect, or passive voice only. In fact, in the complete portion of play-by-play talk in the first half of the ABC and the 2GB commentaries there are only six instances of verbal groups which show a greater degree of complexity than those found in the analyses of the two extracts. Five of these instances involve the lexico-modal operator 'be + going to + infinitive'. The other instance involves the lexico-modal 'be + about to + infinitive'. The three instances in the 2GB commentary are in passive voice, whereas in the ABC commentary two instances are in passive voice, while the third is in active voice. It can be argued that the lack of complexity or recursion in the verbal groups is related to the contextual pressure of having to keep pace with the activities taking place in the field of play: there would be no time to express complex arrangements of activities. Other complex verbal groups such as those involving modal auxiliaries, as in 'might have been running', convey an evaluative meaning about the activity, and these are also not relevant in play-by-play talk (as the Mood analysis pointed out). The relatively simple structure of verbal groups in play-by-play talk creates a sense of spontaneous activity and separate single actions taking place at the time of speaking.

Before moving on to a consideration of voice and aspect in verbal groups in play-by-play talk, the next section considers the function of present tense in play-by-play talk from the perspective of its role in the construal of experiential meaning.

6.2.2 The Function of Present Tense in Play-by-Play Talk

There have been several suggestions as to the function of present tense in play-by-play talk. Pawley (1991) for instance, observes that during play-by-play commentary the simple present or present progressive are used to describe events 'so as to create the impression that they are relaying events are they happen' (1991: 358). In a study of simultaneous television sports commentating Marriott (1996) finds that the present tense is 'typically used for the description of what is going on at the moment of utterance, and for the prediction of situations in the immediate future' (1996: 72). She observes, however, that when reporting events on video reply, 'commentators seem equally likely to talk about the action on-screen in the past tense or in the present, and may even alternate apparently randomly between the two' (1996: 73). The choice of tense in television sports commentating reflects the fact that the replay images motivate past time references, while 'it is the "liveness" of the commentary which licenses the commentators' view of the material as "now"' (Marriott 1996: 84). It would thus seem that the liveness of commentary on radio motivates the use of exclusively present tense during play-by-play talk. These arguments for the function of present tense in commentary are straightforward and acceptable, as it would be difficult to dispute that during simultaneous commentating, the speakers are attempting to translate into verbal semiotic actions as those actions take place in front of them, and that the use of the present tense contributes to the effectiveness of this function of play-by-play talk.

6.2.3 Types of Verbal Groups in Play-by-Play Talk: Voice and Aspect

An examination of the analysis of the structure of the verbal group in Table 6:10 shows that while the tense choice is present tense, there is a variety of types of verbal groups chosen during play-by-play talk. In this section, in order to gain a more detailed picture of the types of verbal group choices made during play-by-play talk, the complete play-by-play portions of both the 2GB and the ABC commentaries are analysed in terms of choice of verbal groups. Specifically, only finite verbal groups are considered, and only those with up to one auxiliary. As was noted in the previous section, complex verbal groups (i.e. verbal groups with two or more auxiliaries are rare in play-by-play talk), so the exclusion

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of these from the analysis is not considered to distort the overall picture of the frequency of verbal group types. The analysis in this section is divided into two stages. In the first stage, only verbal groups in which there is an operator present, or in the case of simple present, in which the lexical verb is present, are counted. In the second stage, ellipsis is taken into consideration in calculating the frequency of verbal group types. The first stage of this analysis thus ignores any lines in which there is verbal group ellipsis of any type, but aims to show the proportion of full verbal group choices made by the speakers during play-by-play talk. The results of the analysis of the complete play-by-play portions of the first and second halves of the 2GB text and the ABC texts in terms of verbal groups in which a present tense operator is selected are presented in Tables 6:11 and 6:12 below. These results are then combined and presented in Table 6:13 to give an overall picture of the pattern of choices in verbal group type in play-by-play talk.

Table 6:11 Verbal Groups Selecting Primary Tense (Present Tense) in the Complete Play-by-Play Portions of the 2GB Commentary

Verbal Group	2GB - First Half		2GB - Second Half		Averaged Totals - 2GB	
	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total
Simple (Active)	232	72.7%	274	79.2%	506	76.1%
Simple (Passive)	32	10.0%	33	9.5%	65	9.8%
Progressive	5	1.6%	5	1.5%	10	1.5%
Perfective	50	15.7%	34	9.8%	84	12.6%
Total	319	100	346	100	665	100

Table 6:12 Verbal Groups Selecting Primary Tense (Present Tense) in the Complete Play-by-Play Portions of the ABC Commentary

Verbal Group	ABC - First Half		ABC - Second Half		Averaged Totals - ABC	
	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total
Simple (Active)	268	79.2%	290	83.3%	558	81.7%
Simple (Passive)	62	19.3%	51	14.7%	113	16.5%
Progressive	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	6	0.9%
Perfective	2	0.6%	4	1.2%	6	0.9%
Total	335	100	348	100.1	683	100

Table 6:13 Combined Results of the Analysis of the Types of Verbal Groups Chosen in the 2GB and ABC Play-by-Play Portions

Types of Verbal Groups	Totals: 2GB + ABC	
	No. of occurrences	% of Total
Simple (Active)	1064	78.9%
Simple (Passive)	178	13.2%
Progressive	16	1.2%
Perfective	90	6.7%
Total	1348	100%

From Tables 6:11, 6:12 and 6:13 we can see that the most common verbal group chosen during play-by-play talk is the simple (active) present. Amongst the other verbal groups there are some differences between the choices made by each commentator. The 2GB commentator chooses a greater proportion of perfective verbal groups than does the ABC commentator, whereas the proportion of simple passive verbal groups chosen by the ABC commentator is slightly higher than that of the 2GB commentator. In both commentaries the selection of present progressive verbal groups is low, with this group forming the lowest proportion in the 2GB commentary and sharing the lowest proportion with the present perfective in the ABC commentary. Before commenting on the possible reasons for these differences we will move on to the second stage of the analysis in which ellipsis is taken into account. The results of taking into account the cases of verbal group ellipsis in the play-by-play portions of each commentary are presented in Table 6:14 below.

Table 6:14 Verbal Groups in Play-by-Play Talk Taking Into Account Verbal Operator Ellipsis

Verbal Group	2GB - First Half		ABC - First Half		Totals - 2GB + ABC	
	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total	No. of occurrences	% of Total
Simple (Active)	306	63.5%	314	62.8%	620	63.1%
Simple (Passive)	89	18.5%	88	17.6%	177	18%
Progressive	33	6.9%	37	7.4%	70	7.1%
Perfective	54	11.2%	61	12.2%	115	11.7%
Total	482	100	500	100	982	100

From the results in Table 6:14 we can see that when ellipsis in the verbal group is taken into consideration, the proportion of simple (active) present tense verbal groups decreases relative to the proportion of other types of verbal groups, from an overall average of 78.9% to 63.1%. But it still remains the most common verbal group choice in both commentaries.

When operator ellipsis is taken into account, the proportion of simple passive verbal groups increases almost twofold in the first half of the 2GB commentary, but slightly decreases in the ABC commentary. The results overall, however, suggest that the proportion of simple (passive) present tense verbal groups increases somewhat when operator ellipsis is taken into account.

In the case of present perfective verbal groups, the proportion in the first half of the 2GB commentary falls from 15.7% to 11.2%; but in the ABC commentary it rises from 0.6% to 12.2%. These results suggest that where a present perfective verbal group is selected in the ABC commentary, there is more likely to be operator ellipsis than when it is selected in the 2GB commentary. However, the results overall suggest that when operator ellipsis is taken into account, the proportion of present perfective verbal groups present in play-by-play talk almost doubles.

The reason why there is a difference between each commentary in terms of operator ellipsis in the present perfective verbal group is difficult to explain. The 2GB speaker may prefer not to select operator ellipsis for the present perfective verbal group because he may feel that unlike the present progressive, without the presence of the operator the tense of the present perfective verbal groups seems unclear; this may not, however, be a concern of the ABC speaker.

When we compare the results in Tables 6:11, 6:12 and 6:14 we find that in the ABC commentary the proportion of progressive verbal groups increases from 0.9% to 7.4% and in the 2GB text the increase is from 1.5% to 6.9%. These results suggest that when a progressive verbal group is selected in play-by-play talk, operator ellipsis is more likely to occur across both commentaries. That is, there are increases shown in both commentaries and the results shown in Tables 6:13 and 6:14 indicate a sharp increase overall from 1.2% to 7.1%. The present progressive verbal group differs from the other verbal groups selected in play-by-play talk by virtue of the fact that it encodes activities as 'ongoing', rather than as completed or momentary. The next section proposes some possible reasons why the speakers choose operator ellipsis in the present progressive verbal groups in play-by-play talk.

6.2.4 Some Possible Reasons for Operator Ellipsis in Present Progressive Verbal Groups in Play-by-Play Talk

In the previous section it was found that when operator ellipsis is taken into account in an analysis of verbal group types in play-by-play talk, more often than not, speakers choose operator ellipsis. The reason for this may lie in the relationship between the nature of the activity of play-by-play talk (field and mode) and the nature of the present progressive verbal group. In these verbal groups the speaker has chosen to prioritise the secondary information of the verbal group. As has already been explained, in the SF model of grammar, the verbal group is seen to be recursive in that once a primary tense is chosen there is an option to select a secondary (or tertiary etc.) tense. In the present progressive,

the secondary tense is present tense such that the present progressive in SF terminology is the 'present in present' (in contrast to the present perfective which is 'past in present'). Therefore, by selecting only the lexical portion of the verb, the speaker is still able to convey a sense of 'present time'. Unlike the activity in a simple present tense verbal group, however, the activity in the present progressive is packaged as an 'ongoing' activity. In the context of play-by-play talk, it would seem that the speakers are able to linguistically economise in their talk by stating only the lexical portion of the present progressive verbal group and yet convey the sense of an ongoing present time event. This choice appears to be a response to the mode of discourse: the talk is responding to the moment, and events are spontaneously relayed as they are happening.

The non-selection of the operator in the present progressive verbal groups also appears to be responding to the field of discourse. Because the nature of the activity of radio play-by-play is to relay concurrent events the context demands that the actions being relayed be understood as 'concurrent' to the moment of speaking. Therefore, it would seem that the inclusion of the finite element is in a sense redundant or unnecessary (a point raised in Chapter Five in the discussion of Mood). The information of most value in the situation then becomes the lexical, or experiential, part of the verb. By only stating the lexical verb the speakers can economise on what they say by stating only 'information' words. This could be interpreted as one of the ways in which the speakers fulfil the requirement of 'succinctness' in play-by-play talk as mentioned in Chapter Four, or to reiterate what Hyde said, 'to give the maximum amount of information in the minimum amount of words' (1995). Section 2.5.1 discusses some examples of present progressive verbal groups in play-by-play talk.

6.2.5 The Function of the Different Types of Verbal Groups in Play-by-Play Talk

In the previous section it was found that whether we take into consideration verbal group ellpsis or not, the simple present tense choices remains the most frequently chosen verbal group during play-by-play talk. This finding would seem to support the long accepted view that the simple present tense is a feature of simultaneous sports commentating. In

fact, the use of the simple present, is referenced in Quirk et al.'s (1972: 85) *A Grammar of Contemporary English* as 'the instantaneous simple present' signifying 'an event simultaneous with the present moment', and used in such situations as commentaries, demonstrations, exclamations and performative declarations. However, as the results of the previous section have shown, the simple present tense is not the only verbal group choice made during play-by-play talk, and so we could ask, 'Why is it that the speakers choose other verbal group types to relay concurrent action?'. Reference to previous studies of sports commentating suggests some possible reasons for the choice of other verbal group types during play-by-play talk.

6.2.5.1 Use of the Present-Progressive

Ferguson's study of the recordings of commentaries of American baseball and football and Japanese baseball suggests that 'in direct reporting of events the sportscaster uses the simple present to refer to actions of short duration regarded as taking place at the moment of speaking - *Washington backhands it* - and the progressive to refer to actions of extended duration - *they're bringing that ball back to the 27-yard line* - or summing up the game or season - *the Expos are perking*' (1983: 164). This is an interesting claim by Ferguson and is worth examining in the light of the data used in this study. Some examples of actions reported in the present progressive from the 2GB and ABC data are listed below.

Examples 1-4

1. GB502 *but now Lowrie [is] getting up very slowly*
2. GB532 *Iro [is] standing out in the centres*
3. GB569 *but er Cleary very cautiously taking that football*
4. A1633 *running from Taylor*
   A1634 *and kicking*
   A1635 *driving it over the top*
   A1636 *accelerating down the touchline*

Each of the above actions are likely to take more time than others such as *goes, gives*, or *sends*, and in particular in GB502 and GB569 the added descriptions *very slowly* and *very cautiously* suggest that the actions are taking a comparatively longer time. However, the same actions (i.e. lexically the same) are also reported in the simple present tense.

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Examples 5 - 8

5.	A146 *who accelerates to the half-way line*
6.	GB1896 *Dunn runs towards the centre of the ground*
7.	A1591 *and Fittler kicks for position*
8.	A1592 *drives it into touch*

Furthermore, there are examples in the commentary of actions which take the simple present tense or the present passive form but which materially, would also be more likely to take an extended period of time. For instance in the following examples the lexical verbs are construing actions which would seem to require a comparatively longer time to complete.

Examples 9 - 11

9.	GB529 *but [he is] pulled down once again thirty out now from the Bears' line*
10.	GB481 *and drag him to the ground thirty out from the North Sydney line*
11.	A641 *and again he chugs back over the ten*

From the examples in the Rugby League play-by-play talk, it cannot be concluded that the actions being reported using the progressive form take a relatively longer time to complete in the situation, because not only do the same lexical items appear in both the progressive and the simple verbal groups, but actions which materially would most likely take a comparatively long time to complete are reported using the simple present tense. It would seem that the only way of ascertaining whether the use of the progressive form is used for actions of longer duration would be to check the use of the verbal groups against the action as it is taking place. Unfortunately, this kind of analysis was not within the scope of this study. Therefore, without access to the events taking place, it is difficult to measure the length of time each activity takes, and to therefore make any generalisations regarding 'duration of action' in relation to why the speakers choose on one occasion to use the simple present while on another the present progressive form of the same lexical verb. It would not appear from the data in this study that Ferguson's claim can be supported. We can only speculate at this point that the use of the progressive form of a certain verb construes an event which may take longer than its simple present counterpart.

6.2.5.2 The Present Passive

According to Table 6:14 in play-by-play talk after the simple present active verbal groups, the present passive verbal group is the next most common verbal group selected. An examination of the use of the passive in the commentary seems to suggest that its selection differs according to the kind of material action which is being construed in the verbal group. When the action is that of tackling such as in the following examples, the Actor in the process of tackling is often (though not always) absent or 'un-named'.

Examples 12 & 13

12.   A30 *tackled just inside North Sydney territory*
13.   A328 *and he's held forty-two metres out from the goal-line in the cricket pitch area in the centre of the field*

In examples 12 and 13 the player being tackled is presupposed from the preceding text, but the perpetrator of the tackle remains unsaid. This would seem to indicate either that the speaker may not be sure of the identity of the perpetrator of the tackle and therefore he leaves this piece of information out, or the perpetrator of the tackle is less important than other pieces of information such as the event of tackling, the person being tackled, or the location on the field of play where the tackle takes place. Whichever is the case, the present passive form allows for the identity of the Actor to remain unknown.

The other prominent case in which the present passive is used is where the Agent of the action is identified. In these cases the action is most often one of either *giving, taking, receiving* or *knocking* the ball. Examples of these are listed below.

Examples 14-17

14.   A34 *and it's taken by Matt Seers*
15.   A51 *but brilliantly taken by Dallas on the flank*
16.   A281 *it's knocked backwards by Iro*
17.   A428 *ball [is] given to a driving Fittler*

In examples 14 - 17 the identity of the person 'receiving' or 'knocking' the ball is crucial to the progress of the game, and the use of the present passive allows a little extra time in which the speaker can ascertain the identity of the player before actually naming him.

6.2.5.3 The Present Perfective

The meaning of the present perfective is that the event being described extends up to and includes the speech time. The present perfect is often used in English to refer 'to the anteriority of the event in relation to speech time [such that] the action is viewed as occurring at an indefinite or unspecified time in the past' (Downing & Locke 1992: 374). However, in play-by-play the role of the speaker is to relate events as they happen in the here and now, and in play-by-play talk, the events being related do not have a sense of 'pastness' about them. Therefore, we can ask, 'What is the purpose of the present perfect?' Consider the following examples from the 2GB text.

Examples 18 - 20
18. GB366. *it's gone to Smith*
19. GB403. *he's passed to Taylor*
20. GB659. *Mattie Seers has put it down*

The meaning that seems to be conveyed by the present perfect in these cases is a sense of 'just now happening/happened'. Downing and Locke (1992: 377) suggest that when the present perfect is used for actions and events it has the effect of presenting the information as 'hot news'. This appears to be the kind of meaning which is conveyed in the play-by-play talk. Listeners are receiving information about the events as they 'just' happen, and the present perfect gives the events this sense of immediacy. Downing and Locke also comment that the sense of 'hot news' is conveyed not just by the perfective form, but is dependent on the type of verb used. Certainly, in the context of play-by-play talk, the acts of *passing, going, putting* have a momentary meaning attached to them, in contrast to verbs such as 'belong' or 'know', which have a more durative sense and which are not used in play-by-play talk.

In summary we can say that the overall effect in the play-by-play talk of using simple present, perfective, passive, and progressive forms of verbal groups is one way of conveying through these linguistic resources the kinds of variations inherent in the series of

ongoing actions in the material situation of the game, and the speaker's interpretation of these actions in relation to the time in which he is speaking.

6.3 Nominal Groups

Analysing nominal groups in terms of the experiential function involves examining both how the nominal group organises experience, and which categories of experience are represented in the group. In SF theory, the nominal group is structured in terms of a Head and a set of optional modifiers. The Head of the nominal group is called the Thing, and the other elements in the experiential structure of the nominal group include Deictic, Numerative, Epithet and Classifier. All these latter elements function to subcategorise the Head of the nominal group, the Thing. One category of nominal group which is not generally subcategorised is that of proper names. This is because proper nouns represent 'unique' categories and require no further specification.

Nominal groups can also be analysed from the perspective of the logical function. From this perspective the group is viewed as a 'word complex'; 'a combination of words built up on the basis of a particular logical relation' (Halliday 1994: 180). This section analyses the nominal groups in play-by-play talk from both of these perspectives, and includes a description and analysis of ideational (experiential) grammatical metaphor. Before proceeding to an analysis of the nominal groups in play-by-play talk, the structures of the nominal group are described using examples from play-by-play talk.

6.3.1 Deictics

The Deictic is generally the first element in the nominal group. Its function is to indicate whether the Thing belongs to a specific or non-specific subset of Things. It may do this through indicating 'proximity' (*that*) or 'possession' (*his*). This is one way in which the nominal group is grounded somehow to the time of the speaking. The Deictic also indicates whether the subset of the Thing in question is identifiable, or whether it is known to the interactants, or not, as in the case of the definite article *the*, and the demonstrative *that*. In order to explain the function of the Deictic in more detail, some examples of

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different types of Deictic selected in play-by-play talk are focused on in the following discussion. All these examples are taken from the ABC play-by-play extract.

Example 21 Deictic: non-specific

a	penalty
Deictic: non-specific	Thing

Here the Deictic is indicating that the penalty is 'non-specific'. In play-by-play talk almost invariably when the word *penalty* enters the discourse, it enters through the use of the indefinite *a*. This is because penalties vary throughout the game. There is an overall category *penalty*, but the identity of each penalty is different according to the kind of event which has taken place on the field of play.

Example 22 Deictic: specific: possession

their	own	twenty-metre	line
Deictic: specific: possession	Post-Deictic	Numerative	Thing

In Example 22 we can see a Deictic of possession. Possession Deictics are those which subcategorise the Thing according to possession. Post Deictics, as their name implies, come after the Deictic and function to extend its meaning.

During play-by-play talk positions on the field are often referred to through the use of personal pronouns (whether singular or plural) denoting possession. The reason for this is that each team defends a different end of the playing field. The closer they are to the opposing team's end of the field, the more likely it is that points will be scored. If the speaker says that the players are near *their own* end of the field, or on *their own* twenty metre line then the listeners know how far the team has progressed (or not) towards the opposite end of the field, and towards the possibility of scoring a try. The speaker may also use a combination of classifier and definite article, as in *the North Sydney line*, or *the Bears' line* to convey location. The use of possessive Deictics in nominal groups related to positions on the field of play is a way the speaker can orient the listeners to the position of the players on the field as well as to the physical progress of the teams.

The word *own* in Example 22 is an example of a post-Deictic. The function of the post-Deictic is to give some kind of further information regarding the Deictic. In this case, the word *own* makes more explicit and unambiguous the *line* that the speaker is referring to by the pronoun *their*.

Example 23 Deictic: specific: identifiable

the	left	side
Deictic: specific: (identifiable)	Classifier	Thing

Specific (identifiable) Deictics are those which indicate that the Thing being referred to in this context is known by the interactants. The identity can be retrieved from either the situation itself or from the common knowledge of the interactants. At the beginning of the commentary the commentator will often indicate which end of the field the teams are defending, as well as his own vantage point in relation to the field. Throughout the commentary the speaker then refers to positions on the field using the definite article *the*. This was mentioned in the previous paragraph on possessives, e.g. *the Eastern Suburbs' line*. The use of the definite article in instances such as these and in Example 23 indicates that 1) the identity of the position on the field is 'known', and 2) that there is only one such position in this context.

Example 24 Deictic: specific: proximity

that	ball
Deictic: specific: proximity	Thing

Although the Deictics of proximity are typically used in situations where both the speaker and the listener can see the Thing which is being referred to, during play-by-play talk the speakers occasionally refer to objects and people within their own visual sphere by using the specific proximity Deictics. In the context of play-by-play talk the specific proximity Deictic seems to indicate that the speaker is assuming that the listeners are keeping up with the talk and understanding what he is referring to. There is, after all, only one ball being used during a game of Rugby League. The orientation in Example 24 is to *that ball*

that I can see and which I am currently talking about, rather than *that ball over there that you can see*.

6.3.2 Numeratives

As its name implies, the Numerative indicates a numerical feature of the Thing, such as quantity or order. Numeratives can be subcategorised as to whether they are definite or indefinite. Definite Numeratives indicate exact numbers or proportions, whereas indefinite Numeratives do not. Some examples of nominal groups from the play-by-play portions of the commentary that contain Numeratives are presented below.

Example 25

a	few	metres
Deictic	Numerative: quantitative: indefinite	Thing

Example 26

three	Bears
Numerative: quantitative: definite	Thing

Example 27

the	first	line
Deictic	Numerative: ordinative: definite	Thing

6.3.2.1 Measure Numeratives and Facet Nominal Groups

Measure Numeratives and Facet nominal groups are similar in their structure in that in these nominal groups the Head and the Thing are separated. In each of these groups it is the Facet or the Numerative which becomes Head of the group. Measure Numeratives include collectives, partitives and quantitatives such as in the following examples:

> Collective: *a box of books, a packet of cigarettes*
> Partitive: *a piece of cake*
> Quantitative: *an acre of land*

Examples of Facet nominal groups are: *the back of the room, the left side of the page*. Both Measure Numeratives and Facet nominal groups are used in play-by-play talk. Facet

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nominal structures are particularly common in play-by-play talk as they provide a means of identifying precise locations on the field of play. Some examples are:

Examples 28 - 30
28.   A150 *he makes a few metres on **the right side of the ruck***
29.   A218 *the ball to **the left edge of the ruck***
30.   GB470 *Fairleigh down **the centre of the ground** twenty metres out from his own goal line*

Measure Numerative nominal groups, on the other hand, are rare in play-by-play talk. The following example is from the ABC extract.

Example 31
A186 *he has it perched high on **the mound of sand***

The Facet nominals and the Measure Numeratives both provide a means of packaging information economically. The Facet Numeratives are most probably very common in play-by-play talk because they provide a means of stating accurately positions and locations on the field of play, as this is a key piece of information in the field of play-by-play talk.

6.3.3 Epithet and Classifier

The Epithet and the Classifier are the most semantically open of all the elements in the nominal group: the Epithet perhaps more so because unlike the Classifier, it can accept degrees of intensity or comparison. The structure of Epithets and Classifiers vary greatly and may derive from the present (active) or past (passive, intransitive active) particles of the verb. Whereas Epithets may be interpersonal or experiential in nature, Classifiers function to identify a subset of the Thing in question in terms of such features as composition, scale and scope, purpose, origin, or mode of operation (Halliday 1994: 185). Some examples of nominal groups in the play-by-play talk which contain Epithets and/or Classifiers are presented below.

Example 32

a	very	very	fine	tackle
Deictic	Intensifier	Intensifier	Epithet: Attitude	Thing

In Example 32, the speaker is projecting some of his personal attitude towards the *tackle* by the use of intensifiers and the Epithet *fine*.

Example 33

an	awkward	bouncing	ball
Deictic	Epithet: Quality	Epithet	Thing

In Example 33 the speaker uses a present participle as Epithet along with a quality Epithet to describe the ball. The Epithet, *awkward* is in fact giving a quality to the movement or bouncing of the ball. That processes can be turned into Epithets is an important grammatical resource of English whereby speakers can economically package a lot of experiential information. This point will be taken up later in this chapter when discussing the resource of grammatical metaphor.

Example 34

the	North Sydney	line
Deictic	Classifier	Thing

In Example 34 the line, or position on the field of play, is classified according to the team. The *North Sydney line* is the line at the end of the field which is being defended by the North Sydney team, and which the opposing team needs to cross in order to score a try.

There are several categories of *lines* in a game of Rugby League. Figure 6:1 illustrates the different kinds of lines which are used to describe the location of action taking place on the field of play. Once the game has started, however, another set of categories of lines becomes relevant. This latter set has to do with the teams and the relation of the lines to the direction that each team is playing (moving) in order to gain territory and to eventually score a goal, exemplified by the nominal group *their own line* (see Example 22).
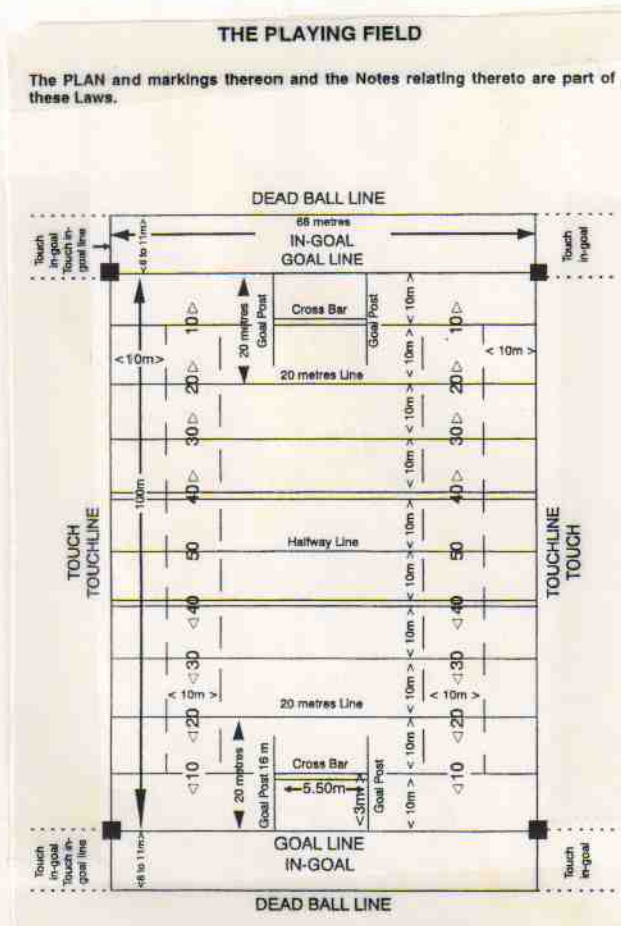
Figure 6:1 The Playing Field for Rugby League Showing the Different Categories of Lines which are Relevant to a Description of the Action Taking Place (*Australian Rugby League Laws* (1999: 2).

6.3.4 Qualifier

The Modifiers of the nominal group which have been described so far structurally precede the Thing. Structures which come after the Thing and which further modify it are 'rank-shifted' structures. That is, they are larger structures such as phrases or clauses that have been 'downranked' to become constituents in the nominal group. These downranked elements function as Qualifiers in the nominal group. There are, in fact, very few nominal groups containing Qualifiers in play-by-play talk. This is probably because nominal groups containing Qualifiers involve recursion and this is a type of complexing that is not commonly deployed due to the spontaneous nature of the talk and the contextual requirement that events be relayed as they take place.

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6.3.5 Thingless Nominal Groups

In some nominal groups the Thing is omitted leaving, for example, a Deictic or Numerative as Head of the group. This is only possible when the class of 'Thing' is understood. An example of a Thingless nominal group is provided below.

Example 36

the	Bears'	twenty

Deictic: possession	Classifier

Here the remainder of the Numerative 'twenty metre' is left unsaid and the Thing is understood as 'line'. In Rugby League play-by-play talk, Thingless nominal groups, in particular, those referring to locations on the field, seem to be quite common, and appear to represent a short-hand way of referring to these locations. The interpretation of the ellipsed Thing in these nominal groups is unambiguous to listeners who understand the ways of talking about Rugby League.

Some of the Thingless nominals in play-by-play talk are presented below with their 'full' form indicated in parentheses next to each example.

Examples 37 & 38

37.   A142 *he's just outside **his own twenty** (**his own twenty metre line**)*
38.   A213 *in fact they're on **their thirty** (**their thirty metre line**)*

6.3.6 Analysis of the Experiential Content of Nominal Groups in the Play-by-Play Extracts

In the 2GB extract there are 83 nominal groups and 41 pronominals which are analysed and discussed here. In the nominal group analysis the discussion focuses on the Thing, because it is here that the semantic core of the nominal groups can be found. It is through the nominal groups that much of the information regarding the subject field is located (although we saw in Section 6.1.2.2 that the lexical selections of processes are also a rich resource for construing the field in play-by-play talk). Nominals (and their Classifiers) reflect the

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primary field concerns of the register of play-by-play talk, and also indicate the limitations of what is possible to report in the situation of a Rugby League commentary. Modifiers and Qualifiers of nominal groups reflect how the speakers choose to present these field concerns. For instance in Chapter Five we saw that the speakers choose to add their personal evaluation of aspects of the field in certain Epithets in the nominal groups. In addition to the analysis of the nominal groups, the analysis in this section also focuses on the pronominals and makes a comparison between those referring to players and those referring to the ball.

Figure 6:2 presents the results of the analysis of the nominal groups (excluding pronominals) in the 2GB play-by-play extract, and Figure 6:3 presents the results for the nominal group analysis of the ABC extract. In each of these sets of results (represented as pie graphs) the experiential content of the nominal group is analysed. That is, the results indicate the proportion of nominal groups in which the Thing is, for instance, 'a player', 'a field location', or 'an action'.
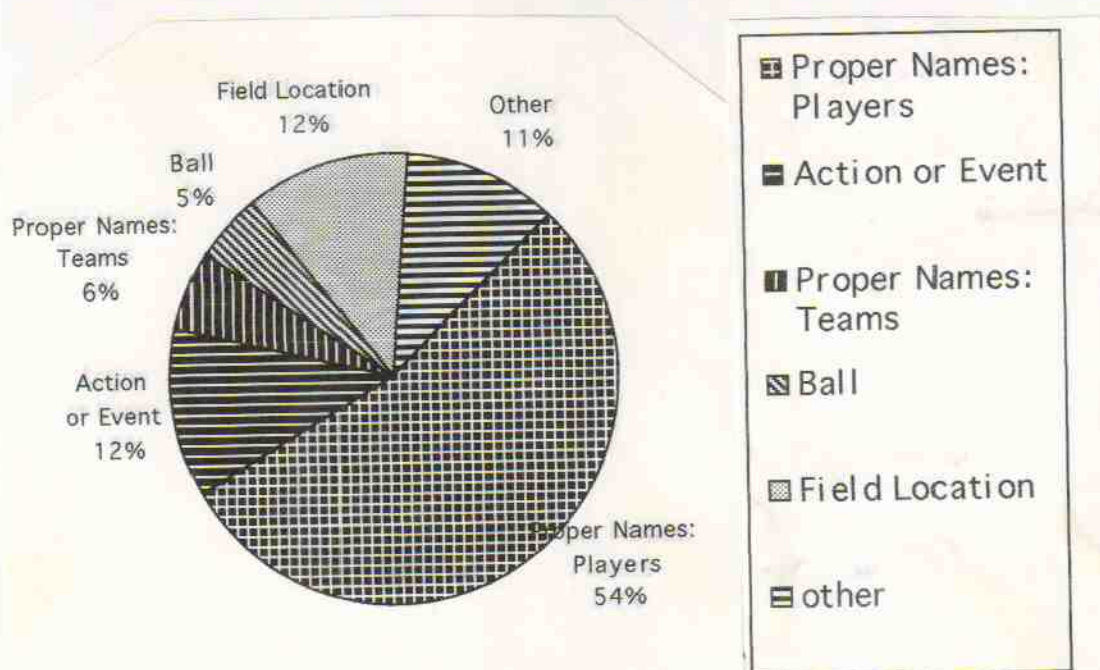
Figure 6:2 Nominal Groups in the 2GB Play-by-Play Extract
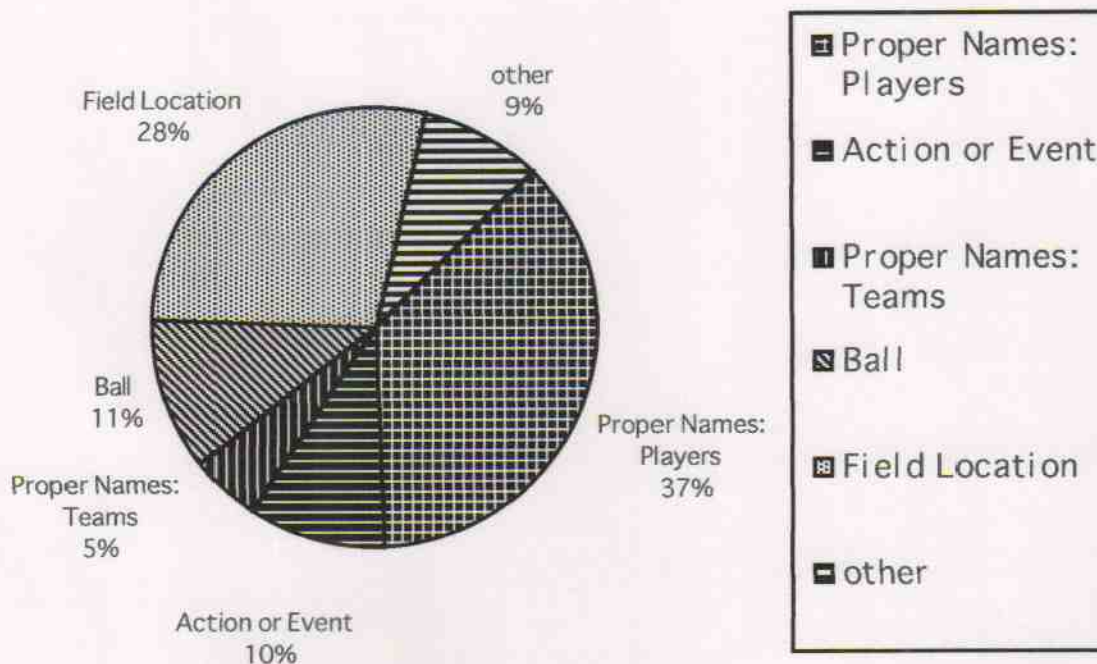
Figure 6:3 Nominal Groups in the ABC Play-by-Play Extract

The results in Figures 6:2 and 6:3 reveal that the experiential content most commonly packaged as a nominal group (excluding pronominals) in play-by-play talk is the proper name of individual players. In the 2GB extract proper names of individual players constitute 54% of the nominal groups, and proper names of teams constitute 5%. In the ABC extract, although the proportion of proper names is lower than in the 2GB extract at 37%, it still comprises the highest proportion of nominal groups in the ABC extract. The proportion of proper names of teams is slightly higher in the ABC extract than in the 2GB extract. The difference between these two results may indicate that the 2GB commentator is better able to identify the individuals who are playing than the ABC commentator. As was mentioned in Chapter Three, the commentary box is set high up in the spectator stands and is therefore quite distant to the activity taking place on the field of play. During each commentary that I observed, the 2GB commentator used binoculars much more frequently than the ABC commentator — for instance, Plate 3:2 in Chapter Three shows the 2GB commentator using the binoculars. It is quite possible that this commentator may use the binoculars for a greater proportion of the time of the commentary, and hence he may be better able to identify the individual players by name.

Whatever the case, the high proportion of proper names of players in the play-by-play talk indicates that the naming of players involved in the game is a primary concern of the speakers. This result concurs with the results found by Crystal and Davy (1969) in their analysis of cricket commentary. They report that commentary exhibits a high proportion of proper nouns, in particular the names of people and places.

As proper names form a significant proportion of the nominal groups in play-by-play talk, it is important to consider what aspects of the context may be motivating their choice. We could say that the proper name nominal groups reflect the fact that there is a number of individuals involved in the game of rugby league. While this is true, it is not the whole story. In fact, the use of the players' names actually provides a lot of information about what is happening on the field of play. First, it is a way in which the speaker can provide a means for the listener to track the location of the ball in that listeners are generally familiar with which players belong to each of the teams playing, so stating the name of a player is also a way of stating which team has the ball (especially if listeners have just tuned into the broadcast and they have missed the 'turnover' of possession of the ball from one team to the next). Furthermore, stating the players' names is a way of indicating something about potential events on the field of play. If listeners hear the name of a 'forward' who has the ball, then they will assume that this player is not likely to 'make a run' for the goal line. Rather he is more likely to be 'bullocking' his way forward. On the other hand, if listeners hear that a 'centre' or a 'half-back' has the ball, they are likely to anticipate the possibility of that player making a break, running with the ball, gaining some distance on the field, or even scoring a try (Royce 1998).

Stating the name of a player is also a means of keeping the 'star' quality of the game alive. The finding that there is a proliferation of proper names in play-by-play talk complements the results in the Theme analysis (see Chapter Seven) in which it is found that individual players feature to a large degree in the informational prominence of the Theme and the New. The focus on the individual appears to be in contrast to the low proportion of nominal groups in which the name of a team is mentioned. It can be argued that were the

commentators only to state the number of the player, or which team has the ball, there would be no sense of 'stardom' in the game and listeners would have no idols to look up to. Stardom is an important aspect of professional sport, and in particular, of the media construction of professional sport. Hargreaves reports that 'individualism and civil privatism is constructed through the media-sport professionals' assumption that personalities constitute the core of the audience's interest.... [and that] even in a game like football where team-work is so important, attention is, nevertheless, focused on the individual' (Hargreaves 1986: 149-150). In this study, the importance of individuals in the game was also highlighted by the commentators themselves during interviews (Hartley 1993, Wilkins 1993). For these reasons it does not seem surprising that player names are one of the most common nominal groups in play-by-play talk.

The next most common nominal groups in the play-by-play extracts are those containing a field location. In the ABC extract the proportion of these is considerably higher than that in the 2GB extract. In the ABC extract field locations constitute 28% of the nominal groups, whereas in the 2GB extract they constitute 12% of the nominal groups. The proportion of field location nominal groups in the 2GB extract is the same as that of the proportion of action or event nominals, whereas in the ABC extract the proportion of action or event nominals is much lower. The reasons for these differences could lie in individual differences between speaker styles of play-by-play commentary. On the other hand the high proportion of field location nominals in the ABC extract could be a means of 'balancing' the information content of the play-by-play talk as in the ABC there is a lower proportion of proper names of individuals. In both commentaries, the proportion of field locations suggests that it can be considered a key component of the subject matter construed in play-by-play talk. Field locations indicate something about the progress of the ball and the progress of the game as a whole, and can also be used by listeners to mentally track the movement of the ball in relation to the field of play, thus providing a means of monitoring the progress of a particular team throughout the game.

6.3.7 Pronominals in Play-by-Play Talk

It was noted earlier that pronominals were not taken into consideration in the account of nominal groups in play-by-play talk. Therefore, this section focuses specifically on the pronominals. Pronominals would generally be considered as part of the system of REFERENCE in English, and would relate to the grammar of textual meaning. However, in this section, they are viewed in terms of the kind of experiential information they are referring to in the play-by-play text and the way in which this complements the experiential information construed in the nominal groups.

In both extracts the results indicate that pronominals exclusively refer to either 'players' (players or teams) or 'the ball'. In the 2GB extract there are 44 pronominals out of which 23 (52.3%) refer to 'the ball' and 21 (47.7%) refer anaphorically to a 'player'. In the ABC extract there are 50 pronominals in which 24 (48%) refer anaphorically to a 'player', 1 (2%) refers anaphorically to a 'team', 3 (6%) refer exophorically to the 'teams' and or 'players', and 22 (44%) refer to 'the ball'. These results complement the nominal group analysis in that we can see that individual players again figure in an important way in the talk through the resource of reference. In each extract personal pronouns comprise approximately 50% of the pronominal references. While this is interesting in that it confirms the significance of individual players in relating events during play-by-play talk, a result emerging from the analysis of pronominals in play-by-play talk reveals that 'the ball' figures to a much greater degree in the talk through pronominal reference than it does through lexical reference. In the nominal group analysis it was found that lexical reference to the ball constituted only 5% of the nominals in the 2GB extract and 11% in the ABC extract in contrast to 52.3% of pronominal reference in the 2GB extract and 44% in the ABC extract.

Reference to the ball through the use of the pronoun *it* is generally not endophoric, but in fact appears to be a form of exophoric reference peculiar to play-by-play talk, and most probably to other forms of talk which assume an understanding of the objects and participants around which the activity being related revolves. Another use of exophoric

pronominal reference in play-by-play talk is the use of *they* in which the referent for *they* is not found in the previous text, but is understood as *the players around whom the game is taking place at the time of speaking.* The context, as constructed in play-by-play talk, is such that exophoric pronominal reference does not result in any ambiguity or misunderstanding.

6.4 Grammatical Metaphor

The notion of grammatical metaphor was introduced in the previous chapter as a resource in which experience is expressed incongruently in the language. Ideational grammatical metaphor is a resource whereby actions, for instance, can be repackaged as nominals in the clause and these can then be modified through the resources available for modification in the nominal group. Essentially, therefore, grammatical metaphor is a realisation of textual meaning, is generally considered a feature of written language rather than spoken language, and is hence a resource for the realisation of mode. Thompson (1999), however, has demonstrated that a consideration of grammatical metaphor as a choice or non-choice in a specific situation is a factor motivated by not only mode, but by field and tenor. He argues that whereas the use of grammatical metaphor can convey 'technicality', it can also convey 'interpersonal distance'. In some contexts, such as doctor-patient interviews, Thompson explains that there is a tension between these two such that in order to convey sympathy towards a patient, the doctor may choose not to use grammatical metaphor as frequently as he may on occasions where 'sympathy' is not required.

Thompson (1999: 117) also observes that when speakers nominalise processes the options for expressing interpersonal meanings are changed in that 'the underlying proposition [becomes] non-negotiable'. Moreover, ideational grammatical metaphor, and in particular the process of nominalisation, creates new possibilities in experiential meaning (Thompson 1999: 117). That is, when the resource of nominalisation is deployed, some kind of Quality, Classifier or Epithet is available to be applied to the nominalised item. This has the effect of providing for a great deal of experiential and interpersonal information to be packaged in a relatively condensed form. In analysing language in terms of ideational

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metaphor, we need to consider whether the speaker is choosing to represent the external experience he is observing as linguistically congruent or linguistically incongruent with its manifestation in 'reality'. The next section considers the use of ideational grammatical metaphor in play-by-play talk.

6.4.1 Ideational Grammatical Metaphor in Play-by-Play Talk

It was noted in Chapter Five that in play-by-play talk material processes are the most predominant process types, and that the speakers tend not to represent the material activities of the game as thoughts or reflections. It was also noted that this suggests that material actions in the extralinguistic environment are being encoded congruently as material processes in the language. However, an interesting feature of play-by-play talk is that even though the processes tend to be material processes, the participants involved in the processes are occasionally metaphorized processes. In the 2GB extract there are eleven instances of nominalised processes, and in the ABC extract there are twelve instances of nominalised processes, and one instance in which a process is a modifier in a nominal group (*an awkward bouncing ball*).

During play-by-play talk, there are several kinds of actions which are nominalised, including, *tackling, scrummaging, kicking, defending, picking up* the ball, *chasing* the ball, and *busting* through opposing players. Examples of these processes in their nominalised forms as used in play-by-play talk are listed below.

- tackling: *a strong tackle, an absolutely superb tackle, a very very fine tackle*
- scrummaging: *a scrum*
- kicking: *a little kick, a good kick, a superb kick*
- defending: *strong defence*
- picking up: *a nice pick up*
- chasing the ball: *good chase*
- busting through: *the bust*

Some of these, such as *tackle* and *scrum*, have become institutionalised in the context of Rugby League talk and their metaphoric forms are not considered unusual in any way (see for instance their descriptions in the *Laws* (1998)). Rather, these are part of the technical

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language of Rugby League. In order to illustrate the use of grammatical metaphor in play-by-play talk some instances of grammatical metaphor from the extracts are analysed below. In this analysis the original form is indicated by italics and the 'unpacked' form is shown above it. The experiential structure of each form is given to show which aspect of the incongruent form has been metaphorised.

- **Process as 'Existent'**

Example 39

'X'		'is chasing'	'Y'
Actor		Process: material	Object
A224 *There*	*is*	*a chase*	
	Process	Existent: event	

- **Process as Noun Complement in a Prepositional Group**

Example 40

'he'	'is buried'	'and is well tackled'	'out	wide'	'by Greg Florimo'
Goal	Process: material	Process: material	Location: place	Manner: quality	Actor
A232 *he*	*is buried*	*in a very very fine tackle*	*out*	*wide*	*from Greg Florimo*
Goal	Process: material	Location: place	Location: place	Manner: quality	Location: place

- **Process as Participant (Actor) in a Material Clause**

Example 41

'David Fairleigh and Gary Larson'	'slam'	'Clear y'	'as they'	'tackle'	'him'	well
Actor	Process: material	Goal	Actor	Process: material	Goal	Manner: quality
A276 *and a fine body-slamming tackle*	*is coming*		*in*	*on Cleary*	*from big David Fairleigh with Gary Larson*	
Actor	Process: material		Location: place	Location: place	Location: place	

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Example 42

'now'	'is kicking'	'downfield'			'Buettner'
	Process: material	Location: place			Actor
A301 now	a kick downfield		comes	in	from Buettner
	Actor		Process: material	Location: place	Location: place spatial

- **Process as Participant (Goal)**

Example 43

'tackles'	'strongly'	'Logan'	'over the top'
Process: material	Manner: quality	Actor	Location: place
GB475 (and again) a strong tackle		by Logan	over the top
Goal		Actor	Location: place

Example 44

Ikin		kicks	the ball	a short distance		downfield
Actor		Process: material	Goal	Location: place		Location: place
GB570 Ikin	puts	a little kick			in	downfield (too)
Actor	Process: material	Goal			Location: place	Location: place

Example 45

'Dallas'		'him'	'at a close distance'	'chases'
Actor		Goal	Location: place	Process: material
GB570 and Dallas	[is]	right on his hammer		with a good chase
Carrier	Process: intensive	Location: place		Manner: quality

- **Process as Participant (Actor)**

Example 46

'skilfully'	'the ball'	'is passed'	'across	to Josh Stuart'
Manner: quality	Goal	Process: material	Location: place	Beneficiary: recipient
GB473 *good*		*pass*	*across*	*to Josh Stuart*
Participant			Location: place	Location: place

Example 47

'the ball'	'is passed'	'back inside'	'to Florimo'
Goal	Process: material	Location: Place	Beneficiary: recipient
GB483 *the pass*		*back inside*	*to Florimo*
Participant		Location: place	Location: place

We can see from these few examples taken from the 2GB and ABC extracts that one of the reasons why the speakers may choose to use grammatical metaphor is so that a range of interpersonal and experiential information can be packaged very economically, while at the same time maintaining the sense of 'movement' in the game. In addition to this, if we consider Examples 42 and 44, we can see that by packaging the process *kicking* as a nominal, the speaker is able to delay stating the Actor until the end of the clause, thus allowing him to be sure of the identity of the Actor in this process. This may also be the case in Example 42 where the identity of the person who is *tackling* (in the grammaticalised form) is not revealed until after the process has been mentioned. However, this reason for organising the information does not always hold, as in Examples 44 and 45 the identity of the kicker and chaser are located at the beginning of the clause. In these cases, the reason for nominalising the processes may be a result of a desire to package the information more economically, as in both these cases, and in Examples 46 and 47, the congruent (unpacked) versions are somewhat longer than their metaphorised counterparts.

In the context of play-by-play talk the specific instances of nominalisations do not seem to create a sense of distance or 'technicality' as is the case in written language, such as

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scientific language (see Halliday and Martin 1993), but they seem to create a sense of succinctness and fluency suitable for relating fast moving action. A *pass*, for example, can be packaged as *a good pass*, *a bad pass*, *a loose pass*, or *a brilliant pass* (all examples taken from the extracts), thus allowing the speaker to provide some evaluation of the activity.

The use of grammatical metaphor in Rugby League play-by-play talk can be compared to the use of heavy modifiers found by Ferguson in his study of sports announcer talk. Ferguson's (1983) results indicate that a characteristic of SAT (sports announcer talk) is the use of heavy modifiers such as appositional noun phrases, non-restrictive relative clauses, or preposed adjectival constructions, much like those used in written English. One of Ferguson's examples is: '*left-handed throwing* Steve Howe, *who in the mini-playoffs or the playoffs just preceding this one*, came out ...' (Ferguson 1983: 163). Ferguson argues that these are 'a mark of the skilled user of SAT [because] most listeners ...are probably unable to use such devices in running speech without considerable practice, even though they may be thoroughly familiar with the devices in written English' (1983: 163). A major function of these is to 'pack more background information into the event-reporting sentences' (1983: 169).

Other complementary results can be found in Crystal and Davy's (1969) study of unscripted commentary. They note that modification and descriptive phraseology is a common feature of commentary because of the situational pressures on the commentator to choose 'vivid and descriptive language' (Crystal and Davy (1969: 142). Some examples of this descriptive language from Crystal and Davy's study which would come under the category of ideational grammatical metaphor in this study are listed below:

- *a most ungraceful little jab*
- *buoyant bouncing*

Pawley (1991: 360) also notes that the commentator uses 'words and phrases that elaborate on events instead of describing them as starkly as possible in strictly technical or

"objective" terms'. One of his examples that fits the category of grammatical metaphor is *a fantastic catch*.

The examples listed by Crystal and Davy (1969) and Pawley (1991) are of a different structure from those mentioned by Ferguson (1983), but the examples from each study, as well as those from this study, serve to illustrate how commentators attempt to economically package a good deal of descriptive and evaluative information into their talk through what SF grammar calls grammatical metaphor.

6.4.2 Logical Structure of the Nominal Group

The nominal groups in the play-by-play portions of the talk are generally simple in the sense that there is little recursion in their structure. Only rare examples of complex nominal groups, i.e. those in which there is a Qualifier, exist in play-by-play talk. The reason for the preference for simple nominal groups probably lies in the fact that the talk is simultaneous to the action taking place and that in order for the talk to remain concurrent and spontaneous, the speaker cannot afford to spend time providing more and more information about the Thing he is talking about. He has no time to back-track, to add, or to elaborate on the events, persons, and objects which are in front of him.

6.5 Profiling the Register of Play-by-Play Talk: Choices in Experiential Grammar

Using the same format as that in the previous chapter, Figure 6:4 presents a profile of the linguistic resources deployed in the grammar of experiential meaning in play-by-play talk. The first three horizontal bars show the choices in process-types, circumstances, and verbal groups. The remaining horizontal bars indicate the proportions and types of experiential information contained in specific grammatical categories. A description of the contextual information construed by the grammar of experiential meaning follows in the next section.

Process Types: Material 82.6% | Relational 12.5% | Existl 4.2% | Behavioural 0.8%

Circumstances: Location: place (spatial) 73.1% | Location: time 11.5% | Manner: quality 7.9% | Other 7.5%

Verbal Groups: Simple Present (Active) 63.1% | Simple Present (Passive) 18% | Present Prog. 7.1% | Present Perfective 11.7%

Participants: Actors: Players 66.6% | Other 3.7%

Participants: Goals: The Ball 49.3% | Players 32.5% | Kick 6.3% nominalisation | Other 11.9%

Mediums: The Ball 42% | Players 38.7% | Nominalised Action 11.6% | Other 7.7%

Nominal Groups: Proper Names: Player(s) 45.5% | Action/Event 11% | Field Location 20% | Ball 8% | Teams 5.5% | Other 10%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Figure 6:4 Profile of Choices in the Grammar of Experiential Meaning in Play-by-Play Talk

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6.6 Summary of the Contextual Features Construed by the Experiential Grammar

This section draws on the results and the discussion of the grammatical analyses and other linguistic descriptions in this chapter in order to summarise the kind of contextual information that is construed in play-by-play talk. In this chapter the analyses have focused on choices in the grammar of experiential meaning and other linguistic phenomena related to this. These choices primarily play a role in the construal of the field of discourse. The contextual category of field is described in terms of the nature of the social activity and the subject matter of the situation. Table 6:15 follows the same format as that used in Table 5:8 in Chapter Five. The left-hand column shows the general contextual features with the play-by-play features placed underneath. The right-hand column lists the linguistic features deployed in play-by-play talk that play a significant role in the construal of the contextual features in the left-hand column. As is the case with Table 5:8, Table 6:15 is divided into two sections. The first part specifically relates to the contextual category of field, whereas the latter half of the table describes tenor and mode in terms of the situation of play-by-play talk, and lists the linguistic features which contribute to the construal of these categories.

Table 6:15 Contextual Information Construed Through Experiential Grammatical
Resources Deployed in Play-by-Play Talk

CONTEXTUAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES
FIELD	
General Contextual Feature: Nature of the Social Action **Play-by-Play Features:** • Participants are not involved in the activities they are talking about. • Speakers are relaying external material events. • Participants in these events are either acting or being acted upon. • Events are taking place in the present time and either extend through the time of speaking, are spontaneous to the time of speaking, or are completed at the time of speaking. • Speakers are not reflecting on events. • Events Centre around the ball or human participants, and the events take place in certain locations which are measured or classified according to teams and field locations.	• Pronominals, Process Types • Process Types, Participants • Types of Verbal Groups, Participants in the Clauses • Types of Verbal Groups • Process Types • Nominal Groups, Circumstances, Medium-Process Nuclei

General Contextual Feature: Subject Matter
 	
Play-by-Play Features:
• Subject Matter Centres on: human participants
                           teams
                           ball
                           positions
                           locations
 	
• Active, powerful, violent, aggressive, and graceful actions.
	• Nominal Groups, Circumstances
	
	• Lexical Verbs

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Other Contextual Features Of Play-by-Play Talk Construed in the Experiential Grammar	
TENOR	
Distance is not created by the use of grammatical metaphor as many terms have become institutionalised in this context and are used widely in the subculture of Rugby League.	• Grammatical Metaphor
MODE	
Talk is spontaneous and simultaneous to the action. The talk conveys temporally sequenced events.	• Types of Verbal Groups, Non-Recursive/Simple Nominal Groups and Verbal Groups

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the grammar of experiential meaning. The first part of the chapter analysed the play-by-play extracts from the perspective of transitivity and ergativity. The analysis from the transitivity perspective found that the most common process choice in play-by-play is the material process with a combined average percentage of 82.6%. An analysis of the types of elements chosen as Actors and Goals revealed that players and the ball were most commonly chosen. In terms of the types of circumstances in play-by-play talk the transitivity analysis revealed that circumstances of Location: place are the most common circumstances. Finally an analysis of the lexical verbs chosen revealed that they mostly refer to the actions of tackling, passing the ball, taking the ball, or the ball going from one location to another.

The ergativity analysis again highlighted the prominence of the players and the ball as the most commonly chosen elements taking the role of Medium in the Medium-Process nucleus of the clause. The ergativity analysis also revealed that there were no processes which configured 'ergatively'. Rather, the processes chosen during play-by-play talk configure transitively, with the action extending to the right Medium either acting or being acted upon.

In the analysis of verbal groups in play-by-play it was found that the most common verbal group chosen is the simple present. It was also found that operator ellipsis is very high is verbal groups of the present progressive type. Furthermore, verbal groups in play-by-play talk are on the whole fairly simple in structure.

The nominal group analysis found that nominal groups in play-by-play talk tend to be simple structures with few instances of recursion. In terms of the experiential content of the nominal groups the analysis found that proper names of players were the most common type of nominal groups followed by field locations in the ABC and field location and actions or events in the 2GB.

The analysis of the choices in the grammar of experiential meaning has shown that there is a very limited set of events, participants and circumstances relevant to a description of the game as relayed in play-by-play talk. It has also revealed that even though grammatical metaphor is occasionally used, the speakers relay the events that they are observing congruently in the language — material happenings are, on the whole, encoded through material processes in the language.

The next chapter focuses on the grammar of textual meaning and examines choices in the systems of Theme and Given-New in order to explore waves of informational prominence in play-by-play talk.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. While the ergative and transitive grammatical models are two complementary ways of viewing the structure of all clauses, some languages are said to favour the ergative style of representing experience, while others are said to favour the transitive style (see Langacker 1991 for some discussion of this). It is argued (Halliday 1967a, 1994; Davidse 1992) that in fact, all languages probably embody both perspectives, so that we can find clauses which inherently structure ergatively, and others which structure transitively. In relation to this is Halliday's observation that although dictionaries often indicate that a verb is both transitive and intransitive, the relation between these verbs is in fact generally that of 'ergative and non-ergative'. He explains that except for a few exceptions, verbs which have an inherent ergative relationship are lexically identical when they are placed in a one participant or a two participant clause. The process in each case revolves around the same

participant. For the transitive/intransitive pairs, however, in order for the process to remain with the same participant in one participant clause the verb must change.

Another important consideration regarding the differences between ergative structures and transitive structures concerns the 'ergative middle' clauses. Davidse (1992) explains that in such clauses the 'self-instigated' or 'externally instigated' features are 'neutralised'. She demonstrates that ergative middle clauses or non-ergative structures 'do not incorporate the structural role of an external Instigator' (Davidse 1992: 123). These can be contrasted with intransitives which are 'non-instigatable' (Davidse 1992: 109). The following clauses from Davidse (1992: 123) illustrate this point.

Intransitive	*The children are swimming.*	**Who's swimming them?*
	John stumbled.	**Who stumbled him?*
	The sun's shining.	**What is shining it?*
Non-ergative	*The door is opening.*	*Who is opening it?*
	The branch moved.	*Who/what moved it?*
	The news spread.	*Who spread it?*

2. In the transitivity and ergativity analyses structures such as *across to X, out to X* or *back to X* have been analysed as comprising two Locations. The first is *across, out* or *back* while the second is the prepositional phrase *to X.* The decision to analyse these structures in this way arises from an observation that these same elements are used at separate locations in other clauses, such as in the clause *back now to X* or *across now it goes to X* or *out now to X.* It would seem that the use of *across* or *out* (unlike structures such as *away from* which convey negative direction) is a shorthand way of saying *across field* or *out in the field* (or perhaps *away from* the original location). The use of *back* suggests a different direction to the original location. Prepositions such as *on to (X),* however, have been analysed as one location as it seems difficult to suggest what kind of location the *on* is referring to (although it could be argued that in these cases the preposition is a shorthand way of saying *en route*). The use of prepositions appears to be a very rich source of information regarding directional, locative and dynamic movement in play-by-play talk. It was decided that the analysis of prepositions and their relation to circumstances of Location would be omitted because this feature of play-by-play talk requires much more analysis and discussion, which could not be adequately done within the confines of this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Developing a Linguistic Profile of Play-by-Play Talk
Part III: The Grammar of Textual Meaning

7.0 Introduction

In SF theory the textual metafunction is considered the 'enabling' function of language in that it is the means whereby experiential and interpersonal meanings 'become operational in an environment' of a text (Halliday 1978: 145). According to Matthiessen (1992: 44) 'the textual metafunction uses the (i) experiential and (ii) interpersonal modes of organisation as carriers of textual waves'. Although there are several lexicogrammatical systems which contribute to the expression of textual meaning, this chapter focuses on the two major contributors: THEME-RHEME and GIVEN-NEW. Theme and New structures represent two waves of informational prominence built into the clause. Theme is the information prominence attached to experiential meaning, and the 'carrier' of the Thematic wave of prominence is 'constituency'. On the other hand, New is the information prominence attached to interpersonal meaning, and the carrier of the New wave of prominence is 'prosody'. Thematic prominence is realised by the ordering of experiential constituents such as participant or circumstance. The element that is considered to be 'New' in a clause is that which is assigned tonic prominence by the speaker; it is the element that the speaker wishes the listener to attend to in the situation. Theme and New are thus different in 'shape' and hence in their identifying characteristics.

Specifically, THEME is the system whereby <u>experiential</u> elements of the text are given informational 'value' in the text, whereas GIVEN-NEW is the system whereby <u>interpersonal</u> elements of the text are given information value. Matthiessen (1995: 44-46) explains this in the following way:

> (i) The experiential metafunction creates constituency but it does not assign any value to the relative order of the constituents: for example, ACTOR + PROCESS + GOAL and GOAL + PROCESS + ACTOR are experientially the same. Since the expressive potential of ordering the experiential constituents is not taken up by the experiential metafunction, the textual

one can draw on this constituency to give textual meaning to the relative ordering of the constituents.

(ii) The interpersonal metafunction creates a pitch prosody but it does not assign any value to the location of the major pitch movement, the tonic. Since the expressive potential locating the tonic is not taken up by the interpersonal metafunction, the textual metafunction can draw on this prosody to give textual meaning to the placement of the tonic.

This chapter attempts to describe how the interpersonal and experiential meanings expressed in play-by-play talk are semioticised in text through the resources of these features of the grammar of textual meaning. A description of the systems of THEME-RHEME and GIVEN-NEW, along with a description of their complementary roles in the construal of textual meanings in play-by-play talk are outlined in this chapter. The next section describes the system of THEME.

7.1 Theme and Rheme

7.1.0 Introduction

In SF theory the system of THEME is an important resource for realising the textual function of the clause: the clause as a 'message' (Halliday 1994). In a Thematic analysis the clause is said to contain two elements — the Theme and the Rheme. Theme is considered to be the 'point of departure' of the clause as message. In this regard, Matthiessen (1995: 515) explains that Theme

> is the point at which the clause departs from its own history and moves forward, semantically speaking. The local context set up for the clause, its Theme, is oriented towards the preceding discourse—towards what the speaker has already said; and it constitutes the point of departure for the next step in the development of the discourse.

Rheme, on the other hand, contains the remainder of the message in the clause. Although Theme and Rheme are components of the clause, their function is more readily observed in relation to the text as a whole, which is implied in Matthiessen's comment that Theme is 'the point of departure for the *next* step in the development of discourse'. Essentially, the function of Theme in the text is culminative. Explaining the function of Theme, however,

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has proved somewhat problematic in SF theory. Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that the function of Theme and the recognition of the boundary of the Theme are determined in a different way to that of other structures of the clause such as Subject and Actor. The function of Subject for instance, can be exemplified through presenting a pair of clauses in dialogic exchange (Hasan & Fries 1995: xxvii). This provides enough textual environment to demonstrate the way that the Subject realises its role in the Mood of the clause. On the other hand, the function of Theme 'can be appreciated only when enough of the textual environment is taken into account' (Hasan & Fries 1995: xxviii) to demonstrate the contribution, if any, that Theme might make to the realisation of textual meaning.

Theme in the clause and Thematic patterns in a text are said to create 'wave-like' effects of informational prominence using constituency as carrier. Deciding where these waves end is at the centre of the debate about the function and boundary of Theme. Some views on the issue of recognition criteria and on the wave-like effect of Theme and textual Thematic patterns are briefly summarised here before adopting one particular view and then moving on to an analysis of Theme in play-by-play talk.

7.1.1 The Recognition Criteria and the Function of Theme
7.1.1.1 Halliday

There are two main arguments regarding the recognition criteria of Theme: that advanced primarily by Halliday (see especially, 1994), and that proposed by Berry (see especially 1996). This section briefly describes Halliday's definition and description of Theme and section 7.1.1.3 describes Berry's.

Halliday (1994) argues that Theme is realised in English by position in the clause and is constituted by the first element(s) in the clause up to and including the first element of the clause functioning in the Transitivity system. This first experiential element is called the topical Theme. A consequence of this criterion is that the Theme of a clause may include a variety of other elements which precede this first experiential element, which may be

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interpersonal or textual elements. Textual elements include continuatives (such as *well* or *oh*), structural elements (such as WH- relative), and conjunctives (such as *meanwhile* or *moreover*). Interpersonal elements include vocatives, modals (such as *in my opinion*, or *evidently*), and Mood-marking elements (such as a Finite verbal operator preceding the Subject). Another consequence of Halliday's criterion is that the Theme may include very little information if the elements following the first experiential element are also experiential in nature, but are not conflated with the Subject of the clause, as in the following clause: *Yesterday, before anyone had woken up, Ryuji slipped quietly out the back door.* In this clause, according to Halliday's criterion, only *Yesterday* would be classified as Thematic.

In relation to the criterion of 'everything up to and including the first experiential element', Halliday also makes a distinction between marked and unmarked Theme. In order to determine what is marked and unmarked Theme, reference must be made to the Mood of the clause. Where the first experiential element does not conflate with the Subject of the clause, the Theme is said to be 'marked'. Unmarked Theme, therefore, conflates with the Subject of the clause.

Two examples of clauses analysed for Theme, as defined according to Halliday's criteria, are presented below. The first contains a single unmarked Theme comprising the first experiential element and conflating with the Subject of the clause. The second example contains a multiple Theme comprising interpersonal, textual and experiential elements. This latter Theme is also unmarked as the topical Theme conflates with the Subject of the clause.

Example 1. Single Theme

GB478 he	steps back inside
topical	
Theme	**Rheme**

Example 2. Multiple Theme

GB2935 TI:	and	er well	you know	we	had a few lucky bounces of the ball
	textual: conjunctive	textual: continuative	interpersonal: modal	experiential: topical	
	THEME				**RHEME**

The system of THEME is thus clearly linked to the systems of MOOD and TRANSITIVITY, and it is this interplay between Theme, Mood and Transitivity structures that partly gives rise to the view that systems which construe textual meanings play a role in the semiotic organisation of interpersonal and experiential meanings (Hasan 1993: 91, Matthiessen 1995: 18).

Although the above examples indicate which element in the clause is Theme, they do not really help in identifying the function of Theme. That is, it is not particularly helpful if we say that *he* is the 'point of departure' for the speaker in Example 1, or whether we say that *he* is the 'local context' of the clause or the next step in the discourse unless we have more of that discourse to interpret this function. This is because Theme is not just an element of clause structure but relates to the overall structure and flow of information in the text in which the clause is situated.

In SF literature there is a variety of studies in which the function of Theme is analysed according to the recognition criteria proposed by Halliday. For instance, Halliday (1985a) demonstrates that in spoken interaction the Thematic choices made by a child reflect the kinds of things the child is wanting to achieve in the situation. In a study of written scientific discourse, Halliday (1993) demonstrates how an analysis of the content of the Themes in scientific discourse from several periods in history shows changes in the construction of scientific argument and discourse in general. Martin and Peters (1985), demonstrate the different textual functions of Themes in expository writing. They explain that Thematic choices function to divide the text into 'elements of schematic structure', and that, for instance, Theme in expository writing plays a key role in structuring the overall argument that is being advanced as well as creating continuity in a text. This latter function of Theme is known as the 'method of development' of a text (see Fries 1983;

1995). Before discussing 'method of development', the next section focuses on the way in which Thematic and New choices create 'waves of informational prominence' in the text. The notion of 'method of development' is discussed in section 7.2.4 below.

7.1.1.2 Theme and Wave-like Information Prominence in Text

Halliday explains that there is a complementary relation between the system of THEME-RHEME and that of GIVEN-NEW. Given and New are structures relevant to the prosodic patterns of text, and contribute to the function of the clause as a message, or unit of information. New is the culminating or focal point of the message of the clause. It is realised by the assignment of tonic prominence in the information unit, and is thus that element in the information unit that the speaker wishes the listener to attend to. Unlike Theme, which comes at the beginning of the clause and points forward, (unmarked) New is located at the end of the clause and extends backwards. An important difference between Theme and New is that Theme is related to the constituents of the clause, whereas New is related to the intonation contours of utterances. Halliday explains that the typical pattern of Theme and Rheme and Given and New is that 'the Theme is something that is Given and the New is something that is Rhematic' (Halliday 1993: 60). He argues that the rhetorical effect of this kind of unmarked mapping is that when Theme is mapped on to Given it becomes a means of 'backgrounding' information, while Rheme mapped on to New is a means of 'foregrounding' information (Halliday 1993: 60). Halliday's diagrammatic representation of the complementarity between Theme and New is presented in Figure 5: 1 below.

(Given→) New

Theme (→ Rheme)   Focus
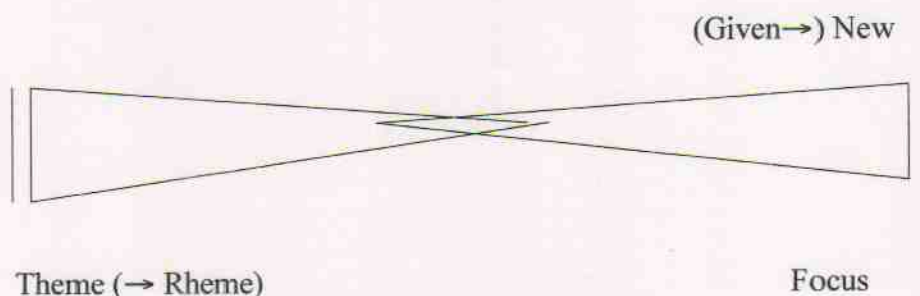
Figure 7:1 Halliday's Representation of the Complementary Wave-like Effect of Thematic and Focal (New) Prominence (from Halliday 1994: 337)

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Martin (1993) extends Halliday's notion of the relationship between Theme and New to describe the global organisation of a text. He suggests that textual prominence culminates at both the beginning and ending of a text, and uses the terms Hyper-Theme and Hyper-New to refer to these two culmination points. The Hyper-Theme is the overall Theme of the text that 'point(s) forward to a relatively small set of meanings which ... pattern as Theme' (Martin 1993: 248). This is a slight departure from Martin (1992) in which he uses the term Macro-Theme for the Theme of the text, Hyper-Theme for the Theme of a paragraph, and Theme for the Theme of a clause (1992: 437). Hyper-New on the other hand is the culmination of information found at the end of the text. It is 'retrospective' rather than 'prospective' as it 'look(s) backward, ranging across a relatively larger set of meanings patterning as New' (Martin 1993: 248). There is thus a complementarity in the roles that Theme and Rheme and Given and New play across the text, within the paragraph, and within the clause. Each functions in a culminative way to organise experiential and interpersonal meanings and to realise textual meaning.

Even though Halliday's definition of Theme is straightforward, his explanation of the relationship between Theme and Given and New structures (other grammatical resources for construing textual meaning), and how these function within a text, lends itself to a variety of interpretations concerning the boundary of Theme. There are two matters at the core of the debate surrounding the function and boundary criteria of Theme. First is Halliday's suggestion that Theme includes everything up to and including the first element in the experiential function of the clause, and second is Halliday's suggestion concerning the periodic or wave-like information prominence created by Thematic and New patterns in a text. This latter suggestion is something which is said to be theoretically possible, but difficult to represent (Hasan & Fries 1995). One of the most influential participants in the debate over the function and boundary of Theme is Berry (see especially 1995 & 1996). Her views on Theme are presented in the next section.

7.1.1.3 Berry

In a study of children's writing Berry's (1995: 64) definition of the boundary of Theme 'err[s] on the side of generosity' and includes 'everything that precedes the verb of the main clause'. A consequence of adopting this definition of Theme is that several experiential elements at the beginning of the clause can be included in the Theme, thus providing more 'information' in the 'point of departure of the clause'. A comparison of Berry's (1995) definition of Theme with that of Halliday's can be seen in the following example.

Well	last week	after we had finished the first phase of the project	we	went out for a walk
(Berry's definition of Theme) **Theme**				**Rheme**
interpersonal	topical	topical	topical	
(Halliday's definition of Theme) **Theme**		**Rheme**		
interpersonal	topical			

Figure 7:2 A Comparative Analysis of Theme — Berry and Halliday

In Figure 7:2 we can see that using Halliday's definition of Theme, the Theme would be everything up to the circumstance *last week*, whereas Berry's definition would include the two circumstances *last week* and *after we finished the first phase of the project* and the participant *we* in the Theme.

In a later paper, Berry (1996) tackles in detail the recognition criteria of Theme as it relates to the meaning and form of Theme. In this discussion Berry proposes several hypotheses regarding Theme in order to find a systematic relationship between what she calls $Theme_m$ (Theme as meaning) and $Theme_f$ (Theme as form). According to Berry, $Theme_m$ relates to the definition of 'point of departure', or the speaker's 'primary concerns' in the text, whereas, $Theme_f$ relates to the functional cut off point of this point of departure. Berry states that these are reinterpretations of Huddleston's (1991) distinction between Theme as content and Theme as expression respectively. With reference to the view that Theme

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relates not just to the clause level but to the discourse level, Berry distinguishes between discourse Theme$_m$ and clause Theme$_m$. This distinction arises from the Hallidayan notion of the culminative nature of Theme — in Berry's words: 'Theme has to do with the concerns of the speaker or writer; and ... it is the culminative force of the Themes of the clauses of a text that indicates these concerns, rather than the Theme of any one clause individually' (Berry 1996: 18). Distinguishing between Theme$_m$ and Theme$_f$ opens up two avenues of exploration which are summarised in the next few paragraphs.

Theme$_m$ is related to the 'priority meaning for the speaker or writer' and therefore reflects the main concerns of the speaker or writer. To determine Theme$_m$ Berry first consults with the authors of the texts she is analysing in order to ascertain what their main concerns are. She then asks several readers of the texts to offer their opinions about what they feel are the main concerns of the authors, and which meanings they feel have been prioritised. Based on these interviews and discussions with informants, Berry proposes several hypotheses regarding the kinds of meanings likely to be prioritised in the texts she is studying, and attempts to establish some guidelines for determining clause and discourse Theme$_m$. Next, Berry poses the question: 'Are there any systematic relations between Theme$_m$ and Theme$_f$?' In order to address this question, Berry first focuses on the notion of Theme$_f$ and proposes several hypotheses deriving from work in SFL theory. She argues that 'first position' has been interpreted in various ways ranging from Halliday's initial suggestion that it comprise everything up to and including the first experiential element in the clause, to everything up to and including the lexical verb of the clause (Stainton 1993 cited in Berry 1996). One interpretation of Theme which Berry finds attractive is what she calls the 'Matthiessen-Ravelli' view. She describes this view as the Theme/Rheme overlap. A brief overview of Matthiessen's and Ravelli's views on Theme seems apropos at this point in the discussion.

Ravelli (1995) argues that the path into the message through Theme is not complete until it contains at least the element acting as Subject of the clause: or in Ravelli's words, 'The Mood component acts as a hinge between the simultaneously unfolding analyses of Theme

and Transitivity; until a potential Subject element is confirmed, the Theme analysis is still relevant, as the message is not yet fully "off the ground"' (Ravelli 1995: 227). Ravelli's discussion centres on both the function and structure of Theme, and it is clear from her discussion that she prefers the more 'extended' view of the structure and boundary of Theme, i.e. everything up to the verb. Two quotations from Ravelli (1995: 226) exemplify her point of view regarding the boundary of Theme:

> ...each of the clause elements continues to contribute to the 'departure point' of the message, but once the Process is reached, the dance is unequivocally "under way".

> Textually, everything up to that critical dividing line [the process] can be seen to be Thematic.

However, Ravelli sees the *function* of Theme as extending somewhat into the verb in that as the text unfolds Theme has a 'residual' effect on the information value of the elements in the Rheme. She states that Theme is highly informative at the beginning of the clause, but that it trails off as the clause unfolds, and the function of Theme is completed by a 'step into Rheme' at the site of the process in the clause (Ravelli 1995: 227).

Complementary to Ravelli's description is Matthiessen's (1992: 50-52) argument that Themes may 'pile up' at the beginning of the clause. With reference to the boundary of Theme, Matthiessen argues that because the carrier of the Thematic wave is constituency (i.e. it is realised through specific constituents in the experiential function of the clause), the boundary of the Theme can be recognised in terms of constituency. Although Matthiessen does not suggest that the verb is part of the Theme, he does suggest that where Subject is located next to the verb, the Subject may be seen to fall 'within the diminuendo of the thematic wave', and this could be interpreted as suggesting that the Thematic function extends into the verbal group. Furthermore, in three of Matthiessen's diagrams of the Thematic wave patterns in the same clause the Thematic wave is shown to decline in the region of the verbal group. Thus, Matthiessen and Ravelli appear to hold similar views regarding the boundary and function of Theme: the verb constitutes the site

of the boundary of Theme and the 'effect' of the Theme diminishes once the process of the clause is reached.

Berry's interpretation of the implications from Matthiessen's and Ravelli's work is clearly related to the relationship between the two waves of prominence of information in the clause: that the Theme hosts the prominent concerns of the speaker in terms of interpersonal and textual meanings, whereas the Rheme hosts the main ideational concerns of the clause, and the diminuendo of Theme and the initial rise of Rheme are located at the site of the verbal group. Although Berry interprets Ravelli's (1995) and Matthiessen's (1992) ideas as suggesting that Theme and Rheme structures overlap 'somewhere in the neighbourhood of the verb', this interpretation can only be made from their discussion of the function of Theme or from selected diagrams in Matthiessen's paper (see in particular Matthiessen 1992: 42, 51), and not from what either Matthiessen or Ravelli have specifically said.

Returning to her hypothesis about Theme$_m$ and the prioritising of meanings in a text, Berry attempts to match up the identified Theme$_m$s with the hypothesised Theme$_f$s. She reasons that where there is a systematic correlation between the majority of Theme$_m$s with a particular definition of Theme$_f$, this Theme$_f$ will be the most likely candidate for supplying the definition of Theme in structural terms.

Based on the texts that Berry uses, her analyses of Theme$_m$, and from her interpretation of Matthiessen's and Ravelli's views concerning the wave-like effect of Theme, Berry proposes that the most likely candidate for Theme$_f$ (functional Theme) is that part of the clause which includes everything up to and including the lexical verb. It is this view of Theme which Berry believes describes the way in which communicative prominence is achieved, because it is in this part of the clause that interpersonal meanings and "logical" meanings, those meanings 'that have to do with making connections between the meanings of different parts of a text' (1996: 60), coincide. It should be noted that Berry's work is

concerned with written texts and it remains to be seen as to whether her interpretation of Theme is a viable option for the analysis of spoken discourse.

7.1.2 Analysis of Theme in Play-by-Play Talk

Acknowledging that the boundary and function of Theme is a contentious issue in SF theory, in this study, Halliday's recognition criteria of Theme is adopted in order to remain within the Halliday framework of grammatical description. Should this view of Theme be unhelpful in shedding light on how textual meanings are construed in play-by-play talk in this study, a consideration of other views of Theme would seem appropriate. Therefore, in the analyses in this section, Theme includes everything up to and including the first experiential element in the clause.

Table 7:1 presents the Thematic analysis of each line in the 2GB play-by-play extract. Thematic ellipsis (i.e. where there is no element preceding the main verb of the clause) and topical Theme ellipsis (i.e. where there are no experiential elements in Thematic position) are noted. Another point regarding the analysis relates to the results from the Mood analysis (see Chapter Five), specifically the finding that there are certain structures in which the Mood element is 'indeterminable'. This finding, on the whole, does not affect the Thematic analysis, except in the determination of what may be interpreted as marked or unmarked Theme. In the lines in the extract where the Mood is indeterminable, elements other than a 'participant' (a potential candidate for the role of Subject) but which fall within Thematic position are considered 'marked' Themes. All lines in each extract are analysed for Theme. The analysis of Theme in the ABC extract can be found in Appendix XII. A horizontal dash in the right-hand column indicates that the clause is non-play-by-play.

Table 7:1 Themes in the 2GB Play-by-Play Extract

Segment	Thematic element(s)	Classification of Thematic element(s)
A	GB469.**back** (now it)	topical (circumstantial)
	GB470.**Fairleigh**	topical (participant)
	GB471.**and** [he – topical Theme ellipsis]	textual (structural) (topical ellipsis)
	GB472.**now it**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB473.**good pass**	topical (participant)
	GB474.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB475.**and again**	textual, topical (circumstance)
	GB476.Theme ellipsis	Theme ellipsis
	GB477.**it**	topical (participant)
	GB478.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB479.-	
	GB480.**eventually they**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB481.**and** [they - topical Theme ellipsis]	textual, (topical ellipsis)
	GB482.**now it**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB483.**the pass**	topical (participant)
	GB484.**but he**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB485.**it**	topical (participant)
	GB486.**and he**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB487.-	-
	GB488.**it**	topical (participant)
	GB489.Theme ellipsis	Theme ellipsis
	GB490.**Ikin**	topical (participant)
	GB491.-	-
	GB492.**but a nice pick up**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB493.[he - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB494.[he - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB495.**oh what**	textual, interpers/topical WH element
B	GB502.**but now Lowrie**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB503.-	-
	GB504.**but it**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB505.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB506.**Billy Moore**	topical (participant)
	GB510.**and the referee**	textual, topical (participant)
C	GB511.**and Eastern Suburbs**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB512.[it - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB513.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB526.**but it**	Textual, topical (participant)
	GB527.[it - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB528.-	-
	GB529.**but** [he – topical Theme ellipsis]	textual
	GB530.**Adrian Lam**	topical (participant)
	GB531.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB532.**Iro**	topical (participant)
	GB534.**Walker**	topical (participant)
	GB535.**Lam**	topical (participant)
	GB536.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB537.[he - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB538.**but Taylor**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB539.[Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB540.**it**	topical (participant)
	GB541.**he**	topical (participant)
D	GB547.[it - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB548.**who**	textual
	GB549.-	-
	GB550.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB551.**but it**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB552.**then** [it - topical Theme ellipsis]	textual
	GB553.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB554.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB555.-	-

	GB556.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB557.**and he**	textual, topical (participant)
E	GB566.**it**	topical (participant)
	GB567.**Buettner**	topical (participant)
	GB568.-	-
	GB569.**but Cleary**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB570.**and Dallas**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB574.**but the arm of Ward**	textual, topical (participant)
F	GB594.**back** (it)	topical (circumstance)
	GB595.**he**	topical (participant)
	GB596.**in possession**	topical (circumstance)
	GB597.[it - Theme ellipsis]	Theme ellipsis
	GB598.**now he**	textual, topical (participant)
	GB599.**Garlick**	topical (participant)
	GB600.**he**	topical (participant)

7.1.3 Results and Interpretation of the Analysis of Theme

7.1.3.0 Introduction

There are several perspectives from which Thematic patterns in a text can be viewed and which point to how meanings are organised in the text. A text can be viewed from the perspective of 1) the types of Themes, indicating whether, for instance, there is a proliferation of textual or interpersonal Themes, or mainly topical Themes; 2) the content of the topical Themes, indicating the patterns of a speaker's point of departure at the clause level, and the textual waves of experiential prominence; 3) the use of marked Themes, indicating the kinds of contextual pressures on the speaker's choice of point of departure; and 4) the method of Thematic development (Fries 1995), indicating something about the global organisation of the text. The play-by-play text is analysed from each of these perspectives in the next sections.

7.1.3.1 Types of Themes in Play-by-Play Talk

The Theme of a clause may consist of one or more elements up to and including the first experiential element in the clause. Therefore, Themes may be either single Themes or multiple Themes. Table 7:2 presents the proportion of the types of single and multiple Themes in the 2GB and ABC play-by-play extracts.

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Table 7:2 Proportions of Types of Single and Multiple Themes in the 2GB and ABC Play-by-Play Extracts (including proportion of Ellipsed Themes)

Type of Theme	2GB		ABC		Combined Total Proportions
	No.	Proportion	No.	Proportion	
SINGLE THEMES					
Topical	33	49.3%	48	55.2%	52.6%
Textual	5	7.5%	10	11.5%	9.7%
ELLIPSED THEMES	10	14.9%	8	9.2%	11.7%
MULTIPLE THEMES					
Textual + topical: participant	17	25.4%	15	17.2%	20.8%
Textual + topical: circumstance	1	1.5%	3	3.5%	2.6%
Textual + interper/topical WH	1	1.5%	0	0%	0.7%
Textual + textual + topical: participant	0	0%	1	1.1%	0.7%
Textual + topical: existential	0	0%	2	2.3%	1.3%
Total Number of Lines	67	100%	87	100%	100%

From Table 7:2 we can see that the most common single Theme in both the 2GB and the ABC play-by-play extracts is the topical Theme. In fact, the proportion of single topical Themes in each extract is very close at approximately 50% (higher in the ABC and slightly lower in the 2GB extract). In Table 7:2 we can also see that whenever there is a multiple Theme, it always contains a textual Thematic element, and that the most common multiple Theme is the textual + topical (participant) Theme. There are no interpersonal Themes in the ABC extract and only one example in the 2GB extract. This suggests that information foregrounded in the Themes is most often experiential in nature and that the speaker's concerns are more informational than interpersonal. This preference for foregrounding experiential information is one way in which the linguistic choices made in play-by-play talk construe an important purpose of play-by-play talk: to supply information in an objective manner. This finding also seems to complement the results of the Mood analysis in which the majority of clauses were found to be declarative and the speech function to be a Statement rather than a Question or a Demand. The lack of interpersonal Themes also suggests that the speakers are presenting information with the assumption that there will

not be any dynamic feedback, and that the information they are presenting is meant to be uncontentious and informational in nature.

An interesting finding of the analysis of the multiple Themes is that there is always a textual Theme present. Textual Themes have two major functions: namely, to either 'giv[e] information about the organization or function of part of the text ... or [to express] logical relations which hold in the world' (Whittaker 1995: 113). In play-by-play talk, the most common textual Themes are the conjunctions *and* or *but* or the conjunctive temporal successive *and* + *now* or *then*. These choices reflect both the linear/sequential arrangement of information in the text and the sequential ongoing activities of the game which is taking place. This marrying of text activities and field activities is a characteristic of play-by-play talk as noted in Chapters Four and Five. A short extract from the ABC play-by-play text illustrates this function of the textual Themes (Thematic elements are underlined).

Extract 7:1

A186. *he has it perched high on the mound of sand*
A187. *and now that crouching leaning style towards the football*
A188. *and then he attacks it*
A189. *and boots it solidly towards goal*

The textual Themes in the play-by-play extracts are almost exclusively simple conjunctions such as *and*, or *but*, and there are no complex conjunction groups in the segments of play-by-play talk under focus here (which is not to say that complex conjunctions are never used during play-by-play talk, but a brief examination of the complete play-by-play portions of the commentaries reveals that they are rare in play-by-play talk). That there are no instances of complex conjunction groups can be interpreted as a significant feature of the register of Rugby League radio play-by-play commentary, and perhaps play-by-play commentary in general. The next section focuses on this finding.

7.1.3.2 Textual Themes and Organising Talk in Play-by-Play

A feature which arises from the analysis of the textual Themes in play-by-play talk is the very low degree of complex conjunctions and hence of grammatical (clausal) complexity. The two most common means of explicitly relating clauses to each other in play-by-play talk is through the use of *and* or *but*. Their function in play-by-play talk is described in the next paragraphs.

In the play-by-play text there are several instances in which *but* is selected. One example of the use of *but* is at lines GB483 and GB484: *the pass back inside to Florimo // but he's cut down by Sean Garlick*. In this example *but* is used in the contrastive sense. Here *Florimo* receives the ball (line GB483), but he is unable to make any progress in running with it. Instead, he is tackled (*cut down*). In this example, the conjunction *but* is used to connect two clauses in a paratactic extending relation.

In contrast to the above use of *but* is the use of *but* to indicate a return to play-by-play talk. In this sense *but* appears to be used as a stage marker rather than as a conjunction. This use of *but* is evident throughout the play-by-play talk, for instance, in the following excerpt.

GB501 *one of the Claudio's big hits thus far in this game (not play-by-play)*
GB502 ***but*** *now Lowrie getting up very slowly*
GB503 *might've hurt his knee (not play-by-play)*
GB504 ***but*** *it's gone across to Fittler*

Interestingly in the ABC transcript this use of *but* does not appear. Rather, the speaker occasionally signals a return to play-by-play talk with the use of *and* or *now*, as in the following excerpts from the ABC commentary.

A538 BC: *Souths six Crushers two (not play-by-play)*
A539 PW: ***and*** *the tap taken on the forty metre line*

A636 CH: *correct (not play-by-play)*
A637 *one hundred percent right (not play-by-play)*
A638 PW: ***now*** *the er kick is taken*

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Even though in each commentary the exponent of the signal to return to play-by-play talk differs, the same category of signal is being used; in both commentaries the speaker may use a simple conjunction to signal a return to play-by-play talk.

Both written and spoken texts make use of textual signalling devices to signpost which part of the text a reader/or listener may be in, or to direct the reader or listener to the next stage of the text. Speeches often have signals like first, my next point, and so on, and a speaker may make use of fairly complex conjunctions to organise the parts of the speech. The use of complex conjunctions implies a certain degree of preplanning, and thus are not a likely choice in the situation of play-by-play talk where the speakers are spontaneously relating a set of ongoing material activities. The simple conjunctions which constitute the textual Themes tend to indicate sequence, alternation, or addition. Furthermore, in play-by-play talk the speaker may use the same conjunctions to indicate that the event is NOT actually joined to that which precedes it, but is an event which is part of a different stage in the text, and at the same time different event taking place in the context.

Although conjunctions are used in play-by-play talk, one of the features of play-by-play talk which is also evident from the analysis of the textual Themes is the apparent lack of explicit connection between many of the clauses in play-by-play text. This feature of play-by-play talk is discussed in the next section.

7.1.3.3 Relations Between Clauses in Play-by-Play Talk

One of the features of both the 2GB and the ABC play-by-play texts is the lack of explicit relations between many of the clauses, creating a text which is grammatically simple in its structure. In the 2GB extract, for instance, the longest of these are Segment F and Segment C lines GB534-541.

In cases where there are strings of independent clauses, the most common relation seems to be that of temporal sequence. Hoey (1983) has noted that the most basic form of logical sequence relation is time sequence; therefore, using Hoey's terminology, the sequence of

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events expressed in play-by-play talk could be considered the 'unmarked sequence' because the sequence of events makes sense without the use of explicit signals of clause relations. Martin (1992) also observes that 'simply putting clauses next to each other suggests some logical connection between them, whether or not this is made explicit through the various linking resources the grammar provides' 1992: 165).

The lack of explicit signals of how the clauses logically relate to one another suggests that the speakers are relying on implicit logical sequence based on the temporal sequence of events. The connection between the clauses is that of sequential movement through events conveyed in the same sequence in which they happen in the external environment. This is exactly what was behind the use of the successive conjunctive marker *and now* in Chapter Four where we were determining which elements of the commentary constituted play-by-play talk. If a clause did not satisfy the condition of being linked in time and type of event to the previous clause, it was excluded from the play-by-play data.

Some of the temporally sequenced clauses with no explicit temporal relation in the play-by-play are exemplified below (except at line GB598) in Figure 7:3.

GB594.	back it goes now to Garlick
	↕ **temporal**
GB595.	he sends it across to Iro
	↕ **temporal**
GB596.	in possession the Sydney City Roosters
	↕ **temporal**
GB597.	[it has] gone back to Peter Clark now
	↕ **temporal**
GB598.	now he's wrapped up beautifully too thirty-two metres out from the Bears' line
	↕ **temporal**
GB599.	Garlick very quickly at the dummy-half
	↕ **temporal**
GB600.	he gives it across to Dunn
	(↕ indicates that there is a relation between the two clauses)

Figure 7:3 Implicit Temporal Relations Between Clauses in Play-by-Play Text

The temporal connection between clauses is the most common connection in play-by-play talk and this is due to the fact that play-by-play talk is relating concurrent ongoing events. Once one event is related, the next event takes place and is also related and so on. Almost

every clause in play-by-play talk is relating a new event which, in real time, is happening subsequent to the previous event. Martin (1992) argues that texts which are structured primarily on the basis of the activity sequences in the field are classified as iconic texts, or 'field-structured' texts. Texts which are not structured on the basis of the activity sequences in the field, but are structured in some other way, are classified as non-iconic texts, or 'genre-structured' texts. These two classifications are actually two ends of a continuum of classification on which texts can be arranged. Field structured texts are those which tend to relate the activities taking place at the time in which the text is happening. Therefore, using Martin's terminology, we could say that play-by-play text is a field-structured text. The activities in the external material activities and the sequence in which they occur are reflected in the way they are organised as text.

Martin's classification of texts as field-structured or as genre-structured can also be applied to the overall structure of the commentary. In the description of the way in which the commentary is framed (see Chapter Three) we saw that when the commentators relate the kick-off they are indicating that the commentary is beginning **and** that the game is beginning. At the end of the commentary the commentators refer to the end of the game and the outcome of the score. These features of the text suggest that the global organisation of the commentary is also 'field structured'. Unlike a newspaper report which begins with the outcome of the game, the commentary must follow the events in real time and the linguistic framing markers reflect this component of the context of the commentary.

7.1.3.4 Grammatical Complexity in Play-by-Play Talk

An analysis of the clause complexes in play-by-play text reveal that there are few complex clauses. Furthermore, as has already been discussed, many clauses in play-by-play talk are presented as independent pieces of information, implicitly related through temporal sequence, each one adding another link in the chain of events that the speaker is relating. Where there is clausal dependency, it does not involve many clauses and is not particularly complex. Rather than the speaker taking a journey in which he may take several different

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paths to reach his goal as is typically done in spontaneous casual conversation (Halliday & Plum 1985: 31), the play-by-play speaker is on a single path with no time to return to previous moments and experiences. Any return to events for elaboration, for instance, is done during certain non-play-by-play moments.

7.1.3.5 Types of Topical Themes

So far we have examined the types of Themes which precede the topical Themes in play-by-play talk. This section focuses on the topical Themes themselves and the kinds of elements chosen by the speakers as the experiential 'point of departure' of the clauses. Although Table 7:2 indicated that there is a large proportion of topical Themes present in the Theme, it is of interest to ascertain what type of experiential information is expressed in the topical Themes. Therefore, the play-by-play texts are analysed in this section according to the type of elements selected as topical Themes, and Table 7.3 presents the proportions of categories of elements which host the topical Themes.

Table 7.3 Proportions of Categories of Topical Themes in Play-by-Play Talk

Category of Topical Theme	2GB	ABC	Combined Proportions
Participant	88.2%	81.1%	84.7%
Circumstance	9.8%	11.6%	10.7%
WH	1.9%	2.9%	2.4%
Existential 'There'	0%	4.4%	2.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

The results in Table 7:3 suggest that there is a very similar pattern in each commentary as to the elements selected as topical Themes. Participant Themes are by far the most common topical Themes in play-by-play talk, with the proportion above 80% in both extracts. There are also close proportions of circumstantial Themes in each text, but in the ABC extract there are some Existential Themes whereas in the 2GB extract these are not chosen (although in other locations in the 2GB play-by-play talk there are existential Themes). The conclusion that can be drawn here is that the speaker places Thematic prominence on participants more often than on other elements. Before discussing some of the contextual reasons why this is so, the next section focuses on the content of the topical

Themes, as it is here that we can see the nature of the experiential content the speakers choose to Thematise in play-by-play talk.

7.1.3.6 Content of the Topical Themes

Several studies have reported findings relating to the experiential content of Themes. Berry (1987 cited in Berry 1996) for example, compared the Themes in four different genres: a coffee party discussion, a committee meeting, a travel brochure and a guide book. She found that there is a higher number of place names in the Themes of the travel brochure and the guide book than in the other texts. Fries (1995) compares the experiential content of Themes reported by several researchers examining different genres. His comparison indicates that the categories of the experiential content of different genres differs. For instance, the most common Thematic elements in guide books are 'concrete Things' and 'locations', whereas the most common Thematic element in News reports, introductions to recipes and Fables is 'a major text participant'. Francis' (1990) study of Themes in news reports, editorials and letters of complaint to the newspaper finds that the most common Theme in news is 'people' and in editorials and letters is 'abstracts' (nominalised processes or abstract nouns). El-Issa (1998) finds that a common Thematic choice in tourist guides is 'interactional Theme'. These Themes include imperatives, the second person pronoun *you*, the inclusive *we*, and direct references to the reader using third person constructions such as *visitors*.

Because participant Themes are selected to a greater extent than any other Themes in play-by-play talk, this section analyses the types of items chosen to be participant Themes. Table 7:4 presents the results of the analysis of the participant Themes selected in each of the play-by-play extracts .

Table 7:4 Content of the 'Participant' Topical Themes in Play-by-Play Talk

Content of the Participant Topical Themes	2GB		ABC		Selected Combined Proportions
'he' Masculine 3rd person pronouns	36.9%		32.8%		Players/Teams
		65.2%		46.6%	
Proper names of individual players	28.3%		13.8%		combined
'they' (players)		0		6.9%	average
team names		2.2%		5.2%	63.1%
'it' (pronominal reference to the ball)	21.7%		20.7%		The ball
		21.7%		32.8%	
the ball (lexical reference)	0		12.1%		combined average 27.3%
event nominals		6.5%		5.2%	
referee		4.4%		0	
other		0		3.5%	
Total		100		100.2	

From Table 7:4 it appears that in play-by-play talk the most common item chosen as a participant Theme is a human participant (either referred to by proper name or by third person pronoun), while the next most common item is 'the ball'.

From Table 7:4 we can see that the combined proportion of Themes in which an individual player is located is 65.2% for the 2GB extract and 46.6% for the ABC extract. These results indicate that the major proportion of the Themes in play-by-play talk are individual players. The analyses of Subject and of participants in the material process clauses in Chapters Five and Six also found that individual participants or 'players' feature to a great extent in each of these systems. Therefore, the choice of 'player(s)' as a common experiential element in the participant Themes seems to complement these other findings.

The focus on the individual as the point of departure in the clause is also complemented by the fact that many of the ellipsed Themes relate to *the ball*, and in these lines often the prioritised meanings in the New element are the participants to whom the ball is being passed, such as in GB489 // 3 *out to /Ben /Ikin* // (see Section 7.2). At this point in the discussion and analysis of Theme we could say that participants appear to feature in both

Thematic and New positions in the clause. The interaction of participant (players) 'Theme' with participant (players) 'New' information is idealistically represented in Figure 7:4 below:

(Given→) New

Player   Player

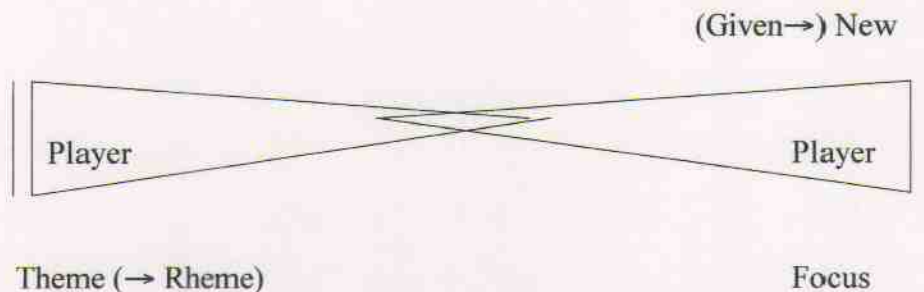Theme (→ Rheme)   Focus

Figure 7:4 Wave-like Effect of Thematic and Focal Prominence of Individual Players in Play-by-Play Talk

A major difference between the Thematic choices in each play-by-play extract is in the proportion of times that each commentator uses proper names of individual players. In the 2GB extract the proportion of Themes in which a player's proper name is used is just over twice that in the ABC. This result could represent a stylistic difference between the two speakers, or the results may reflect the 2GB speaker's concern with identifying players by using their names. However, the reasons for the choice of these Themes in these extracts may in fact reflect what is taking place on the field of play at the time. For instance, in Segment B of the ABC extract the speaker is relating the player kicking the ball. In this segment the commentator relates the activity in a series of steps. The identity of the player has already been established by the time he begins to relate this event and so his reference to the player through the personal pronoun 'he' is the most likely choice in this environment. If we consider some moments in the commentaries where each speaker is relaying the same event, we might gain a more useful insight into the use of proper names and personal pronouns in the Themes. In Extract 7:2 and Extract 7:3 each speaker is relaying the same events taking place in the field of play.

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Extract 7:2 (excerpt from the 2GB play-by-play talk)

GB378.*Soden elects to pass a long ball out wide*
GB379.*and it does go to Florimo*
GB380.*[it goes] on to Dallas*
GB381.*Dallas trying to get around one or two*
GB382.*he's flicked over the far touch line*
GB383.*but the ball went back in-field*

Extract 7:3 (excerpt from the ABC play-by-play talk)

A112.*[it is] half-volleyed by Soden*
A113.*he loops a pass over the top*
A114.*it hits Florimo*
A115.*Florimo for the corner to Dallas*
A116.*[there is/he has] no room to work with*
A117.*and he is tackled over the touchline*
A118.*[he] whips the ball back into the field of play*

An analysis of these two short extracts shows the following Thematic choices.

2GB

Soden (proper name - player)
and it (textual, reference to the ball)
[it] (Theme ellipsis)
Dallas (proper name of player)
he (pronominal reference to player)
but the ball (textual, lexical reference to the ball)

ABC

[it] (Theme ellipsis)
he (pronominal reference to player)
it (pronominal reference to the ball)
Florimo (proper name - player)
[Theme ellipsis]
and he (pronominal reference - player
[he] Theme ellipsis

Figure 7:5 Analysis of the Themes in Two Short Extracts

Here we can see that the 2GB speaker uses slightly more proper names in Thematic position than the ABC speaker and so the results from the analysis of the longer extracts seem to stand. Therefore, it is possible that the greater use of proper names by the 2GB commentator than the ABC commentator is a stylistic difference.

The results in Table 7:4 above showed that a small proportion of topical Themes in play-by-play talk are circumstantial elements — 9.8% in the 2GB extract and 11.6% in the ABC extracts. Table 7:5 presents the types of circumstantial topical Themes.

Table 7:5 Number of Types of 'Circumstantial' Topical Themes in the Play-by-Play Extracts

Type of Circumstance	2GB	ABC
Location: time (temporal)	2	0
Location: place: (spatial)	2	8
Manner	1	0
Total	5	8

The low number of circumstantial topical Themes indicates that the speakers only occasionally choose a circumstance as their point of departure in play-by-play talk. This appears to contrast with the large number of circumstances selected in the latter part of the clause, or the Rheme. Therefore, we can say that although there is a large number of circumstances selected in play-by-play talk, they are rarely selected to serve the point of departure for the clause, and therefore, are not given Thematic informational prominence. This suggests that the flow of information in play-by-play talk is not organised around circumstantial information but around textual/sequential indicators and/or individual participants.

7.1.3.7 Thematic Ellipsis

There are several cases of Thematic ellipsis in the play-by-play talk and the proportions of these are presented in Table 7:6 below.

Table 7:6 Thematic Ellipsis in Play-by-Play Talk

Type of Ellipsis	2GB	ABC	Average ABC & 2GB
Full Theme Ellipsis	14.9%	8.1%	11.5%
Topical Theme Ellipsis	7.5%	10.4%	9.0%

Table 7:6 indicates that there is a greater proportion of clauses with full Theme ellipsis in the 2GB extract than in the ABC extract. On the other hand, there is a greater proportion of clauses with topical Theme ellipsis in the ABC extract than in the 2GB extract. These differences are not very high and may represent stylistic differences between the speakers.

One of the few studies that reports on register specific Thematic ellipsis is Ghadessy's (1995: 134) study of newspaper sports reports. In his study, Ghadessy found that 7.5% of the Themes were elliptical Themes. It is difficult at this stage to come to any comparative conclusions regarding the degree of ellipsis in play-by-play text and that in Ghadessy's study. That Thematic ellipsis is slightly higher than that in written sports reports may be a result of the contextual aspects associated with the mode of discourse.

7.1.3.8 Marked Theme and Indeterminate Structures

From the analysis of Theme in the play-by-play text (see Table 7:1) we can see that there are few marked Themes in play-by-play talk. The topical Theme, as Table 7:3 above indicated, is most often a participant, and in the text these participants are invariably Subjects in the clause (or potential Subjects if the Mood is indeterminable) and so are not considered to be marked Themes. This finding differs from that of previous studies. For instance, although his description differs from the SF description adopted in this study, the existence of marked Themes appears to be a phenomenon reported in Ferguson's (1983) study of sports announcer's talk. In his study, Ferguson finds that sports announcers make use of what he calls 'inversions'. He defines inversions as 'structures in which the predicate precedes the subject' (Ferguson 1983: 160). An example of an inversion given by Ferguson is *holding up at third is Murphy*. According to Ferguson, although a function of inversions is to 'give the speaker a little more time to ascertain the identity of the player whose action is being reported', there are many times when the identity of the player is 'perfectly evident' and yet an inversion is still used. Ferguson therefore suggests that inversions can 'be regarded as a register-marking feature freely used even when the practical stalling function is not needed' (1983: 161). Ferguson suggests a dual function of inversions: they may function 'to postpone mentioning the agent's name

until the announcer is sure of it', and/or they may be used 'to heighten the listeners' feeling of suspense' (Ferguson 1983: 168-169). Structures similar to those found in Ferguson's study occasionally occur in Rugby League play-by-play commentary, for example, A308 *almost a double tackle there is* or A268 *back to pick it up is Lam*, but they do not appear to be very common. The reason for this may have to do with the different kinds of sports being commentated; Ferguson's data focuses on baseball and American football, whereas this study focuses on Rugby League football. It may also be that the effect of delay or suspense may be achieved through different strategies in Rugby League radio play-by-play talk than in the sports announcer's talk reported by Ferguson.

7.1.4 Thematic Development in Play-by-Play Talk

Even though Theme-Rheme structures are clause-level structures, they actually function on a text-wide basis creating waves of experiential prominence in the text. Furthermore, Thematic choice functions to globally organise the text, to structure the internal purposes of the text, and to realise the method of development of the text. We have already looked at the experiential content of the Themes and found that some general trends seem to exist in play-by-play talk, in particular, human participants are prioritised in the Themes of play-by-play text. If we interpret this finding in terms of 'waves of prominence', we can suggest that primarily it is the participants that are located in the Thematic peaks in play-by-play talk. It was also found that when textual Themes are chosen, they are simple conjunctions which organise the text as a 'field-structured' text.

The main focus of this section is on the method of development of play-by-play text. There are several types of Thematic progression which can be identified. For instance, 1) Theme-Theme, 2) Rheme to Theme, and 3) derived Thematic progression. The first type of Thematic progression is generally known as 'Theme iteration'. In this type of Thematic progression the content of one Theme is repeated in subsequent Themes. The second type of Thematic progression, Rheme to Theme, is called the 'linear' Thematic progression. Here, the content of the Rheme in one clause is picked up in the Theme of the subsequent clause and this pattern may be repeated. In the third type of progression, derived

Thematic progression, different elements from one broad Theme are picked up in subsequent Themes. Cloran (1995) adds to this list of styles of Thematic progression, and proposes that patterns of Theme to Rheme and Rheme to Rheme are also significant to text organisation.

Fries (1981) has proposed four hypotheses concerning the patterns of Thematic progression in a text. They are:

1. Different patterns of thematic progression correlate with different genres;
2. The experiential content of Themes correlate with what is perceived to be the method of development of a text or text segment;
3. The experiential content of Themes correlates with different genres; and
4. The experiential content of the Themes of a text correlates with a different generic element of structure within a text.

Fries (1995) reports that since these hypotheses were proposed, hypothesis 1 has received weak support; hypothesis 2 has received partial support; and hypothesis 3 has received little substantive support. Within the commentary there are considerable differences between Thematic choices during evaluative moments and during moments of play-by-play talk. An analysis of Theme in a segment from the ABC side-line reporter's evaluation exemplifies this difference.

```
A172.CH: Well I
A173.I ‖ it
A174.as we
A175.it (the wind)
A176.it (the wind)
A177.but [it] (the wind)
A178.but I
A179.we
A180.he
A181.this
```

Figure 7:6 Analysis of Theme in a Segment of Sideline Reporter's Talk

In the above analysis we can see that the speaker chooses predominantly first person pronouns and references to *the wind* as Themes. Such Themes would be unlikely to occur

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in play-by-play talk, and indeed the Thematic analysis did not find any such Themes. This seems to lend support to Fries' hypotheses 2 and 3 in that evaluative segments of talk in the commentary could be classified as different in register to play-by-play talk and therefore as different stages in the global organisation of the commentary.

According to Fries, hypothesis 4 can be subdivided into two hypotheses: hypothesis 4a and hypothesis 4b. Hypothesis 4a states that 'as a text moves from one element of structure to the next, the purposes to be accomplished will change. As a result, the meanings expressed in each element of structure of the text will change... [and] the Themes of the clauses of the different elements of structure are simply part of the differences in language which are generally encountered' (Fries 1995: 11). Hypothesis 4b states that 'as one moves from one element of structure within a text to the next, that move will be signalled in the Themes of the clauses and clause complexes. More specifically, the Theme of the first clause of the new element of structure of the text will be signalled in the Themes of the clauses and clause complexes' (Fries 1995: 12). Fries has found that recent research supports 'the general trends predicted by Hypothesis 4a, but that there are many examples of texts in which there is no obvious signalling of a move to a new element of the text in the Theme of the first clause complex' (Fries 1995: 12). Fries reports that there does however, appear to be a statistical tendency for this to be so (Fries 1995: 12). It was noted earlier that the commentator occasionally uses a simple conjunction to signal a change in the activities taking place in the commentary: the speaker is moving, for instance, from evaluation back into play-by-play talk. This finding seems to lend some support to Fries' hypothesis 4b. However, it should be remembered that these textual Themes are also found in play-by-play talk itself, so the support for Fries' hypothesis here is rather weak at best.

The Thematic progression of each segment of the 2GB play-by-play extract is represented in Appendix XIII and that of the ABC extract in Appendix XIV. The Thematic progression of Segment A of the 2GB data is presented below in Figure 7:7 for discussion. Because 'the players' and 'the ball' are the only experiential Themes in this segment (and

indeed virtually throughout the play-by-play text as a whole) Thematic progression involving a 'player' or 'players' is indicated by solid arrow-headed lines, and that involving 'the ball' is indicated by dotted arrow-headed lines.

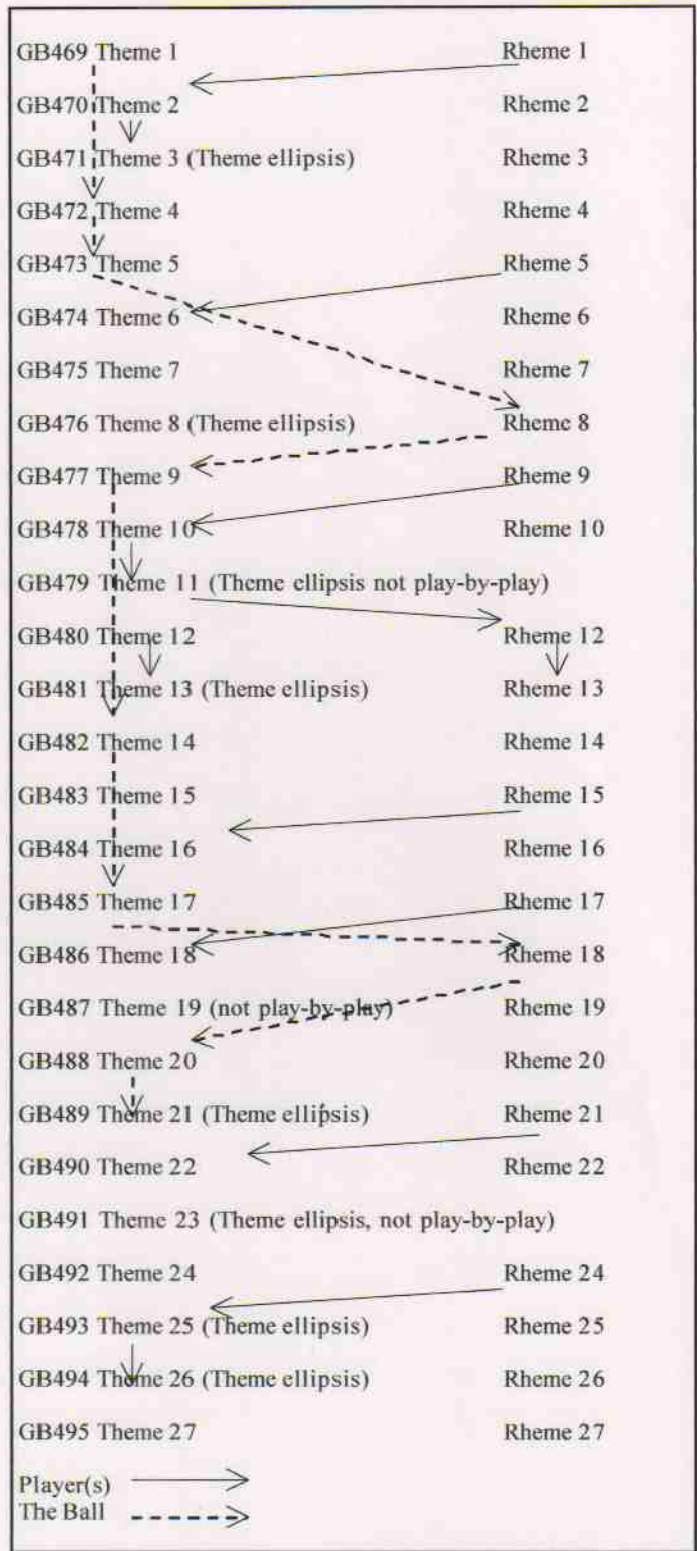| GB469 Theme 1 | Rheme 1 |
GB470 Theme 2	Rheme 2
GB471 Theme 3 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 3
GB472 Theme 4	Rheme 4
GB473 Theme 5	Rheme 5
GB474 Theme 6	Rheme 6
GB475 Theme 7	Rheme 7
GB476 Theme 8 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 8
GB477 Theme 9	Rheme 9
GB478 Theme 10	Rheme 10
GB479 Theme 11 (Theme ellipsis not play-by-play)	
GB480 Theme 12	Rheme 12
GB481 Theme 13 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 13
GB482 Theme 14	Rheme 14
GB483 Theme 15	Rheme 15
GB484 Theme 16	Rheme 16
GB485 Theme 17	Rheme 17
GB486 Theme 18	Rheme 18
GB487 Theme 19 (not play-by-play)	Rheme 19
GB488 Theme 20	Rheme 20
GB489 Theme 21 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 21
GB490 Theme 22	Rheme 22
GB491 Theme 23 (Theme ellipsis, not play-by-play)	
GB492 Theme 24	Rheme 24
GB493 Theme 25 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 25
GB494 Theme 26 (Theme ellipsis)	Rheme 26
GB495 Theme 27	Rheme 27

Player(s) ⟶
The Ball ⟶

Figure 7:7 Thematic Progression in Segment A of the 2GB Play-by-Play Extract

What is immediately obvious from Figure 7:7 is the apparent lack of connection between lines in the text, a feature noted in the discussion of conjunction and grammatical complexity in Sections 7.1.3.2 and 7.1.3.3. A feature of interest in this section is the 'extent' to which sections of the text conform to a specific Thematic pattern. For instance, in the play-by-play extract, linear Thematic patterns tend to be 'short-lived', such as between GB469 and GB470. The reason for this can be found in the interplay of elements in the context. The nature of the material activity that is being related to the listeners is such that a chain of individual events occur, and these form the game. One of the key events in the game of Rugby League involves the ball being passed from one player to another. This chain is interrupted by other less 'stable' material events, such as a tackle. When the ball is passed from one player to the next the commentator often conveys this using a pattern of linear Thematic progression. Figure 7:8 illustrates this pattern.

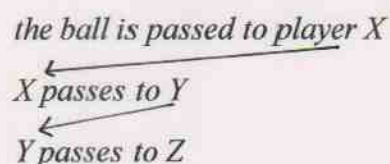*the ball is passed to player X*
X passes to Y
Y passes to Z

Figure 7:8 An Example of Linear Thematic Progression in Play-by-Play Talk

The material activity of passing the ball, the fact that the talk is iconically following the material action, and the nature of linear Thematic progression in English, work together to organise the text in this specific way.

The linear Thematic progression (Rheme to Theme) is not the only type of short-lived Thematic pattern found in play-by-play talk. Theme to Theme patterns tend to occur when the speaker relates an event in which a player holds the ball long enough for him to participate in more than just the action of passing the ball. For instance, Figure 7:8 shows a segment from the ABC transcript where the player, Nigel Roy, has the ball and runs for a few metres before being tackled.

A149 *as it's with Nigel Roy now*

A150 *he makes a few metres on the right side of the ruck*

A151 *he's now forty-two out*
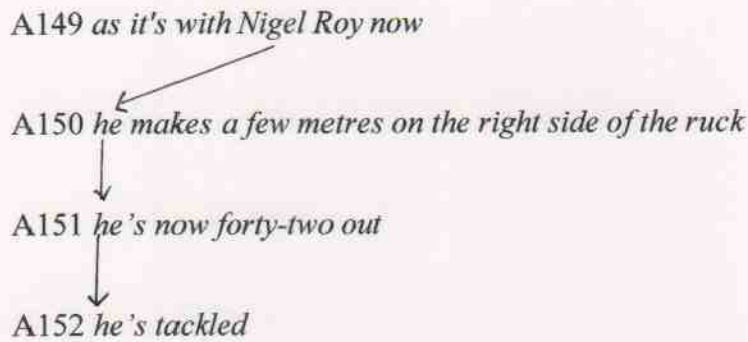
A152 *he's tackled*

Figure 7:9 An Example of Theme-Theme Progression in Play-by-Play Talk
    (Lines A150-A152)

In Figure 7:9 we can see that after the first clause, the speaker focuses on 'the player' as the point of departure. On the other hand, the amount of territory that the player gains and what happens to him are presented in the Rhemes. It would seem that the nature of the activity motivates this Theme to Theme pattern. Once the New information, 'Nigel Roy' has been stated, he becomes the point of departure, for each subsequent step in this set of activities. Whether he is Actor or Goal in the event, the player is given Thematic prominence. This is made possible through the verbal group choices of simple present or present passive.

Theme-Theme pattern may also occur when the speaker relates a series of events surrounding a player who is difficult to tackle. The Theme may stay with that player until he has been tackled and play has stopped. This is illustrated in Figure 7:10 below (note that cohesive ellipsis occurs in the third clause as the Subject *he* and the Finite are presupposed from the previous line):

A257   *Lam sends it to Fittler on the left edge of the ruck*

A258   *he's met front on*

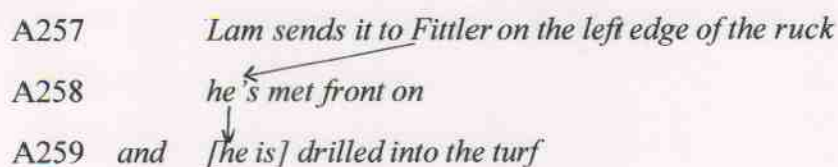A259 *and* *[he is] drilled into the turf*

Figure 7:10 Another Example in which Theme-Theme Progression is used in Play-by-Play Talk
    (Lines A258 & A259)

As in the previous segment, the interplay of Thematic prominence with experiential resources such as verbal group types makes it possible to keep the pattern of Thematic informational prominence. Examples 7:9 and 7:10 demonstrate what Matthiessen (1992: 45) refers to as the textual metafunction assigning value to the order of the experiential constituents. The player remains in Thematic position whether he is Goal or Actor in the event through the ordering of the experiential constituents.

7.1.5 Summary of Findings from the Thematic Analysis

This section first described the system of THEME and some of the debates surrounding the identification criteria of the boundary of Theme and Thematic function in text. Adopting Halliday's identification criteria, the analyses of Thematic choice in play-by-play talk focused on types of Themes, the content of topical Themes, marked Themes and the method of Thematic development. It was found that in play-by-play talk Themes tend to be simple with approximately 50% of Themes being single topical Themes. Where multiple Themes are selected, they most often comprise a textual Theme and a topical Theme. These results suggest that the speaker's concerns in play-by-play talk tend to be experiential or textual rather than interpersonal, a finding which appears to complement the results for the Mood analysis in the previous section in which it was found that very few choices in the system of modality are made in play-by-play talk.

Another finding regarding Theme is that Thematic ellipsis constitutes approximately 20% of instances of Thematic choice in play-by-play talk, which suggests that the speakers more often than not (almost 80% of the time) choose some type of Theme to foreground the message they wish to convey.

In the analysis of topical Themes, it was found that the most prominent topical Theme is a participant Theme which is realised as a player (either by proper name or personal pronoun). This suggests that the speaker chooses individual players as the point of departure for his messages, and this appears to highlight the importance of the individual over the team in Rugby League play-by-play talk. The waves of informational prominence

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located at the beginning of clauses in play-by-play talk centre on the human participants in the game.

The analysis of Thematic progression in play-by-play talk indicates that independent pieces of information are presented one after the other with no Thematic linking, or as 'short-lived' strings of linked events. Some types of Thematic progression evident in play-by-play talk are the linear pattern, which is used in relating situations such as the ball being passed from one player to the next, and Theme to Theme progression, which tends to be used when relaying a situations where a player keeps the ball for a comparatively long duration of time, or where a player is difficult to tackle. Thus it appears that there is a close link between the movement of action in the material field and the relating of this action through Thematic choice in the language.

Furthermore, unlike continuatives such as *oh* or *well* which would suggest that the speaker is trying to 'keep the floor' and to arrange his ideas before speaking, the textual Themes chosen by the commentator reflect a fluent linear arrangement of information. This seems to indicate that the speaker requires very little time to think about what he wants to say. This observation lends support to Kuiper's (see Kuiper 1996, Kuiper & Haggo 1985) contention that the highly fluent talk of a commentator is due to his reliance on a 'mental stockpile' of expressions. It would seem that the lack of textual Themes such as continuatives, the lack of complex clause relations and complex conjunctions, and the lack of interpersonal Themes, suggest that the speakers are not having to spend time thinking about what they wish to say, rather, they are able to fluently arrange the information in a way which reflects the flow of the material events in the situation. Fluency is a desirable characteristic of a good sports commentating, and the selection of Themes appears to contribute to the construal of this characteristic.

A final remark which should be made before moving on to the analysis of Given and New structures concerns Halliday's definition of Theme as including everything up to and including the first experiential element in the clause. In this study, this definition of Theme

proved to be useful in describing the flow of Thematic informational prominence in play-by-play talk. A more extended definition of Theme did not appear to be necessary in this context. The reason for this may be because of the fairly simple nature of the Themes and because of the lack of circumstantial or marked Themes.

7.2 Given and New

Theme is primarily associated with experiential meaning and represents one type of 'wave' of informational prominence in the clause. The other wave of informational prominence in the clause is that of 'New'. New is the informational prominence attached to interpersonal meaning and the carrier of this textual wave is 'prosody'. In order to explain the kind of textual wave associated with New, we need to briefly describe systems related to the system of INTONATION in English. As we are using the SF grammatical system in this study, the SF model of intonation is also utilised. In order to explain the notions of Given and New we need to briefly explain the systems of TONALITY, TONICITY and INFORMATION. TONALITY is the system whereby speech is segmented into a series of tone groups. According to Halliday, unmarked tonality is where one tone group corresponds with a clause. However, speakers do not always choose to arrange their utterances in this way, so that a tone group may correspond with a unit as small as a syllable or larger than a clause. In Halliday's (1970a) description of the intonation system of English he explains that there are seven primary tone groups. Five of these are simple tones in which there is one significant pitch change, and the other two are compound tone groups in which there are two noticeable pitch changes, one closely following the other. The point at which pitch significantly changes is the focal point in the tone group, and this is known as the tonic syllable. The system of assignment of focus to a syllable in a tone group is known as TONICITY. The tone group can be described in terms of its prosodic features, for example, a rising pretonic or a falling tone, and it can also be described semantically as an information unit. Of interest in this section is the semantic organisation of the tone group, or the organisation of the tone group into an 'information unit'. The boundary of the information unit corresponds with the boundary of the tone group, and the point of focus in the tone

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group is the location where the speaker chooses to present New information. The semantic and prosodic features of a tone group are illustrated in Figure 7:11 below.

Tone Group:

rising pretonic   falling tone

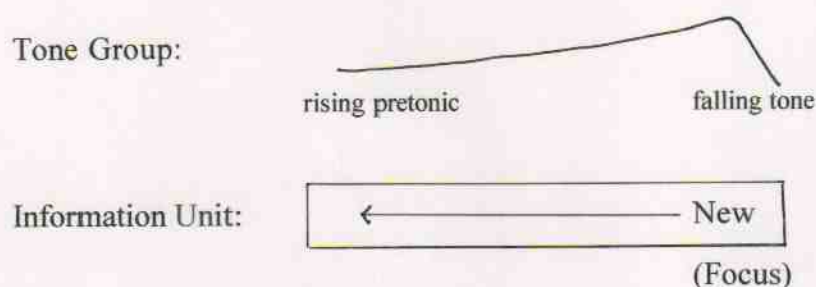Information Unit:

← —————————————— New

(Focus)

Figure 7:11 The Semantic and Prosodic Features of a Tone Group

Because the carrier of the textual wave in the information unit is prosody and not constituency, the element on which the tonic falls, or the 'information focus' is interpreted as the culmination of what is New information in the information unit. The typical sequence of elements in the information unit is Given *followed by* New. The unmarked position of the New element is on the last lexical item in the tone group. However, if the context motivates a marked tonic assignment, such that the tonic falls on a salient syllable part way through the tone group, then 'any accented matter that follows the tonic foot is ... signalled as being Given' (Halliday 1994c: 297). Although the tonic syllable is the culmination of New information, there is not always a specific phonological means whereby the beginning of the New or the end of the Given information can be identified. Therefore, in order to establish the domain of the Given and the New in the information unit, it is necessary to consult the context in which the information unit is located. Halliday explains that 'the concepts of 'given' and 'new' ...depend on the presence of a context. Indeed the choice of *tonicity*, the assignment of tonic prominence to a particular place in the tone group, is a means of relating what is being said to what has gone before' (Halliday 1970a: 40-41). Essentially, Given information is 'recoverable' information from the context in which the utterance takes place. On the other hand, New information is either 'non-recoverable' or treated as 'new' because of the demands of the context in which the utterance takes place. This section focuses on the system of tonicity and on the

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relationship between Thematic Prominence and Information prominence realised through the assignment of tonic prominence to a syllable in the tone groups. As the concern here is with the peak of information in the New wave, the analysis does not include an indication of which elements in the tone groups fall within the structure of the Given category.

Halliday argues that there is a close relationship between Theme and information focus, such that they complement each other in the presentation of information and in the creation of texture in the text. Halliday (1994c: 336) states that the Theme

> is speaker-oriented prominence; it is "what I am starting from". The New, which culminates in the focus, is listener-oriented prominence: it is "what I am asking you to attend to". As the clause moves away from the first peak, it moves towards the second; and this imparts a small-scale periodic or wave-like movement to the discourse.

An example of an utterance analysed according to (unmarked) Theme and (unmarked) New is presented below (the tonic syllable is underlined). (Conventions used in analysing intonation are listed in Appendix III).

// 1 back   now it /goes to David /_Fairleigh_//

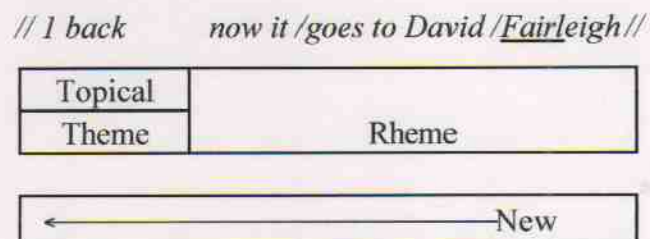| Topical Theme	Rheme

←——————————————————New

Figure 7:12 Utterance Analysed for Theme and New

We can see in this example that the information focus as expressed in the tone group culminates in the name of the player, *Fairleigh*. The prominent information in the Theme, however, is the location or direction to which the ball is going. Therefore in this utterance there are two peaks of informational prominence: one circumstantial (Theme) and the other participatory (New).

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7.2.1 Tonicity in Play-by-Play Talk

In order to examine the patterns of tonicity in play-by-play talk, both the 2GB and the ABC extracts were analysed according to Halliday's system of intonation. These analyses are presented in Appendix XI. The intonation analysis of the play-by-play extracts reveals that there are about 13.6% of tone groups in which there is marked tonicity, i.e. the tonic syllable falls on some item other than the last lexical item in the tone group. In order to compare this result with what happens in other registers, two extracts from Halliday (1970a) which have been analysed for their patterns of intonation were consulted. One of these extracts is a spontaneous dialogue (see Halliday 1970a: 131-132) while the other is a spontaneous monologue (see Halliday 1970a: 133-134). After analysing the information units in each of these texts we find that in the spontaneous dialogue there are 22.6% which select marked tonicity, while in the spontaneous monologue there are 12.2%. This indicates that the proportion of tone groups selecting marked tonicity in play-by-play talk is slightly higher than that for the spontaneous monologue, but considerably lower than that of the spontaneous dialogue.

The reason behind the differences in these patterns of choices can perhaps be explained by reference to the nature of each of these types of talk. In a dialogue there is dynamic interaction between at least two speakers, and meanings are continuously being negotiated as the text proceeds in response to the context in which it takes place. It is typical during dialogic discourse that speakers present as new information contrasting, or opposing ideas, or meanings which they wish to negotiate with one another. For instance, in the dialogue from Halliday (1970a: 132) the following exchange takes place:

> Speaker A...//2 aren't you just /judging from the /standpoint of an /_adult_
> and // 2 as/suming that the /child's /worries and an/xieties /aren't
> im/_portant_ // 1+ ʌ but they /_are_ im/portant to // 4 _him_ ...

> Speaker B: // 1 _yes_ but he // 1 doesn't live on / _aspirations_ so to /speak //

In this section of the dialogue (which has been shortened slightly) the two speakers are discussing whether children experience worries and anxieties, or whether their lives are

'less complicated' than those of adults. The marked tonicity in Speaker A's comment can be seen in the last clause, *but they <u>are</u> important*. Here the emphasis is on the verb rather than on the last lexical item *important*, because the speaker is contrasting the positive nature of the importance, the view that worries and anxieties *do* exist for the child, in contrast to opinions such as held by speaker B that they perhaps do *not*.

In the spontaneous monologue in Halliday (1970a: 133) and in play-by-play talk, the motivation behind marked tonicity does not tend to lie in the negotiation of points of view. There are different aspects of the context which motivate the assignment of marked tonicity in monologic forms of discourse. This can be exemplified by examining a short extract from the spontaneous monologue in Halliday (1970a: 133).

In the spontaneous monologue the speaker is describing the countryside between Scarborough and Whitby, what it is like to walk there, and what one is likely to see. Towards the end of the monologue the speaker talks about some of the things he feels a person needs to be careful of if he or she is walking in the areas of high cliffs. The following extract is taken from this latter part of the monologue.

> *//1 one of the /things you /had to be /<u>careful</u> a/bout was // 4 not to walk /too near the /<u>edge</u> of the /cliff because .....*

In this part of the text, the speaker is emphasising which part of the cliff requires care, so in this case he chooses marked tonicity to point out the new information, *the edge*.

As in the spontaneous monologue, marked tonicity is often used in play-by-play talk to indicate something about what the speaker wants the listener to attend to, not for the purpose of provoking some kind of negotiation, or discussion, but for pointing out some specifically new information that is felt to be important to an understanding of the events, or to express a particular attitude about an event or about the information that is being conveyed. The next paragraphs discuss some of the instances of marked tonicity in play-by-play talk, and attempt to explain the contextual reasons behind these. Halliday's

(1970a) conventions for transcribing text with intonation analysis are followed, and above each segment of text a 'wave pattern' is placed in order to show clearly the location of the peaks of New information.

Example 3.

//1 back now it /goes to /David /Fairleigh// 1 Fairleigh down the /centre of the /ground //

In Example 3 the second tone group shows marked tonicity in that the tonic syllable falls on the first lexical item, *Fairleigh*. The speaker is thus presenting the identity of the player as new information. It can be inferred from this choice that because the speaker is emphasising *Fairleigh* he is suggesting that it is somewhat of a surprise that Fairleigh does not immediately pass the ball, but instead attempts to run with the ball down the centre of the ground. This meaning is something like, *it's Fairleigh and not someone else who is running with the ball.* In this utterance Theme and New conflate creating just one peak of informational prominence in the second clause. Although technically the remainder of the clause in this case would be considered Given information, it is not in fact Given, as this information cannot have been known beforehand. Therefore, what we can assume from the speaker's choice of information prominence here is that the location of *down the centre of the ground* is not considered to have any special information value at this moment in the talk.

Example 4.

// 3 Lam's/ there to/ pick up the/ dregs //3 ʌ he /does that /now //

In the second tone group of Example 4 the speaker assigns tonic prominence to the verb, *does*. The new information is thus the actual *doing* of the action mentioned in the previous utterance. This use of marked tonicity indicates the presupposition of the events that were predicted in the preceding utterance, and the fulfilment or achievement of the intended action.

Example 5.

// 3 ∧ gone /straight back /once again //

In Example 5 the speaker is highlighting something about the manner of the pass; he is choosing to emphasise the quality of the direction of the pass. The emphasis on *straight* also suggests 'direct, unimpeded action'. This adds colour to a common action relayed in play-by-play talk. Another point relevant to this utterance is that in this utterance there is Thematic ellipsis, and therefore, there is only one peak of information — that carried by the tonic syllable.

Example 6.

// 4 Buettner puts a / high ball /up // 4 ∧ a /swirling /wind pre/vailing /here but er //

In this utterance the speaker chooses the 'type' of kick (or ball) as the focus of the new information. The information in the next utterance, while not play-by-play, is important because it is the wind which is affecting the height of the kicks in the game, causing them to go higher than expected. Because the speaker has chosen to highlight the 'highness' of the ball in the first utterance he probably feels that it is necessary to explain what has affected it, and he does this by mentioning the *wind* in the next utterance and by placing information prominence on the existence of this *swirling wind*. This reinforces information which was presented in a previous utterance in segment D where tonic prominence was again placed on *high* as in // 3 Walker who's /put a // 3 high /kick /up //. The 'highness' of the kicks appears to hold informational value during this part of the game.

Example 7.

// 5 ∧ but the /arm of /Ward has /gone up to/wards // 4 Eastern /Suburbs//

Example 7 shows the speaker again assigning tonic prominence to the verb. As already noted, marked tonic prominence is assigned when the context motivates that a specific choice be made in contrast to another. In this case the choice concerns the confirmation of either awarding a penalty or not awarding a penalty. Thus, the option is either 'gone up' or 'not gone up'. Tonicity is not placed on the auxiliary 'has' because the speaker is not

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arguing about whether the penalty has gone up, he is simply drawing the listeners' attention to the fact the it has gone up. In the game, because the arm of the referee *has gone up* one team is given a penalty. The team which is given the penalty is also assigned tonic prominence in the next utterance, so in this clause there are two new pieces of information: the referee's awarding of a penalty, and the team that the penalty goes against. Both of these pieces of information constitute newsworthy pieces of information in the context of play-by-play talk.

A summary of the reasons why the speaker may choose to use marked tonicity in play-by-play talk are summarised below:

1) To emphasise the identity of a player carrying out an activity (and not any other player).
2) To emphasise the fulfilment of an activity that the speaker has predicted.
3) To emphasise the quality of an action.
4) To emphasise that an event such as a penalty has in fact occurred.

The next section focuses on the interrelationship of the waves of prominence created by Theme and New in the same text.

7.2.1.1 Creating Waves of Informational Prominence in Play-by-Play Talk: Theme & Rheme and Given & New

If we relate the type of Themes with the notion of information prominence we find that an interesting pattern of prominence of information emerges. It was noted that the most common topical Theme chosen in play-by-play talk is the participant Theme in which a player is referred to by either his proper name or by pronominal reference. Players may also be picked up in the peaks of New information through the assignment of tonic prominence, as we can see in the following extract.

Extract 7:6
//3 now it goes /back this /time to /Larson //
// 1 ∧ the /pass /back in/side to /Florimo//
// 3 ∧ but he's /cut /down by /Sean /Garlick//

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The analysis of segment A of the 2GB extract in terms of peaks of Thematic and New information is represented in Figure 7:13. Peaks of informational prominence are indicated by rises in a continuous 'wave' across the top of the lines in the text.
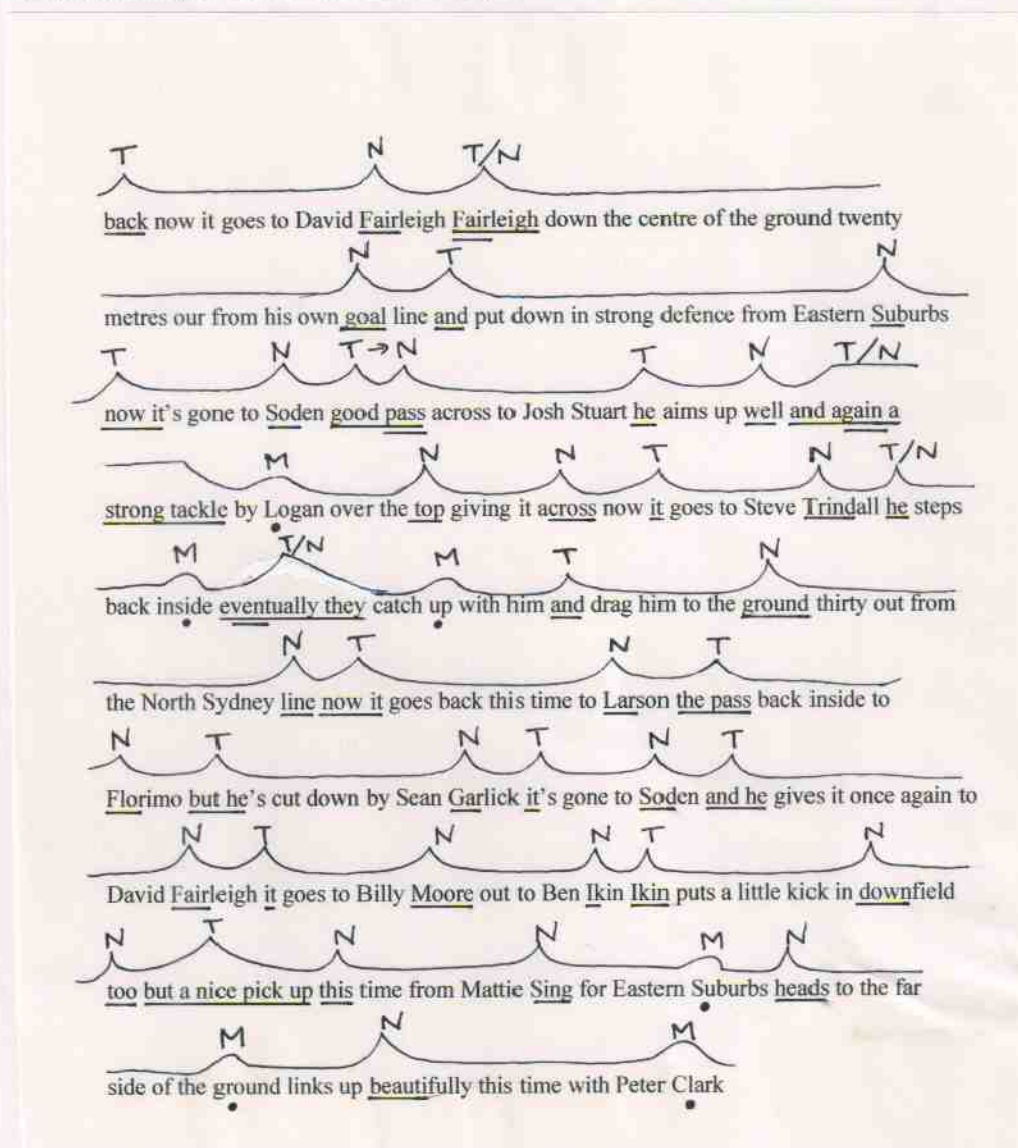

Figure 7:13 Waves of Informational Prominence in Segment A of the 2GB
Play-by-Play Extract

Key to Figure 7:13

- Waves of Informational Prominence are shown by rises in the continuous line above the text.
- Sharp peaks indicate either Thematic Prominence or Tonic Prominence
- Soft peaks indicate secondary or minor information conveyed through the second pitch change in a compound tone group (also indicated by a dot underneath the syllable).

- Theme and Tonic syllables are underlined in the text. Double underlines indicate where Theme and New converge.
- T = Theme   N = New   M = minor information
- T ——→N Theme extends into the New

From Figure 7:13 we can see that there is a limited range of items which take Thematic prominence. In this segment Theme is a participant or occasionally a circumstance. If it is a participant it is either a player or the ball. In terms of New information, however, there is a greater variety of elements on which the tonic falls, including circumstances, participants, and processes. Table 7:7 shows a comparative summary of the experiential information in the Themes and at the culmination point of the New in this segment of play-by-play text.

Table 7:7 Experiential information in the Theme and at the Culmination Point of the New

Category of Information Carried in the Textual Wave		THEME		NEW	
Circumstance	Location: time	1	5.3%	2	5.9%
	Location: place (non-human - field location)	1	5.3%	6 + (2)	23.5%
	Location: place (human - player or team)	0	0	11	32.4%
	Manner: quality	0	0	2	5.9%
	Accompaniment: comitation	0	0	1+ (1)	5.9%
	Cause: purpose	0	0	(1)	2.9%
Participant	Player	7	36.8%	3 + (1)	11.8%
	Object: ball (or metaphor for ball, e.g. 'the pass')	7	36.8%	1	2.9%
	Nominalised process	1	5.3%	0	0
Process		0	0	1 + (1)	5.9%
Conjunction		2	10.5%	0	0
Deictic		0	0	1	2.9%
TOTAL		19	100%	34	100%

The information in Figure 7:13 and Table 7:7 indicates that Theme and New carry complementary types of information. Each type of wave in play-by-play talk features a player either as a participant or as the destination to which the ball is going. The ball is also carried as information, but it is carried more frequently by the Thematic wave and rarely by the New wave. In a sense this is not surprising because in the context of a game

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of Rugby League it would seem pointless to present the ball as 'new' information. The game revolves around the ball, but the information which is new concerning the ball is its location, destination, or which player has possession of it. Thus, it is these latter items are conveyed more often in the peaks of New information. This argument also appears to be supported by the assignment of marked tonicity, such as in the examples in the previous section which, for instance, showed that a 'quality' associated with the ball such as *high* is a preferred location of New informational prominence than the actual ball itself.

The results for the Theme analysis showed that circumstances are rarely placed in Thematic position. In contrast to this, in Table 7:7 we can see that circumstances feature more prominently in the New information peaks. This is another way in which Theme and New complement each other in play-by-play talk, and it is a way in which the talk can be seen to be organised in a way which mirrors the sequence of events taking place in the game itself. That is, the location to which the ball is passed in the actual game is 'new' in relation to the movement of the ball or the person who is passing the ball.

In Segment A there are some instances of marked tonicity. Most of these can be identified by the double underlined syllables, because at these points the New information peak is located in the Thematic information peak. There are also instances where Theme is ellipsed and only New informational prominence is created. Unlike Theme, ellipsis is not an option for the assignment of tonic prominence because, no matter what, the speaker will at some point make a significant pitch change which indicates that he has assigned tonic prominence to a syllable in his utterance. The consequence of this is that whether or not the information is particularly newsworthy (as is generally the case with marked tonicity), the speaker is compelled to assign some kind of value to elements in his talk. This is one of the reasons why patterns of intonation vary widely in the degree to which the tonic rises or falls, the degree to which the lead up to the tonic rises or falls, and the degree to which the tail of the tone group rises or falls. Halliday (1970a) has attempted to capture these kinds of distinctions in tone groups, for example, by proposing a set of secondary tone groups which are distinguished by their pretonics and the degree to which they rise or

fall. The secondary tone groups also express more delicate shades of meanings. Unfortunately, it is not within the scope of this study to conduct a detailed analysis of intonation choices and intonation patterns in play-by-play talk. The point here is that in spoken English there will always be waves of informational prominence carried by prosody, whereas the speaker may choose to omit Thematic prominence thereby relegating that piece of information as un-newsworthy, and in effect Given.

7.2.2 Summary of 'New' Choices in Play-by-Play Talk

The analysis of Given and New has revealed that there is a complementary relationship between the kind of information carried in the peaks of the Thematic waves and the peaks of the New waves. In particular, whereas locations rarely feature in the Thematic wave, they are commonly found in the New wave. Furthermore, the players are often singled out as Themes and/or as New. This supports the findings in the previous chapters as well as the argument that the individual players are highly valued in the media representation of the game, and are promoted to a much greater degree than the teams themselves in play-by-play talk, even though the sport is a team sport. Finally, marked tonicity in the play-by-play talk occurs to a similar degree to that in spontaneous monologue, suggesting that marked tonicity is not as prevalent in such modes of talk due to the fact that the information the speakers is presenting is not being negotiated through dialogic exchange. Rather, the presentation of information in a monologue requires little negotiation and is presented as 'uncontentious'. This finding complements the finding in the interpersonal grammar where, for instance, it was found that Statements are used exclusively through play-by-play talk, and that there is a low degree of modality in the Finite and frequent operator ellipsis. These choices appear to construe a situation where the speaker is not expecting to be challenged on what he is saying.

Using the bar graphs that the previous two chapters used, the next section presents a profile of the choices in the grammar of textual meaning in play-by-play talk. This is followed by a description of the contextual features which these choices construe.

7.3 Profile of the Grammar of Textual Meaning in Play-by-Play Talk

Figure 7:14 presents a profile of the choices in the grammar of textual meaning made in play-by-play talk. The proportions shown on the bar graph derive from the analyses in this chapter. The profile is organised into two sets of bars. The first set contains five bars that are relevant to the findings from the Thematic analysis of play-by-play talk. The first bar in this set shows the proportion of single Themes, multiple Themes and ellipsed Themes. The next two bars show the category of elements which make up the single Themes and those which make up the multiple Themes. The next bar shows the proportion of experiential grammatical elements which constitute the topical Themes. The fifth bar in this first set in the profile shows the experiential content of the participant Themes, that is, the content that is specific to the activity of play-by-play talk.

The second set of bars in the profile are relevant to the analysis of Given and New in play-by-play talk. The first of these bars shows the proportion of unmarked and marked tonicity. From the profile we can see that unmarked tonicity is the predominant choice in play-by-play talk. The second bar shows the kind of content carried in the 'New' wave. It is these pieces of information which the speaker is assigning tonic prominence to, and hence wishing the listener to particularly attend to. We can see that there are two major categories of information on which the tonic syllable is assigned: location in terms of a human player or team and location in terms of the field on which the game is taking place.
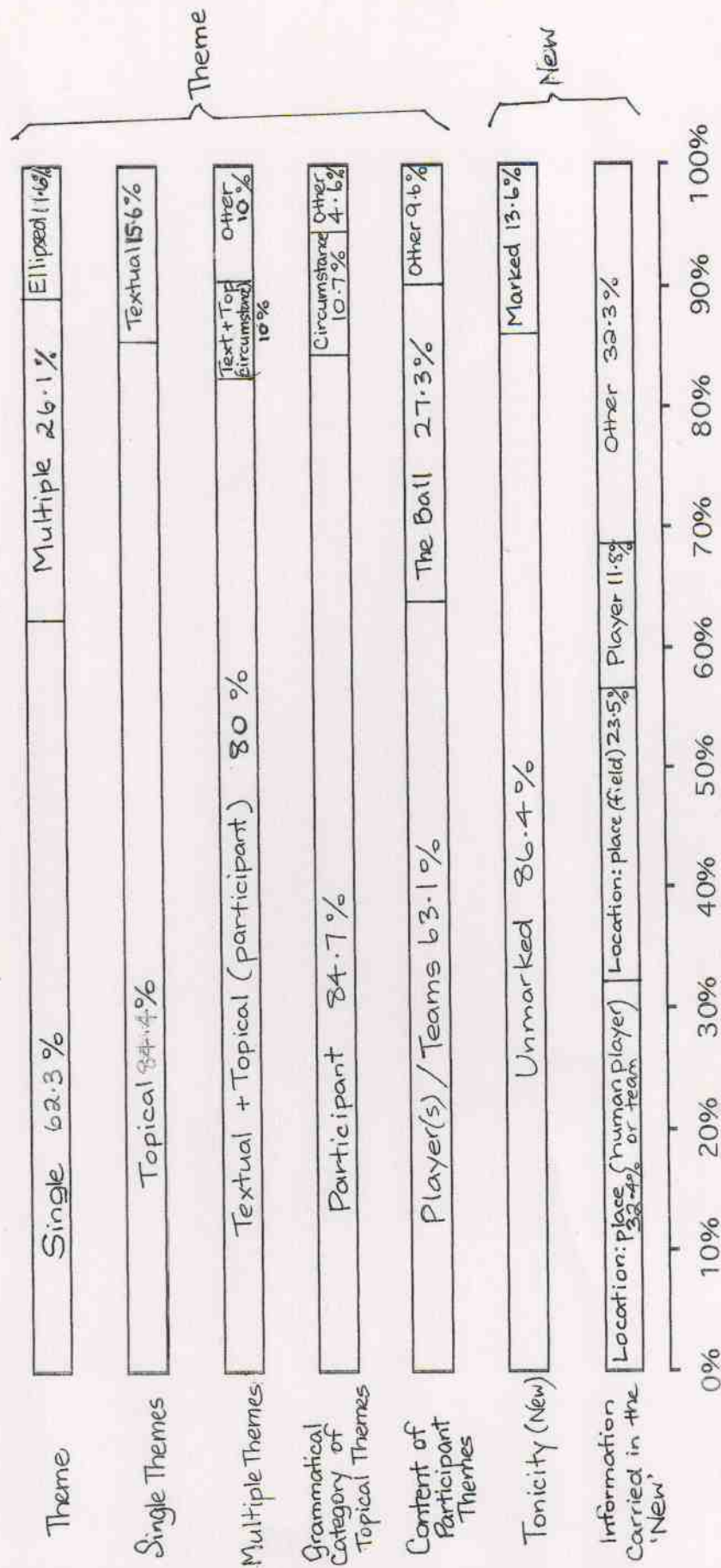
Figure 7:14 Profile of Choices in the Grammar of Textual Meaning in Play-by-Play Talk

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7.4 Summary of Contextual Information Construed in the Grammar of Textual Meaning in Play-by-Play Talk

This section draws on the results and discussions of the grammatical analyses and other linguistic descriptions in this chapter and summarises the kind of contextual information that is construed through the choices in the grammar of textual meaning made in play-by-play talk. Table 7:8, which focuses on the contextual category of mode, follows a similar format to the contextual summary tables in Chapters Five and Six. Table 7:8 is divided into two sections: the left-hand column in the first section shows the general features of mode — the structure of the text and the nature of the text — and beneath these are listed the specific features of the mode of play-by-play talk. The right-hand column lists the linguistic features deployed in play-by-play talk which primarily construe these features of the context. The latter half of the table shows the other contextual categories and lists the linguistic choices found in the analyses in this chapter which contribute to their construal.

Table 7:8 Contextual Information Construed Through the Grammar of Textual Meaning in Play-by-Play Talk

CONTEXTUAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES
MODE	
General Contextual Feature: Structure of the Text. **Play-by-Play Features:** • Text is field structured - It simultaneously relates the material action that is taking place.	• Theme, Method of Development through Theme, New — some placement of tonic prominence on locations and conjunctions
• Individual players are the main locus of informational prominence.	• Content of Theme and assignment of Tonic Prominence (New), Waves of Informational Prominence.
General Contextual Feature: Nature of the Text. **Play-by-Play Features:** • Text is monologic in nature.	• Tonicity, Theme — no interpersonal Themes
•Text is spontaneous.	• Conjunctions

Other Contextual Features which the Textual Grammatical Resources Construe	
FIELD	
Nature of the Discourse: Talk mirrors the action taking place on the field.	• Method of Development
TENOR	
• Speakers do not seek spoken interaction during play-by-play talk. • Speaker's interpretation of the event involves prioritising the individual over the team.	• No interpersonal Themes • Waves of Informational Prominence

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on two key systems in the grammar of textual meaning: THEME-RHEME and GIVEN-NEW. The results of the analyses of play-by-play text have revealed that choices in these systems are complementary. Specifically the analyses have shown that play-by-play text is organised to relate the simultaneously occurring activities in which two key participants are involved; these participants are 'the ball' and 'the individual players'. The results in this chapter indicate that the textual resources of Theme and New organise the text in terms of its role in relating ongoing events in a congruent sequence to their 'real time' occurrence, and its role as the domain of one speaker who does not need to negotiate his role in 'keeping the floor' nor the information he is relaying.

The next chapter concludes this study by describing some of the implications arising from this study and suggesting areas for further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusions and Implications

8.0 Concluding Summary

This study proceeded on the assumption that radio play-by-play talk is a variety of talk distinct from other kinds of talk which take place on radio. Another assumption underlying this study was that linguistic choices pattern in specific ways in response to specific contextual pressures, and therefore, it is theoretically possible to locate the variety, play-by-play talk, to describe its specific linguistic properties, and to make assertions as to the kind of contextual pressures which motivate it. As such, this study represents a study of a specific register.

Chapter Two began the research into the register of radio play-by-play talk by outlining the theory that informs this study: namely, Systemic Functional linguistic theory (SF theory). Some of the key concepts of this theory relevant to this study that Chapter Two focused on were 'register', 'context of situation', and the 'non-arbitrary relationship between context and language'. Chapter Two also included a discussion and review of other theoretical perspectives on the key concepts.

In beginning the research into play-by-play talk, this study first identified three language activities: the Sunday Afternoon Broadcast (SASB), the commentary, and play-by-play talk. It was argued that these three activities are related to play-by-play talk in that they represent three varieties of talk at different degrees of registral delicacy—the SASB being the least delicate variety and play-by-play talk being the most delicate. Furthermore, it was argued that the SASB and the commentary represent the textual environment in which play-by-play talk occurs. Chapter Three began by describing some of the features of the SASB, in particular, some of the ways in which the SASB is framed. It also described the Material Situational Setting (MSS) in which the SASB takes place, and proposed that features of this setting are institutionalised. Chapter Three then described some features of

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the commentary. The commentary, in this study, was defined as the language which takes place simultaneously with the game which is taking place; it begins when the game begins and ends when the game ends. The outer frames of the commentary were described along with the frames indicating the 'end of the first half' and the 'beginning of the second half' of the commentary. Chapter Three also analysed the types of participants in the commentary, and the proportion of talk that each participant contributes to the commentary. It was found that the type of participation and the proportion that each category of speaker contributes to the commentary are consistent across each half of the same commentary and across two different commentaries. These findings suggest that type and degree of participation is institutionalised in the context of Rugby League radio sports commentary.

Chapter Four continued with a description of the commentary, but focused on some major linguistic features that distinguish this as a specific register in itself: choices in primary tense and polarity. The results of an analysis of their probability ratios in the English language found that the ratios of present and past tense are close to equiprobable, and that the system of polarity was skewed. It was hypothesised that in contrast to English as a whole, the ratios of present and past tense would be skewed in commentary, but that choices in polarity would remain skewed. In fact, this hypothesis was supported in that it was found that tense is a skewed system in the register of commentary with present tense being the unmarked choice. The system of polarity was also skewed in commentary, but to a slightly greater extent than in English. This part of the study points to a need for more studies that focus on probabilistic descriptions of systemic choices in the English language and across different registers so that register choices can be compared and contrasted.

Once these features of the commentary were described, Chapter Four then focused directly on 'play-by-play talk'. Play-by-play talk is considered the central activity around which the SASB revolves, because it is the talk that simultaneously relays the match of the day to the listeners. However, unlike the commentary or the SASB, play-by-play talk is not

set within a single set of frames, but takes place at different points throughout the commentary. Therefore, in order to analyse this talk as a separate register it was necessary to develop a means of identifying it as it occurred in the commentary. There are possibly many approaches that could have been taken in order to ascertain which parts of the commentary could be identified as play-by-play talk. One way might have been to examine a segment of commentary and show how different configurations of contextual features shift and change as the speaker(s) move in and out of the different activities that they are engaged in during the talk. This might have shown how different fields are integrated or co-located in the same setting, as Hasan has done in her description of a conversation between a mother and child (Hasan 1999). Another method might have been to examine the text in terms of rhetorical unit structure (see for example, Cloran 1994), which would highlight how the text moves through different stages which correspond to degrees to which segments of the text are dependent or independent of the material situational setting in which it takes place. While these approaches are valid in and of themselves, the focus of this study was somewhat different. Rather than showing how play-by-play talk interacts with other forms of talk in the commentary, as Hasan has done in her study of shifting fields, or showing to what degree it is connected to the material context in relation to other types of talk during the commentary as Cloran has done with the rhetorical units analysis, this study attempted to extract play-by-play talk from the talk of the commentary, to examine it as a distinct register, to describe its linguistic properties exclusively, and to make statements about the kinds of contextual information these linguistic properties construe.

In order to extract play-by-play talk from the other talk that takes place in the commentary, Chapter Four first developed a definition of play-by-play talk. This definition was derived from what commentators themselves had said about play-by-play talk through either written publications or through personal interviews. Once a definition was established, the commentary was examined in relation to some linguistic criteria which were thought to be the most likely criteria to distinguish play-by-play talk from other talk in the commentary. These criteria aimed to exclude talk that did not satisfy the criteria and

that could not satisfy the definition of play-by-play talk. It was found that the most useful criterion for excluding talk which is not play-by-play talk is the successive temporal conjunction *and now*. By prefacing each clause in the text with this conjunction it was possible to highlight whether relevant discrete events and movements were being relayed in a sequence and time frame congruent with the sequence and time frame in which they occur in the material reality of the game as it takes place.

By the end of Chapter Four those segments of the commentary which did not fit the criterion and the definition of play-by-play talk used in this study had been deleted and play-by-play talk had been exposed. The results showed that play-by-play talk takes place at different points of time in the commentary. The location of play-by-play talk in relation to the SASB and the commentary is represented in diagrammatic form in Figure 8:1 below.
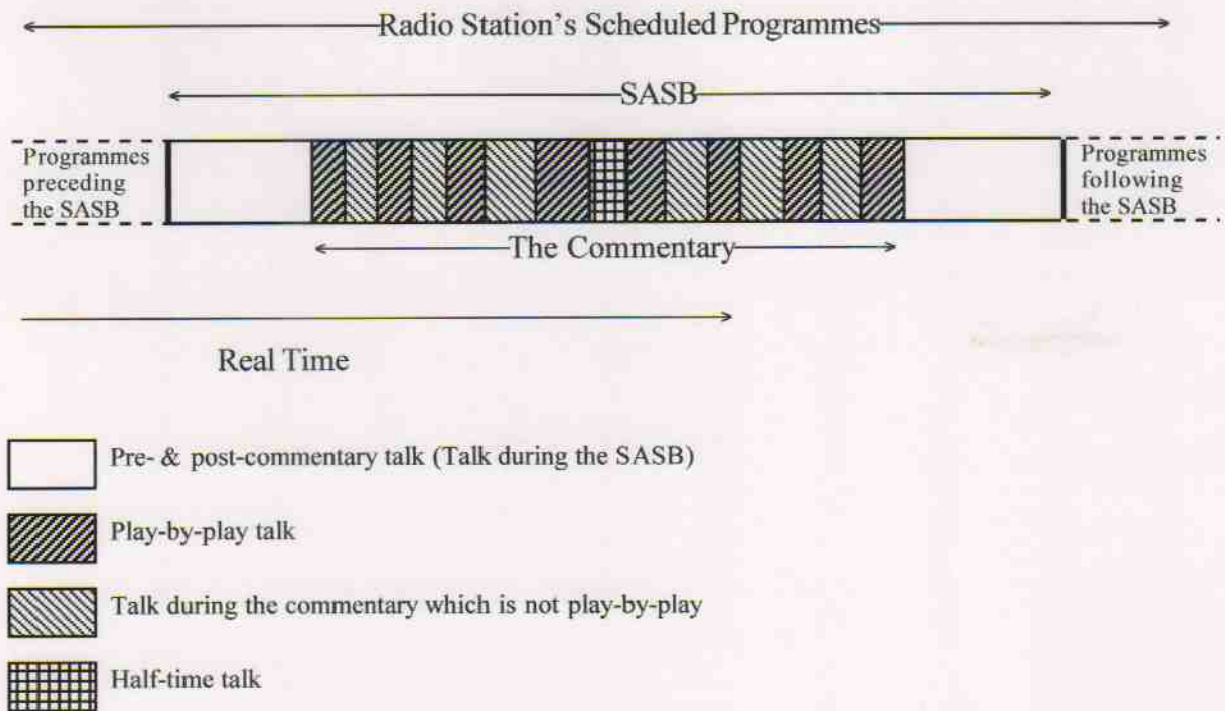

Figure 8:1 Idealistic Representation of the Location of Play-by-Play Talk in the SASB

Figure 8:1 attempts to show that play-by-play talk cannot be considered a single-framed activity that occurs 'once' in the SASB, but that it takes place several times throughout the commentary, and for varying periods of time.

Once a means of identifying play-by-play talk was established, Chapters Five, Six and Seven analysed the play-by-play talk extracted from the commentary in order to develop a profile of its linguistic properties. Using the grammatical model developed by Halliday and described in Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, Chapter Five mainly focused on interpersonal grammatical features such as Mood, Chapter Six focused on experiential grammatical features, such as Transitivity and Ergativity, and Chapter Seven on textual grammatical features, such as Theme and New. Part of the reason for describing play-by-play talk from these different perspectives was to build a profile of the patterns of choices within these different grammatical perspectives, and also to explore their interdependency. In fact, this study has shown that the grammatical choices which fall within the different metafunctional domains do indeed complement one another and together construe the relevant context of situation. Each chapter closes with a summary profile in which the proportions of features found in play-by-play talk are presented largely through the use of horizontal bar graphs. Following these profiles the contextual features construed by the grammatical choices in play-by-play talk are described.

8.1 Implications and Directions for Future Research

Although the aims of this study as stated in the first chapter appeared to be fairly straightforward and manageable, it became obvious as the study proceeded that to describe features of the textual environment in which play-by-play talk takes place (the SASB and the commentary), to develop an operational definition of play-by-play talk, and to then develop a linguistic profile of this talk through examining grammatical choices made in the interpersonal, experiential and textual systems, was a very ambitious enterprise and that certain analyses would have to be sacrificed in order to keep the study within manageable proportions. Amongst others, two analyses of the grammar which were in the end omitted from this study were analyses of tone groups and of prepositional groups (although there

is cursory mention of these in the study as it stands). The analysis of tone group choices was omitted on the grounds that a description of interpersonal meanings realised through the grammar could be gained by considering the constituent-based grammatical systems of MOOD and TENSE, and that an adequate description of choices in the system of intonation could not be accomplished within the space allowed for this study.

An analysis of prepositional groups in play-by-play talk was also omitted from the final version of this study because it was found that prepositional groups required a far greater degree of discussion and analysis than anticipated, and again, an adequate description of choices of prepositional groups and how they are used in the register of play-by-play talk would be difficult to accomplish within the confines of this study. As mentioned in Chapter Six prepositions and preposition groups (see Chapter Six note 2) appear to be a resource used widely by the commentators to convey a variety of experiential meanings related to passage, movement, direction and location. In the play-by-play text, where linguistic economising is valued, the prepositions often take the place of verbal groups providing a short-hand way of relating movement in the material event. Both complex prepositional groups and simple prepositional groups are used in play-by-play talk, as well as combinations of adverbial groups and prepositional groups. It is suggested that a study of prepositional groups may prove an interesting avenue for future research into the register of play-by-play talk.

Although these features were omitted from the analyses of play-by-play talk, this study, as it stands, provides a comprehensive view of the kinds of linguistic choices made in play-by-play talk and the kind of contextual information that these choices construe.

Some of the results of this study point towards theoretical issues that need to be considered. For instance, the analysis of verbal group ellipsis in Chapter Five revealed that the typical patterns of ellipsis in English are not always adhered to during play-by-play talk. In play-by-play talk ellipsis of the Finite alone with no textual presupposition is an accepted choice. Furthermore, there are independent structures in which the Mood

element is indeterminable in that its identity is not presupposed, nor is it retrievable from pattern matching. These latter types of ellipsis were labelled 'mood omission'. This label was chosen partly because it would appear that in these structures there is in fact no ellipsis in the typical sense of the term. In structures in which there is mood omission the speakers are producing structures which are meaningful and non-ambiguous in the context of play-by-play talk. The analysis and results in this study suggest that there is a need for a more detailed exploration of the phenomenon of ellipsis and the phenomenon of mood omission, particularly across registers of spoken language whose contexts motivate the speakers to economise in their presentation of information. Questions that seem to arise from this part of the study are: Are there similar patterns of ellipsis occurring in other spoken registers? Are there other spoken registers in which mood omission occurs? What possible consequences could these findings have for a description of ellipsis?

It was noted in Chapter Two that there has been a preference for system networks or continua in SF theoretical descriptions; however, this study has chosen to profile the linguistic choices in play-by-play talk in bar graphs. The choice of bar graphs was based on the premise that these could show the proportions of choices within a set of grammatical features, whereas the system networks and clines cannot do this. The profiles make it possible to see at a glance the constellation of categories of choices, specific meanings made within these categories, and the proportions of certain choices in relation to others. For instance, in the profile of choices in experiential grammar, we find information which relates to types of processes (i.e. material, relational etc.), as well as to the experiential content of participants (such as the ball or players). It is suggested that the use of bar graphs in representing linguistic choices of a specific register could also be used in the description of other registers, and could be used as a tool with which to compare registers. For instance, if we were to compare the profile of choices in Transitivity in one text, let us call this Text Type 1 with those in another text, Text type 2, we could make this comparison by either placing the horizontal bars side-by-side or by placing them under one another. Visually either of these methods would make a comparison very

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accessible. Figure 8:2 shows a constructed comparison between grammatical choices made in two hypothetical texts in which the horizontal bars are placed one under the other.

Text Type 1: Process Types

Text Type 2: Process Types

Text Type 1: Verbal Groups

Text Type 2: Verbal Groups

Material 60%	Relational 40%
Material 30%	Verbal 50%	Mental 20%
Simple Present 30%	Present Perfect 60%	Other 10%
Simple Present 35%	Past Progressive 45%	Past Perf. 20%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Figure 8:2 Example of a Portion of a Profile of Grammatical Choices in
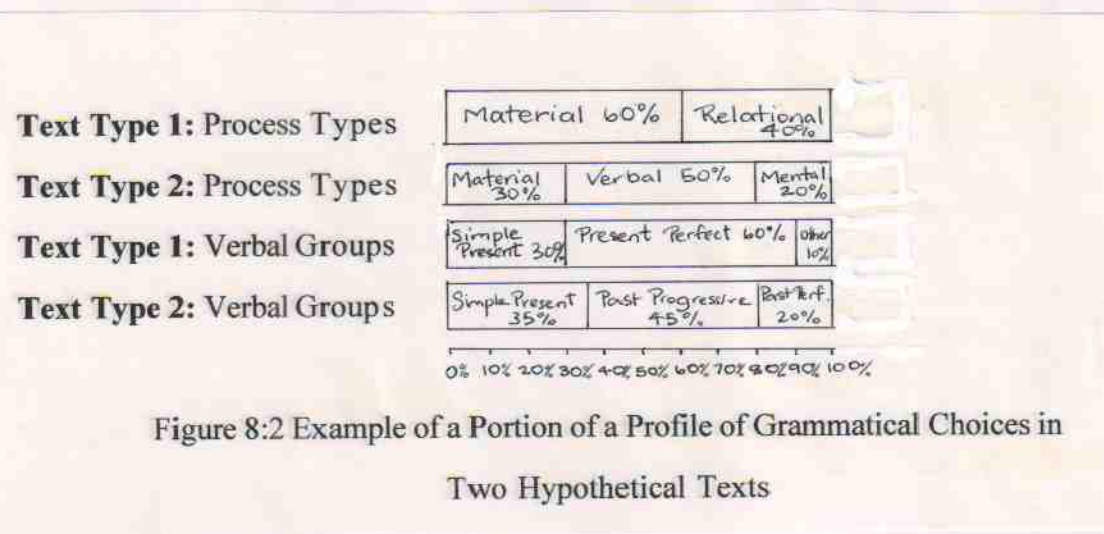
Two Hypothetical Texts

Figure 8:2 attempts to show that the notion of profile and its representation in the form of bar graphs as used in this study could be used for analyses of other types of texts and for comparisons between the choices made in different texts.

Perhaps a shortcoming of the profile is that some phenomena cannot easily be represented in terms of a bar graph. This was especially true of descriptive features such as types of lexical processes. Finding a consistent means of representing linguistic choices in a profile would seem to be a possible direction for future research.

In order to form a profile of the linguistic features of play-by-play talk, this study analysed two commentaries: one from a commercial radio station and the other from the national radio station, which is a non-commercial radio station. The profiles thus represent an overview of the linguistic properties of the register play-by-play talk deriving from both these commentaries. However, throughout the analyses there were some differences between the choices made in the commercial radio station and those in the national radio station, for instance, the use of proper names for players was greater in play-by-play talk in the commercial radio station. A question which seems to arise from these different findings is: Are these differences instantial and therefore idiomatic

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or are they realisations of some contextual features relevant to specific differences in the contexts in which each speaker works? This would seem to be an important question regarding the relationship between language and context in Rugby League radio commentating, and the activity of radio sports commentating in general, but will require further study in order to be adequately considered.

An ideological question which arises from this study relates to the notion of the 'inner circle' of Rugby League enthusiasts. That the commentators are male is not accidental, but is indicative of the general sense that sport on the whole, and that Rugby League in particular, is still considered to be a male preserve (even though there are competitive Rugby League teams comprised of women). During an interview with Wilkins (1995) of the ABC he did not discount the possibility of a woman commentating Rugby League, but felt that the commentary itself 'would lose something'. In his opinion, 'women don't have a level of aggression that is suited to it. You've got to have a level of aggression in the commentary box as well'. It would seem that Rugby League is just one of the sports within an overwhelming masculine bias in the media (McKay & Rowe 1987: 261). Furthermore, the history of sport in Australia including that for Rugby League is closely tied to an ideology surrounding the concepts of manliness, mateship, perseverance, and loyalty (Wilkins 1995, Elford 1976). In fact, according to Burchell, 'rugby league is not just a "man's game", it is a particular definition of manhood itself' (1987: 42). If these attitudes are a part of how people think about Rugby League in Australia, how might they be reflected, if at all, in the commentary, the SASB and in play-by-play talk? This aspect of the context has only been tackled on a small scale in this study. For instance, the focus on the individual, which became apparent in the grammatical analyses from all three perspectives, highlights the 'star' value attached to the men who take part in the game of Rugby League. The lexical verbs chosen in play-by-play talk reflect a game which involves active, violent and powerful movements. These indicate something about the way in which the game is perceived and perpetuated through the language of the commentary. However, further exploration into the underlying ethos of the Rugby League sub-culture in Australia, its relationship to the ideology of 'masculinity' in Australian society, and the

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possible construal of these in the language of the commentary would appear to offer an interesting direction for future research.

Although the descriptions of play-by-play talk in this study are specific to Rugby League Radio commentating there is probably much that is similar to other sports commentaries. Chapter Three pointed out that there are some similarities in the global organisation of the Rugby League SASB with other sports broadcasts (Ferguson 1983), and the grammatical analyses pointed to similarities among sports broadcasts in the 'short-hand' ways of talking about events (Barber 1970, Pawley 1991, Ferguson 1983). While it could be suggested that a field-structured text would be the most likely structure for relaying activities in play-by-play talk in any sports commentary, a comparison between the language used in relaying events in Rugby League play-by-play talk with that in commentating a horse race (Kuiper & Austin 1990), for example, suggests that there are significant differences between Rugby League play-by-play commentating and other forms of simultaneous sports commentary. In commentating a horse race, the race track is viewed as 'a two-dimensional track, as if seen from the air ... [and also] as though it were a straight line', and the speaker makes 'as many passes through the field as can be managed in time' (Kuiper & Austin 1990: 206). Therefore, relaying of the action on the race course differs from relaying action in a sport such as Rugby League as each of these commentaries are responding to a different contextual framework. Indeed each sport has its own idiosyncrasies, which could be manifest in its 'play-by-play' commentary. A comparison of these differences could form the basis for future research into the register of sports commentating, and of play-by-play talk in other team sports and ball games in particular.

Another avenue for future research may be the analysis of other types of talk which take place in the commentary. In Chapter Three we found that the kinds of things that three different side-line reporters say in their initial comments during different commentaries of same game are very similar in experiential content. Questions which could be posed in relation to this finding are: Are there similarities between these three side-line reporters' choices in interpersonal and textual meanings as well? Is there a specific side-line

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reporter's register? What are the contextual features which motivate the talk by the side-line reporters?

In extracting play-by-play talk from the commentary, it was found that there are other types of talk which take place in the commentary, such as score updates, evaluations, and recounts of activities. This finding was not explored in this study, but it does suggest another avenue for future research based on the following questions: Are there some linguistic criteria that can be used to isolate the other kinds of talk in the commentary? What would be the linguistic properties of these kinds talk? How do their linguistic properties differ to those of play-by-play talk? What contextual features do they construe? What is the relation between these types of talk, and what kind of purposes do they serve in the commentary as a whole and in the SASB? Do these different types of talk occur within a single set of frames or are they dispersed throughout the commentary and/or the SASB in a similar way to the way that play-by-play talk is?

It was acknowledged that the definition of play-by-play talk adopted in this study was very limited. However, for the purposes of this study, this definition appeared to be useful, and the analyses indicate that the talk which satisfies this definition is characterised by a very specific set of linguistic features. In future research, based on the findings of this study, however, it is possible that a broader definition of what constitutes play-by-play talk could be considered. In particular, it seems possible that some instances in which past tense is used may need to be brought within the play-by-play data. Furthermore, the surfacing of the 'speaker' in the commentary through mental projecting clauses in which the projected clause contains play-by-play talk, seems to be another kind of language use which may need to be considered in relation to the definition of play-by-play talk.

Finally, it is generally agreed that play-by-play commentary on radio differs from that on television, and commentators themselves acknowledge that they must speak differently when they are commentating a game on TV or on radio. Mossop, a commentator who

began his career on television but who later switched to radio, makes the following observation about his first experience as a radio commentator:

> I was shocked by how bad my first radio broadcasts sounded. I was making the mistake of doing a TV commentary full of those long pauses that a TV caller makes when he knows the viewer can see for himself what's taking place and description is redundant. A radio commentator, however, always has to paint the full picture, tell who made the run, how far he ran, who tackled him, where on the field the movement came to a halt. I adapted quickly however and beefed up my call to meet the demands of radio (Mossop 1991: 203).

Using the guidelines set up in this study for determining play-by-play talk, research which focused on the differences and similarities between television and radio play-by-play talk would be likely to highlight some of the key ways in which mode, for example, motivates specific choices in a register, and this would provide a greater insight into the ways in which mode operates within a context. Furthermore, displaying the results of linguistic analyses of each of these types of play-by-play talk in the form of profiles such as those used in this study, would make a comparison between the two types of play-by-play talk very accessible.

8.2 Concluding Comments

As pointed out in Chapter One the motivation for a study on the language of Australian Rugby League radio commentating arose from a challenge to analyse the language to see how it was able to exclude those outside the 'inner circle' of Rugby League enthusiasts. In taking up this challenge this research has focused on the talk that centres on the key activity around which the SASB revolves: the relaying of the game. This study has produced a comprehensive description of this talk which both adds to a general understanding of this specific register of English, and which can be used in relation to future research into other kinds of broadcast talk, and other registers in general. This study has shown one way in which to identify a variety of talk, to explore the linguistic choices which characterise that talk, and to relate these choices to a relevant context, as proposed in the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistic theory. It is hoped that the results of this

study have opened the door to a better understanding of the relationship between the language of commentating and the context in which an 'inner circle' of Rugby League enthusiasts has evolved, at least in terms of the kinds of meanings construed in play-by-play talk. There are, however, many questions that have been raised as a result of this study, and many areas into which future research could be conducted. Further study of other kinds of language activities which take place in Rugby League radio commentaries, and research into those areas suggested in the previous section, would likely add greater depth to an understanding of the register of play-by-play talk, and of how language is deployed in the act of observing and interpreting a specific material event within a specific context.

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